

Later Opposition under Xerxes and Artaxerxes - Ezra 4:6-24

Topics: Accusation, Actions, Administration, Authority, Criticism, Enemies, Government, Opposition, Power, Pressure, Punishment, Rebellion, Work

Open It

- * 1. In what ways does Christianity go against the flow of society today?
- 2. What sacrifices do you think Christians have to make for their faith?
- 3. What would you do if it were illegal to go to church?

Explore It

- 4. At what point in Israel's history did these events take place? (4:6)
- 5. Who lodged an accusation against the Israelites? (4:6)
- 6. Who wrote a letter to Artaxerxes? (4:6-7)
- * 7. Why did Israel's enemies write a letter to Artaxerxes? (4:8-16)
- 8. How was Jerusalem described in the letter to Artaxerxes? (4:12)
- 9. What danger was there in Jerusalem, according to Rehum? (4:13)
- 10. What motivated Rehum and Shimshai to send their letter to the king? (4:14)
- 11. What advice did Rehum give to the king? (4:15)
- 12. According to Rehum, what would the king's records reveal about the Jews? (4:15)
- 13. Why was Jerusalem originally destroyed, according to the letter? (4:15)
- * 14. What did Rehum and Shimshai's letter say would result from Jerusalem's restoration? (4:16)
- 15. How did the king respond to Rehum and Shimshai's letter? (4:17)
- * 16. Why did Artaxerxes order the Israelites to stop rebuilding the temple? (4:18-22)
- 17. What did the king's records reveal about Jerusalem? (4:20)

Get It

- 18. Why did Israel's enemies not want them to build a temple to the Lord?
- 19. What does this story reveal about the strategies Satan uses to thwart good?
- 20. How have you experienced opposition from others to your Christian faith?
- * 21. How should believers respond to opposition?
- 22. What can Christians do to protect themselves against Satan's attacks?
- 23. What can you do when it seems as if you have lost a spiritual battle?
- * 24. Why do you think God allows believers to experience failure?
- 25. What good can result from failure?
- 26. What lesson have you learned from a recent failure in your life?
- 27. How has this story affected your view of opposition or failure in the Christian life?

Apply It

- * 28. What specific steps can you take this week to protect yourself from Satan's attacks?
- 29. How could you encourage another believer who is struggling with a failure or setback?