

**BOOK OF EZRA
RESPONDING TO OPPOSITION
EZRA 4:1-24**

Introduction

Last week we looked at **THE NATURE OF OPPOSITION!**

OPPOSITION CAN COME IN THE FORM OF COMPROMISING ALLIANCES! (Ezra 4:1-3)

OPPOSITION CAN COME IN THE FORM OF OPPRESSIVE DISCOURAGEMENT FROM THE ENEMY! (Vs 4)

OPPOSITION CAN COME IN THE FORM OF THE ENEMY INSTILLING FEAR! (Vs 4)

OPPOSITION CAN COME IN THE FORM OF ORGANIZED OPPRESSION FROM THE ENEMY! (Vs 5)

OPPOSITION CAN COME IN THE FORM OF UNJUST ACCUSATIONS FROM THE ENEMY! (Vs 12-16, 24)

This morning I want us to look at RESPONDING TO OPPOSITION, or HOW TO FACE OPPOSITION:

The first time opposition came in verses 1-3 we see that they got most of it right, but we'll also see where they erred:

I. RESPOND TO OPPOSITION WITH HOLY DISCERNMENT!

(i.e. RECOGNIZE THE OPPOSITION FOR WHAT IT IS!)

They did that in verses 1-3! They saw right through this “offer to help” and saw these folks for what they really were—An enemy!

They were an enemy that was wanting them to form a compromising alliance with them! Understand that Israel had been previously warned about making unholy alliances! Also, Israel had previously sinned in the matter of unholy alliances! And it cost them dearly! **(Deuteronomy 7:1-6; 12:1ff; Judges 2:1-4)**

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A Holy Discernment gives us the ability to see that the real enemy is not the flesh and blood enemy, but the spiritual enemy guiding them!

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

“Holy Discernment” means a holy wisdom to judge righteous judgment and make a right determination!

Oh how we need the wisdom of the LORD in our day to day walk to make right determinations and resist unholy alliances!

Proverbs 2:1-15; 3:1-7

RESPOND TO OPPOSITION WITH HOLY DISCERNMENT!

II. RESPOND TO OPPOSITION WITH A HOLY DETERMINATION! (Vs 3)

Initially, they did respond with determination!

They purposed to stand in the face of the opposition and get the job done anyway.

It is the attitude of putting on the whole armor of God “*having done all, to stand!*”

But I want you to notice that they missed one important detail!

III. RESPOND TO OPPOSITION WITH HOLY DEPENDANCE!

Even though they had the right discernment and determination, they messed up because **they claimed the Persian King Cyrus as their authority instead of God. (Vs 3)**

And I believe because they did that, later on, they weren't able to continue to stand against the waves of opposition that came!

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Our reliance is not to be on our Spiritual heritage!—Israel had that!

Our reliance is not to be on our Special history!—Israel had that!

There is a lot of talk right now about what our constitutional rights are and how we ought to be invoking them.

Our reliance is to be on our Sovereign Helper!—DEPEND ON GOD!

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Hebrews 13:5-6 ...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”

2 Chronicles 32:7-8, 10, 13-22

Acts 5:28-29

God would have us to face it head on with our eyes wide open!
God would have us to face it with Him as **our Authority**, with the Lord Jesus Christ as **our victory**, and with the Holy Spirit as **our power!**

1 Corinthians 15:57-58 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

A Holy Dependence is shown by:

- A. Fearing God!
- B. Obeying God!
- C. Trusting God!