

Ezra, Haggai, Esther and Nehemiah

LESSON THREE

Ezra 4

Day 1	Ezra 4:1-5
Day 2	Ezra 4:6-10
Day 3	Ezra 4:11-16
Day 4	Ezra 4:17-22
Day 5	Ezra 4:23-24

LESSON THREE

1 Look in His Word

Feel free to underline, circle or otherwise mark text if it will aid your study.

Ezra 4:1-5

¹ When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel,

² they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.”

³ But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, “You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us.”

⁴ Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building.

⁵ They hired counselors to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia.

2 List the Facts

What does the passage say? Make a verse-by-verse list of the most obvious, outstanding facts. Be literal as you answer.

Example:

(4:1) When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard the exiles were building a temple for the Lord, they said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God.”

LESSON THREE

3 Learn from the Lessons

What does the passage mean? What lessons can be learned from these facts? Be spiritual as you answer.

Example:

(4:1) We need to be cautious before partnering with others in ministry.

4 Listen to His Voice

What does this passage mean to you? Rewrite the lessons from step 3 in the form of a question. Be personal as you answer.

Example:

(4:1) What should I do before accepting offers of help from those who may oppose my work for God?

LESSON THREE

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Ezra 4:6-10

⁶ At the beginning of the reign of Xerxes, they lodged an accusation against the people of Judah and Jerusalem.

⁷ And in the days of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and the rest of his associates wrote a letter to Artaxerxes. The letter was written in Aramaic script and in the Aramaic language.

⁸ Rehum the commanding officer and Shimshai the secretary wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king as follows:

⁹ Rehum the commanding officer and Shimshai the secretary, together with the rest of their associates-the judges and officials over the men from Tripolis, Persia, Erech and Babylon, the Elamites of Susa,

¹⁰ and the other people whom the great and honorable Ashurbanipal deported and settled in the city of Samaria and elsewhere in Trans-Euphrates.

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Learn from the Lessons

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Listen to His Voice

LESSON THREE

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Ezra 4:11-16

¹¹ (This is a copy of the letter they sent him.)
To King Artaxerxes, From your servants, the
men of Trans-Euphrates:

¹² The king should know that the Jews who
came up to us from you have gone to Jerusalem
and are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city.
They are restoring the walls and repairing the
foundations.

¹³ Furthermore, the king should know that if
this city is built and its walls are restored, no
more taxes, tribute or duty will be paid, and the
royal revenues will suffer.

¹⁴ Now since we are under obligation to the
palace and it is not proper for us to see the king
dishonored, we are sending this message to
inform the king,

¹⁵ so that a search may be made in the archives
of your predecessors. In these records you will
find that this city is a rebellious city, troublesome
to kings and provinces, a place of rebellion
from ancient times. That is why this city was
destroyed.

¹⁶ We inform the king that if this city is built
and its walls are restored, you will be left with
nothing in Trans-Euphrates.

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3 Learn from the Lessons

4 Listen to His Voice

LESSON THREE

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Ezra 4:17-22

¹⁷ The king sent this reply: To Rehum the commanding officer, Shimshai the secretary and the rest of their associates living in Samaria and elsewhere in Trans-Euphrates:

Greetings.

¹⁸ The letter you sent us has been read and translated in my presence.

¹⁹ I issued an order and a search was made, and it was found that this city has a long history of revolt against kings and has been a place of rebellion and sedition.

²⁰ Jerusalem has had powerful kings ruling over the whole of Trans-Euphrates, and taxes, tribute and duty were paid to them.

²¹ Now issue an order to these men to stop work, so that this city will not be rebuilt until I so order.

²² Be careful not to neglect this matter. Why let this threat grow, to the detriment of the royal interests?

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3 Learn from the Lessons

4 Listen to His Voice

LESSON THREE

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Ezra 4:23-24

²³ As soon as the copy of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read to Rehum and Shimshai the secretary and their associates, they went immediately to the Jews in Jerusalem and compelled them by force to stop.

²⁴ Thus the work on the house of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

LESSON THREE

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Learn from the Lessons

4

Listen to His Voice

5

Live in Response

How will you respond? Pinpoint what God is saying to you from this passage. Write down today's date and what you will do now about what He has said.

NOTES