

# Ezra 4:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel;

## Analysis

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The opposition begins: 'Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel.' The identification 'adversaries' (Hebrew *tsar*, enemies/opponents) reveals hostile intent from the beginning. The phrase 'children of the captivity' became technical term for returned exiles. That enemies 'heard' about temple building shows God's work attracts attention—both positive and negative. Spiritual advance inevitably provokes opposition.

## Historical Context

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The 'adversaries' primarily were Samaritans—descendants of northern kingdom Israelites who remained after Assyrian conquest (722 BC) mixed with foreign settlers (2 Kings 17:24-41). They practiced syncretistic religion combining Yahweh worship with pagan elements. They viewed Jewish return and temple rebuilding as threatening their religious and political status. Archaeological evidence shows Samaritan communities were established and influential in the region. Their opposition would persist throughout Persian period and into New Testament era.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

### Study Questions

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1. What does automatic opposition to temple rebuilding teach about the inevitability of spiritual conflict when God's work advances?
2. How does identifying them as 'adversaries' demonstrate discernment that not all religious people support God's true purposes?

### Interlinear Text

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וַיִּשְׁמָע ו	צָרֵי י	יְהוּדָה	וּבִנְיָמִן	כִּי	
heard	Now when the adversaries	of Judah	and Benjamin		
H8085	H6862	H3063	H1144	H3588	
בְּנֵי י	הַגּוֹלָה	בּוֹנֵי ים	הַיֵּכָל	לַיהוָה	אֱלֹהֵי י
that the children	of the captivity	build	the temple	unto the LORD	God
H1121	H1473	H1129	H1964	H3068	H430
יִשְׂרָאֵל:					
of Israel					
H3478					

### Additional Cross-References

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**Ezra 1:11** (Parallel theme): All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.