

# Ezra 4:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.

## Analysis

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The deceptive offer: 'Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur.' The claim 'we seek your God, as ye do' asserted religious compatibility. The reference to Esarhaddon (681-669 BC) verified longstanding worship. However, 2 Kings 17:33 exposes their syncretism: 'they feared the LORD, and served their own gods.' Their offer appeared cooperative but threatened to corrupt pure worship with pagan elements.

## Historical Context

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Esarhaddon ruled Assyria 681-669 BC, approximately 150 years before this encounter. His settlement of foreign peoples in Samaria (2 Kings 17:24) created the mixed Samaritan population. Their claim to worship Yahweh was partially true—they did offer sacrifices at various high places. However, they simultaneously worshiped pagan deities, violating the first commandment. Allowing them to 'build with you' would have legitimized syncretism and corrupted temple worship. The Jews' refusal, though creating opposition, maintained covenant purity.

## Related Passages

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**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

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

## Study Questions

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1. How does the adversaries' claim 'we seek your God, as ye do' demonstrate that false religion often claims compatibility with truth?
2. What does the necessity of refusing seemingly cooperative offers teach about discerning between genuine faith and syncretism?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיָּבֹאוּ Then they came H5066	אֶל H413	זְרֻבָּבֶל to Zerubbabel H2216	וְאֶל H413	רֹאשׁ י and to the chief H7218	הָאֲבֹתֹת of the fathers H1
וַיֹּאמֶר and said H559	לָהֶם H1992	נִבְנֶה ה unto them Let us build H1129	עִמָּךְ H5973	כִּי H3588	כָּךְ H0
נִדְרֹשׁ with you for we seek H1875	לְאֱלֹהֶיךָ your God H430	וְלֵאן H3808	אֲנִי חֲנוּ H587	וְזָבַח יִם as ye do and we do sacrifice H2076	
מִיָּמֵי unto him since the days H3117	אֶסְרָח H0	חֲדָן of Esarhaddon H634	מֶלֶךְ king H4428	אֲשׁוּר of Assur H804	
הַמַּעֲלָה which brought us up hither H5927	אֶתְנוּ H853	פֹּה: H6311			

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Kings 19:37** (Kingdom): And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

**2 Kings 17:24** (Kingdom): And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

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