

# Ezra 4:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

## Analysis

The refusal: 'But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God.' This firm rejection risked creating enemies of potential allies. The phrase 'Ye have nothing to do with us' asserted incompatibility. The reason: 'we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.' They appealed to divine authorization through Cyrus's decree, not mere ethnic exclusivity.

## Historical Context

The refusal to include Samaritans in temple building was controversial then and now. However, allowing syncretistic worship would have violated covenant distinctiveness God demanded. The appeal to Cyrus's authorization provided legal justification—he decreed that Jews, not Samaritans, build the temple. This firm stance created lasting Samaritan-Jewish hostility (continuing into New Testament, John 4:9). However, covenant purity required it. Theological boundaries sometimes demand social consequences.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does the refusal of seemingly helpful offers teach about prioritizing covenant faithfulness over pragmatic alliances?
2. What does appealing to Cyrus's authorization demonstrate about using legitimate authority to support necessary boundaries?

## Interlinear Text

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בְּאֵשׁ וְ וְשָׁאָר וְשָׁאָר וְיִאָמֶר  
said H0 But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the chief  
H559 H2216 H3442 H7605 H7218

תַּלְכֵד לְכָמָד לֹא יְשַׁרְאֵל בְּאָבוֹת  
of the fathers of Israel H0 H0  
H1 H3478

אָנוּ חָנוּ כִּי אֱלֹהִים בְּבָנָה  
unto them Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house God  
H1129 H1004 H430 H3588 H587

כְּבָנָה  
but we ourselves together unto them Ye have nothing to do with us to build  
H3162 H1129

כְּבָנָה  
unto the LORD God of Israel hath commanded as king Cyrus  
H3068 H430 H3478 H834 H6680 H4428 H3566

מֶלֶךְ פָּרָس:  
as king of Persia  
H4428 H6539

## Additional Cross-References

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**Nehemiah 2:20** (References God): Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.