

expressed their negative attitude towards it, they spoke against it, in other words. They weren't strong enough to stop it, but they kind of threw cold water on the people who were building it. And then there was something even more deadly and that was the attitude of the people who were building it, because there were the aged men of Israel who had seen Solomon's temple and all its glory, and they looked back remembering Solomon's temple and all its glory and they thought, why, this little beggardly temple that Zechariah and the boys are building, is nothing compared to what we knew in Israel. They are like the people who have moved from one community to another, and remember the beautiful church they worshipped in in the old community and the storefront that is existing as a gospel witness in the new community. That sort of an attitude prevailed among Israel very clearly. And there was another attitude, too, that was even more damaging and that was the attitude, well, who knows whether it is God's will to build the temple or not? Maybe God would just as soon have us worship in the field. So you had a two-fold question: is it God's will, and if it is God's will, is it necessary that we obey it, even at that? And all of these things are by way of an historical introduction as to what happened to the Jerusalem temple, and when you got the outward opposition and the inward lack of spirit, when you got these questions poured on to the top of the whole matter, the people of Israel just threw up their hands and they said, well, why build the temple. And the temple stopped for 13 years. I would emphasize to you that there was no decree from the King of Persia, or the King of Babylon, to stop building the temple, and when you read Ezra 4, you will realize that it deals with when the decree was given to stop building the wall, but there was no act of law that said, stop building the