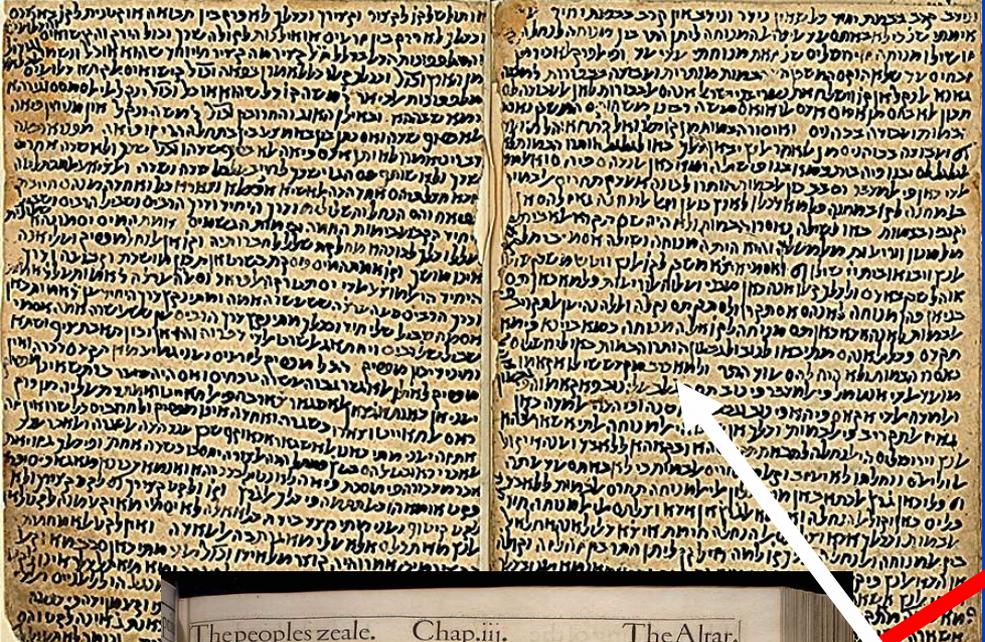
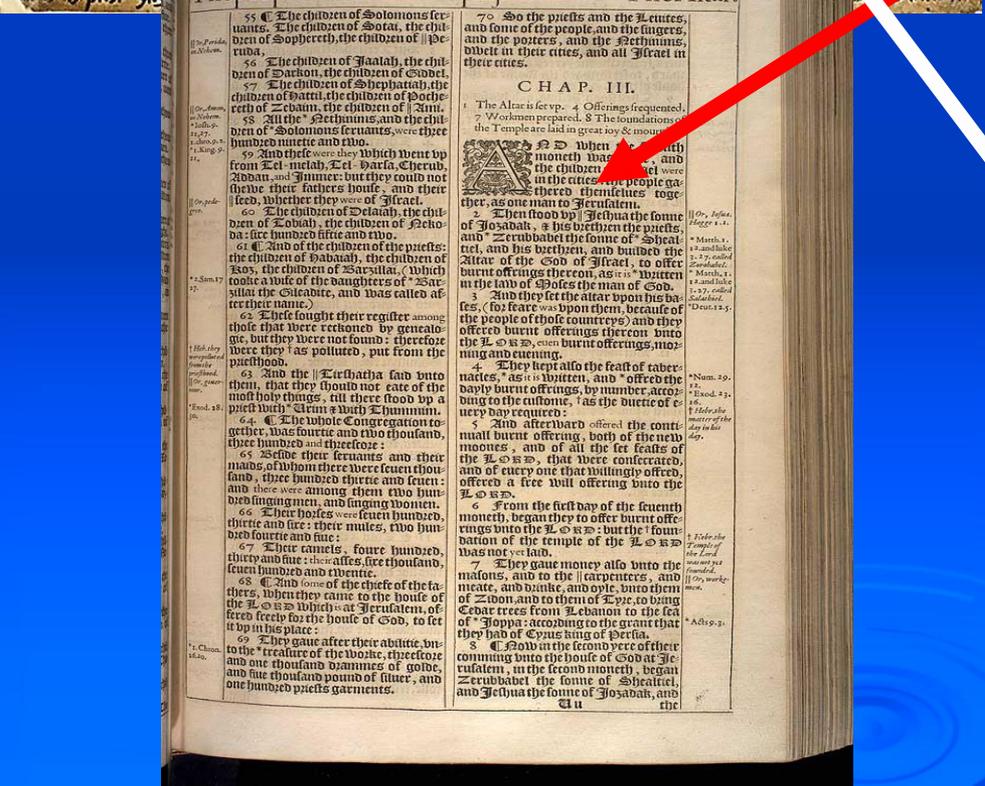


THE PROBLEM WITH PARAGRAPHS



- Chapters, paragraphs & verses are a late invention of European scholars
- Bible not written that way originally
- This poses a problem with the Book of Ezra



BREAK AFTER VS. 6, NOT VS. 7

➤ Paragraph break ought to be here at end of vs. 6:

➤ Typical Western Bibles place the break here at end of vs. 7:

➤ Vs 6 ends a thought
➤ Vs. 7 connects directly with vs. 8

also had 200 men and women singers.^a ⁶⁶They had 736 horses,^r 245 mules, ⁶⁷435 camels and 6,720 donkeys.

⁶⁸When they arrived at the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, some of the heads of the families^s gave freewill offerings toward the rebuilding of the house of God on its site. ⁶⁹According to their ability they gave to the treasury for this work 10,000 drachmas^t of gold, 5,000 minas^e of silver and 100 priestly garments.

⁷⁰The priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers and the temple servants settled in their own towns, along with some of the other people, and the rest of the Israelites settled in their towns.^t

REBUILDING ALTAR

³ When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled^v as one man in Jerusalem. Then Jeshua^w son of Jozadak^x and his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel^y and his associates began to build the altar of the God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what is written in the Law of Moses^z the man of God. ³Despite their fear^a of the peoples around them, they built the altar on its founda-

2:65
^aS 2Sa 19:35
2:66 ^rIsa 66:20
2:68 ^sS Ex 25:2
2:70 ^tS ver 1;
S 1Ch 9:2;
Ne 11:3-4
3:1 ^uNe 7:73
^vS Lev 23:24
3:2 ^wS Ezr 2:2
^xHag 1:1;
Zec 6:11
^y1Ch 3:17
^zS Ex 20:24;
Dt 12:5-6
3:3 ^aEzr 4:4;
Da 9:25

^bS Ex 29:39;
Nu 28:1-8
3:4 ^cS Ex 23:16;
Nu 29:12-38;
Ne 8:14-18;
Zec 14:17
3:5 ^dS Nu 28:1,
11,14; Col 2:16
^eLev 23:1-44;
S Nu 29:39
3:7 ^f1Ch 22:15
^gS 1Ch 14:1
^hIsa 35:2; 60:13
ⁱS Ezr 1:2-4
3:8 ^j1Ki 6:1
^kZec 4:9

tion and sacrificed burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening sacrifices.^b ⁴Then in accordance with what is written, they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles^c with the required number of burnt offerings prescribed for each day. ⁵After that, they presented the regular burnt offerings, the New Moon^d sacrifices and the sacrifices for all the appointed sacred feasts of the LORD,^e as well as those brought as freewill offerings to the LORD. ⁶On the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, though the foundation of the LORD's temple had not yet been laid.

REBUILDING TEMPLE

⁷Then they gave money to the masons and carpenters,^f and gave food and drink and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre, so that they would bring cedar logs^g by sea from Lebanon^h to Joppa, as authorized by Cyrusⁱ king of Persia.

⁸In the second month^j of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel^k son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers (the priests and the

^{d69} That is, about 1,100 pounds (about 500 kilograms)
^{e69} That is, about 3 tons (about 2.9 metric tons)

LAYING THE TEMPLE FOUNDATION



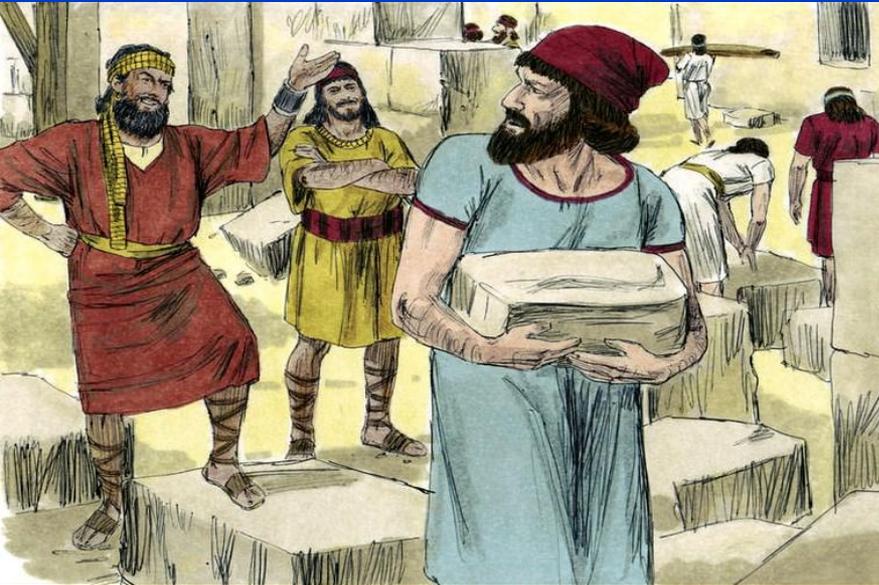
- ***Beth Ha-Elohim Yerushalayim*** = the House of The God of Jerusalem
- ***“Coming to the House of God”*** refers to a later time, during the reign of Darius
- 2 kinds of songs sung at the celebration: songs of praise and songs of thanksgiving

JOY & SORROW

- Exuberance by some
- Weeping and wailing by some of the old men
- Foundation no doubt smaller than Solomon's Temple
- Stones were smaller and less impressive
- In Temple Mount today we see irregular small stones (Muslims)
- Also the larger grand stones made by the Jews



EZRA CHAPTER 4: THE OPPOSITION



- H.G.M. Williamson: *“The work of God in all ages has known the pressures and persecutions of those who would frustrate its advance”*
- Opposition groups report to the Persians that Jews will rebel
- Spiritual maturity: Becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable
- Jews who returned expected smooth seas but were surprised to find vehement opposition
- Jews of modern Israel ask why God would return them, but block them from building the Temple?



OPPOSITION IS NORMAL



**NO
CHRISTIANS
ALLOWED**



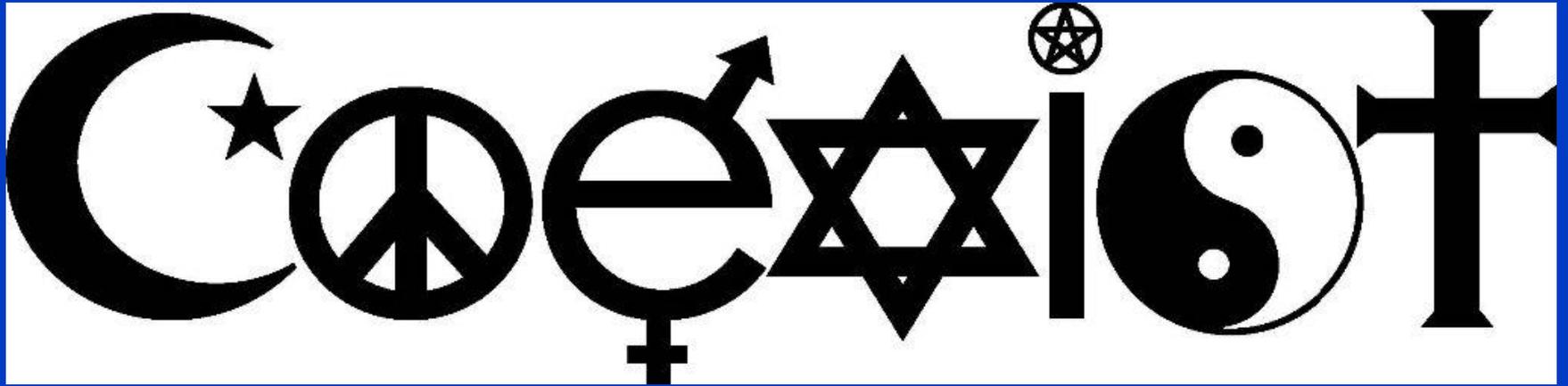
- God-Pattern is that for God's worshippers risk, discomfort and opposition are to be expected
- 2Tim 3:10 -13
- John 15:18, 19
- God decided to create a co-operative venture with humans to bring redemption to the world
- He has placed much responsibility in our hands to deliver His message of salvation

DISCOMFORT AND OPPOSITION GOES WITH THE TERRITORY

- *“We’re supposed to be surrounded.....!”*
- It’s not that if we’re surrounded we’re doing something wrong, it’s when we’re NOT that something’s wrong
- Modern Israel and the modern Church often tries to alleviate discomfort by appeasing the opposition
- Romans 7:15 - 25



CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?



- Vs. 1 *“When the ENEMIES of Judah and Benjamin...”*
- Zerubbabel refuses the Samaritans offer of joining forces to build the Temple
- First saw these enemies in Chapter 3 when they threatened the Jews about their rebuilding plans
- Enemies claim to “seek your God”, and have been “sacrificing to Him” during Jews’ absence
- To them, Yehoveh was just another god.....He was the god of Jerusalem

“You and we have nothing in common...”



- This less-than-cordial response brought immediate consequences
- Samaritans bribed Persian officials to stop progress on building
- Darius began to rule in 521 B.C. and there was still no Temple
- It appears that the 1st foundation had to be replaced by a 2nd one

"You have heard that it was said,
'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'
But I tell you:

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

A black and white photograph showing a hand holding a knife, cutting through a thick, twisted wire. The wire is stretched across the frame, and the knife is positioned to cut it. The background is a plain, light color.

- Joy and enthusiasm was met with immediate opposition
- Were the Jews' troubles self-made ?
- Should they have acted "in love" and accepted the Samaritans offer for the sake of peace and goodwill?
- This rationale of love & mercy that we might merge with "the enemy" has led to acceptance of homosexuality and embracing Gay marriage in many denominations (among other things)
- Salt and light is NOT achieved by compromising with what God calls EVIL !
- Obedience is what God's worshippers are called to, despite the personal cost