

3483b AM, 4193 JP, 521 BC

1006. According to Ctesias, the names of these seven Persians (whom Jerome, writing on Daniel, {#Da 11:2} called the Magi) were as follows: Onophas, Iderues, Naradobates, Mardonius, Barises, Artaphernes and Darius, the son of Hystaspes. Herodotus called them Otanes, Hydarves, Megabyzus, Gobryas, Aspathines, Intaphernes and Darius. Darius had recently arrived there from Susa, where his father Hystaspes was governor. Ctesias and Herodotus stated that the Persians always kept a yearly festival upon the day when the Magi were overthrown. {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 70,79. 2:91,105}

1007. Six days after the Magi were overthrown, those seven Persians met to decide what form of government suited Persia best. [L157] Otanes advised an aristocracy, Megabyzus an oligarchy, but Darius persuaded them to adopt a monarchy. Darius' opinion prevailed and was carried by majority vote. Otanes resigned all his rights to the other six on the condition that neither he himself, nor any of his descendants, should ever be subject to any of them or their posterity. Of all the Persians, only his family were left free and not subject to the king's command, provided that they broke no law of the Persians. Since he had been the first

to act and organise the conspiracy, they thought it fit to heap all kinds of magnificence and honour upon him and his posterity. Each year he was presented with a Median Robe. For the election of a new king, they agreed on the following method. Each of them should get on horseback a little before sunrise and the rider of whichever horse happened to neigh first after the sun was up would become king in Cambyses' place. The horse of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, by the craft and cunning of his groom Oebares, neighed first. All the rest leaped off their horses and adored Darius, crying, God save the king. {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 80-88. 2:105-117}

1010. In the beginning of his reign, Darius took Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus, who had formerly been married to her own brother Cambyses and afterward to Magus, who had married her. [L158] He planned to establish his kingdom more firmly by marrying into royalty, so that the kingdom might not appear to have moved to another family, but rather to have remained in the family of Cyrus. {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 88. 2:115} {*Herodotus, l. 7. c. 2. 3:303} {Justin, Trogus, l. 1. c. 10.} He was first called Ochus, {*Valerius Maximus, l. 9. c. 2. ext. 6. 2:317} yet later, when he took over the kingdom of Cambyses, he took his surname also. So I conceive that he was Achash-veroth or Ahasuerus, who in the story of Esther is said to have reigned from India to Ethiopia, over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces. His chief wife

Atossa was none other than Vashti, as mentioned in the book of Esther.

3484c AM, 4194 JP, 520 BC

1015. Mordecai, the Jew, in the Greek edition of Esther {#/ Apc Est 11:1-12}, is said to have had a dream on the first day of the month of Nisan, in the second year of the reign of Artaxerxes the Great (or Ahasuerus or Darius, the son of Hystaspes) concerning a river signifying Esther and two dragons portending himself and Haman. {#/ Apc Est 10:4-13} [L159] [E111]

3484d AM, 4194 JP, 520 BC

1016. In the second year of king Darius, which was in the 65th Olympiad, Haggai the prophet reproved the Jews for their idleness in not rebuilding the temple. Their neglect in this matter was the cause of crop failures and other plagues that continually happened to them between the first and third Sabbatical years. He earnestly persuaded them to change their ways. Then Zerubbabel, the governor of the Jews and Joshua, the high priest, and all the people earnestly began to rebuild the temple on the twenty-fourth day of the same month. {#Hag 1:1-15}

1021. Tatnai, governor of the countries on the west side of the Euphrates River, together with Shetharboznai and the Apharsachites, their associates, came to Jerusalem to hinder the work on the temple. They asked the elders of the Jews by whose command they were doing it. The elders replied that they were doing it by the authority of the edict of Cyrus, and continued with their work. {#Ezr 5:3-5,13,16} The laws of the Medes and Persians were perpetual and unalterable. {#Da 6:8,12 Es 1:19 8:8} Therefore, it was lawful for the Jews to proceed in the work without expecting any new order about it.

1022. Their enemies sent a letter to Darius containing the Jews' answer and desiring that a search might be made of the records at Babylon. They wanted to see whether or not any such grant had been made by Cyrus, and desired to know the king's further pleasure concerning this. {#Ezr 5:5-17}

1023. The work was thus interrupted, and the famine continued in Judah because the grain was not yet ripe. On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the prophet Zechariah had a vision of horsemen galloping up and down over the face of the whole earth, which was at rest and quiet. [L160] When in the vision

the prophet asked what this meant, God graciously answered with many comforting words to the angel who was entreating God to cease his anger and fury against the Jews, Jerusalem and the cities of Judah. These seventy years mentioned in the vision are to be reckoned from the coming of the Babylonians and their last siege laid to Jerusalem. {See note on 3415c AM. <<841>>} {#Jer 34:1 Eze 5:12,13 Zec 1:7-13} This exhortation, which is recorded in Zechariah, {#Zec 2:6,7} was sent to the Jews still remaining in Babylon. They were told to get out as fast as possible, to avoid that calamity which Darius brought upon Babylon a while later, when he took it.

1024. The edict of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the temple was found at Achmetha or Ecbatana, in the province of the Medes. Darius sent this and a second command in favour of the Jews to Tatnai and his companions. They were ordered not to hinder the work of the Lord's house but help it along. The costs of the project were to be taken from the king's tribute. Tatnai and his companions were to pay the costs for the daily sacrifices that were to be offered by the priests at Jerusalem. With this new command, and the encouragement of Haggai and Zechariah, they enthusiastically completed the work. {#Ezr 6:1-14}

1025. I think that at this time Artaxerxes, who signed with Darius in this edict {#Ezr 6:14} and shared power with him in ruling the kingdom, was one of the seven princes of Persia who killed Magus.

3486 AM, 4196 JP, 518 BC

1028. After this half-year long banquet was over, there followed another one lasting seven days. Everyone in Susa was invited. The men were sitting with the king in the court of the garden of the king's house, and the women were within the palace itself with Vashti, the queen, who was Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus. {#Es 1:5-9}

1029. On the last day of this feast, the king, being somewhat drunk, wanted to show off the beauty of his queen to the men, and sent for her to come to him. She refused, and Darius divorced her on the advice of Memucan, one of the seven wise men of the Medes and Persians, who knew the laws and statutes of those countries. For these were the king's judges, who judged in all matters arising among the Persians and revealed all cases in point of law. {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 14. 2:17-21} {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 31. 2:41} {*Plutarch, Artaxerxes, l. 1. c. 29. s. 4. 11:199} After this, they made a law that every man should be master in his own house. {#Es 1:10-22}

1030. Consequently, a search was made for all the fair damsels that were to be found in the empire, to find a new queen for the king, to replace Vashti. Among the ones selected was Hadassah, a damsel of the Jews, who was also called Esther, a woman of Benjamin. {#Es 2:1-8}

3487a AM, 4196 JP, 518 BC

1031. In the fourth year of Darius, on the fourth day of the ninth month, called Chisleu, the Jews, through Sharezer and Regemmelech, consulted with the priests and prophets concerning the appointed fast to be held to commemorate the day of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple. God replied that those fasts of the fifth and seventh months, which they had observed for seventy years, displeased him, and reminded him of their obstinacy and sins, which had caused that terrible desolation in the first place. {#Zec 7:1-14} From the time of this destruction, and the death of Gedaliah two months later, (which was the reason for the fast in the seventh month), to the very time of this prophecy, we, in our chronology, count seventy years.

1032. In the book of Zechariah, God told them that he would restore Jerusalem and put an end to all their former miseries, and that he would change their fasts into mirth and gladness. {#Zec 8:1-23} These fasts were:

- a) Fourth month, ninth day when the city was taken**
- b) Fifth month, tenth day when the temple was burned**
- c) Seventh month, when Gedaliah was murdered and they were scattered among the nations**
- d) Tenth month, tenth day when Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city under Zedekiah. [E113]**

3489b AM, 4199 JP, 515 BC

1033. Toward the end of the sixth year of Darius on the third day of the twelfth month, called Adar, the temple was completed. At its dedication, the Israelites who had returned from the captivity celebrated with great joy and many sacrifices, and the priests and Levites once again performed their offices and duties in the temple. {#Ezr 6:15-18}

1034. On the fourteenth day of the first month, they joyfully celebrated the first Passover in the second temple, and kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days, for God had favourably inclined the heart of Darius, king of Assyria, toward them. {#Ezr 6:19,22} After a twenty month siege, he took Babylon with the help of Zopyrus. [L162] He could now rightly be called king of the Assyrians as well as of the Persians. {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 153. 2:187} {Justin, Trogus, l. 1. fin.}

1035. When Esther's turn came to be brought before king Ahasuerus, she was brought from the house of the women to the king's chamber by Hegai, the eunuch. {#Es 2:12,15} {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 69. 2:91}

"The women in Persia come round in their turns, to their husband's beds."

1036. In the seventh year of Ahasuerus' reign, in the tenth month called Tebeth, when Esther came to the king, she found grace and won his favour and approval more than all the other maidens. He put the crown of the kingdom upon her head and made her queen in Vashti's stead. {#Es 2:16,17} From this I gather that as Vashti was Atossa, so Esther was the one Herodotus called the virgin, Artystone. He said that Darius loved her more than all his wives, and made a solid gold statue of her. {*Herodotus, l. 3. c. 88. 2:117} {*Herodotus, l. 7. c. 69. 3:383} Hadassah was another name given to Esther and sounds much like Atossa. Herodotus makes Artystone to have been Cyrus' daughter and Atossa's sister. We do not know whether Herodotus was not so well skilled in the Persian genealogies, or whether the Persians themselves, out of sheer envy, concealed the name of Esther.

3490b AM, 4200 JP, 514 BC

1037. In honour of his new marriage, Ahasuerus made a most sumptuous feast for all his princes and servants and called it Esther's feast. He relieved the provinces of many taxes and distributed gifts commensurate with the wealth of so great a king. {#Es 2:18}

3494b AM, 4204 JP, 510 BC

1042. Esther went to the king in gorgeous apparel and was graciously received by him. She invited the king to a banquet. Meanwhile, Haman was busy having a gallows made for Mordecai. {#Es 5:1-14}

1043. One night, when Ahasuerus could not sleep, he had the records read to him. It was found that two of his servants, Bigthan and Teresh his doorkeepers, had plotted his death and that Mordecai had revealed this conspiracy to him. Thereupon, he ordered that Mordecai should be highly honoured publicly by none other than Haman himself. {#Es 6:1-14} [E114]

1044. Shortly after this, Haman was hung on the gallows he had made for Mordecai. {#Es 7:1-10} Haman's house was

given to the queen. Mordecai, her uncle, who had raised her, had great honours bestowed upon him. {#Es 8:1,2,15-17}

3514d AM, 4224 JP, 490 BC

1093. The Persians took Eretria after a seven day long siege. After spending a few days in settling things there, they sailed to the land of Attica and destroyed a great part of it. At last, with the guidance of Hippias, the son of Peisistratus, they came to the plain of Marathon. There they were defeated by the men of Athens and of Plataea, under the command of Miltiades. He had the government of the Chersonesus in Thrace. The Greeks lost a hundred and ninety-two men, while the Persians lost sixty-four hundred. {*Herodotus, l. 6. c. 101,102,112,117. 3:253,255,267,271}

1094. The Persians fled to their ships, many of which were subsequently sunk or captured. In these two battles the Persians lost two hundred thousand men. Hippias, the author of this war and a former tyrant of Athens, died there. {Justin, Trogus, l. 2. c. 9.} The entire army of the Persians in this battle consisted of three hundred thousand men. {*Valerius Maximus, l. 5. c. 3. ext. 3c. 1:489}

3519c AM, 4229 JP, 485 BC

1100. When Darius had declared Xerxes to be the next king, he was now ready to take his journey. According to Diodorus {*Diod. Sic., l. 11. c. 2. s. 2. 4:123} he was on his way into Greece in the year following the revolt of the Egyptians. Toward the latter half of that year he died, having reigned for a full thirty-six years. {*Herodotus, l. 7. c. 4. 3:305} [E121]