

Part 2 – A Chronological Analysis of the Kings Who Ruled Over Jerusalem From 606 to 331 B.C
by Walter T. Robinson II, March 21, 1996, © 1996, 1998, All Rights Reserved

Page – 1

The historical dates of the kings have been taken from secular sources such as encyclopedias and history books. The dates of these kings' activities dealing with Jerusalem and the Jews have been taken strictly from the Bible. The Jews used the beginning of the reign of each king as their basis for recording the dates of important events.

| Historical King | Date (B.C.) | Ezra's Record | Nehemiah's Record |
|--|---|--|---|
| <u>Nebuchadnezzar</u> (II Kings 24:1–4) (II Kings 25:8–9) | 606–561 586, 9th day <-4th month-> 586, 5th day <-7th month-> | 2:1, 5:14 <u>1st year</u> . Past references. <- He Conquered Jerusalem in 606. 20 years later, he destroyed the walls in 586. <- 28 years later, he also destroyed the Temple. | 7:6 <u>1st year</u> . Past reference. V |
| <u>Cyrus II</u> Born 598(?)—Died 529 (Also called “Darius the Mede” in Daniel 9:1?) Compare Daniel 11:1 of the <i>Septuagint Version</i> . (i.e., LXX) | 536-> 534, 15th–22nd day of the 7th month-> 534, after the 22nd day of 7th month-> | 1:1–3:7. <u>1st year</u> . Ezra's historical overview about the DECREE given to rebuild the Temple in 536 when the Jewish return from captivity actually began. 2:1–62. The genealogy of all initial returnees are provided and is the same as in Nehemiah 7:7–64 (scribal differences noted). Zerubbabel led this group and also laid the foundation of the Temple. (2:2) <i>[Note: Ezra did not go to Jerusalem until the 7th year of Artaxerxes II. (7:1–8)]</i> 3:4–5 <u>They then kept the “Fest of Tabernacles.”</u> (3:4) 3:8–4:5. <u>2nd year</u> . Construction on the Temple began in 534 and slowly continued for 90 years until 446 till after the wall was raised up by Nehemiah. | |
| <u>Cambyses</u> | 529–522 | (not mentioned) | No action. Work continued. |
| <u>Darius I (Hystaspis)</u> | 521–485 | | 4:5. (passing mention) Work continued. |
| <u>Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)</u> [He deposed Vashti in 482. (Esther 1:3) <u>He then made Esther queen in 478 (2:16) Five years later she approached the king on behalf of her people. (3:7, 12 & 5:1) 11 months later, they were delivered from Haman's plans. (9:15–17)</u> | 485-> 478, (?) day <- 7th month 473, 16th day <-1st month 473, 13–14th day <-12th month | 4:6. <u>1st year</u> . A libelous letter was written against the Jews working in Jerusalem and was sent to “Ahasuerus” in 485. But, it seems he ignored it and allowed the work to continue through his reign and on into that of his son's until probably 446. V | |

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|--|----------------------|---|--|-------|
| <u>Artaxerxes I</u> (i.e. <u>Longimanus</u>) | 466–425 | 446, 6th (?) day 1st month— > | <p>1:1–14. 20th year. <u>In 446, Nehemiah was given official letters by the king saying he had the legal right to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls. (2:1–11)</u></p> <p>After securing various materials, he proceeded to Jerusalem. After surveying the city, he convinced the people already there to help him rebuild the walls. (2:11–18)</p> <p>The work began and progressed against opposition and scheming by the people of the surrounding nations. (2:19) <u>Yet, the work continued until the wall was finished the same year in 446. (2:20–6:15) 5:14 adds that Nehemiah then served as governor of Jerusalem for 12 years until the 32nd year of Artaxerxes I's reign in 434.</u></p> <p><u>The wall was quickly finished in 52, days on the 25th day of the 6th month, Elul. (6:15)</u> Nehemiah then appointed two faithful God fearing men (7:1–2) to watch over Jerusalem because he was soon to return to Shushan in Persia to serve the king as he had previously promised. (2:6 & 13:6)</p> <p>However, before returning to Shushan, he gave a few last instructions to those he had placed in charge. (7:3) He was also led to take a census of all who had come out of Babylon in 536, realizing the people were probably going to scatter to the surrounding villages <u>because no houses had been built in Jerusalem so far. (7:4–5)</u> And, to make sure everyone returned to the proper city of their inheritance, the census was necessary.</p> <p><u>The census was finished shortly, and by the beginning of 7th month, most of the people had left Jerusalem to live in the surrounding cities. (7:73)</u></p> <p>Nehemiah then returned to the king in Persia and continued to serve as the governor in absentia. (13:6)</p> | |
| | | 446, 1st day 5th month— > | | V |
| | | 446, 3rd day 5th month— > | | |
| | | 52 days later | | |
| | | 446, 25th day, 6th month Elul— > | | |
| | 446, 7th month— > | 20th year. <u>Non-Jews from Jerusalem sent the king a letter, in the Syrian language, claiming the Wall he had allowed the Jews to build was going to be used in a rebellion. As a result the king ordered a halt to all work on the Temple. (4:7–14)</u> | V | |
| <u>Xerxes II</u> | 425–424 | (not mentioned) | Took no action. | |

| Historical King | Date (B.C.) | Ezra's Record | Nehemiah's Record |
|--|--|---|--|
| <u>Darius II</u> 423–404 (i.e. Nothius) (Halley's date 423–405) [Haggai 1:1–4 says <u>the people's houses were up, yet the Temple still lay in ruins in 2nd yr., 6th month, & 1st day. In 1:8 the LORD commanded them to resume building it. And, 1:14–15 says they did so in the 6th month and 24th day.</u>] | 421-> | 4:24–5:2. <u>2nd year.</u> By the king's 2nd year, the work on the Temple had sat idle for many years. Finally, the prophets led in resuming the work again. This caused the Persian satrap, Tatnai, to investigate and ask about the wall which was raised up. (5:3) The ensuing investigation finally proved that Cyrus had indeed decreed for the Jews in Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. (5:4–6:5) | [12:1–22. Past reference indicating it was during this time Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, rose up once more in Jerusalem and resumed the work during the reign of Darius II. (12:22) This group was to complete the Temple begun in 536 by Zerubbabel himself. (12:22) He was accompanied by another Ezra, (12:1, 13) and the prophet named Zechariah (12:16). However, there were other prophets already there, who— with Zechariah and other prophets—resumed the work on the Temple and encouraged the others to also do so.] |
| | 421, 1st day <-6th month | As a result, that same year (421), the king issued a DECREE to complete the work according to the previous decrees made by Cyrus II, Darius II, and Artaxerxes I. (6:6–14) | |
| | 421, 24th day <-6th month | <u>The Temple was finished in 4 years in the 12th month of the king's 6th year, which was in 417. (6:15).</u> [Zerubbabel is not mentioned as living any more. -> *] | |
| | 417, 12th month, Adar-> | <u>The Jews then dedicated the Temple and kept the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for 50 days.</u> (6:16–22) | |
| <u>Artaxerxes II</u> 404–359 (Halley's date 405–358) | 416, 1st month 14th day on for 50 days-> (Lev. 23:5–16) | | * Author's note: I realize my reckoning means Zerubbabel would have to have been very old. For instance, his name means “descended or born in Babylon” just as Matthew 1:12 records. If he had been 20 years old in 536, he would have been 139 in 417 when the Temple was finally finished. Even though such an age was somewhat unusual by this time, it was not unheard of—even as some living into the early hundreds are even heard of today. (See Part 1 for examples.) |
| | 397, 1st day of the 1st month-> | 7:1–10:44. <u>7th year. 20 years after the Temple was finished and dedicated, in 397, on the 1st day of the 1st month, of the 7th year of the king (7:6–9), the king gave a DECREE for all those still in Babylon to return to Jerusalem—if they desire to do so. (Ezra 7:13)</u> | And, there are some Biblical references which seem to indicate some old people who had formerly lived in captivity could possibly return at the end of the period of captivity which came about when Ezra led the last group out of Babylon. |
| | 397, 1st day and 5th month-> | <u>The king also DECREED for Ezra the priest to go to Jerusalem and serve as the official scribe. (7:21) He arrived the 1st day of the 5th month (7:8–9)</u> | One such passage is found in Zechariah who was mentioned by Nehemiah in 12:16. Zechariah actually said, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. (Zechariah 8:4) “Very age” literally means a “multitude of days.” Even though it does not denote just how many, it does indicate “very many” which means very old age. |
| 397, 4th day and 5th month-> | Ezra then provides the genealogy of the last ones to come to Jerusalem from Babylon with him. (8:1–14) He also gives a brief history of the trip from Babylon and also describes an inventory of goods the king had provided for them to carry to Jerusalem. (8:15–36) On the fourth day after he arrived (8:33), he once more took inventory of the goods they had brought from Babylon. (8:33–36) | In addition, another passage seems to indicate Zechariah may have been on the verge of giving up on seeing the Temple finished—perhaps because of old age. 4:6–8 actual says the Temple was not to be finished by Zerubbabel's own physical ability—but by God's Spirit. The Lord also promised that he would actually finish the Temple. (For other refs. see, Gen. 47:9, Ex 34:7, & Josh. 24:29.) | |

| Historical King | Date (B.C.) | Ezra's Record | Nehemiah's Record |
|-----------------|---|---------------|--|
| | 397, 1st day and 7th month— -> | V | <p><u>Shortly after Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, the people came and asked him to read from the book of Moses. (8:1) Thus, on the 1st day of the 7th month of 397 he began reading the Law and teaching the people how to understand and obey all therein. (8:2)</u></p> <p><u>It is also noted that the people gathered for these official matters at a place called the "street." (8:1, 3 and 16).</u></p> <p><u>In addition, each person now had a house covered with a roof—indicating significant time had past and the rebuilding of the city was finally complete. (8:16)</u></p> |
| | 397, 15th–22nd day of the 7th month— -> | | <p><u>The people then kept the "Feast of Tabernacles" under booths as in the times of Joshua, the son of Nun. (8:17–18) [Leviticus 23:34, says this feast was held from the 15th–22nd day of the 7th month, Ethanim. (Note: By now the Temple had been finished and ready for 20 years.)]</u></p> |
| | 397, 24th day and 7th month— -> | | <p><u>On the 24th day of the month (9:1), some of the people left their strange wives and families at home and joined the others in a solemn assembly to confess their sins and the iniquities of their their ancestors. (9:2) They also recounted the past blessings of God upon their nation. (9:3–37) The people then made a covenant with God and all the leaders signed it. (9:38) Those signing the covenant are then listed, including Nehemiah, the Levites, the non-Jewish Nethinim—and all the others who had separated from the those of the land by keeping the law of God. (10:1, 9, 28–30)</u></p> <p><u>The people solemnly promised to obey all the laws of God. (10:28–29) They also promised not to intermarry with those who do not worship the God of Israel. (10:30) Moreover, they also made several other ordinances to obey God. (10:31–39)</u></p> <p><u>Next, 1/10 of the people volunteered to live in the city. The rest took up residence in the cities around Jerusalem. Numerous other people were placed into various types of ministries. (11:1–11:36)</u></p> <p><u>Nehemiah then provides an old list of names of priests, Levites, and prophets who had earlier came from Babylon during the reign of Darius II from 423–404 (12:1–22) He then names those who had served even earlier as various ministers.</u></p> |

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| | | V | <p>some time during the time Nehemiah served as governor from 446–434 (12:23–26) during which another Ezra served as priest and official scribe. (12:26) He then stops speaking of the past.</p> <p>Nehemiah then resumes speaking of the present year when the <u>wall was dedicated in 397</u>. (12:27–47)</p> <p>Once more Nehemiah begins to speak of a noteworthy <i>past event</i>. This time there was an embarrassing situation in which someone had set up special living quarters in the Temple for Tobiah during the time Nehemiah had been in Babylon (?) serving the king. (13:6) But, when he had recently come back to Jerusalem in the <i>5th month of 397</i>, he threw all of Tobiah's personal belongings out and had the special chamber fumigated. (13:7–9)</p> <p><i>Still recounting what he found when he first came back to Jerusalem</i>, Nehemiah said he initially discovered that <u>the Levites and other Temple workers had left the city so they could provide for themselves. Thus, the Temple services were being neglected</u>. (13:10–12) However, he corrected the problem by setting up the Temple treasury so the people would begin giving tithes again. (13:13–14)</p> <p>He also mentioned the past violations of the Sabbath which he also corrected. (13:15–22)</p> <p><u>Nehemiah also recounted how certain Jews had temporarily separated themselves from those who did not keep the Law after Ezra had originally read it in the hearing of the people.</u> (13:1–3) Yet, he later observed them being back with their strange wives and children who could not even speak Hebrew—let alone read, hear and understand, or observe the Law. (13:23–24)</p> |
| | 397, 7th month after (?) the 24th day— -> (Perhaps 20th day and 8th month?) | | |
| | 397, 17th day 9th month-> (10:6–8) | <p>Some four months after Ezra initially arrived, he was informed how some of the ministers had taken up with those from the surrounding lands, even though a covenant forbidding this had been signed by the people a little less than 2 months earlier!</p> <p>This left him astonished and caused him to rend his garments as he began leading the people in mourning over their transgression. (9:1–4)</p> <p>He then confessed the past sins of the people as he praised God for His mercy and for <i>providing the new “house of God” and “wall.” He also mentioned the other “desolations” which had also been repaired.</i> (9:5–9)</p> <p>Ezra then confesses the people's <i>current</i> sin of marrying the ungodly from the</p> <p align="center"><i>(Continued on next page)</i></p> | V |

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Page – 6

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|---|--|--|---|
| | 397, 20th day 9th month-> (10:7) | nations around them (9:10-15) Some people soon joined Ezra wanting to make another (?) covenant promising to correct the evil practice once more. (10:1-4) Finally, Ezra admonished the people to obey God. They then set out to examine the matter to determine just who the guilty were. (10:4-17) | V |
| | 396, 1st day 1st month-> | NOTE: The official council to deal with this was held on the "street." (10:9) A little over 3 month later, on the 1st day of the 1st month of 396, (10:17) the offenders are named. (10:17-44) They also take an oath to obey God by putting away their ungodly wives. | Nehemiah then dealt severely with all the offenders and made them each comply. (13:25-30) He also assigned specific tasks to various priests and Levites. (13:30) Lastly, Nehemiah asked God to remember him. (13:31) |
| <u>Artaxerxes III (Ocus)</u> (Halley's date 358-338) | 359-338 | (Not mentioned) | |
| <u>Arses</u> | 338-335 | (Not mentioned) | |
| <u>Darius III</u> | 335-330 | (Not mentioned) | |

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This was a very hard lesson which shows the best time to cease from sin is before it begins and before it establishes deep seated roots!

Alexander the Great then conquered the region and the GREEK EMPIRE reigned until the ROMAN EMPIRE came to power and endured unto and through the Time of JESUS CHRIST.

Seven important points to ponder in light of secular history and the past and prophetic record preserved in the Jewish Christian Bible:

1. The Jewish captivity began in 606. But, *some were sent back to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple in 536-> 70 years later.* (Jeremiah 25:11, 29:10)
2. The Temple construction began 2 years later in 534 and continued until Artaxerxes I stopped it in->
446, after Nehemiah had officially been allowed to return and rebuild the wall around Jerusalem.
3. The Temple work was resumed in 421 and ended in 417. 20 years later, the city's "Wall" was dedicated after Ezra received the decree to bring the last captives in Babylon to Jerusalem. This was -> 48.295 solar, but 49 prophetic day/years (7 "weeks of 7's") after Nehemiah received the decree to build the wall and he finished it in 397. (Each prophetic day represents 1 year, Ezekiel 4:6) *
4. Jesus was baptized and began His earthly ministry—and a little later He "cleansed the Temple" at the time of the Passover (1st month Nisan) in A.D. 27-> 46 years after Herod began the last renovations on the Temple in 19 B.C. (John 2:20) He was 30 years of age. (Luke 3:23)
5. On the 4th Passover later, Jesus was crucified in A.D. 30-> 427.762 solar years, but 434 prophetic years (62 "weeks of 7's") after 397.
6. Nehemiah was sent to rebuild the wall exactly 476.057 solar years, but 483 prophetic years (69 weeks of 7's") before Jesus' death.

7. LASTLY: The ultimate question. Is this all a mere coincidence? NOT ON YOUR ETERNAL LIFE.
YESHUA IS MESSIAH according to Daniel 9:22-26. Truth is indeed stranger than fiction, unless the Bible is God's word.

* NOTE: The Secular solar year is 365.25 days long. The Jewish prophetic year is only 360.