

POST-EXILIC HISTORY

THE GREAT EMPIRES & THEIR RULERS

The Kingdom of Judah

1. Josiah | 641 - 610
2. Jehoahaz (or Shallum), the Second Son of Josiah | 610
3. Eliakim (or Jehoiakim I), the First Son of Josiah | 610 - 600
4. Jehoiakim II (or Jehoiachin or Jeconiah, or Coniah), Son of Jehoiakim I | 599
5. Mattaniah (or Zedekiah), Son of Josiah | 599 - 588

The Neo-Babylonian Empire - The Golden Head (Dan 2), Lion with Eagle's Wings (Dan 7)

1. Nabopolassar
2. Nebuchadnezzar | 605 - 562 | Daniel 1 - 5
3. Evilmerodach | 562 - 560
4. Neroglassaros | 560 - 556
5. Laborosoarchodus | 556 - 555
6. Nabonidus (with Belshazzar | Daniel 5 - 8) | 555 - 538

The Persian Empire

1. Achemenes /Cyrus I
2. Cambyses I

The Median Empire

1. Phraortes
2. Cyaxares I
3. Astyages
4. Cyaxares II / Darius the Mede | Daniel 5, 11

Note: Cyaxares II Co-Rules With Cyrus the Great Over Both the Empire of Media and Persia

The Medo-Persian Empire - The Silver Chest & Arms (Dan 2), Lopsided Bear with 3 Ribs in mouth (Dan 7)

1. **Cyrus II / Cyrus the Great | 537 - 529 | Ezra 1**
2. **Cambyses II, Son of Cyrus II¹ | 529 - 522**
3. **Magus / Pseudo-Smerdis², A Pretender to the Throne, also Called Artaxerxes | 522 | Ezra 4**
4. **A Council of Seven Called the “Seven Magi”³ | 522**
5. **Darius the Great (or Darius,⁴ Ahasuerus,⁵ Artaxerxes⁶ in Ezra, Esther,) 522-486**
6. **Xerxes I | 486 - 473**

Titles Used:

Darius - Statholder

Ahasuerus - Emperor

Artaxerxes - Universal Emperor

¹ Many people think this is the Ahasuerus in Esther. This cannot be the case for three reasons.

Esther 1 Says Ahasuerus has (1) 127 provinces (2) stretching from Ethiopia to India. Esther 10 says (3) he imposed tribute “on the land and the islands of the sea.”

Cambyses II did not have 127 provinces, or an empire stretching from Ethiopia to India. Darius the Great is the only known emperor to meet these qualifications.

Cambyses II is only mentioned in the Bible in Ezra 4 where he is called “Ahasuerus”, but this is not the Ahasuerus in Esther.

² Pseudo-Smerdis is mentioned in the Bible only in Ezra 4:7-24 where he is called “Artaxerxes”, but this is clearly not the same Artaxerxes as later in Ezra 7-10 or in Nehemiah.

³ Pseudo-Smerdis became Emperor by impersonating Cambyses II’s brother Smerdis. He was eventually found out by the Seven Magi who overthrew him and ruled themselves over the Medo-Perisan Empire for a short time until they elected from among themselves Darius the Great, Son of Hystaspis (distinct from Darius the Persian in Daniel) to become Emperor.

⁴ Darius is a Title that relates to Kingship over Persia proper. It means “Stadholder” or “Scepter Bearer”; it should be understood to communicate “he who holds the power of governance”.

⁵ Ahasuerus is a title meaning “Emperor” it has to do with uniting the Provinces under a single throne/crown.

⁶ Artaxerxes is a claim of kingship or hegemony over the greeks - it means “mighty warrior”.

TIMELINE - BC - Before Christ - Countdown to Christ

607 - 537 | The 70 Year Babylonian Captivity

607 | Nebuchadnezzar's 1st Attack on and Plunder of Jerusalem

599 | Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd Attack on and Thorough Plundering of Jerusalem

588 | Nebuchadnezzar Destroys the Temple in Jerusalem

570 | Nebuchadnezzar's Reason and self rule taken away to Become Like an Animal

562 | Nebuchadnezzar Dies

538 | Cyrus the Great Conquers the Babylonian Empire

537 | Cyrus the Great Decrees that the Jews Ought to Return to Their Land and That the Temple Ought to be Rebuilt | Ezra 1-6

535 | Temple Construction is Begun

536 | Ezra, Nehemiah and Mordecai Return to Jerusalem - Ezra 2:2

529 | Cyrus the Great Dies and is Replaced by Cambyses II - Ezra 4:6 (Implied)

522 | Magus or Pseudo-Smerdis Begins His Reign Over the Medo-Persian Empire - Ezra 4:7 (Implied) (He is called Artaxerxes which was a false title he claimed to himself meaning Greek Hegemon)

The Samaritans Entreat Him to stop the construction of the Temple - Ezra 4:11-16

Magus (or Smerdis or Pseudo-Smerdis or Artaxerxes) Forbids the Continuation of the Rebuilding of Jerusalem - Ezra 4:17-24

521 | The Seven Magi Kill Magus - Ezra 4:24 (Implied)

Darius the Great is Appointed Emperor by the Seven Magi - Ezra 4:24 (Implied)

519 | God Rebukes the Israelites Through Haggai - Haggai 1:1-15

Zechariah Has a Vision of a Horseman - Zechariah 1:7-13

The Jews Continue Construction of the Temple Despite the Command of Magus on the Grounds of the Edict of Cyrus the Great - Ezra 5

Darius Gives a Decree that They Are to Continue in their Construction and No One is to Hinder Them - Ezra 6:1-14

Artaphernes Hellanicus (who is called Artaxerxes in in Ezra) Who Was One of Seven Princes Reigning Under Darius Signed with Him on this Decree - Ezra 6:14

518 | Zechariah Prophesies the Condemnation of God - Zechariah 7:1-14

515 | The Jews Complete Construction of the Temple | Ezra 6:15

Darius the Great (or Ahasuerus) Makes Esther His Queen | Esther 2

The Walls of Jerusalem or Either Complete or Nearly Complete - Ezra 9:9 (according to the analysis of Pastor Kayser)

Ezra Gains Permission to Reform the Jewish People - Ezra 8-9

Ezra Commands the Men to Gather in Jerusalem and Separate from Their Heathen Wives - Ezra 9-10

510 | Haman Casts Pur to Destroy the Jewish People | Esther 3:7

Darius the Great Gives the Proclamation for the Annihilation of the Jews | Esther 3

Darius the Great Allows the Jews to Defend Themselves | Esther 8

509 | Gates of the Temple Are Burned by Gog and Magog | Ezekiel 38-39, Esther 8-9, Nehemiah 1:1-3

502 | Nehemiah Comes to Jerusalem to Start the Project of Rebuilding the Walls | Nehemiah 2-13

495 | Darius the Great (or Ahasuerus) Imposes Tribute on the Jews | Esther 10

490 | The Walls of Jerusalem are Finished | Nehemiah 13:6

489/488/487? | At Some Point, Nehemiah Returns to Jerusalem Again and Finds it in Need of Reform Again | Nehemiah 13:6-13⁷

486 | Darius the Great Dies

⁷ Malachi's placement on the timeline is up for debate. There are two significant conservative theories. One, that Malachi's rebukes take place in 515 during the final push of Ezra's reforms or in 489-487 period when Nehemiah had his second push of reforms.