

NOTES ON THE "FIXED" 70x7s CHART (Daniel 9:24-27.)

TWO SIGNIFICANT WORDS

CHATHAK [determined] "Seventy sevens are **determined**" v.24.

God determined 70 times 7 periods. These were fixed - exactly 70 without gaps - exactly 7 in length without breaks.

SHOWB [restore] " **from** the **issuing of the directive** to **restore** and to build Jerusalem" v.25.

Only the decree given to Ezra necessitated the city being restored as the administrative centre of justice. (Ezra 7:25-26)

The 70 times 7s start from when this decree was issued.

AN APPARENT ANOMALY CLARIFIED

When Xerxes, Achaemenid emperor of Persia, died his eldest son, Darius, did not succeed him to the throne. Why?

The most powerful man in the Persian court was a man in charge of the royal bodyguard named Artabanus. He was called Hazarapat which means Commander of a Thousand. He put his seven sons in key positions and intended to dethrone the Achaemenids. He conspired to assassinate Xerxes with his general, Megabyzus, and the chamberlain of his royal bedchamber, Aspamitres. In August BC. 465, Artabanus, with his sons, entered the royal bedchamber and killed Xerxes. He then accused Darius, who hated his father for seducing his wife, of murdering his father. So Darius was executed on the charge of patricide. This way it was Artabanus who gained control of the empire and ruled it for seven months. He then schemed to assassinate Xerxes' second son, Artaxerxes. Alarmed by this, Megabyzus betrayed him. A fight ensued. Artabanus and his sons were killed and Aspamitres was tortured to death. So it was Artaxerxes who succeeded Xerxes. This was in BC. 464, the year after his father's death. Artaxerxes issued the decree early in his 7th year, during the latter half of BC 458. (Ezra 7:7-9)

ARTAXERXES - THE NATURE OF THE MAN

Artaxerxes ruled the empire for forty years and exacted such heavy taxes that many of his subjects and senior citizens became bankrupt. In Bactria A younger brother, Hystastis, staged a revolt. Artaxerxes defeated him and then made sure that all his remaining brothers were killed. One might ask "How is it that such a nice picture is painted of Artaxerxes, as the emperor who enabled subjects of many nations to return to their homeland and to worship their own gods?" "How is it that Ezra gained such favours from the type of man we see in history?" "How is it that such a man granted to Ezra all that he had asked for?" Ezra's explanation for this is that the hand of his God was upon Artaxerxes. (Ezra 7:6) "And he praised God that he had put those thoughts into the heart of king Artaxerxes" (verse 27).

NOTES ON - DATING ARTAXERXES' YEARS - CHARTS

Without reliable palaeographic evidence we cannot determine the exact day Artaxerxes was enthroned. But there is enough evidence to narrow down the part of the year from which his years of reign were counted.

THE FIRST CHART on the sheet illustrates the Hebrew year, then: CHART No. 1 shows why he must have begun to reign in BC 464.

CHART No. 2 shows that the enthronement could not have been between Hebrew months numbered 9 and 1.

CHART No. 3 shows that the enthronement could not have been between months numbered 1 and 5.

CHART No. 4 adds the two together which shows that the enthronement must have been between month 5 and 9.

CHART No. 5 shows the Hebrew religious festivals in that period.

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