

# Companion Bible, Appendix 57

## The Genealogy of the Persian Kings

The main sources of information on this subject are Herodotus, Xenophon, Ctesias, Nicolas of Damascus (all B.C.); and Arrian (century 2 A.D.)

The writers of a former generation were occupied in unravelling and piecing together the varying accounts of these ancient historians without the knowledge of the still more ancient Inscriptions recently discovered, which were caused to be written by the persons concerned in the events recorded.

In 1846 Major (afterward Sir Henry) Rawlinson published a complete translation of the trilingual Persian text on the isolated *rock of Behistun?*, (or more correctly *Bahistun*) which rises 1,700 feet out of the Plain, on the high road from Babylonia to the East; in which DARIUS HYSTASPIS gives his own genealogy.

This famous rock (of which a view is given below by the kind permission of Messieurs Longmans & Company, the publishers of Canon Rawlinson's *Memoir of Major-General Sir H.C. Rawlinson*) derives its name from the village of *Bisitun* or *Bisutun*, near its foot. It is on the high road from Baghdad to Teheran, about sixty-five miles from Hamadan (on the site of the ancient Ecbatana).

On this rock, on a prepared surface about 500 feet from the level of the plain, and most difficult of access, DARIUS HYSTASPIS caused to be carved the principal events of his reign; and he commences with an account of his genealogy.

The following is the translation of the Persian text <sup>1</sup>:—

I. "I am Darius, the great king, the king of kings, the king of Persia, the king of the provinces, the son of

Hystaspes, the grandson of Arsames the Achæmenian.

- II. (Thus) saith Darius the king: My father is Hystaspes; the father of Hystaspes was Arsames; the father of Arsames was Ariyaramnes; the father of Ariyaramnes was [Teispes]; the father of Teispes was Achæmenes.
- III. (Thus) saith Darius the king: On that account are we called Achæmenians; from antiquity are we descended; from antiquity hath our race been kings.
- IV. (Thus) saith Darius the king: Eight of my race were kings before (me); I am the ninth<sup>2</sup>. In two lines<sup>3</sup> have we been kings", etc.

It must be noted that the confusion which has hitherto been experienced arises from the fact that appellatives have been mistaken for proper names; to say nothing of the confusion arising from their transliteration or translation into other languages.

These appellatives are, like Pharaoh and Abimelech, the general titles of a line of kings, such as the modern Czar, Sultan, Shah, etc. Hence

AHASUERUS means "the Mighty", and "is the name, or rather the title, of four Median and Persian monarchs" (Kitto, *Bible Encyclopedia* I, page 91). "In every case the identification of the person named is a matter of controversy". See *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th (Cambridge) edition, volume i, page 429.

ARTAXERXES means *Great King*, or *Kingdom*, and is synonymous with *Artachshast* (*Arta* = Great, and *Kshatza* = Kingdom, preserved in the modern "Shah"). According to Prideaux he is identified with the Ahasuerus of Esther 1:1 (volume i, page 306).

DARIUS means *the Restrainer* (Her. VI.98); or, according to Professor Sayce, *the Maintainer*. DARIUS "appears to be originally an appellative meaning 'king', 'ruler'", (Herbelot,

*Biblioth, Orient.*, Article 'Dara'); Herodotus (VI.98) renders it *Erxeies* = Coercer. "It was assumed as his throne-name by Ochus (= Darius Nothus), son and successor of Artaxerxes Longimanus (Ctesias, *de Reb. Pers.*, 48, 57, Muller)". See Kitto, *Bible Cycl.*, volume i, page 625. XERXES, in his inscription at Persepolis, actually calls himself "DARIUS"; one paragraph beginning "XERXES the great king," and the next beginning "DARIUS the king."

This is why DARIUS HYSTASPIS is thus called, to denote him as DARIUS the son of HYSTASPES; and to distinguish him from "Darius the Mede", who was ASTYAGES his grandfather.

#### ASTYAGES

Is the Persian monarch with which this Appendix is concerned. According to Herodotus, ASTYAGES was the son of CYAXARES, who was the son of PHRAORTES (II), who was the son of DEIOKES (Bk. I. 73), who, again, was the son of PHRAORTES (I). (Bk. I. 96.)

In the genealogy given by CYRUS on the Cuneiform Cylinder, he calls his great-grandfather TEASES (see below).

This TEISPES is to be identified with TEISPES the son of ACHÆMENES in the Behistun Rock genealogy of DARIUS HYSTASPIS.

The ACHÆMENES of DARIUS, identified with the DEIOKES of Herodotus (I. 96), was the real founder of the Achæmenian dynasty of which Darius speaks, although his father (PHRAORTES I) was the first of the line. Herodotus describes him (DEIOKES) as a man "famous for wisdom", of great ambition, "aiming at the aggrandisement of the Medes and his own absolute power" (I. 96).

PHRAORTES I. would therefore be the first of the *eight* kings before DARIUS HYSTASPIS, who speaks of himself as the *ninth*. See translation given above.

#### ARSAMES

As the grandfather of DARIUS HYSTASPIS, he is (according to the *Behistun* Inscription) to be identified with the ASTYAGES of Herodotus.

At the close of the Lydio-Median War "Syannesis the Cilician and Labynetus (or Nabonnedus) the Babylonian (identified by Prideaux, volume i, page 82 note, and pages 135, 136, 19th edition with Nebuchadnezzar) persuaded ALYATTES to give his daughter ARYENIS in marriage to ASTYAGES, son of KYAXARES" (Her. 1. 74). Of this marriage came HYSTASPES and DARIUS his son.

## CYRUS

In the Cuneiform Cylinder account of the capture of Babylon, CYRUS states:—

"I am CYRUS the king... the great king, the mighty king, king of Tintir (Babylon), king of Sumir, and Akkad, king of the regions of the earth, the son of CAMBYSES the great king, king of the city of Anzan, grandson of CYRUS, the great king, king of the city of Anzan, great-grandson of TEISPES, the great king of the city of Anzan, of the ancient seed of royalty, whose dominion (reign, that is to say, of Cyrus himself) Bel and Nebo had exalted according to the beneficence of their hearts" (E. Wallis Budge, *Babylonian Life and History* page 87).

Here we have the statement of Cyrus his father was known as CAMBYSES, his grandfather as CYRUS, and his great-grandfather under the name (or title), common to the Behistun Inscription and the Cylinder alike, of TEISPES.

## TEISPES

If TEISPES' grandson was ARSAMES (according to the *Behistun* Inscription), and this TEISPES and the TEISPES of Cyrus's Cylinder are one and the same, -then, it follows that the CAMBYSES of the Cylinder and the ARSAMES of the Inscription

must be one and the same person, well known under different names, titles, or appellatives.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, if the TEISPES of the *Behistun* Inscription and the one of the Cylinder of Cyrus are to be identified with the PHRAORTES (II) of Herodotus (I. 73), then the grandson of this PHRAORTES (II) must be ASTYAGES.

Consequently we have, under these three names, titles, or appellatives, from Greek, Median, and Persian sources, three persons, called by Herodotus ASTYAGES, by Darius ARSAMES, and by Cyrus CAMBYSES<sup>5</sup>, who are in reality one and the same.

But, if the father of CYRUS was CAMBYSES, by Esther (see the Table of the Genealogy, below), then it follows that not only does CAMBYSES = ARSAMES = ASTYAGES, but = also the AHASUERUS of the book of Esther (Prideaux i, page 306).

Therefore in the presence of all these identifications from independent sources and authorities, we have:—

ASTYAGES } {the AHASUERUS of Esther 1:1, etc.  
ARSAMES }={the ARTAXERXES of Ezra 6:14; Neh. 2:1.  
CAMBYSES} {the “DARIUS the Median” of Dan. 5:31.  
all one and the same person.

We now give the Genealogy, according to the Inscription of DARIUS HYSTASPIS on the *Behistun* rock, referred to above.

The names in large capitals are the Greek names given by HERODOTUS. Those in small capitals are the corresponding Persian names as given by DARIUS HYSTASPIS on the *Behistun* rock, and by CYRUS on his Cylinder; while the names in ordinary small type are the appellatives.

The Line of Persian Kings According To
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HERODOTUS (Lydian Line)	HERODOTUS, THE BEHISTUN ROCK, AND THE CYLINDER OF CYRUS (Medo- Persian) COMBINED	<a href="#">INSCRIPTION ON THE <i>BEHISTUN</i> ROCK</a>	THE CYLINDER OF CYRUS
ATYS (I.7)	<sup>(1)</sup> <b>PHRAOTES I</b> (Herodotus I.96)		
LYDUS (I.7)	<sup>(2)</sup> <b>DEIOKES=</b> (Herodotus I.94)	<sup>(2)</sup> ARCHAEMENES	
CANDAULES (I.7)	<sup>(3)</sup> <b>PHRAORTES II=</b> (Herodotus I.73)	<sup>(3)</sup> TEISPES=	<sup>(3)</sup> TEISPES
GYGES (I.8)	<sup>(4)</sup> <b>CYAXARES=</b> (Herodotus I.73)	<sup>(4)</sup> ARIYARAMNES=	<sup>(4)</sup> CYRUS I
ARDYS (I.16)			
SADYATTES (I.16)			
ALYATTES (I.74)			
ARYENIS=VASTI m. (I.74) (Esther 1.9)	<sup>(5)</sup> <b>ASTYAGES</b> (Herodotus I.73) (m. ESTHER) <sup>z</sup> (Esther 2.17)= Ahasuerus (Esther 1.1) Artaxeres (Ezra 6.14; Nehemiah 2.1) “Darius the Median” (Daniel 5.31)	<sup>(5)</sup> ARSAMES=	<sup>(5)</sup> CAMBYSES

	(6) <b>CYRUS</b> <sup>8</sup> “The Persian” (Isaiah 45.1; Ezra 6.14)		(6) CYRUS II
	(7) <b>CAMBYSES II</b> <sup>8</sup>		(7) CAMBYSES II
	(8) <b>HYSTASPES</b>	(8) HYSTASPES	
	(9) <b>DARIUS HYSTAPIS</b> <sup>9</sup> Artaxerxes (Ezra 7.1)	(9) DARIUS (HYSTASPIS) <sup>9</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> For full particulars see the handsome volume published by the Trustees of the British Museum, *The Sculptures and Inscription of Darius the Great on the Rock of Behistun, in Persia*. London, 1907. (Price 21s.)

<sup>2</sup> We have indicated this enumeration by placing the figures against the names in the table above.

<sup>3</sup> The “two lines” are Lydian and Medo-Persian, as shown in the table above.

<sup>4</sup> “Dareios the son of Hystaspes, who traces his decent through Arsames and Ariaramnes to Teispes the son of Akhæmenes, probably refers to the same Teispes” (Sayce, *Ancient Empires of the East*, page 243).

<sup>5</sup> “The names *Kyros* and *Kambyses* seem to be of Elamite derivation. Strabo, indeed, says that *Kyros* was originally called *Agradates*, and took the name of *Kurus* or *Kyros* from the river that flows past Pasargadoe” (Sayce, id. page 243). *Cyrus* and *Cambyses* both seem to be territorial titles rather than names.

<sup>6</sup> Herodotus says the ancestors of Candaules reigned for twenty-two generations, covering a period of 505 years (I.7).

<sup>7</sup> This marriage resulted in the birth of Cyrus, in fulfillment of Isaiah 44:28–45:4. And the part taken by Esther and

Mordecai in his training, explains all that we read of Cyrus in Ezra and Nehemiah.

<sup>8</sup> Darius, in giving his own *direct* line, omits the *names* of Phraortes I, Cyrus, and Cambyses II, but he *includes* them in the *numbering* of his *eight* predecessors. There was a still later "Cyrus" (the Cyrus of Xenophon). See Her. VII. 11.

<sup>9</sup> When Darius Hystaspis says "in two lines we have been kings", he must refer to the Lydian and Medo-Persian lines.



THE ROCK OF BEHISTUN, IN PERSIA, SHOWING THE INSCRIPTION OF  
DARIUS HYSTASPIS.

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