

~DARIUS 2 (370)

(Da-ri'us)

.. Later Campaigns In Greece

- **Darius** Hystaspis, also called **Darius** the Great or **Darius I**, Persian. He is viewed as one of the outstanding rulers of the Persian Empire.
- **Darius** describes himself as son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan seed. [History of the Persian Empire, pp. 122,123] He thus claimed royal descent from the same ancestor as Cyrus the Great, though being of a different family branch from Cyrus.
- Following the death of Cambyses II in 522 B.C.E. while he was returning from Egypt, the Persian throne was occupied for a short time by his brother Bardiya, or possibly by a Magian named Gaumata. **Darius**, with the aid of six other Persian nobles, slew the occupant of the throne and gained it for himself.
- **Darius** version of this is set forth in three languages in the immense inscription that he had carved on sheer cliffs at Behistun, facing a plain through which ran the principal caravan route from Baghdad to Tehran.
- According to the inscription, Gaumata was a usurper, posing as Cambyses brother who had been put to death. Most modern scholars accept this account, which is laced with repeated assurances by **Darius** that it is true and not lies, as basically factual, while some believe that **Darius** was a monumental liar and that the evidence indicates him to be the actual usurper.
- Whatever the case, **Darius** was faced with an empire in revolt upon assuming the kingship and is considered to have spent the next two years subduing the insurrectionary elements throughout the realm. Egypt, which had thrown off the Persian yoke, was reconquered by **Darius** about 519-518 B.C.E.
- Thereafter he extended the imperial borders into India in the East and into Thrace and Macedonia in the West. He is noted as well for his efficient reorganization of the administrative structure throughout the empire, for the formation of an imperial Law code,

called the Ordinance of Good Regulations, and for having reopened the canal connecting the Nile River of Egypt with the Red Sea.

- It is particularly with regard to the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem that **Darius** Hystaspis figures in the Bible record. The temple foundation was laid in **536 B.C.E.**, but rebuilding work came under ban in **522 B.C.E.** and continued stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius **520 B.C.E.**

- At that the people of the land were continually weakening the hands of the people of Judah and disheartening them from building. (**Ezra 4:4**)

- And hiring counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus the king of Persia down till the reign of **Darius** the king of Persia. (**Ezra 4:5**)

- It was then that the work on the house of God, which was in Jerusalem, stopped, and it continued stopped until the second year of the reign of **Darius** the king of Persia. (**Ezra 4:24**)

- During this year the prophets Haggai and Zechariah stirred up the Jews to renew the construction, and the work got under way again.

- And Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the grandson of Iddo the prophet prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and in Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. (**Ezra 5:1**)

- It was then that Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jehozadak got up and started to rebuild the house of God, which was in Jerusalem, and with them there were God's prophets giving them aid. (**Ezra 5:2**)

- In the second year of **Darius** the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of Yehowah occurred by means of Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak the High Priest, saying; (**Haggai 1:1**)

- And Yehowah proceeded to rouse up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak the High Priest, and the spirit of all the remaining ones of the people, and they began to enter in and to

do the work in the house of Yehowah of armies their God.
([Haggai 1:14](#))

- It was on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of **Darius** the king. ([Haggai 1:15](#))
- In the eighth month in the second year of **Darius** the word of Yehowah occurred to Zechariah the son of Berechiah the son of Iddo the prophet, saying; ([Zechariah 1:1](#))
- This provoked an inquiry and the sending of a letter to Persian King **Darius** by Tattenai, the governor representing the imperial interests in the region West of the Euphrates, and other officials.
- The letter advised him of the construction work, set forth the Jews claim for the legality of the project, and requested an investigation in the royal archives to see if there existed written evidence to substantiate that claim.
- At that time Tattenai the governor beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues came to them, and this is what they were saying to them; Who put an order through to you to build this house and to finish this beam structure? ([Ezra 5:3](#))
- Then they said to them this; What are the names of the able-bodied men that are building this building? ([Ezra 5:4](#))
- And the eye of their God proved to be upon the older men of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report could go to **Darius** and then an official document concerning this could be sent back. ([Ezra 5:5](#))
- Here is a copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his colleagues, the lesser governor's that were beyond the River, sent to **Darius** the king. ([Ezra 5:6](#))
- They sent the word to him, and the writing in it was in this manner; To **Darius** the king. All peace! ([Ezra 5:7](#))
- Let it become known to the king that we went to the jurisdictional district of Judah to the house of the great God, and it is being built with stones rolled into place, and timbers are being laid in the walls, and that work is being eagerly done and is

making progress in their hands. ([Ezra 5:8](#))

- Then we asked these older men. This is what we said to them, Who put an order through to you to build this house and to finish this beam structure? ([Ezra 5:9](#))
- And we also asked them their names, so as to let you know, that we might write the names of the able-bodied men that are at their head. ([Ezra 5:10](#))
- And this is the word that they gave back to us, saying; We are the servants of the God of the heavens and the earth, and we are rebuilding the house that had been built many years before this, which a great king of Israel built and finished. ([Ezra 5:11](#))
- However, because our fathers irritated the God of the heavens, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, and he demolished this house and took the people into exile at Babylon. ([Ezra 5:12](#))
- Nevertheless, in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, Cyrus the king put an order through to rebuild this house of God. ([Ezra 5:13](#))
- And also the gold and silver vessels of the house of God that Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple, which was in Jerusalem, and brought to the temple of Babylon, these Cyrus the king took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were given to Sheshbazzar, the name of the one whom he made governor. ([Ezra 5:14](#))
- And he said to him; Take these vessels. Go, deposit them in the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt upon its place. ([Ezra 5:15](#))
- When that Sheshbazzar came he laid the foundations of the house of God, which is in Jerusalem, and from then until now it is being rebuilt but it has not been completed. ([Ezra 5:16](#))
- And now if to the king it seems good, let there be an investigation in the king's house of treasures that is there in Babylon, whether it is so that from Cyrus the king an order was put through to rebuild that house of God in Jerusalem, and the decision of the king concerning this let him send to us. ([Ezra](#)

5:17)

- The Jewish declaration that contrasted the actions of the Chaldean Nebuchadnezzar, as the destroyer of the temple, with the Persian Cyrus, as the one authorizing its reconstruction, should have had an appropriate and felicitous effect on **Darius** since, in the first years of his reign, he had to overcome two revolts by rebels each taking the name Nebuchadnezzar, called Nebuchadnezzar III and Nebuchadnezzar IV by historians, claiming to be sons of Nabonidus, and endeavoring to make Babylon independent of the Persian Empire.
- The official search of records in the archives at Ecbatana, the ancient Median capital, uncovered the document by Cyrus. **Darius** thereupon sent orders to Governor Tattenai that he and the other officials should not only refrain from interfering with the temple work but also provide building funds from the royal treasury of the tax beyond the River, as well as animals and other necessary supplies for the sacrificial offerings. Anyone violating the king's order was to be impaled on a stake and his house turned into a public privy.
- It was then that **Darius** the king put an order through, and they made an investigation in the house of the records of the treasures deposited there in Babylon. (**Ezra 6:1**)
- And at Ecbatana, in the fortified place that was in the jurisdictional district of Media, there was found a scroll, and the memorandum to this effect was written within it: (**Ezra 6:2**)
- In the first year of Cyrus the king, Cyrus the king put an order through concerning the house of God in Jerusalem; Let the house be rebuilt as the place where they are to offer sacrifices, and its foundations are to be fixed, its height being sixty cubits, its width sixty cubits. (**Ezra 6:3**)
- With three layers of stones rolled into place and one layer of timbers, and let the expense be given from the king's house. (**Ezra 6:4**)
- And also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God that Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon be returned, that they may reach the temple that is in Jerusalem at its place and be deposited in the house of God. (**Ezra 6:5**)

- **Now Tattenai the governor beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues, the lesser governor's that are beyond the River, keep your distance from there. (Ezra 6:6)**
- **Let the work on that house of God alone. The governor of the Jews and the older men of the Jews will rebuild that house of God upon its place. (Ezra 6:7)**
- **And by me an order has been put through as to what you will do with these older men of the Jews, for rebuilding that house of God, and from the royal treasury of the tax beyond the River the expense will promptly be given to these able-bodied men without cessation. (Ezra 6:8)**
- **And what is needed, young bulls as well as rams and lambs for the burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine and oil, just as the priests that are in Jerusalem say; Let there be given them continually day by day without fail. (Ezra 6:9)**
- **That they may continually be presenting soothing offerings to the God of the heavens and praying for the life of the king and his sons. (Ezra 6:10)**
- **And by me an order has been put through that, as for anybody that violates this decree, a timber will be pulled out of his house and he will be impaled upon it, and his house will be turned into a public privy on this account. (Ezra 6:11)**
- **And may the God who has caused his name to reside there overthrow any king and people that thrusts his hand out to commit a violation and destroy that house of God, which is in Jerusalem. I, **Darius**, do put through an order. Let it be done promptly. (Ezra 6:12)**
- **With this official cooperation and with continued prophetic encouragement.**
- **Furthermore, it came about that in the fourth year of **Darius** the king the word of Yehowah occurred to Zechariah, on the fourth day of the ninth month, that is, in Chislev. (Zechariah 7:1)**
- **And the word of Yehowah of armies continued to occur, saying; (Zechariah 8:1)**

- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; I will be jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and with great rage I will be jealous for her. (Zechariah 8:2)**
- **This is what Yehowah has said; I will return to Zion and reside in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem will certainly be called the city of trueness, and the mountain of Yehowah of armies, the holy mountain. (Zechariah 8:3)**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; There will yet sit old men and old women in the public squares of Jerusalem, each one also with his staff in his hand because of the abundance of his days. (Zechariah 8:4)**
- **And the public squares of the city themselves will be filled with boys and girls playing in her public squares. (Zechariah 8:5)**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; Although it should seem too difficult in the eyes of the remaining ones of this people in those days, should it seem too difficult also in my eyes? is the utterance of Yehowah of armies. (Zechariah 8:6)**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; Here I am saving my people from the land of the sunrise and from the land of the setting of the sun. (Zechariah 8:7)**
- **And I shall certainly bring them in, and they must reside in the midst of Jerusalem, and they must become my people, and I myself shall become their God in trueness and in righteousness. (Zechariah 8:8)**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; Let the hands of you people be strong, you who are hearing in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets, on the day on which the foundation of the house of Yehowah of armies was laid, for the temple to be built. (Zechariah 8:9)**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; It will yet be that peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will come. (Zechariah 8:20)**
- **And the inhabitants of one city will certainly go to those of another, saying; Let us earnestly go to soften the face of Yehowah and to seek Yehowah of armies. I myself will go also.**

(Zechariah 8:21)

- And many peoples and mighty nations will actually come to seek Yehowah of armies in Jerusalem and to soften the face of Yehowah. **(Zechariah 8:22)**
- This is what Yehowah of armies has said; It will be in those days that ten men out of all the languages of the nations will take hold, yes, they will actually take hold of the skirt of a man who is a Jew, saying; We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people. **(Zechariah 8:23)**
- The temple work went on to successful completion by the third day of the lunar month Adar, that is, in the Sixth year of the reign of **Darius** by **March 6 of 515 B.C.E.**
- Then Tattenai the governor beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues, just as **Darius** the king had sent word, so they did promptly. **(Ezra 6:13)**
- And the older men of the Jews were building and making progress under the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the grandson of Iddo, and they built and finished it due to the order of the God of Israel and due to the order of Cyrus and **Darius** and Artaxerxes the king of Persia. **(Ezra 6:14)**
- And they completed this house by the third day of the lunar month Adar, that is, in the sixth year of the reign of **Darius** the king. **(Ezra 6:15)**
- Since **Darius** inscriptions show him to be a devoted worshiper of Ahura Mazda, it is evident that his action, though serving Yehowah God's purpose and doubtless having His direction, was basically taken out of respect for the irrevocable nature of the Medo-Persian laws and in harmony with a policy of tolerance by **Darius** government, evidence for which tolerance is found in some of his inscriptions.

.. Later Campaigns In Greece

- Toward the turn of the century, various Greek cities of Ionia revolted against Persian domination, and though their revolt was quelled, **Darius** determined to punish Athens and Eretria for their having rendered aid to the rebellious cities.

- This led to a Persian invasion of Greece, resulting, however, in defeat of **Darius** forces at the battle of Marathon in **490 B.C.E.** Though **Darius** made careful preparations for a further Grecian campaign, he was unable to carry it out before his death in **486 B.C.E.** He was succeeded by his son Xerxes.