

ANNOTATIONS TO TABLE XXVII

I. CYRUS, CAMBYSES, AND DARIUS (I) HYSTASPES:

(1) The beginning of the reign of Cyrus in Ansan-Persia. and, again, in Babylon, and the beginning of the co-regency of Cambyses, and also of his sole reign are as fixed by Table XXI and Annotations.

(2) By Table XXI Annotations Col. (2), the first year of Cyrus (Ansan-Persia) began at 1st Nisan (Spring) of B.C. 558.

(3) Herodotus (I, 214 ; III, 66, 67 ; IV, 4) gives, from the latter date, Cyrus 29 years, Cambyses (including the usurper, pseudo-Smerdis or Bardis) 8 years, and Darius, 36 years. Total 73 years. By Table XX Annotations, these years all begin from the spring month Nisan, beginning the regnal years, from the “first year” inclusive of each reign.

(4) Herodotus VII 1-4 narrates that Darius died in the 5th year after the Battle of Marathon, definitely fixed as Oct. 490 B.C. Dating from this fixed point, the 1st year is Oct. 490 B.C.—Oct. 489 B.C. and the 5th year Oct. 486 B.C. to Oct. 485 B.C. The latter year included spring 485 B.C. ending the 73 years of Herodotus as (2) and (3) above. The 36 years of Darius, therefore, ended at the 1st of Nisan, B.C. 485.

(5) By the data of Herodotus, the 1st year of Darius I began at 1st Nisan, B.C. 521, this, as Herodotus states, being the termination of the 8 years of Cambyses. The 8 years of Cambyses, therefore, began at 1st Nisan, B.C. 539, as Table XX Annotations Col. 2.

(6) This is confirmed by the two Babylonian eclipse records of the reign of Darius I quoted by Ptolemy. These determine (a) that the 20th regnal year of Darius began between 19th Nov., B.C. 503 and 19th Nov., B.C. 502 and his 1st year, therefore, between 19th Nov., 522 and 19th Nov., 521 B.C.; and (b) that the 31st regnal year began sometime between 25th April, 492 and 25th April, 491 B.C. and his 1st year, therefore, between 25th April, 522 and 25th April, 521 B.C. Combining (a) and (b) Darius began his 1st year between 19th Nov. (Julian) B.C. 522 and 25th April (Julian) B.C. 521. His 1st year, therefore, began at 1st Nisan (spring) B.C. 521, by Table XX Annotations.

(7) The Babylonian Egibi Tablets begin the 1st year Darius with the 1st Nisan dating.

II.—THE COMBINED NARRATIVE OF DARIUS (BEHISTUN INSC.) AND HERODOTUS :

(1) Less than a month before the beginning of the 8th year of Cambyses (Oppert and Maspero give the 12th month Adar) and when Cambyses was absent in Egypt, Bardis revolted (Feb.-March, 522 B.C.). The accession year of Bardis is the 7th year Cambyses (inscription of Darius).

(2) Cambyses hearing of the revolt set out from Egypt to overthrow Bardis (according to Herodotus).

(3) Bardis was enthroned (late May or early June, according to Oppert and Maspero, from datings of Darius).

(4) Cambyses advancing through Syria intercepted the heralds of Bardis, and received news of the enthronement of Bardis. The narrative and circumstances attach the date to Aug., 522 B.C.

(5) Cambyses, in a rage, violently mounted his horse and accidentally wounded himself. He lingered for over three weeks after his accident and died (Herodotus). This would be late August or early September, 522 B.C. Agreeing with this, Herodotus states that at his death, Cambyses had reigned 7 years, 5 months, obviously beginning 1st Nisan (Mar.-April) 529 B.C. Darius merely narrates that Cambyses, “killing himself, died.” Darius, however, did not know this until many months later.

(6) Meanwhile, prior to receiving the news of the death of Cambyses, Darius slew Bardis in Media. The narrative of Darius gives Bardis a reign of 7

months from the time of his revolt, i.e., from March to September inclusive, 522 B.C. Herodotus states that Bardis was discovered to be a usurper in the 8th month of his rule and was slain by Darius. This would give death of Bardis, early Oct., 522 B.C.

(7) Accordingly, the last dating of Bardis is 1st Tisri (Sept. or Oct.), 522 B.C.

(8) News of the death of Cambyses had still not come to Babylon, for the resumed datings of the 8th year of Cambyses continued to be recorded in Babylon to nth Tebet (Dec., 522 B.C., or Jan., 521 B.C.).

(9) The nth Tebet dating is the last dating of the reign of Cambyses. News of his death had come to Babylon by the beginning of B.C. 521, for we find the next dating (at Abu-habba) to be of the “Accession Year” of Darius, and in the month Sebat (Jan. or Feb., B.C. 521).

(10) The next dating (Egibi Tablet at Babylon) is 1st Nisan, 1st year Darius (i.e., beginning the 1st regnal year March-April, 521 B.C.).

III. THE OVERTHROW OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR III (USURPER) :

(1) During 521 B.C., the 1st year of Darius I, Babylon revolted under Nebuchadnezzar III. The earliest dating of the latter's Accession year is 20th Chisleu (early Dec., 521 B.C.).

(2) The 1st year Nebuchadnezzar III beginning 1st Nisan, 520 B.C., is therefore, the 2nd year of Darius I. The last dating of Nebuchadnezzar III is of his 2nd year—month not stated. This was the 3rd year of Darius I, i.e. Nisan, 519 to Nisan, 518 B.C.

(3) Herodotus (III, 150) states that the Babylonians had been preparing for the siege from the time they had heard of the death of Cambyses; and that when Darius became king, they revolted. This was obviously after the 1st Nisan dating of Darius I's 1st year (March-April, 521 B.C.) recorded at Babylon. The Babylonian inscription of Nebuchadnezzar III in December, 521 B.C. (i) above, shows that the revolt took place before the latter date. The dating cannot belong to 522 B.C., since the last record of Cambyses at Babylon belongs to December, 522 B.C. to January, 521 B.C.

(4) Herodotus (III, 151) states that when news of the revolt reached Darius he immediately collected all his forces, marched on Babylon, besieged it, and captured it in the 21st month of the siege (III, 153-158). The Behistun inscription of Darius, as Oppert has shown (1st series Records of the Past, VII, 94, 99 notes) confirms the long siege of Babylon mentioned by Herodotus.

(5) Combining the evidence from Herodotus and the inscriptions, the siege obviously began in the second half of 521 B.C.—in the 1st year of Darius I—and ended in the first half of 519 B.C.—in the 3rd year of Darius I—or as Marquart has calculated, in May, 519 B.C.

IV. THE ERRORS IN THE NARRATIVE OF HERODOTUS:

(1) In stating that the 8 full years of Cambyses were from the death of Cyrus.

(2) In stating that the 7 months' revolt of the pseudo-Smerdis (Bardis) occupied the 7 months that elapsed between the death of Cambyses, and the beginning of the 1st year of Darius I.

The chronological elucidation here given is of importance in relation to the questions of Old Testament chronology and Jewish (Rabbinical) chronological forgeries (Table XXVIII and Annotations).