

The KEY To The Crucifixion Date

Scholars attempt to destroy key proof which reveals true date of Crucifixion. Theologians attempt to alter this proof to uphold "Good-Friday, Easter-Sunday" tradition. Read the astonishing and thoroughly documented proof that both scholars and theologians are in error! Here is proof that the true date of the crucifixion can be completely understood.

by Paul Kroll

CAN YOU *prove* that Christ was crucified in 31 A.D.? Do you know—and *know that you know*—Christ was not crucified in 33 A.D. as Roman Catholics teach? Could you prove to a Jew that Jesus came the very year Old Testament prophets said the Messiah would come?

Missing KEY

Here is the KEY that unlocks the PROOF. This KEY the scholars and theologians have sought to hide.

Few understand that one of the most conclusive proofs of Jesus' Messiahship is found in the date Artaxerxes issued his famous decree (Ezra 7) for the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem.

When you know the date of the issuance of the decree—you can *pin-point* the EXACT YEAR of Christ's death. That precise year, foretold by the prophet Daniel, can be simply understood and known. It is amply proved by the Bible and historical records.

How Theologians Reason

Here is how scholars misunderstood the important points surrounding this decree. They say: "One of the most perplexing and controversial problems of Ezra-Nehemiah is that of the date of Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem. Traditionally Artaxerxes is identified with Artaxerxes I (464-424 B.C.) whose seventh year was 458 B.C."

This fact would place the coming of Nehemiah several years after Ezra's appearance in Palestine. But what do scholars conclude? Just the opposite. They place Nehemiah before Ezra.

Continuing the quote: "Since Ezra followed Nehemiah into Palestine and was *not his contemporary* [which is a totally *erroneous* assumption], the Artaxerxes must have been Artaxerxes II (404-359 B.C.), whose seventh year was 398 B.C." (*Interpreters Bible, Commentary on Ezra*, vol. 3, p. 624.)

Their *incorrect* date of 398 B.C. for the decree would make Christ come in 86 A.D.—which is a totally *ridiculous* assumption! However, this totally erroneous date is now being supported—not only by theologians—but also by scholars and archaeologists:

Notice this statement by a well-known "authority."

"The *chronological problems* connected with the era of Ezra-Nehemiah remain UNSOLVED, though there is a growing scholarly consensus in favor of *reversing* the traditional order (which place Ezra in the seventh year of Artaxerxes I, i.e. 458, and Nehemiah in the 20th year, or 445). Van Hoonacker was the chief exponent of the view that Ezra followed Nehemiah and was therefore to be dated in the reign of Artaxerxes II (seventh year—398)." (*The Bible and the Ancient Near East*; G. Ernest Wright, editor, p. 213.)

Other scholars reason that *errors* crept into the Bible. They would tell you a scribe made an error—and later tried to "reconcile" the dates which actually need no reconciling. Many theories are advanced. But *no one* seems to have the truth!

Fundamentalists Incorrect

Even among those religionists who hold the "traditional views" there is much inaccuracy.

Here is an example:

"Then as hopeful Daniel was confessing his and Israel's sins and praying, he was given the glorious prophecy of the seventy weeks, fixing the time of Messiah's earthly advent. So understandable and so exact in its time features was it that at the DUE TIME, A.D. 29, the Jews were expectantly awaiting the Messiah." (*Equipped for Every Good Work*, p. 229.)

What deception!

This religious sect, as some others, would *incorrectly place* the decree as going into effect as late as 455 B.C. Why? So that they can place the crucifixion on *Friday* in 33 A.D. But the Bible and the *true facts* of history reject such an *erroneous* date.

It seems so few really understand and correctly place the decree of Artaxerxes. If they do, *none grasp* the tremendous significance of this date. Yet, as Christ said, these things *are revealed* to babes.

We can understand them!

Decree of Artaxerxes

This important decree as found in Ezra 7:11-26 reads:

"Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time.

"I make a decree, that all they of the

people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thcc." (Quoted from verses 12-13.)

This decree of Artaxerxes contained the commandment to go forth and *build Jerusalem*. It gives the *starting year* of the prophecy recorded in Daniel 9:25, 26. Thus, it reveals the *key year* in which Christ was to *begin His ministry!*

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to *restore and to build Jerusalem* [contained, as we shall later see, in the decree of Artaxerxes] unto the Messiah the Prince shall be *seven weeks*, and *threescore and two weeks*: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

Daniel records that there would be sixty-nine (7 + 62) prophetic weeks till Christ would begin His ministry. Sixty-nine prophetic weeks equals 483 days (69 x 7). But a *prophetic day* equals *one year* in prophecy (see Numbers 14:34, Ezekiel 4:6 for the Biblical proof). Therefore, we have a total of 483 YEARS!

If we discover the *beginning year* of Daniel's prophecy, we can know the exact year Christ began His ministry. But since Daniel's prophecy refers to the decree of Artaxerxes for the beginning—we must go to that prophecy to discover the *key year*.

We must determine the EXACT YEAR of Artaxerxes decree in order to fix the starting date in Daniel's prophecy! Once we know the exact year of the decree, we can pinpoint—from this date—the *exact year* (483 years later) in which Christ began His ministry. It would be a simple task then to find the date of His *crucifixion*—three and one-half years later.

Why This Confusion?

Theologians and scholars deny Christ by claiming that He was buried on *Friday* and rose on *Sunday*—in *HALF* the time He said He would (Mat. 12:40).

But these same men cannot escape the fact that Christ was crucified at the *END OF THE PASSOVER!* Hence, they have inherited another

problem. They must incorrectly say that the crucifixion occurred in a year when the *Passover fell on Friday*. The only possible Friday - Passover - crucifixion year would have been 33 A.D.

Theologians force themselves to put the crucifixion of Christ in 33 A.D.—to maintain the "Good-Friday, Easter-Sunday" tradition. This is the *ONLY POSSIBLE* year in which Christ could have been crucified at the end of the Passover—and still rise in time for Sunday morning (according to the *false* "one-and-a-half days" theory).

If we prove Christ was not crucified in 33 A.D.—this false idea would be destroyed!

Of course, it is quite clear that Christ's ministry lasted three and a half years. If you have not proved this, be sure to write in for our article, "The Crucifixion was not on Friday."

Now, in order to substantiate a 33 A.D. crucifixion—these scholars must date the beginning of Christ's ministry in 29 A.D. Therefore, they must either suggest the decree of Artaxerxes cannot be understood—or put it in a year which will make the 483 years end in 29 A.D.

Now it is clear why the decree of Artaxerxes is of such monumental importance. If theologians place the crucifixion in 33 A.D., they falsely place the decree of Artaxerxes in 455 B.C.

Now see the proof that Artaxerxes DID NOT issue his decree in 455 B.C.—the "Good-Friday, Easter-Sunday" tradition is shattered!

Ezra Holds Key

The book of Ezra holds the key for a *correct understanding* of this most important decree. Therefore it is of tremendous importance to understand what was taking place—and the *chronological* sequence of the book of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Ezra 1:1-2, reads "Now in the *first year* of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation . . . Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven . . . hath charged me to build him an *house* at Jerusalem . . ."

Remember, this was to build the *TEMPLE—not the city*. This decree therefore is *not the one* spoken of by Daniel in chapter 9:25.

So the people of Judah and Benjamin arose to go to the land of Palestine and began rebuilding the house of God (Ezra 1:5). They kept the Festival of Tabernacles that year in Palestine (Ezra 3:1). In the second year the ministry was installed (Ezra 3:8).

But then their troubles began!

The Samaritans began to harass the Jews. First, they tried fifth-column tactics—and attempted to overthrow the project from within. When this failed, they hired people to frustrate them. Finally, the work was stopped.

"Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building. And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra 4:4-5).

Here is the account of the Jews' problems with the Samaritans concerning the building of the temple. It lasted throughout the days of Cyrus.

Problems Continue

Now, note this. In Ezra 4:6-23, THE SUMMARY of all the problems the Jews had is recorded. However, this is an *inset* in the chain of events. The account of the problems with building the temple during the reign of Darius I ENDS at verse five and *resumes* in verse 24!

"And hired counsellors against them . . . all the days of Cyrus [538-529] king of Persia, even *until* the reign of Darius [the first] king of Persia [521-485] . . . Then ceased the work of the *house of God* which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the *second year* of the reign of Darius [the first] king of Persia" (verses 5, 24).

It was at this time—around 520 B.C. that the books of Haggai and Zechariah were written (Ezra 5:1). The matter finally came to Darius I concerning the temple—and he ordered the construction to continue (Ezra 6:11-12). Again, this decree was to build the *house of God*—not Jerusalem. It is

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not the decree spoken of in Daniel 9.

Ezra 6:14-15 recapitulates the history of the *restoration of the temple*. "And the elders of the Jews . . . builded, and finished it [the temple], according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of *Cyrus* [538-529], and *Darius* [the first, 521-485], and *Artaxerxes* [the first, 464-423] king of Persia.

"And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius [the first, 516-515] the king."

Temple Completed

The Jews began to build the temple during the reign of Cyrus but accomplished nothing until the beginning of the *second year* of Darius I [520-519]; Four years later in his *sixth year*, in 515 B.C.—the temple was finished.

Again, how miraculous that the temple was restored *exactly seventy years* from the final captivity in 585 until 515 B.C.

Later, *after* the temple was completed, Artaxerxes I (464-423) included as *part of* his decree to rebuild Jerusalem a clause to procure any further materials necessary to *beautify* the temple (Ezra 7:16).

Now we must retrace our steps to pick up the account of Ezra 4:6-23. This gave the *summary* of problems the Jews encountered.

We saw that the temple—except for finishing touches—was completed in the sixth year of Darius I.

Jerusalem Rebuilt

Now the account continues. It takes us past the completion of the temple. "And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the

beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem" (Ezra 4:6). This is the Ahasuerus of the *book of Esther*. He is generally regarded as the Xerxes of Greek history (485-464).

The narrative then continues: "And in the days of Artaxerxes [the first, 464-423] wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, . . . Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, BUILDING THE REBELLIOUS AND THE BAD CITY, and have set up the walls thereof, . . . Then sent the king an answer . . . Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this CITY be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me" (Ezra 4:7, 12, 17, 21).

This was probably near the beginning of the reign of Artaxerxes I. Notice that this concerned the building of the city—Jerusalem! Artaxerxes commanded that the city and wall should not be built—until he sent another commandment. How clear that this "other commandment" he sent is the one we read about in Ezra 7—the one sent by Artaxerxes in his seventh year!

How clear that the Artaxerxes of Ezra 7 is the one who reigned from 464-423 B.C.

Other Proofs

An important fact to remember: Daniel 9:25 is dated from "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem"!! It is *not dated* from the time ACTUAL BUILDING began or terminated.

The prophecy states that the wall would be built in troublous times—during the 7 prophetic weeks (49 literal years) before the 62 weeks. Although the decree was issued by Artaxerxes in his seventh year, apparently little or no building on the city took place. It was not until the *twentieth year* of Artaxerxes-I (445-444) that Nehemiah took action concerning the construction (Nehemiah 2:1).

This proves *scholars are incorrect* in placing Ezra AFTER Nehemiah. Ezra was of the SAME GENERATION as Nehemiah. In the book of Nehemiah, chapter 8, verses 1-9—we see them *working together!*

We have historical and archaeological findings which uphold the fact that the Artaxerxes mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah is Artaxerxes I, who reigned from 464-423 B.C.

"In the Elephantine papyri AP 30 and 31 we learn that *Johanan* was high priest in Jerusalem in 407 B.C. This was during the reign of Artaxerxes II. He [*Johanan*] is mentioned in Nehemiah 12:22-23 [also in Ezra 10:6] as a SON of a high priest *Eliashib*. *Eliashib* held this office UNDER NEHEMIAH!! (Neh. 3:1)" (Horn *Chronology of Ezra* 7. p. 90).

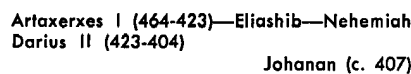
Eliashib was of the same generation as Nehemiah. But at the same time *Eliashib* is the FATHER of this other priest—*Johanan*!

Johanan was high priest around 407 B.C.—which makes him of the same generation as Artaxerxes II (404-358).

The conclusion is inescapable!

This puts *Johanan's* father, *Eliashib* with Nehemiah into the PREVIOUS GENERATION. So both must have lived during the reign of Artaxerxes I (464-423).

Again, the scholars are *incorrect* in trying to make Artaxerxes II, the one mentioned in Ezra 7. Here is a diagram to make the simple relationship very clear.



Since we know which king issued the decree (Artaxerxes I, 464-423 B.C.)—we begin the solution of our problem.

Fall-to-Fall Reckoning

Now, we can begin to determine the *exact year* in which Artaxerxes I issued his decree. We must now consider whether the Jews counted a king's reign beginning from spring or fall. Otherwise, we could be as much as *one year wrong* in our calculations.

Carefully note this!

The Jews had *both a civil and a sacred year*. When God revealed the Passover to Israel, he said that it was in the "beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Exodus 12:2).

However, the calendar is pegged to and centers around—the molad (con-

junction) of the seventh month. Tishri is the *seventh month* of the *sacred year!*

But it is the FIRST MONTH—as we shall immediately see—of the *civil year!* In some ways, the United States has this dual system. The calendar year begins in January. But the *business year* is determined from July to July.

Below is a listing of the months in God's calendar—according to sacred and civil designations. (The names were added by the Jews.)

TWELVE-MONTH YEAR

SACRED	CIVIL
1. Nisan	Tishri
2. Iyar	Heshvan
3. Sivan	Chisleu
4. Tammuz	Tebet
5. Ab	Shebet
6. Elul	Adar
7. Tishri	Nisan
8. Heshvan	Iyar
9. Chisleu	Sivan
10. Tebet	Tammuz
11. Shebet	Ab
12. Adar	Elul

Study the above chart carefully. It is very important in proving the next point.

In Nehemiah chapter one, verse one Nehemiah tells us he received certain news concerning conditions in Jerusalem, "In the month CHISLEU, in the TWENTIETH YEAR." After this time, Nehemiah sends a petition to the king, "In the month NISAN, in the TWENTIETH YEAR of Artaxerxes the king." This is found in Nehemiah 2:1.

Notice! The month Chisleu was regarded as coming BEFORE the month Nisan—in the SAME year! Look at the chart above. If the civil year began in the spring—this is AN UTTER IMPOSSIBILITY!! Nisan is the first month of the sacred year. It could not possibly come AFTER Chisleu in the *same year*.

On the other hand, reckoning the first month in the fall—it is quite easy to see that Chisleu DOES COME BEFORE Nisan in the same year!

This is the simple proof showing from the Bible that the Jews used a *fall-to-fall* calendar for reckoning civil months during the Persian period in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Talmud Proves Fall-to-Fall Reckoning

The Talmud is also a witness to this fact! It helps to prove that the Jews

began their civil year in the *fall*.

"That the fifth century Jews actually counted the regnal year of the Persian kings according to *their own fall-to-fall* calendar is attested not only by Nehemiah, . . . later on (it is) traditionally by the Talmud.

"According to the explanation of Rosh Hashanah . . . the first of Tishri (the seventh month) is the *NEW YEAR FOR FOREIGN KINGS!*" (Horn, *The Chronology of Ezra 7*, p. 73.)

There you have it! The Jews began numbering a king's year *from the fall*—or the seventh month of the *sacred* calendar!

Artaxerxes' Accession Month Known

Archaeologists have further confirmed these facts.

The following tablets which have been unearthed determine and prove the *exact period* in which Artaxerxes came to the throne.

"A cuneiform tablet found in the excavation campaign of 1930-31 in Ur [concerns itself with], an agreement dated in the thirteenth year of Artaxerxes I, but states that the original arrangement was signed in the month *KISLIMU IN THE TWENTY-FIRST YEAR OF XERXES!*" (Horn, *Chronology of Ezra 7*, p. 101.)

In Babylonia, Kislumu began on December 17, 465 B.C. (see Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, p. 31).

Xerxes twenty-first year corresponds to our year of 465-464 B.C. This document proves that Xerxes was alive in late December 465 B.C. (since the tablet shows Xerxes was still alive in the month Kislumu). Hence, his successor—Artaxerxes I—could not have taken the throne until *after this date*.

Precise Time Absolutely Fixed

Another document, AP 6, fixes the *exact time* of the ascension of Artaxerxes. This papyri bears the following dateline: "On the 18th of Kisleu which is the (17th) day of Thoth, in year 21, the beginning of the reign (accession year) when King Artaxerxes sat on his throne" (Horn, *The Chronology of Ezra 7*, p. 101-103).

The eighteenth of Kisleu of year 21 was January 2/3, 464 B.C. (see, Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, p. 31).

Therefore, on January 2, 464 B.C. we see that King Artaxerxes is *ALREADY SITTING ON THE THRONE!!* But Xerxes' death, as we have seen, could not have occurred before December 17, 465 B.C. Here is the only conclusion! Artaxerxes I came to the throne between December 17, 465 and January 2, 464 B.C.

The Jews reckoning from a fall-to-fall basis counted the time from December/January to the fall of that year (464 B.C.) as Artaxerxes' I *accession year*. Therefore, Artaxerxes' regnal years according to Jewish reckoning began *SIX MONTHS LATER* than the Persian count—or in the *fall* of 464 B.C.

This is the conclusion! The accession year of Artaxerxes I extended from around late December, 465 B.C. to the fall of 464 B.C. *YEAR ONE* of Artaxerxes I extended from the *fall of 464 to the fall of 463 B.C.*

THE SEVENTH YEAR OF ARTAXERXES I

The *seventh year* of Artaxerxes extended from the fall of 458 to the fall of 457 B.C. It was in *this year* that the decree of Artaxerxes was issued.

Ezra's journey to Jerusalem began in Nisan and ended in Ab of 457 B.C. (Ezra 7:8-9). Thus, according to our

months, Ezra's trip lasted from April to late July 457 B.C.

The decree of Artaxerxes I *went into effect* after Ezra's arrival in Palestine in the early fall—or late summer—of 457 B.C. This was "the going forth" of the decree recorded in Daniel 9:25-26.

The Prophecy Fulfilled

We can now determine the *EXACT YEAR* in which Christ—the Promised Messiah—would come. According to Daniel 9:25-26, from the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem (issued and put into effect in the late summer or early fall of 457 B.C.) there would be 69 prophetic weeks (7 + 62) until Christ would come.

As we have seen before—sixty-nine prophetic weeks equalled *four hundred eighty-three years!*

And 483 years after 457 B.C. would bring us to the autumn of A.D. 27—*THE YEAR IN WHICH CHRIST BEGAN HIS MINISTRY!!* Three and a half years later, brings us to a 31 A.D. crucifixion. Proof positive—completely destroying the false theory that Christ's ministry terminated in 33 A.D.

Study this article several times. Become thoroughly familiar with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah—so that you *really understand* the chronological sequence of events! Don't assume one quick reading is enough. Be sure to get notes in your Bible. Mark this article. Know and *know* that you know!