

## 6:6-12 Darius orders that construction go forward

## 1. Malbim to Ezra 6:6-7

תהיו רחוקין מן הבנין הזה שלא תשבחו ידי עושי המלאכה אחר שי"ל רשות עליו מן כורש...

כ"ז דבר מצד הפקודה הראשונה של כורש, שהוא לא צוה שיעזרו אותם בבנין רק שלא יבטלום מעבודתם...

You shall be distant from this construction, so that you do not halt the workers, since they have license from Cyrus...

All of this was of the original decree of Cyrus; he did not command to help the building, only not to prevent their work...

## 2. The twelve months

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tishrei	Cheshvan	Kislev	Tevet	Sh'vat	Adar	Nisan	Iyar	Sivan	Tammuz	Av	Elul

## 3. Talmud, Rosh HaShanah 3b

מתיב רב יוסף: "ביום עשרים וארבעה לחדש בששי, בשנת שנים לדריוש (חגי א:טו)" וכתב "בשביעי בעשרים ואחד לחדש (חגי ב:א)",

ואם איתא, "בשביעי בשנת שלש" מיבעי ליה!

אמר רבי אבהו: כורש מלך כשר היה, לפיכך מנו לו כמלכי ישראל.

מתקיף לה רב יוסף:

- חדא, דאם כן קשו קראי אהדדי דכתיב "ושיצא ביתא דנא עד יום תלתא לירח אדר די היא שנת שית למלכות דריוש מלכא (עזרא 1:10)", ותניא "באותו זמן לשנה הבאה עלה עזרא מבבל וגלותו עמו", וכתב "ויבא ירושלים בחדש החמישי, היא שנת השביעית למלך", ואם איתא "שנת השמינית" מיבעי ליה!
  - ועוד, מי דמי? התם כורש, הכא דריוש!
  - תנא: הוא כורש הוא דריוש הוא ארתחשסתא. כורש שמלך כשר היה, ארתחשסתא על שם מלכותו, ומה שמו? דריוש שמו.
  - מכל מקום קשיא! אמר רבי יצחק, לא קשיא: כאן קודם שהחמיץ, כאן לאחר שהחמיץ.

Rav Yosef asked: "On the 24<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> month [Elul], in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Darius", and then "In the 7<sup>th</sup> [month, Tishrei], the 21<sup>st</sup> of the month"! If [his years changed in Tishrei], it should have been "the 7<sup>th</sup> [month, Tishrei] in the third year"!

Rabbi Avahu said: Cyrus was a kosher king, and so they counted for him as from Jewish kings.

Rav Yosef challenged:

- First: Then these verses contradict each other: "And this house was completed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Adar in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of King Darius", and we learned, "At that time next year, Ezra left Babylon with his exiles," and it says, "And [Ezra] came to Jerusalem in the 5<sup>th</sup> month [Av] of the king's 7<sup>th</sup> year." If [his years changed in Nisan], this should have been the 8<sup>th</sup> year!
  - Also, how could you compare them? One is Cyrus, the other is Darius!
  - It was taught: Cyrus is Darius is Artachshasta. "Cyrus" because he was a kosher king. "Artachshasta" because of his empire. And what was his name? "Darius" was his name.
- Still, it is a problem! Rabbi Yitzchak said: It is no problem; one is before he went bad, one is after he went bad.

## 4. Talmud, Rosh HaShanah 4a

מתקיף לה רב כהנא: ומי החמיץ? והכתיב, "ומה חשחן ובני תורין ודכרין ואמרין לעלון לאלק שמיא, חנטין מלח חמר ומשח כמאמר כהניא די בירושלם להוא מתיבה להם יום ביום די לא שלו!" אמר לו רבי יצחק, רבי, מטונג: "די להון מהקרבין ניחוחין לאלק שמיא ומצלין לחיי מלכא ובנוהי."

• ומאן דעבד הכי לאו מעליותא היא? והתניא, "האומר 'סלע זו לצדקה בשביל שיחיו בני' ו'בשביל שאזכה בה לחיי העולם הבא' הרי זה צדיק גמור!" לא קשיא: כאן בישראל כאן בנכרים.

ואיבעית אימא מנלן דאחמיץ? דכתיב "נדבכין די אבן גלל תלתא ונדבך די אע חדת, ונפקתא מן בית מלכא תתיבה." למה ליה דעבד הכי? סבר, אי מרדו בי יהודאי איקלייה בנורא.

• אטו שלמה לא עבד הכי? והכתיב "שלשה טורי גזית וטור כרתת ארזים (מלכים א ו:10)!" שלמה עבד מלמעלה ואיהו עבד מלמטה. שלמה שקעיה בבניא, איהו לא שקעיה בבניא. שלמה סדייה בסידא, איהו לא סדייה בסידא.

רב יוסף ואיתימא רבי יצחק מנלן דאחמיץ מהכא...

Rav Kahana challenged: But did he go bad? See Ezra 6:9 – “And whatever is lacking – cattle, rams, sheep for burnt offerings to the Gd of Heaven, wheat, salt, wine, oil, per the word of the priests in Jerusalem, let it be given to them daily, without fail!” Rabbi Yitzchak said: My master, from your material: “For them to bring as offerings for the Gd of Heaven and to pray for the life of the king and his sons.

- But is it not good for one to do this? Haven't we learned, “One who says, ‘This coin is for tzedakah for my children to live,’ or ‘So that I merit life in the next world,’ is fully righteous!” This is no problem: One is for Israel, one is for others.

Or if you want: How do we know he went bad? Ezra 6:4 says, “Three layers of marble and one layer of wood, and let the expense be given from the palace.” Why did he do this? He thought: Should the Jews rebel, I would burn it in fire.

- But didn't Solomon do this? Kings I 6:36 says, “Three layers of hewn stone and a layer of cut cedar!” Solomon did it above; he did it below. Solomon embedded it in the structure, he did not embed it in the structure. Solomon lined it with lime, he did not line it with lime.

Rav Yosef, and some say Rabbi Yitzchak, said: How do we know he went bad? From here...

#### 5. Rashi to Rosh HaShanah 4a

כאן בישר' שלבו לשמים, ואם מריעין לו בחייו אינו קורא לו תגר, אלא תולה היסורין בעונו. אבל נכרי אם אין מטיבין לו כגמולו קורא תגר. Here it is with a Jew, whose heart is for heaven, and if they harm him during his lifetime he does not complain; he attributes his suffering to his guilt. But a foreigner, if they do not benefit him as he deserves then he complains.

6. Center for Online Jewish Studies: The Elephantine Temple [http://cojs.org/the\\_elephantine\\_temple\\_407\\_bce/](http://cojs.org/the_elephantine_temple_407_bce/)  
The Elephantine papyri, which include letters, business contracts, and literary texts, document the daily life of a Jewish military colony in southern Egypt. The papyri, written in Aramaic, date to the 5th century BCE, when the Persian Empire dominated the Ancient Near East. In this particular text, we learn a great deal about the relationships of the Jewish community in Elephantine (Yeb in Aramaic) with their Egyptian neighbors and Persian rulers. The papyrus contains a letter from Yedaniah ben Gemariah, the community's leader, to the Persian governor in Yehud (Judah). Yedaniah requests permission to rebuild his community's temple, which had been destroyed by a group of Egyptian priests in league with the local Persian administrator. Amazingly, we discover in this letter that the Jewish community and temple had already been established at Elephantine long before the Persians established hegemony over Egypt under Cambyses in 525 BCE (compare with 2 Kings 25-26). Even more confounding is the fact that the community had its own temple, where sacrifices were offered to the Israelite deity. This raises significant questions about the nature of Jewish worship during this period since it seems to be in opposition to biblical law (Deuteronomy 12). The Torah bans sacrificial ritual at sites other than the one place “where G-d chooses to establish his name,” an ambiguous term that literally points to the mobile Tabernacle but surely includes the Temple in Jerusalem, which was the religious capital at the time. In contrast, the Elephantine community offered the full range of animal sacrifices, grain offerings, and incense offerings at their temple! To complicate matters even further, we have a later document from the same archive that states that permission to rebuild the Elephantine temple had been granted by the religious authorities in Israel, along with permission to perform grain and incense offerings; mention of animal sacrifice, however, is conspicuously absent.

#### 7. The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, English edition Vol. 9, pg. 111

Above all, the restriction of the offerings to *minhah* and incense after the rebuilding of the temple illustrates respect for the Egyptians and the cult of their god Khnum. At the same time, from the perspective of Jerusalem it was a good opportunity to restrict the sacrificial cult of Elephantine; if bloody sacrifice could no longer be offered, no one could speak of competition with the universal sacrificial cult of the Jerusalem sanctuary.

#### 8. Metzudat David to Ezra 6:11

עונשו יהיה אשר יעקר עץ מן ביתו ולתלותו בו יושם ויתלו עליו. והוא מדרך איום ואזהרה יתיר' שיהיה נתלה על העץ אשר יעקר מביתו: His punishment would be that a beam would be uprooted from his home, and it would be placed to hang him, and they would hang him on it. This was a threat and exaggerated warning, to be hung on a tree uprooted from his home.

#### 9. Destroying the criminal's home?

See Zechariah 5:4