

# **GRANHOLM GENEALOGY**

## **PERSIAN ROYAL ANCESTRY**

**Achaemenid Dynasty from Greek mythical Perses,  
(705-550 BC)**

**Achaemenid Empire, (550-329 BC) ی‌شن‌ماخه ی‌ه‌اش‌ن‌ه‌اش**

**Sassanid Empire (224-c. 670) ن‌ا‌ی‌ن‌اس‌اس**

## INTRODUCTION

Persia, of which a large part was called Iran since 1935, has a well recorded history of our early royal ancestry. Two eras covered are here in two parts; the Achaemenid and Sassanian Empires, the first and last of the Pre-Islamic Persian dynasties.

This ancestry begins with a connection of the Persian kings to the Greek mythology according to Plato. I have included these kind of connections between myth and history, the reader may decide if and where such a connection really takes place. **Plato** 428/427 BC – 348/347 BC), was a Classical Greek philosopher, mathematician, student of Socrates, writer of philosophical dialogues, and founder of the Academy in Athens, the first institution of higher learning in the Western world.

King or Shah Cyrus the Great established the first dynasty of Persia about 550 BC. A special list, “Byzantine Emperors” is inserted (at page 27) after the first part showing the lineage from early Egyptian rulers to Cyrus the Great and to the last king of that dynasty, Artaxerxes II, whose daughter Rodogune became a Queen of Armenia. Their descendants tie into our lineage listed in my books about our lineage from our Byzantine, Russia and Poland.

The second begins with King Ardashir I, the 59<sup>th</sup> great grandfather, reigned during 226-241 and ends with the last one, King Yazdagird III, the 43<sup>rd</sup> great grandfather, reigned during 632 – 651. He married Maria, a Byzantine Princess, which ties into our Byzantine Ancestry. See *Byzantine Royal Ancestry*. After the fall of the Sassanian dynasty Persia was conquered and divided into Arab Caliphates, of them emerged the present Iran and Iraq.

Throughout this period Persia was mostly at war with the Goths, Huns, Byzantines, Romans, Turks and others, many of them our ancestors, a situation which still seems to go on there.

On the next pages I have listed our Persian ancestors and **highlighted** those for who I have found some additional information. The list shows how that lineage ties into us via other royalities.

Our first ancestor here, Neithiyti Princess of Egypt, is the last one listed in the book [Egyptian Royal Ancestry](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_kings\\_of\\_Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_kings_of_Persia)

## **Pre-Islamic empires (705 BC-c. 670 AD) شاهنشاهی پارس**

### **Achaemenid Dynasty from Greek mythical Perses, 705-550 BC**

**Achaemenid Empire, 550-329 BC** شاهنشاهی هخامنشی

**Sassanid Empire (224-c. 670)** ساسانیان



[Coat of arms of the Shahanshah of Iran](#)

<b>First monarch</b>	<a href="#">Cyrus the Great</a>
<b>Last monarch</b>	<a href="#">Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi</a>
<b>Style</b>	<a href="#">His Imperial Majesty</a>
<b>Official residence</b>	<a href="#">Sa'dabad Palace</a> , <a href="#">Tehran</a> , <a href="#">Iran</a>
<b>Appointer</b>	<a href="#">Parliament</a> (from 1925 to 1979)
<b>Monarchy started</b>	550 BC
<b>Monarchy ended</b>	11 February 1979
<b>Current pretender</b>	<a href="#">Mohammad Hassan Mirza II</a> ( <a href="#">Qajar dynasty</a> ) <a href="#">Reza Pahlavi</a>

**Shah** ([Persian](#): شاه) is a [Persian](#) term for [King](#) ([Emperor](#)) that has been adopted in many other languages.

## Achaemenid Dynasty from Greek mythical Perses 705-550 BC

### Descendants of: Achamsemenes mythical Perses As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 Achamsemenes mythical Perses King of Persia #13573 (85<sup>th</sup> great grandfather)  
(See [Early Mythology Ancestry](#))
- 2 Teispes King of Anshan #19070 b. 675 B.C, d. 640 B.C.(84<sup>th</sup> grandfather)
- 3 Cyrus I the King of Anshan in Persia #18460 b. 519 BC d. 465 BC (83<sup>rd</sup> great grandfather)
- 4 Cambyses I King of Ashan in Iran #18459 (82<sup>nd</sup> great grandfather)  
m. Mandane Princess of Media #18458 b. 584
5. Cyrus II the Great King of Persia - Continues below

## Achaemenid Persian Empire, 550-329 BC

### Descendants of: Cyrus II the Great King of Persia As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 Cyrus II the Great King of Persia #18445 d. 530 BC (81<sup>st</sup> great grandfather)  
m. Neithiyti Princess of Egypt #18446 (See [Egyptian Royal Ancestry](#))
- 2 Atossa #18444 (80<sup>th</sup> grandmother)  
m. Darius I the Great King of Persia #18443
- 3 Xerxes I the Great King of Persia #18442 b. 519 BC d. 465 BC (79<sup>th</sup> great grandfather)  
m. Amestris  
m. Esther Queen of Persia #18436
- [Children of Artaxerxes I King of Persia and Amestris]  
4 Artaxerxes I King of Persia #18435 (78<sup>th</sup> great grandfather)  
m. Andia of Babylon #18437  
[great-great granddaughter of Nebuchadrezzar II King of Babylon #18440] (81<sup>st</sup> great grandfather)
5. Parysatis #18434 (77<sup>th</sup> great grandmother)  
m. Darius II (Ochus) King of Persia #18433
- [Children of Artaxerxes I King of Persia and Esther Queen of Persia #18436]  
4 Darius II (Ochus) King of Persia #18433 (77<sup>th</sup> great grandfather)  
m. Parysatis #18434  
[daughter of Artaxerxes I King of Persia #18435 and Andia of Babylon #18437]
- 5 Artaxerxes II King of Persia #18431 (76<sup>th</sup> great grandfather)  
m. Stateira #18432 d. 400 BC
- 6 Sisygambis Princess of Persia #18448 (75<sup>th</sup> great-aunt)  
m. Arsames #18449  
[son of Ariaramnes King of Parsa #18461]

7 **Darius III King of Persia** #18450 (first cousin, 74 times removed)  
m. **Stateira I Queen of Persia** #18451 d. 332 BC

8 **Stateira II** #18452 (second cousin, 73 times removed)  
m. **Alexander the Great King of Macedon** #18453 b. 356 BD d. 323 BC

[Children of Artaxerxes II King of Persia and Stateira]

6 **Artaxerxes III King of Persia** #18454 b. 425 BC d. 338 BC (75<sup>th</sup> great-uncle)

6 **Rodogune Queen of Persia Princess of Armenia** #18428 (75<sup>th</sup> great grandmother)

See page 27, “*Byzantine Emperors*” list generation # 49

## Sassanid Empire (224-c. 670)

### Descendants of: Ardashir I King of Kings of Persia As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

1 **Ardashir I King of Kings of Persia** #18351 d. 242 (59th great grandfather)

2 **Shapur I the Great King of Persia** #18350 (58th great grandfather)

3 **Narseh King of Persia** #18349 (57th great grandfather)

4 **Hormizd II King of Persia** #18348 d. 309 (56th great grandfather)

5 **Shapur II the Great King of Persia** #18346 (55th great grandfather)

6 **Ardashir II King of Persia** #18347 d. 383 (55th great-uncle)

6 **Shapur III King of Persia** #18345 d. 388 (54th great grandfather)

7 **Bahram IV King of Persia** #18344 (53rd great grandfather)

8 **Yazdegerd I King of Persia** #18343 d. 421 (52nd great grandfather)

9 **Bahram V King of Persia** #18342 (51st great grandfather)

10 **Yazdegerd II King of Persia** #18340 d. 457 (50th great grandfather)

11 **Balash King of Persia** #18341 (50th great-uncle)

11 **Peroz I King of Persia** #18339 d. 484 (49th great grandfather)

12 **Kavadh I King of Persia** #18338 d. 531 (48th great grandfather)

13 **Khosrau I Emperor of Persia** #18337 b. 501 d. 579 (47th great grandfather)

14 **Hormizd IV King of Persia** #18336 d. 590 (46th great grandfather)

15 **Khosrau II Parvez Emperor of Sasanian Persia** #18264 d. 628 (45th great grandfather)

m. **Maria Princess of Byzantium** #18265 (See *Byzantine Royal Ancestry*)

[daughter of Maurice Tiberius Emperor of Byzantium and Constantia Empress of Byzantium, 46<sup>th</sup> great grandparents]

16 **Kavadh II King of Persia** (44<sup>th</sup> great uncle)

16 **Borandukht King and Monarch of Persia** #18353 (45th great-aunt)

16 **Dukhtzanan Princess of Sasanian Persia** #18233 (45th great-aunt)

m. **Shah-Varez Emperor of Sassanian Persia** #18232

16 **Shahryar Prince of Sasanian Persia** #18335 (44th great grandfather)

17 **Yazdagird III Emperor of Sasanian Persia** #18215 (43rd great grandfather)

m. **Manyanh Princess of Byzantium** #18214

[daughter of Constantine III Emperor of Byzantium #18216 and Gregoria #18217]

18 **Izdundad Princess of Sasanian Persia** #18212 (42nd great grandmother)

m. **Bustanai ben Haninai Exilarch of Jews** #18211

[son of Haninai Exilarch of Jews in Babylon #18213]

19 **Hisdai Shahrijar Exilarch of Jews in Baghdad** #18210 d. 665 (41st great grandfather)

20 **Daughter of Hisdai Princess of Exilarchs** #18209 (40th great grandmother)

m. **Natronai ben Nehemiah of Jewish Exile** #18208

21 **Habibai of Jewish Exile** #18207 b. 700 (39th great grandfather)

22 **Natronai al-Makir Theodoric Duke of Toulouse** #16068 b. 730 d. 804 (38th great grandfather)

m. **Alda (Hilda) Princess of the Franks** #16067

[daughter of Pepin the Short King of the Franks #16023 and Bertrada of Laon Queen of the Franks #16024]

23 **Redburga (Saint Ida) Queen of England** b. 788 m. Egbert III King of Wessex and Kent b. 784 d. Nov 838

24 **Aethelwulf King of Wessex and Kent** b. 795 d. 13 Jan 858 m. Osburh (Osburga) of Wright Queen of England b. 810 d. 852

m. Judith Princess of Holy Roman Empire b. abt 846

25 **Aethelred I King of Wessex and Kent** b. 843 d. 872

26 **Aethelhelm Ealdorman of Wiltshire** b. 859 d. 898 m. Aethelgyth of Mercia

27 **Aethelfrith Ealdorman of Wiltshire** b. 890 d. 924

28 **Eadric Ealdorman of Wiltshire** m. Aethelgifu of Wiltshire

29 **Aethelwerd "the Historian" Thegn of Sussex** b. 920 d. 998 m. Aethelfled of Wessex b. 920

30 **Aethelmaer Ciel "the Great" Thegn of Sussex** b. 940 d. 1015 m. Aethelthrith of Wessex b. 940

31 **Wulfnoth Thegn of Sussex** b. 960 d. 1015

32 **Godwin Earl of Wessex** b. 992 d. 15 Apr 1053 m. Gytha Thorkelsdottir, Countess

33 **Harold II Godwinson King of England** b. abt 1022 d. 14 Oct 1066 m. Edyth (Ealdgyth) Swannesha b. 1025 d. abt 1086

m. Aldgyth (Edith) of Mercia Queen of England d. aft 1070

34 **Gytha Haraldsdotter Princess of England** b. ABT 1053 d. 1 May 1107

m. 1074 Vladimir II "Monomach" Grand Duke of Kiev b. 1053 d. 19 May 1125

35 **Mstislav I (Harald) Grand Duke of Kiev** b. 1076 d. 15 Apr 1132

m. Christina Ingessdotter Princess of Sweden b. ABT 1078 d. 18 Jan 1122

36 **Ingeborg Princess of Russia** b. ABT 1099 d. 1140 m. Knud Eriksson Lavard King of Denmark b. 12 Mar 1091 d. 7 Jan 1131

37 **Valdemar I the Great King of Denmark** b. 14 Jan 1131 d. 12 May 1182

m. Sofiya Vladimirovna Princess of Russia b. 1140 d. 5 May 1198

38 **Richiza Valdemarsdotter Princess of Denmark** b. ABT 1178 d. 8 May 1220

m. Erik X Knutsson King of Sweden b. 1180 d. 10 Apr 1216

39 **Märtha Eriksdotter Princess of Sweden** b. ABT 1213 m. Nils Sixtensson Sparre av Tofta b. ABT 1188

40 **Sixten Nilsson Sparre av Tofta** d. 1310 m. Ingrid Abjörnsdotter b. Abt 1220

41 **Abjörn Sixtensson Sparre av Tofta** b. ABT 1240 d. 1310 m. Ingeborg Ulfssdotter Ulf b. ABT 1258 d. AFT 1307

42 **Ulf Abjörnsson Sparre** b. 1348 m. 1330 Kristina Sigmundsdotter Tre Klöverblad b. 1295

43 **Karl Ulfsson Sparre av Tofta** m. Helena Israelsdotter b. 1340 d. 1410

44 **Margareta Karlsdotter Sparre av Tofta** d. 1429 m. Knut Tordsson Bonde b. ABT 1377 d. 1413

45 **Karl VIII Knutsson Bonde King of Sweden** b. 1409 d. 15 May 1470

46 **Karin Karlsdotter Bonde** m. Erengisle Björnsson Djäkn d. bef 1447

47 **Märta Erengisledotter Djäkn** m. Johan Henriksson Fleming b. 1465 d. AFT 1514

48 **Anna Johansdotter Fleming** b. 1435 d. 1505 m. Olof Pedersson (Wildeman) Lille d. 1535

49 **Karin Olofsdotter Wildeman** b. 1465 d. 1535 m. Ludolf Boose b. 1465 d. 1535

50 **Johan Ludolfsson Boose** b. 1526 d. 1596 m. Ingeborg Henriksdotter

51 **Kirstin Johansdotter Boose** b. 1576 d. 1646 m. Bertil von Nieroht b. 1582 d. 1652

52 **Maria Bertilsdotter von Nieroht** b. 1612 d. 1682 m. Carl Henriksson Lindelöf b. 1605 d. 1668

53 **Carl Carlsson von Lindelöf** b. 1642 d. 1712 m. N.N. Laurisdatter Laurentz

54 **Anna Maria Carlsdotter von Lindelöf** b. 1670 d. 1 Feb 1747

m. Ericus Christierni Orenius b. ABT 1658 d. 2 Mar 1740  
55 **Margareta Eriksdotter Orenia** b. 16 Jan 1710 d. 1804 m. Johan Urnovius b. 1706 d. 1783  
56 **Christina Margareta Urnovia** m. 20 Dec 1781 Johan Flinck  
57 **Johan (Flinck) Årenius** b. 12 Jan 1787 d. 6 Nov 1823  
m. 15 Mar 1810 Ulrika Abrahamsdotter Sevon b. 9 Jun 1784  
58 **Johan Gustaf Johansson Årenius** b. 5 Jun 1810  
m. Johanna Carolina Röring b. 24 Jun 1802 d. ABT 1839  
59 **Charlotta Constantia Renlund** b. 4 Jun 1830 d. 28 Jan 1905  
m. 19 Mar 1854 Erik Eriksson Kåll b. 24 Jun 1829 d. 23 Jan 1905  
60 **Johanna Karolina Eriksdotter Kåll** b. 9 Jan 1863 d. 8 Nov 1934  
m. 24 Mar 1887 Karl-Johan Granholm b. 14 Mar 1866 d. 22 Jun 1920  
61 **Erik Anton Granholm** b. 28 May 1906 d. 29 Jan 1959  
m. 20 Aug 1933 Karin Hildegard Kasén b. 3 Jul 1914 d. 2004  
62 **Lars Erik Granholm** b. 28 Jul 1934

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perses\\_\(son\\_of\\_Andromeda\\_and\\_Perseus\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perses_(son_of_Andromeda_and_Perseus))

## Perses (son of Andromeda and Perseus)

In [Greek mythology](#), **Perses** was the son of [Andromeda](#) and [Perseus](#), and, by analogy of the similarity of sounds, taken for [Achaemenes](#) (of the [Pasargadae](#) tribe) as the ancestor of the [Persians](#) according to [Plato](#).

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaemenes>

## Achaemenes

**Achaemenēs** was the [eponymous](#) ancestor of the [Achaemenid Dynasty](#), who ruled [Persia](#) between [705 BC](#) and [675 BC](#).

As the eponymous ancestor of the clan, Achaemenes is very often held to be [legendary](#). Achaemenes is generally known as the leader of one of the clans of one of the ten to fifteen Persian tribes, the [Pasargadae](#). Persian royal inscriptions such as the [Behistun Inscription](#) place him five generations before [Darius the Great](#). Therefore, according to the Inscriptions, Achaemenes could have lived around [700 BC](#). The inscriptions do label him as a "king," which may mean that he was the first official king of the [Iranians](#).

When Darius rose to the position of [Shah](#) (i.e. King) of [Persia](#) in [522 BC](#) by killing a so called imposter of [Bardiya](#), son of the Persian conqueror [Cyrus the Great](#), Darius was able to claim legitimacy by pointing to his descent from Achaemenes. Consequently, Darius had much to gain by pointing to an ancestor shared by Cyrus and himself. It is sometimes thought that Achaemenes is an invention of Darius. An inscription from Pasargadae mentions Cyrus calling himself as descended from Achaemenes, However, Bruce Lincoln suggests that these inscriptions of Cyrus in [Pasargadae](#) were engraved during the reign of Darius in ca. 510.

In any case, the Persian royal dynasty from Darius onward revered Achaemenes and credited him as the founder of their dynasty. [Ancient Greek](#) writers provide some legendary information about Achaemenes: they call his tribe the *Pasargadae*, and say that he was "raised by an [eagle](#)". [Plato](#), when writing about the Persians, identified Achaemenes with [Perses](#), ancestor of the Persians in [Greek mythology](#). According to Plato, Achaemenes/Perses was the son of the Ethiopian queen [Andromeda](#) and the Greek hero [Perseus](#), and a grandson of [Zeus](#).

Persian and Greek sources state that Achaemenes was succeeded by his son Teispes, who would lead the Persians to conquer and settle in the [Elamite](#) city of [Anshan](#) in southern Iran. Teispes' great-grandson Cyrus conquered the Medes and established the Persian Empire. Teispes is referred to as a son of Achaemenes in the Old Persian texts at Behistun.



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teispes\\_of\\_Anshan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teispes_of_Anshan)

## Teispes

**Teispes** lived from 675-640 BCE. He was the son of [Achaemenes](#) and an ancestor of [Cyrus the Great](#). There is evidence that [Cyrus I](#) and [Ariaramnes](#) were both his sons. Cyrus I is the grandfather of [Cyrus the Great](#), whereas Ariaramnes is great grandfather of [Darius the Great](#). According to 7th-century BC documents, he captured the [Elamite](#) city of [Anshan](#) after being freed from [Median](#) supremacy, and expanded his small kingdom. His kingdom was an Elamite vassal state. He was succeeded by his second son, [Cyrus I](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_I)

## Cyrus I

**Cyrus I** (Old Persian *Kuruš*) or **Cyrus I of Anshan**, was King of [Anshan](#) in Persia from c. 600 to 580 BC or, according to others, from c. 652 to 600 BC. He should not be confused with his famous grandson [Cyrus the Great](#), also known as Cyrus II. Cyrus was an early member of the [Achaemenid dynasty](#). He was apparently a grandson of its founder [Achaemenes](#) and son of [Teispes](#), king of Anshan. Teispes' sons reportedly divided the kingdom among them after his death. Cyrus reigned as king of Anshan while his brother [Ariaramnes](#) was king of Parsa.

The chronological placement of this event is uncertain. This is due to his suggested, but still debated identification, with the [monarch](#) known as "Kuras of Parsumas". Kuras is first mentioned c. 652 BC. At that year [Shamash-shum-ukin](#), [king of Babylon](#) (668–648 BC) revolted against his older brother and overlord [Ashurbanipal](#), [king of Assyria](#) (668–627 BC). Cyrus is mentioned being in a [military alliance](#) with the former. The war between the two brothers ended in 648 BC with the defeat and reported [suicide](#) of Shamash-shum-ukin.

Cyrus is mentioned again in 639 BC. At that year Ashurbanibal managed to defeat [Elam](#) and became overlord to several of its former allies. Kuras was apparently among them. His elder son "Arukku" was reportedly sent to Assyria to pay [tribute](#) to its King. Kuras then seems to vanish from historical record. His suggested identification with Cyrus would help connect the Achaemenid dynasty to the major events of the 7th century BC.

Ashurbanipal died in 627 BC. Cyrus presumably continued paying tribute to his sons and successors [Ashur-etil-ilani](#) (627–623 BC) and [Sin-shar-ishkun](#) (623 BC – 612 BC). They were both opposed by an alliance led by [Cyaxares](#) of the [Medes](#) (633–584 BC) and [Nabopolassar](#) of Babylon (626–605 BC). In 612 BC the two managed to capture the Assyrian capital [Nineveh](#). This was effectively the end of the Assyrian Empire though remnants of the Assyrian [army](#) under [Ashur-uballit II](#) (612–609 BC) continued to resist from [Harran](#).

Media and Babylon soon shared the lands previously controlled by the Assyrians. Anshan apparently fell under the control of the former. Cyrus is considered to have ended his days under the overlordship of either Cyaxares or his son [Astyages](#) (584 BC – 550 BC). Cyrus was succeeded by his son [Cambyses I](#). His grandson would come to be known as [Cyrus the Great](#), creator of the [Persian Empire](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambyses\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambyses_I)

# Cambyses I

**Cambyses I** or **Cambyses the Elder** (c. 600 BC–559 BC) was king of [Anshan](#) in [Iran](#) from c. 580 to 559 BC and the father of [Cyrus the Great](#) (Cyrus II). He should not be confused with his better-known grandson [Cambyses II](#).

Cambyses was an early member of the [Achaemenid dynasty](#). He was apparently a great-grandson of its founder [Achaemenes](#), grandson of [Teispes](#) and son of [Cyrus I](#). His paternal uncle was [Ariaramnes](#) and his first cousin was [Arsames](#).

According to [Herodotus](#), Cambyses was "a man of good family and quiet habits". He reigned under the overlordship of [Astyages](#), King of [Media](#). He was reportedly married to [Princess Mandane of Media](#), a daughter to Astyages and [Princess Aryenis](#) of Lydia. His wife was reportedly a granddaughter to both [Cyaxares](#) of [Media](#) and [Alyattes II](#) of [Lydia](#). The result of their marriage was the birth of his successor [Cyrus the Great](#). According to [Nicolas of Damascus](#) his original name was Atradates, and he was wounded and later died in the [Battle of the Persian Border](#) which he, with his son, fought against Astyages. It occurred in about 551 BC.

Astyages, surrounded by 20,000 of his [bodyguard](#), looked on: among the Persians Atradates had the right, and Oebares the left [wing](#), Cyrus, surrounded by the bravest [warriors](#), was in the center. The Persians defended themselves bravely, and slew many of the Medes, so that Astyages cried out on his throne: 'How bravely these "terebinth-eaters" fight!' But at length the Persians were overpowered by numbers, and driven into the city before which they fought. Cyrus and Oebares advised to send the women and children to [Pasargadae](#), which is the loftiest mountain, and renew the battle on the next day: 'If we are defeated we must all die, and if that must be so it is better to fall in [victory](#) and for the [freedom](#) of our [country](#).' Then all were filled with hatred and anger against the Medes, and when the morning came and the gates were opened, all marched out; Atradates alone remained with the old men in the city to defend the walls. But while Cyrus and Oebares were fighting in the field, Astyages caused 100,000 men to go round and attack the Persian army in the rear. The attack succeeded. Atradates fell covered with [wounds](#) into the hands of the Medes. Astyages said to him: 'An excellent satrap are you; is it thus that you thank me, you and your son, for what I have done for you?' Atradates, almost at the last gasp, replied: 'I know not, O king, what deity has roused this frenzy in my son; put me not to the [torture](#), I shall soon die.' Astyages had compassion on him and said: 'I will not put you to the torture; I know that if your son had followed your advice, he would not have done such things.' Atradates died, and Astyages gave him an honorable burial.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandane\\_of\\_Media](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandane_of_Media)

# Mandane of Media

**Mandane of Media** (b. ca. 584 BCE) was a [princess](#) of [Media](#) and, later, the [Queen consort](#) of [Cambyses I of Anshan](#) and mother of [Cyrus the Great](#), ruler of the [Persia's Achaemenid](#) Dynasty.

## Mandane in Herodotus' histories

According to [Herodotus](#), Mandane was born to [Astyages](#), King of Media and son of [Cyaxares](#) the Great, and Princess [Aryenis of Lydia](#), daughter of [Alyattes II](#), the father of [Croesus](#) of [Lydia](#).

Shortly after her birth, Herodotus reports that Astyages had a strange dream where his daughter urinated so much that [Asia](#) would flood. He consulted the [magi](#) who interpreted the dream as a warning that Mandane's son would overthrow his rule.

To forestall that outcome, Astyages betrothed Mandane to the [vassal Achaemenid](#) prince, [Cambyses I of Anshan](#), "a man of good family and quiet habits", whom Astyages considered no threat to the Median throne.

Astyages had a second dream when Mandane became pregnant where a vine grew from her womb and overtook the world. Terrified, he sent his most loyal court retainer, [Harpagus](#), to kill the child. However, Harpagus was loath to spill royal blood and hid the child, [Cyrus II](#) ([Cyrus the Great](#)), with a shepherd named [Mitradataes](#).

Years later, Cyrus would defy his grandfather, Astyages, leading to war between them; a war that Cyrus would have lost, but for Harpagus' defection on the battlefield of [Pasargadae](#), leading to the overthrow of Astyages, as the dream had forecast.

## Mandane in Xenophon's Cyropaedia


[Xenophon](#) also gives reference to Mandane in his [Cyropædia](#) (*The Education of Cyrus*). In this story, Mandane and her son travel to Astyages court, when Cyrus is in his early teens. Cyrus charms his grandfather, who includes the boy in royal hunts, while Mandane returns to her husband in [Anshan](#). It is when Cyrus concocts a story that his father, [Cambyses I](#), is ill and returns to visit him that Astyages comes after him and the battle is joined.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_kings\\_of\\_Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_kings_of_Persia)

## **Pre-Islamic empires (550 BC-c. 670 AD) ماله س از ا ش ی پ اه ی هاشن هاش**

**Achaemenid Empire, 550-329 BC** ی ش ن م ا خ ه ی هاشن هاش

**Sassanid Empire (224-c. 670)** ن ا ی ن ا س ا س

	
<a href="#">Coat of arms of the Shahanshah of Iran</a>	
<b>First monarch</b>	<a href="#">Cyrus the Great</a>
<b>Last monarch</b>	<a href="#">Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi</a>
<b>Style</b>	<a href="#">His Imperial Majesty</a>
<b>Official residence</b>	<a href="#">Sa'dabad Palace</a> , <a href="#">Tehran</a> , <a href="#">Iran</a>
<b>Appointer</b>	<a href="#">Parliament</a> (from 1925 to 1979)
<b>Monarchy started</b>	550 BC
<b>Monarchy ended</b>	11 February 1979
<b>Current pretender</b>	<a href="#">Mohammad Hassan Mirza II</a> ( <a href="#">Qajar dynasty</a> ) <a href="#">Reza Pahlavi</a>

**Shah** ([Persian](#): شاه) is a [Persian](#) term for [King](#) ([Emperor](#)) that has been adopted in many other languages.

# Achaemenid Empire, 550-329 BC ی‌شن‌ماخه ی‌داشن‌داهش

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus\\_the\\_Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_the_Great)

## Cyrus the Great

**Cyrus the Great** (c. 600 BC or 576 BC – December 530 BC), also known as **Cyrus II** or **Cyrus of Persia**, was the founder of the [Persian Empire](#) under the [Achaemenid dynasty](#).

*King of [Persia](#), King of [Anshan](#), King of [Media](#), King of [Babylon](#), King of [Sumer](#) and [Akkad](#), King of the four corners of the World*



It was under his own rule that the empire embraced all previous civilized states of the [ancient Near East](#) expanded vastly and eventually conquered most of [Southwest Asia](#) and much of [Central Asia](#), parts of [Europe](#) and [Caucasus](#). From [Mediterranean sea](#) and the [Hellespont](#) in the west to the [Indus River](#) in the east, to create the [largest empire](#) the world had yet seen

The reign of Cyrus lasted between 29 and 31 years. Cyrus built his empire by fighting and conquering first the [Median Empire](#), then the [Lydian Empire](#) and the [Neo-Babylonian Empire](#). Either before or after Babylon, he led an expedition into central Asia, which resulted in major campaigns that brought "into subjection every nation without exception." Cyrus did not venture into Egypt, as he himself died in battle, fighting the [Massagetae](#) along the [Syr Darya](#) in

December 530 BC.

As a military leader, Cyrus left a legacy on the art of leadership and decision making, and he attributed his success to "Diversity in counsel, unity in command." Cyrus the Great respected the customs and religions of the lands he conquered. Aside from his own nation, [Iran](#), Cyrus also left a lasting legacy on [Jewish religion](#) (through his [Edict of Restoration](#)), [human rights](#), [politics](#), and [military strategy](#), as well as on both [Eastern](#) and [Western civilizations](#).



Cyrus' sons Cambyses II and Smerdis both later became kings of Persia, respectively, and his daughter Atossa married [Darius the Great](#) and bore him [Xerxes I](#).

*Superimposed on modern borders, the Achaemenid Empire under Cyrus's rule extended approximately from [Turkey](#), [Israel](#), [Georgia](#) and [Arabia](#) in the west*

*to [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), the [Indus River](#) and [Oman](#) in the east. Persia became the [largest empire](#) the world had ever seen.*



On December 10, 2003, in her acceptance of the [Nobel Peace Prize](#), [Shirin Ebadi](#) evoked Cyrus, saying:



I am an Iranian, a descendant of Cyrus the Great. This emperor proclaimed at the pinnacle of power 2,500 years ago that he 'would not reign over the people if they did not wish it.' He promised not to force any person to change his religion and faith and guaranteed freedom for all. The Charter of Cyrus the Great should be studied in the history of human rights

*Cyrus the Great liberated the [Hebrew exiles](#) to resettle and rebuild [Jerusalem](#), earning him an honored place in Judaism.*

## Tomb



Cyrus' [tomb](#) lies in [Pasargadae, Iran](#), a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#) (2006).

Cyrus' remains were interred in his capital city of [Pasargadae](#), where today a tomb still exists which many believe to be his. Both [Strabo](#) and [Arrian](#) give nearly equal descriptions of the tomb, based on the eyewitness report of [Aristobulus of Cassandreia](#), who at the instigation of [Alexander the Great](#) visited the tomb two times. Though the city itself is now in ruins, the burial place of Cyrus the Great has remained largely intact; and the tomb has been partially restored to counter its natural deterioration

over the years. According to [Plutarch](#), his epitaph said,

“ O man, whoever you are and wherever you come from, for I know you will come, I am Cyrus who won the Persians their empire. Do not therefore begrudge me this bit of earth that covers my bones.

# Atossa

The [Persian](#) queen Atossa.



**Atossa** was an [Achaemenid](#) queen and daughter of [Cyrus the Great](#). She lived from 550 BC to 475 BC and probably was a sister (or half-sister) of the Persian king [Cambyses II](#).

Atossa married [Darius I](#) during 522 BC after Darius, with the help of the nobleman [Otanes](#), defeated the followers of a man claiming to be [Bardiya](#), the younger brother of Cambyses II.

[Xerxes I](#) was the eldest son of Atossa and Darius. Atossa lived to see [Xerxes invade Greece](#). Being a direct descendent of Cyrus the Great, Atossa had a great authority within Achaemenian royal house and court. Atossa's special position enabled Xerxes, who was not the eldest son of Darius, to succeed his father.

# Darius I of Persia

**Darius I**, known as **Darius the Great**, was the third "[king of kings](#)" (emperor) of the [Achaemenid Empire](#). Darius held the empire at its peak, then including [Egypt](#), [northern India](#), and parts of [Greece](#). The decay and downfall of the empire commenced with his death and the coronation of his son, [Xerxes I](#).



*Outline tracing of the figure representing Darius in the [Behistun Inscription](#)*

Darius ascended the throne by assassinating the alleged usurper [Bardiya](#) with the assistance of six other Persian noble families; Darius was [crowned](#) the following morning. The new emperor met with rebellions throughout his kingdom, and quelled them each time. A major event in Darius's life was his expedition to punish [Athens](#) and [Eretria](#) for their aid in the [Ionian Revolt](#) and subjugate [Greece](#). Darius expanded his empire by conquering [Thrace](#) and [Macedon](#), and invading the [Saka](#), Iranian tribes who had invaded [Medes](#) and had previously killed [Cyrus the Great](#).

The **Battle of Marathon** took place in 490 BC during the first Persian invasion of Greece. It was fought between the citizens of Athens, aided by Plataea, and a Persian force commanded by Datis and Artaphernes. It was the culmination of the first attempt by Persia, under King Darius I, to subjugate Greece.



*A picture reconstructing the beached Persian ships at Marathon prior to the battle.*

Darius organized the empire, by dividing it into provinces and placing governors to govern it. He organized a new uniform monetary system, along with making [Aramaic](#) the official language of the empire. He also carved the cliff-face [Behistun Inscription](#), an autobiography of great modern [linguistic](#) significance.



*The ruins of Persepolis. In the foreground is the treasure house, right behind the Palace of Darius.*

During [Darius's Greek expedition](#), he had begun construction projects in [Susa](#), [Egypt](#) and [Persepolis](#). He had linked the [Red Sea](#) to the river [Nile](#) by building a canal which ran from modern [Zaqāzīq](#) to modern [Suez](#). To open this canal, he traveled to Egypt in 497 BCE, where the inauguration was done among great fanfare and celebration. Darius also built a canal to connect the [Red Sea](#) and [Mediterranean](#).



# Xerxes I of Persia

**Xerxes I of Persia**; also known as **Xerxes the Great**, was the fourth [Zoroastrian king of kings of the Achaemenid Empire](#).

*Khshayathiya Khshayathiyānam*, [King of Kings](#)



Immediately after seizing the kingship, [Darius I of Persia](#) (son of Hystaspes) married [Atossa](#) (daughter of [Cyrus the Great](#)). They were both descendants of [Achaemenes](#) from different Achaemenid lines. Marrying a daughter of Cyrus strengthened Darius' position as king. Darius was an active emperor, busy with building programs in [Persepolis](#), [Susa](#), [Egypt](#), and elsewhere. Toward the end of his reign he moved to punish Athens, but a new revolt in Egypt (probably led by the Persian satrap) had to be suppressed. Under Persian law, the Achaemenian kings were required to choose a successor before setting out on such serious expeditions. Upon his great decision to leave (487-486 BC). Darius prepared his tomb at [Naqsh-e Rostam](#) and appointed Xerxes, his eldest son by Atossa, as his

successor. Darius' failing health then prevented him from leading the campaigns, and he died in October 486 BC

*Xerxes lashing the [Hellespont](#)*

According to the Greek historian [Herodotus](#), Xerxes' first attempt to bridge the Hellespont ended in failure when a storm destroyed the [flax](#) and [papyrus](#) bridge; Xerxes ordered the Hellespont (the strait itself) whipped three hundred times and had [fetters](#) thrown into the water. Xerxes' second attempt to bridge the Hellespont was successful. Xerxes concluded an alliance with [Carthage](#), and thus deprived Greece of the support of the powerful monarchs of [Syracuse](#) and [Agrigentum](#). Many smaller Greek states, moreover, took the side of the Persians, especially [Thessaly](#), [Thebes](#) and [Argos](#). Xerxes set out in the spring of 480 BC from [Sardis](#) with a fleet and army which Herodotus claimed was more than two million strong with at least 10,000 elite warriors named [Persian Immortals](#). Xerxes was victorious during the initial battles.



At the [Battle of Thermopylae](#), a small force of Greek warriors led by King [Leonidas](#) of [Sparta](#) resisted the much larger Persian forces, but were ultimately defeated. According to Herodotus, the Persians broke the Spartan phalanx after a Greek man called [Ephialtes](#) betrayed his country by telling the Persians of another pass around the mountains. After Thermopylae, [Athens](#) was captured and the Athenians and Spartans were driven back to their last line of defense at the [Isthmus of Corinth](#) and in the [Saronic Gulf](#). The delay caused by the Spartans allowed Athens to be evacuated.

# Esther

Queen Esther (1878) as imagined by [Edwin Long](#).



**Esther**, born **Hadassah**, is the eponymous heroine of the Biblical [Book of Esther](#). According to the Bible she was a [Jewish](#) queen of the [Persian](#) king [Ahasuerus](#) (traditionally identified with [Xerxes I](#)). Her story is the basis for the celebration of [Purim](#) in Jewish tradition.

## Biblical story

King Ahasuerus held a 180-day feast in [Susa](#) (Shoushan). He ordered his queen, [Vashti](#), to appear before him and his guests wearing no veil, which was dishonorable, to display her beauty. But when the attendants delivered the king's command to Queen [Vashti](#), she refused to come. Furious at her refusal to obey, the king asked his wise men what should be done. One of them said that all the women in the empire would hear that "The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not." Then the women of the empire would despise their husbands. And this

would cause many problems in the kingdom. Therefore it would be good to depose her.

To find a new queen suitable to King Ahasuerus, it was decreed that beautiful young virgins be gathered to the palace from every province of his kingdom. Each woman underwent twelve months of beautification in his harem, after which she would go to the king. When the woman's turn came, she was given anything she wanted to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. She would then go to the king in the evening, and in the morning go to the harem where the [concubines](#) stayed. She would not return to the king unless he was pleased enough with her to summon her again by name.

For his wife and queen, King Ahasuerus chose Esther, whose parents died so her cousin [Mordecai](#) had to raise her, to replace the recalcitrant queen Vashti. "Esther 2:7 And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter." Esther was the daughter of a Benjamite, Abihail. When Cyrus gave permission for the exiles to return unto Jerusalem she stayed with Mordecai.

Shortly, when Mordecai was sitting at the king's gates, he overheard two of the king's officers guarding the gates plotting to assassinate the king. Mordecai let Esther know, and she warned the king about it, and Mordecai was given credit. The two officials were hanged on a gallows.

Soon after this, the king granted [Haman](#) the [Agagite](#), one of the most prominent princes of the realm, special honors. All the people were to bow down to Haman when he rode his horse through the streets. All complied except for Mordecai, a Jew, who would bow to no one but his God. This enraged Haman, who, with his wife and advisers, plotted against the Jews, making a plan to kill and extirpate all Jews throughout the Persian empire, selecting the date for this act by the drawing of lots ([Esther 3:7](#)). He gained the king's approval. He offered ten thousand silver talents to the king for approval of this plan, but the king refused to take them.

Mordecai tore his robes and put ash on his head (signs of mourning or grieving/anguish) on hearing this news. Esther sent clean clothes to him, but he refused them, explaining that deliverance for the Jews would come from some other place, but that Esther would be killed if she did not do what she could to stop this genocide - by talking to the king. Esther was not permitted to see the king unless he had asked for her, otherwise she could be put to death. Esther was terrified of this (she had not been called to the king in 30 days), so she and her maid-servants and her people the Jews of Persia fasted earnestly for three days before she built up the courage to enter the king's presence. He held out his scepter to her, showing that he accepted her visit. Esther requested a banquet with the king and Haman. During the banquet, she requested another banquet with the king and Haman the following day.

After the banquet Haman ordered a gallows constructed, 75 feet (23 m) high, on which to hang Mordecai. Meanwhile, the king was having trouble sleeping, and had some [histories](#) read to him. He was reminded that Mordecai had saved him from an assassination attempt, and had received no reward in return. Early the next morning, Haman came to the king to ask permission to hang Mordecai, but before he could, the king asked him "What should be done for the man whom the king delights to honor?" Haman thought the king meant himself, so he said that the man should wear a royal robe and be led on one of the king's horses through the city streets proclaiming before him, "This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!" The king thought this well, then asked Haman to lead Mordecai through the streets in this way, to honor him for previously telling the king of a plot against him. After doing this, Haman rushed home, full of grief. His wife said to him, "You will surely come to ruin!"

That night, during the banquet, Esther told the king of Haman's plan to massacre all Jews in the Persian Empire, and acknowledged her own Jewish ethnicity. The king was enraged and ordered Haman to be hanged on the gallows he had built for Mordecai. The king then appointed Mordecai as his prime minister, and gave the Jews the right to defend themselves against any enemy. The king also issued a second edict allowing the Jews to arm themselves, and kill not only their enemies but also their enemies' wives and children, as well as partake of the plunder. This precipitated a series of reprisals by the Jews against their enemies. This fight began on the 13th of [Adar](#), the date the Jews were originally slated to be exterminated. The Jews went on to kill only their would-be executioners, and not their wives and children, altogether eight hundred killed in Susa alone, 75,000 in the rest of the empire. The Jews also took no plunder.

With King Ahasuerus, she had one son, named Darius II, who would later rebuild the holy Temple in Jerusalem. Although the date of her death is not known, Jewish tradition indicates that Queen Esther's tomb is in [Hamadan](#), also known as [Ecbatana](#), located in what is now western Iran.



# Artaxerxes I of Persia

Prospective tomb of Artaxerxes I of Persia in [Naqsh-e Rostam](#)



**Artaxerxes I**, *Artaxšacā*, "whose reign is through [arta](#) (truth)"; the name has nothing to do with [Xerxes](#)) was king of the [Persian Empire](#) from 465 BC to 424 BC. He was the son of [Xerxes I of Persia](#) and [Amestris](#), daughter of [Otanes](#).

After Persia had been defeated at [Eurymedon](#), military action between Greece and Persia was at a standstill. When Artaxerxes I took power, he introduced a new Persian strategy of weakening the Athenians by funding their enemies in Greece. This indirectly caused the Athenians to move the treasury of the [Delian League](#) from the island of [Delos](#) to the Athenian acropolis. This funding practice inevitably prompted renewed fighting in 450 BC, where the Greeks attacked at the [Battle of Cyprus](#). After [Cimon's](#) failure to attain much in this expedition, the [Peace of Callias](#) was agreed between [Athens](#), [Argos](#) and [Persia](#) in 449 BC.

Artaxerxes I offered [asylum](#) to [Themistocles](#), who was the winner of the [Battle of Salamis](#), after Themistocles was [ostracized](#) from [Athens](#).

Artaxerxes commissioned [Ezra](#), a Jewish priest-scribe, by means of a letter of decree, to take charge of the ecclesiastical and civil affairs of the Jewish nation. A copy of this decree may be found in [Ezra 7:13-28](#).

[Ezra](#) thereby left Babylon in the first month of the seventh year (~ 457 BC) of Artaxerxes' reign, at the head of a company of Jews that included priests and Levites. They arrived in [Jerusalem](#) on the first day of the fifth month of the seventh year ([Hebrew Calendar](#)).

The rebuilding of the Jewish community in [Jerusalem](#) had begun under [Cyrus the Great](#), who had permitted Jews held captive in Babylon, to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the [Temple of Solomon](#). Consequently, a number of Jews returned to Jerusalem in 538 B.C., and the foundation of this "Second Temple" was laid the following year.

In Artaxerxes' 20th year (445 B.C.), [Nehemiah](#), the king's cupbearer, apparently was also a friend of the king as in that year Artaxerxes inquired after Nehemiah's sadness. [Nehemiah](#) related to him the plight of the Jewish people and that the city of Jerusalem was undefended. The king sent [Nehemiah](#) to Jerusalem with letters of safe passage to the governors in Trans-Euphrates, and to [Asaph](#), keeper of the royal forests, to make beams for the citadel by the Temple and to rebuild the city walls

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar\\_II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_II)

# Nebuchadnezzar II

*An engraving inside an onyx-stone-eye in a Marduk statue that depicts Nebuchadnezzar II*



**Nebuchadnezzar II** (c 634 – 562 BC) was king of the [Neo-Babylonian Empire](#), who reigned c. 605 BC – 562 BC. According to the Bible, he conquered [Judah](#) and [Jerusalem](#), and sent the Jews into [exile](#). He is credited with the construction of the [Hanging Gardens of Babylon](#). He is featured in the [Book of Daniel](#) and is also mentioned in several other books of the [Bible](#).

Nebuchadnezzar II was the eldest son, and successor, of [Nabopolassar](#), who delivered Babylon from its dependence on [Assyria](#) and laid [Nineveh](#) in ruins. According to [Berossus](#), some years before he became king of Babylon, he married [Amytis of Media](#), the daughter or granddaughter of [Cyaxares](#), king of the Medes, and thus the [Median](#) and Babylonian dynasties were united.

*Nebuchadnezzar faces off against [Zedekiah](#), the last king of [Judah](#), who holds a plan of [Jerusalem](#), in this [Baroque-era](#) depiction in [Zwiefalten Abbey](#) in [Germany](#)*



Nebuchadnezzar engaged in several military campaigns designed to increase Babylonian influence in Syria and Judah. An attempted invasion of [Egypt](#) in 601 BC was met with setbacks, however, leading to numerous rebellions among the states of the [Levant](#), including Judah. Nebuchadnezzar soon dealt with these rebellions, capturing [Jerusalem](#) in 597 BC and deposing King [Jeconiah](#), then in 587 BC due to rebellion, destroying both the city and the temple, and deporting many of the prominent citizens along with a sizable portion of the Jewish population of Judea to Babylon. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar engaged in a thirteen year siege of

[Tyre](#) (585–572 BC), which ended in a compromise, with the Tyrians accepting Babylonian authority.

Following the pacification of Tyre, Nebuchadnezzar turned again to Egypt. A [clay tablet](#) now in the [British Museum](#), states: "In the 37th year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the country of Babylon, he went to [Mitzraim](#) (Egypt) to make war. [Amasis](#), king of Egypt, collected [his army], and marched and spread abroad." Having completed the subjugation of Phoenicia, and a campaign against Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar set himself to rebuild and adorn the city of Babylon, and constructed canals, aqueducts, temples and reservoirs.

## Portrayal in the books of Daniel and Jeremiah

The second chapter of Daniel relates an account attributed to the second year of his reign, in which Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a huge image made of various materials (gold, silver, bronze, iron and clay). The prophet [Daniel](#) tells him God's interpretation, that it stands for the rise and fall of world powers, starting with Nebuchadnezzar's own as the golden head.

In Daniel chapter 3, Nebuchadnezzar erects a large idol made of gold for worship during a public ceremony on the plain of Dura. When three Jews, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (respectively renamed [Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego](#) by their captors, to facilitate their assimilation into Babylonian culture), refuse to take part, he has them cast into a [fiery furnace](#). They are protected by what Nebuchadnezzar describes as "a son of the gods" (Daniel 3:25) and emerge unscathed without even the smell of smoke.

[Nebuchadnezzar](#), by [William Blake](#)



While boasting over his achievements, Nebuchadnezzar is humbled by [God](#). The king loses his sanity and lives in the wild like an animal for seven years. After this, his sanity and position are restored and he praises and honors God.

Nebuchadnezzar is credited with the construction of the [Hanging Gardens](#), for his homesick wife [Amyitis](#) to remind her of her homeland, Medis in Persia. The **Hanging Gardens of Babylon** is considered to be one of the original [Seven Wonders of the Ancient World](#).

"The Garden was 100 feet (30 m) long by 100 ft wide and built up in tiers so that it resembled a theatre. Vaults had been constructed under the ascending terraces which carried the entire weight of the planted garden; the uppermost vault, which was seventy-five feet high, was the highest part of the garden, which, at this point, was on the same level as the city walls. The roofs of the vaults which supported the garden were constructed of stone beams some sixteen feet long, and over these were laid first a layer of reeds set in thick tar, then two courses of baked brick bonded by cement, and finally a covering of lead to prevent the moisture in the soil penetrating the roof.



On top of this roof enough topsoil was heaped to allow the biggest trees to take root. The earth was leveled off and thickly planted with every kind of tree. And since the galleries projected one beyond the other, where they were sunlit, they contained conduits for the water which was raised by pumps in great abundance from the river, though no one outside could see it being done."

A 16th-century hand-coloured engraving of the "Hanging Gardens of Babylon" by Dutch artist [Martin Heemskerck](#), with the [Tower of Babel](#) in the background.



# Darius II of Persia

**Darius II**, originally called **Ochus** and often surnamed **Nothus**, was king of the [Persian Empire](#) from 423 BC to 404 BC.

[Artaxerxes I](#), who died on December 25, 424 BC, was followed by his son [Xerxes II](#). After a month and a half Xerxes II was murdered by his brother Secydianus or [Sogdianus](#) (the form of the name is uncertain). His illegitimate brother, Ochus, [satrap](#) of [Hyrcania](#), rebelled against Sogdianus, and after a short fight killed him, and suppressed by treachery the attempt of his own brother Arsites to imitate his example. Ochus adopted the name Darius (in the chronicles he is called *Nothos*”).

*Prospective tomb of Darius II of Persia in [Naqsh-e Rostam](#)*



Of Darius's reign historians know very little (a rebellion of the [Medes](#) in 409 BC is mentioned by [Xenophon](#)), except that he was quite dependent on his wife [Parysatis](#). In the excerpts from [Ctesias](#) some [harem](#) intrigues are recorded, in which he played a disreputable part. As long as the power of [Athens](#) remained intact he did not meddle in [Greek](#) affairs; even the support which the Athenians in 413 BC gave to the rebel Amorges in [Caria](#) would not have roused him, had not the Athenian power been broken in the same year before [Syracuse](#). He gave orders to his satraps in [Asia Minor](#), [Tissaphernes](#) and [Pharnabazus](#), to send in the overdue tribute of the Greek towns, and to begin a war with Athens; for this purpose they entered into an alliance with Sparta. In 408 BC he sent his son [Cyrus](#) to Asia Minor, to carry on the war with greater energy. In 404 BC Darius II died after a reign of nineteen years, and was followed by [Artaxerxes II](#).

## Offspring

By [Parysatis](#)

[Artaxerxes II](#)

[Cyrus the Younger](#)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parysatis>

# Parysatis

**Parysatis** was the [5th-century BCE](#) illegitimate daughter of [Artaxerxes I](#), Emperor of Persia and Andia of [Babylon](#).

She was the half-sister of [Xerxes II](#), [Sogdianus](#) and [Darius II](#). She married her half-brother Darius and had four sons, [Artaxerxes II](#), [Cyrus the Younger](#), Ostanes and Oxathres. Her favorite was Cyrus and it was on account of her influence that the then teenager was given supreme command in western Anatolia in around [407 BCE](#). When her husband died, she supported her younger son Cyrus. When Cyrus was defeated in the [Battle of Cunaxa](#) she blamed the satrap [Tissaphernes](#) for the death of her son. She later had Tissaphernes assassinated.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artaxerxes\\_II\\_of\\_Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artaxerxes_II_of_Persia)

# Artaxerxes II of Persia

**Artaxerxes II Mnemon** ([Old Persian](#): *Artaxšaça*) was king of [Persia](#) from 404 BC until his death. He was a son of [Darius II of Persia](#) and [Parysatis](#).

He defended his position against his brother [Cyrus the Younger](#), who was defeated and killed at the [Battle of Cunaxa](#) in 401 BC, and against a revolt of the provincial governors, the [satraps](#) (366 – 358 BC). He also became involved in a war with Persia's erstwhile allies, the [Spartans](#), who, under [Agesilaus II](#), invaded [Asia Minor](#). In order to redirect the [Spartans](#) attention to Greek affairs, Artaxerxes subsidized their enemies: in particular the [Athenians](#), [Thebans](#), and [Corinthians](#). These subsidies helped to engage the [Spartans](#) in what would become known as the [Corinthian War](#). In 386 BC, Artaxerxes II betrayed his allies and came to an arrangement with Sparta, and in the [Treaty of Antalcidas](#) he forced his erstwhile allies to come to terms. This treaty restored control of the Greek cities of [Ionia](#) and [Aeolis](#) on the Anatolian coast to the Persians, while giving Sparta dominance on the Greek mainland.

He is reported to have had a number of wives. His main wife was [Stateira](#), until she was poisoned by Artaxerxes' mother Parysatis in about 400 BC. Another chief wife was a Greek woman of [Phocaea](#) named Aspasia.

## Offspring

By [Stateira](#)

[Artaxerxes III](#)

[Atossa](#), wife of [Artaxerxes II](#) & then [Artaxerxes III](#)

The unnamed wife of [Tissaphernes](#)

112 other unnamed sons



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stateira\\_\(wife\\_of\\_Artaxerxes\\_II\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stateira_(wife_of_Artaxerxes_II))

## Stateira (wife of Artaxerxes II)

**Stateira** (died about [400 BC](#)) was the name of a wife of [Artaxerxes II of Persia](#). Stateira was the daughter of the Persian nobleman Hydarnes. She married Artaxerxes II, the oldest son of [Darius II of Persia](#) and his wife [Parysatis](#). Probably Darius II wanted to establish good relations to the important noble family, from which Stateira descended, because also her brother Terituchmes married Amestris, a daughter of Darius II. But Terituchmes loved one of his half-sisters more than his royal bride and tried to start a rebellion. Therefore Parysatis had killed all children of Hydarnes and only spared the life of Stateira at the request of her husband.

Artaxerxes II took power in 404 BC after the death of his father. Stateira seems to have been his only legal wife in spite of his numerous concubines. She bore [Artaxerxes III of Persia](#), the heir to the throne, and probably other children.

Stateira was very popular with the people, allegedly because she left the curtains open when she drove in her carriage and because she talked to the ordinary people. She supported her husband in his quarrel with his brother [Cyrus the Younger](#) and criticized sharp-tongued her mother-in-law. Reportedly the intense hate between both women caused Parysatis to promote the extramarital relations of Artaxerxes II in order to hurt his wife. Stateira also publicly spoke up against the cruelties of the queen mother at the Persian court. Finally Parysatis had Stateira murdered. She carved a bird with a poisoned knife in this way that only one half of the animal was mixed with the poison. This half was served to Stateira when they were dining together. The poisoned meal caused a painful death of Stateira.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sisygambis>

## Sisygambis Princess of Persia

**Sisygambis** was the daughter of king [Artaxerxes II Memnon](#), who married Arsames of Ostanes and was the mother of [Darius III of Persia](#), whose reign was ended during the wars of [Alexander the Great](#).

At the [Battle of Issus](#) (333 BC), Darius' army was routed and the Persian king fled the field, leaving his extended family, including his mother, his wife [Stateira I](#), his children, and many others to the mercy of Alexander. Alexander captured them, but treated them well. Stateira I died giving birth around 332 BC and some suspect that the child was that of Alexander.

[Quintus Curtius Rufus](#) informs us of the reaction of Sisygambis to this desertion by Darius; Sisygambis never forgave him, and when called upon to mourn his death was reported to have said, *I have only one son (Alexander) and he is king of all Persia*.

She married her granddaughter, [Stateira II](#), to Alexander in 324 BC. On hearing of the death of Alexander, Sisygambis had herself sealed into her rooms and died of grief and starvation.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darius\\_III\\_of\\_Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darius_III_of_Persia)

# Darius III of Persia

**Darius III (Artashata)** (c. 380–330 BC, was the last king of the [Achaemenid Empire](#) of [Persia](#) from 336 BC to 330 BC. It was under his rule that the Persian Empire was conquered during the [Wars of Alexander the Great](#).

[Artaxerxes III of Persia](#) and all of his sons except one, [Arses](#), were killed off through the assassination plots of a [Vizier](#) named [Bagoas](#), who installed [Arses](#) on the throne as a puppet king. When he found out [Arses](#) couldn't be controlled, however, Bagoas killed him off as well in 336 BC, and installed to the throne a man named Codomannus, the last surviving legitimate heir to the Persian throne. Codomannus was a distant relative of the royal house who had distinguished himself in a combat of champions in a war against the [Cadusi](#) and was serving at the time as a royal courier. Codomannus was the son of [Arsames](#), son of [Ostanes](#), one of Artaxerxes's brothers and [Sisygambis](#), daughter of [Artaxerxes II Memnon](#). He took the throne at the age of 46.

**Codomannus** took the regnal name Darius III, and quickly demonstrated his independence from his assassin benefactor. Bagoas then tried to poison Darius as well, when he learned that even Darius couldn't be controlled, but Darius was warned and forced Bagoas to drink the poison himself.

*Darius's flight at the Battle of Gaugamela (18th-century ivory relief)*



In the spring of 334 BC, Philip's heir, [Alexander the Great](#), who had himself been confirmed as [Hegemon](#) by the [League of Corinth](#), invaded Asia Minor at the head of a combined Macedonian and Greek army. This invasion, which marked the beginning of the [Wars of Alexander the Great](#), was followed almost immediately by the victory of Alexander over the Persians at [Battle of the Granicus](#). Darius never showed up for the battle, because there was no reason for him to suppose that Alexander intended to conquer the whole of

Asia.

Darius did not actually take the field against Alexander's army until a year and a half after Granicus, at the [Battle of Issus](#) in 333 BC. His forces outnumbered Alexander's soldiers by at least a 2 to 1 ratio, but Darius was still outflanked, defeated, and forced to flee. It is told by [Arrian](#) that at the Battle of Issus the moment the Persian left went to pieces under Alexander's attack and Darius, in his war-chariot, saw that it was cut off, he incontinently fled – indeed, he led the race for safety. On the way, he left behind his chariot, his bow, and his royal mantle, all of which were later picked up by Alexander. Greek sources recount that Darius fled out of fear at the Battle of Issus and again two years later at the [Battle of Gaugamela](#) despite commanding a larger force in a defensive position each time. At the Battle of Issus, Darius III even caught

Alexander by surprise and failed to defeat the Greek forces. Darius fled so far so fast, that Alexander was able to capture Darius's headquarters, and take Darius's family as prisoners in the process. Darius petitioned to Alexander through letters several times to get his family back, but Alexander refused to do so unless Darius would acknowledge him as the new emperor of Persia.

Circumstances were more in Darius's favor at the [Battle of Gaugamela](#) in 331 BC. He had a good number of troops who had been organized on the battlefield properly, he had the support of the armies of several of his satraps, and the ground on the battlefield was almost perfectly even, so as not to impede movement. Despite all these beneficial factors, he still fled the battle before any victor had been decided and deserted his experienced commanders as well as one of the largest armies ever assembled. Another source accounts that when Darius perceived the fierce attack of Alexander, as at Issus he turned his chariot around, and was the first to flee, once again abandoning all of his soldiers and his property to be taken by Alexander. Many Persian soldiers lost their lives that day, so many in fact that after the battle the casualties of the enemy ensured that Darius would never again raise an imperial army. Darius reportedly offered all of his empire west of the Euphrates River to Alexander in exchange for peace several times, each time denied by Alexander against the advice of his senior commanders.

## Flight, imprisonment and death

When at Ecbatana Darius learned of Alexander's approaching army, he decided to retreat to Bactria where he could better use his cavalry and mercenary forces on the more even ground of the plains of Asia. He led his army through the Caspian Gates, the main road through the mountains that would work to slow a following army. The Persian forces became increasingly demoralized with the constant threat of a surprise attack from Alexander, leading to many desertions and eventually a coup led by Bessus, a satrap, and Nabarzanes, who managed all audiences with the King and was in charge of the palace guard. The two men suggested to Darius that the army regroup under Bessus and that power would be transferred back to the King once Alexander was defeated. Darius obviously did not accept this plan, and his conspirators became more anxious to remove him for his successive failures against Alexander and his forces. Patron, a Greek mercenary, encouraged Darius to accept a bodyguard of Greek mercenaries rather than his usual Persian guard to protect him from Bessus and Nabarzanes, but the King could not



accept for political reasons and grew accustomed to his fate. Bessus and Nabarzanes eventually bound Darius and threw him in an ox-cart while they ordered the Persian forces to continue on. According to Curtius' *History of Alexander*, at this point Alexander and a small, mobile force arrived and threw the Persians into a panic, leading to Bessus and two other conspirators, Satibarzanes and Barsaentes, wounding the king with their javelins and leaving him to die.

*Alexander covers the corpse of Darius with his cloak (18th-century engraving)*

A Macedonian soldier found Darius either dead or dying in the wagon shortly thereafter a disappointment to Alexander, who wanted to capture Darius alive. Alexander saw Darius's dead body in the wagon, and took the signet ring off the dead king's finger. Afterwards he sent Darius's body back to Persepolis and ordered that he be buried, like all his royal predecessors, in the royal tombs. Alexander gave Darius a magnificent funeral and eventually married Darius' daughter [Statira](#) at Opis in 324 BC.

After killing Darius, [Bessus](#) took the regal name Artaxerxes V and began calling himself the King of Asia. He would later be captured by Alexander, and subsequently tortured and executed.

*The charge of the Persian scythed chariots at the Battle of Gaugamela by Andre Castaigne*



THE CHARGE OF THE PERSIAN SCYTHED CHARIOTS.

After the battle, Parmenion rounded up the Persian baggage train while Alexander and his own bodyguard pursued Darius. As at [Issus](#), substantial amounts of loot were gained following the battle, with 4,000 talents captured, as well as the King's personal chariot and bow. The [war elephants](#) were also captured. In all, it was a disastrous defeat for the Persians and possibly one of Alexander's finest victories.

Darius had managed to escape the battle with a small core of his forces remaining intact. The Bactrian cavalry and Bessus managed to catch up with him, as did some of the survivors of the Royal Guard and 2,000 Greek mercenaries.

At this point, the [Persian Empire](#) was divided into two halves—East and West. On his escape, Darius gave a speech to what remained of his army. He planned to head further east and raise another army to face Alexander, assuming that the Macedonians would head towards [Babylon](#). At the same time, he dispatched letters to his eastern satraps asking them to remain loyal.

The satraps, however, had other intentions. Bessus murdered Darius before fleeing eastwards. Alexander pursued Bessus, eventually capturing and executing him the following year. The majority of the remaining satraps gave their loyalty to Alexander and were allowed to keep their positions. The Persian Empire is traditionally considered to have ended with the death of Darius.



# Stateira I Queen of Persia

**Stateira I** (died circa 332 BC) was the wife of [Darius III of Persia](#) of the [Achaemenid dynasty](#). She was known as the most beautiful woman on Earth and, as was the custom for royal Persian women, accompanied her husband while he went to war. It was because of this that she was captured by [Alexander the Great](#) after the [Battle of Issus](#), in 333 BC at [Issus](#). Her husband abandoned his entire family at the site as he fled from Alexander, including his mother, [Sisygambis](#), and his daughters [Stateira II](#) and [Drypteis](#). Alexander is reported to have treated them with great respect.

Stateira I died giving birth around 332 BC. Some sources suggest the father of the child might not have been Darius, but Alexander perhaps. Since Darius' mother referred to Alexander as *her only son* after having been abandoned by Darius and captured by Alexander, it is likely that he took over the household and may have assumed the role of king to Queen Stateira. In 324 BC, her daughter Stateira II, married Alexander and her other daughter, Drypteis, married one of his chief warriors.



When Alexander died one year later these royal Persian women mourned his death, further indicating personal relationships rather than merely diplomatic ones. Both of her daughters and their families were assassinated—by another wife of Alexander, [Roxana](#), seeking in vain, to assure that her son would succeed him—and their grandmother committed suicide.

The death of Stateira (1696).

## Stateira II



*The marriages of Stateira II to Alexander III of Macedon and her sister, Drypetis, to Hephæstion at Susa in 324 BC*

**Stateira II**, possibly also known as **Barsine**, (died 323 BC) was the daughter of [Stateira I](#) and [Darius III of Persia](#). After her father's defeat at the [Battle of Issus](#), Stateira and her sisters became captives of [Alexander of Macedon](#). They were treated well, and she became Alexander's second wife at [The Susa weddings](#) in 324 BC. At the same ceremony Alexander also married her cousin,

[Parysatis](#), daughter of Darius's predecessor. After Alexander's death in 323 BC, Stateira was killed by [Roxana](#), his first wife.

Stateira was the eldest daughter of [Darius III of Persia](#) and his wife, also named [Stateira](#).<sup>[3]</sup> Both of her parents were frequently described as handsome or beautiful, leading Tarn to speculate Stateira "was sufficiently good-looking, at any rate for a princess, to be called ... beautiful."<sup>[4]</sup> Her birthdate is unknown, but by 333 BC she was of marriageable age. After [Alexander the Great](#) invaded Persia, Stateira and her family accompanied Darius's army. In November 333 Alexander's army defeated the Persians at the [Battle of Issus](#). Darius fled, and the Macedonian army soon captured his family. Although many captured Persian women were treated brutally, under Alexander's orders Stateira, her mother, her sister [Drypetis](#), her younger brother, and their paternal grandmother, [Sisygambis](#), were treated well and allowed to retain their social status.

For the next two years, Stateira and her family followed Alexander's army. Her mother died at some point between 333 and 331, leaving Sisygambis to act as her guardian. Although Darius tried several times to ransom his family, Alexander refused to return the women. Darius then offered Alexander Stateira's hand in marriage and agreed to relinquish his claim to some of the land Alexander had already seized in exchange for ending the war. Alexander declined the offer reminding Darius that he already had custody of both the land and Stateira, and that if he chose to marry her Darius's permission would not be necessary

In 330 BC, Alexander left Stateira and her family in [Susa](#) with instructions that she should be taught Greek. Historian Elizabeth Donnelly Carney speculates that Alexander had already decided to marry Stateira and was preparing her for life as his wife Stateira became Alexander's second wife in 324 BC, almost ten years after her capture, at in a mass ceremony known as [The Susa weddings](#). The marriage ceremony lasted five days. Ninety other Persian noblewomen were married to Macedonian and Greek soldiers who were loyal to Alexander; this included Drypetis, who married Alexander's friend, [Hephæstion](#) At the same ceremony, Alexander married

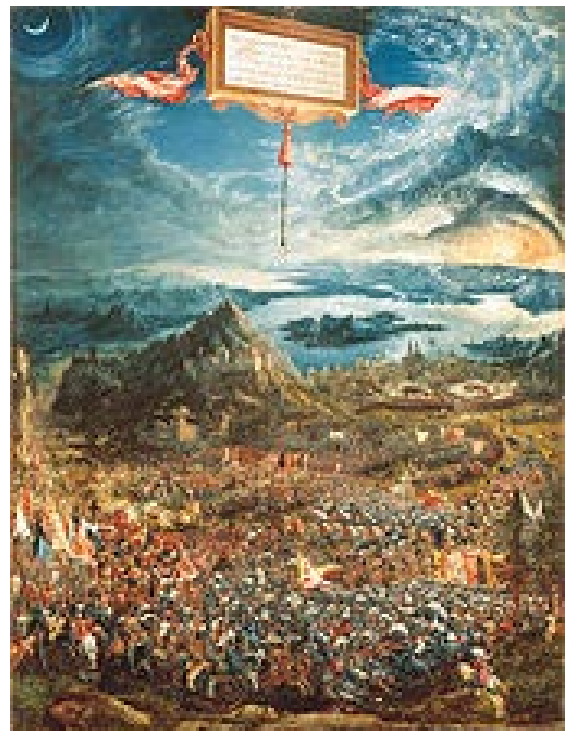
[Parysatis](#), daughter of previous Persian ruler [Artaxerxes III](#). It was fairly common practice for conquering rulers to marry the widow or daughter of the man they had deposed. By wedding both women, Alexander cemented his ties to both branches of the royal family of the [Achaemenid Empire](#)

Alexander died the following year, 323 BC. After his death, his first wife [Roxana](#) colluded with [Perdiccas](#) to kill Stateira. Roxana wished to cement her own position and that of her son, [Alexander](#) by ridding herself of a rival who could be - or claim to be - pregnant.

*A mural in Pompeii, depicting Alexander and a woman who may be Stateira.*



Altdorfer's The Battle of Alexander at Issus.



# Artaxerxes III

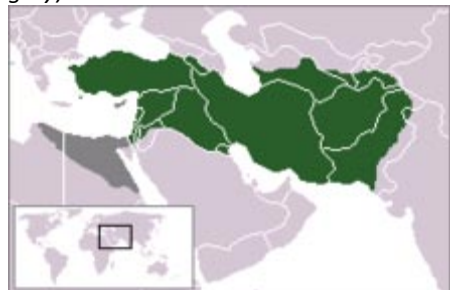
**Artaxerxes III of Persia** (*Ca.* 425 BC – 338 BC) was the [Great King \(Shah\) of Persia](#) and the eleventh [Emperor](#) of the [Achaemenid Empire](#), as well as the first [Pharaoh](#) of the [31st dynasty](#) of [Egypt](#). He was the son and successor of [Artaxerxes II](#) and was succeeded by his son, [Arses of Persia](#) (also known as Artaxerxes IV). His reign coincided with the reign of [Philip II](#) in [Macedon](#) and [Nectanebo II](#) in Egypt.

Before ascending the throne Artaxerxes was a [satrap](#) and commander of his father's army. Artaxerxes came to power after one of his brothers was executed, another committed suicide, the last murdered and his father, [Artaxerxes II](#) died at the age of 86. Soon after becoming king, Artaxerxes murdered all of the royal family to secure his place as emperor. He started two major campaigns against Egypt. The first campaign failed, and was followed up by rebellions throughout the western empire. In 343 BC, Artaxerxes defeated [Nectanebo II](#), the [Pharaoh](#) of Egypt, driving him from [Egypt](#), stopping a revolt in Phoenicia on the way.

In Artaxerxes' later years, [Philip II of Macedon](#)'s power was increasing in Greece, where he tried to convince the Greeks to revolt against [Achaemenid Persia](#). His activities were opposed by Artaxerxes, and with his support, the city of [Perinthus](#) resisted a Macedonian siege. There is evidence for a renewed building policy at [Persepolis](#) in his later life, where Artaxerxes erected a new palace and built his own tomb but projects like the Unfinished Gate.

After his success in Egypt, Artaxerxes returned to Persia and spent the next few years effectively quelling insurrections in various parts of the Empire so that a few years from the conquest of Egypt, the [Persian Empire](#) was firmly entrenched in the grasp of the emperor. Egypt remained a part of the Persian Empire until [Alexander the Great](#)'s conquest of Egypt.

*[Persian Empire](#) at the beginning of Artaxerxes III's rule (green), and his conquests and suppressed rebellions(Dark grey)*

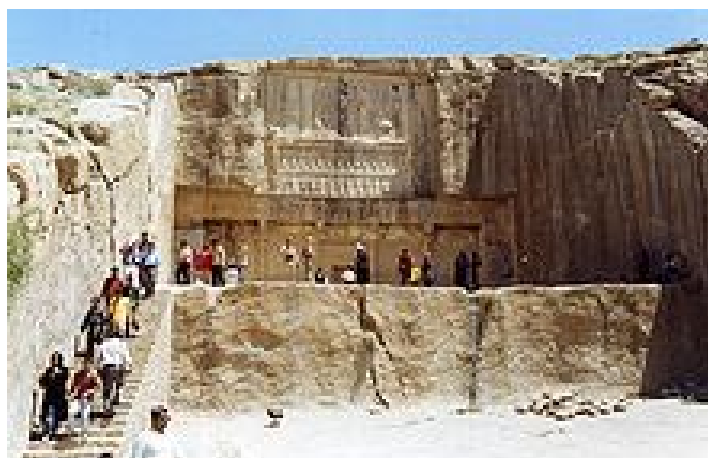


After the conquest of Egypt, there were no more revolts or rebellions against Artaxerxes. Mentor and [Bagoas](#), the two generals who had most distinguished themselves in the Egyptian campaign, were advanced to posts of the highest importance. Mentor, who was governor of the entire Asiatic seaboard, exerted himself successfully to reduce to subjection the many chiefs who during the recent troubles

had assumed an independent authority, and in the course of a few years brought the whole coast into complete submission and dependence. Bagoas was brought back to the capital with Artaxerxes, became the main figure in internal administration, and maintained tranquillity throughout the rest of the Empire. The last six years of the reign of Artaxerxes the Persian Empire was governed by a vigorous and successful government.<sup>[15]</sup>



*Tomb of Artaxerxes III at Persepolis*



Persian forces in [Ionia](#) and [Lycia](#) regained their control of the [Aegean](#) and the [Mediterranean Sea](#) and took over much of [Athens](#)'s former island empire. [Isocrates](#) of Athens started his speeches calling for a 'crusade against the barbarians' but there was not enough strength left in any of the Greek city-states to answer his call. In 341 BC, Artaxerxes returned to [Babylon](#), where he apparently proceeded to build a great Apadana whose description is present in the works of Diodorus.

Although there weren't any rebellions in the Persian Empire itself, the growing power and territory of [Philip II of Macedon](#) in [Macedon](#) (against which [Demosthenes](#) was in vain warning the Athenians) attracted the consideration of Artaxerxes; and he ordered that Persian influence was to be used to check and depress the rising kingdom. In 340 BC, a force was consequently dispatched to assist the [Thracian prince, Cersobleptes](#), to maintain his independence; and such effectual aid was given to the city of [Perinthus](#) that the numerous and well-appointed army with which Philip had commenced its siege was completely baffled and compelled to give up the attempt. By the last year of Artaxerxes' rule Philip II already had plans for invasion of the Persian Empire, which would crown his career as world conqueror; But the Greeks did not unite with him.

In 338 BC Artaxerxes was poisoned by Bagoas with the assistance of a physician

## Family

Artaxerxes III was the son of [Artaxerxes II](#) and Statira. Artaxerxes II had more than 115 sons by many wives, most of them however were illegitimate. Some of Ochus' noticeable siblings were Rodogune, Apama, Sisygambis, Ocha, Darius and Ariaspes, most of them were murdered soon after his ascension Artaxerxes married his niece and the daughter of Oxathres, brother of the future king [Darius III](#). His children were [Arses](#), the future king of Persia, Bisthanes, and Parysatis.

## Byzantine Emperors

1. **Dobronegra Mariya Vladimirovna, Princess of Kiev (15231, 27<sup>th</sup> great-grandmother):** *Born* about 1011, of Kiev, Ukraine; *Died* 1087. *Married* about 1039; **Casimir (Kazimierz) I Karol "the Restorer", King of Poland (15232, 27<sup>th</sup> ggf):** *Born* 25 July 1016, of Krakow, Poland; *Died* 28 November 1058; (See [Kings of Poland](#))

2. **Vladimir I "the Great" Grand Prince of Kiev (15065, 28<sup>th</sup> ggf):** (See [Grand Princes of Kiev](#)) *Born*, Kiev, Ukraine; *Died* 15 July 1015, Berestovo, Kiev, Ukraine; *Married* 988/989, Kherson, Ukraine; **Anna, Princess of the Byzantine Empire (18307, 28<sup>th</sup> ggm):** *Born* 13 March 963, of Constantinople, Turkey; *Died* 1011.

Anna's Parents--

3. **Romanos II, Emperor of the Byzantine Empire (17295, 29<sup>th</sup> ggf):** *Born* 940, of Constantinople, Turkey; *Died* 15 March 963; *Married* about 956, Constantinople, Turkey; **Theophano, Empress of the Byzantine Empire:** *Born* about 936, of Constantinople, Turkey.

Theophano's Parents--

□ **I. Anastaso of The Byzantine Empire:** *Born* 912.

Romanos' Parents--

4. **Constantine (Konstantinos) VII, "Porphyrogenitos" Emperor of the Byzantine Empire (17396, 30<sup>th</sup> ggf):** *Born* about 906, of Constantinople, Turkey; *Died* 9 November 959; *Married* 27 April 919, Constantinople, Turkey; **Eleni of Lekapene, Empress of the Byzantine Empire:** *Born* about 906, of Constantinople, Turkey; *Died* 19 September 961. Constantine VII, known as porphyrogenitos ("born in the purple"), was sole ruler of the Byzantine Empire from 945. He is chiefly remembered for his writings, which are valuable sources for the history of his time. They include *De thematibus*, a description of the Byzantine provinces, *De administrando imperio*, which contains a wealth of information about the peoples living on the borders of the Empire, and *De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, dealing with the customs and ceremonies of the Byzantine court.

Eleni's Parents and Grandfather--

□ **I. Romanos I, Emperor of the Byzantine Empire:** *Born* about 869, Lakape, Armenia; *Died* 15 June 948, Isle of Prote, Makedhonia, Greece; *Married* after 891, Constantinople, Turkey; **Theodora, Empress of the Byzantine Empire:** *Born* about 874, of Constantinople, Turkey; *Died* 20 February 923.

□ **A. Theophylaktos Abstartus:** *Born* 843.

Constantine's Parents--

5. **Leon (Leo) VI "the Wise", Emperor of the Byzantine Empire (18260, 31<sup>st</sup> ggf):** *Born* 19 September 866, of Constantinople, Turkey; *Died* 12 May 912; *Married* 898; **Zoe Zautzina, Empress of the Byzantine Empire:** *Born* about 874, of Constantinople, Turkey; *Died* late in 899.

Zoe's Father—

□ **I. Stylianos Zauts:** *Born* about 850.

Leon's Parents--

6. **Basil (Basileos) I, Emperor of the Byzantine Empire (18312, 32<sup>nd</sup> ggf):** *Born* 812 of Adrianople, Turkey; *Died* 29 August 886; *Married* about 865, of Constantinople; **Eudoxia Ingerina, Empress of the Byzantine Empire:** *Born* about 835, of Constantinople, Turkey.

7. **Konstantinos Porphyrogenitus of Adrianople (18421, 33<sup>rd</sup> ggf) :** *Born* about 786 of, Adrianople, Turkey; *Died* about 828.

8. **Hmayeak of Adrianople (18425, 34<sup>th</sup> ggf):** *Born* about 755; *Died* about 797. Other son of #9 is Marius Mamikonian of Armenia

9. **Artavazd Mamikonian (18424, 35<sup>th</sup> ggf):** *Born* about 720; *Died* about 778.

10. **Hmyayeak Mamikonian.(18589)**

11. **Artavazd Mamikonian:** *Born* about 650; *Died* about 693.

12. **Hamazasp III Mamikonian of Armenia:** *Born* about 610; *Died* about 658.

13. **Dawith (David) Mamikonian:** *Born* about 580.

14. **Vahan II Mamikonian, Prince of Taron:** *Born* about 555; *Died* about 600.

15. **Mousegh Mamikonian:** *Born* about 530; *Died* about 593.

16. **Hmayeak Mamikonian:** *Born* about 490; *Died* about 555.

17. **Vard Mamikonian, Viceroy of Armenia:** *Born* about 450; *Died* about 509.

18. **General Hmayeak Mamikonian:** *Born* about 410; *Died* about 451 Battle; *Married* **Dzoyk.**

19. **Hamazasp I, Prince of Mamikonids:** *Born* about 345; *Died* about 416; *Married* **Sahakanoysh of Armenia.**

Sahakanoysh's Parents--

20. **Isaac I, King of Armenia:** *Born* about 351; *Died* about 438.

21. **Narses I, King of Armenia:** *Born* about 335; *Died* about 373; *Married* **Sandukht.**

22. **Athenagenes;** *Married* **Bambisn.**

23. **Chosroes III, King of Armenia:** *Died* about 339.

24. **Tiran (Helios), King of Armenia:** *Born* about 280; *Died* about 330; *Married* **Asxen of Alania.**

25. **Khusraw II, King of West Armenia:** *Born* about 236; *Died* about 297.

26. **Tiridat II, King of Armenia:** *Born* about 195; *Died* about 252.

27. **Khusraw I "the Brave", King of Armenia:** *Born* about 175; *Died* about 216.

28. **Vologaeses V, King of Parthia:** *Born* about 145; *Died* about 208; *Married* **A princess of Iberia.**

Volgases' Parents, through Great-Great-Grandparents--

- **I. Vologaeses IV, King of Parthia:** *Born* about 115; *Died* about 192.
- **A. Vologaeses III, King of Parthia:** *Died* about 148.
- **i. Vologaeses II, King of Parthia.**
- **a. Vologaeses I, King of Parthia.**

A Princess of Iberia's Parents--

- 29. **Pharasmenes III, King of Iberia:** *Died* about 185.
- 30. **Rhadamiste I, King of Iberia:** *Died* about 135.
- 31. **Pharasmenes II, King of Iberia:** *Died* about 132.
- 32. **Amazaspus I, King of Iberia:** *Died* about 116.
- 33. **Mithradates I, King of Iberia:** *Died* about 106.
- 34. **Pharasmenes I, King of Iberia.**
- 35. **Koudjide Kartham;** *Married A princess of Iberia.*

A Princess of Iberia's Parents--

- 36. **Pharnabazus I, King of Iberia.**
- 37. **Artaces I, King of Iberia.**
- 38. **Artaxias I, King of Iberia.**
- 39. **Artavasdes I, King of Iberia.**
- 40. **Tigranes I, King of Iberia.**
- 41. **Artaxias I, King of Armenia.**
- 42. **Zariadres I, King of Sophene.**
- 43. **Xerses I, King of Armenia;** *Married Antiochis of Syria.*

Antiochis' Parents through Great-Great-Grandparents—

- **I. Antiochus III, King of Syria.**
- **A. Seleucus II, King of Syria.**
- **i. Antiochus II, Theos King of Syria.**
- **a. Antiochus I, King of Syria.**
- **I). Seleucus I, Nictator King of Syria.**

Xerses' Parents--

- 44. **Arsames I, King of Armenia.**
- 45. **Samos I, King of Armenia.**
- 46. **Aroandes III, King of Armenia.**
- 47. **Mithranes I, King of Armenia.**
- 48. **Aroandes II, King of Armenia (18542)**
- 49. **Aroandes I, Satrap of Armenia; Married Rodogune of Persia. (18428, 75<sup>th</sup> ggm)**  
<http://fabpedigree.com/s053/f139755.htm>

Rodgune's Parents--

- 50. **Artaxerxes II, King of Persia. (18431)**
- 51. **Darius II, King of Persia (18433); Married Parysatis. (18434)**
- 52. **Artaxerxes I, King of Persia (18435); Married Andia (18437): Born Babylon.**

Andia's Parents--

- I. **Nebuchadrezzar IV, King of Babylon.**
- A. **Nebuchadrezzar III, Prince of Babylon.**
- i. **Nebuchadrezzar II, King of Babylon; (18440, 81<sup>st</sup> ggf)** *Married* Amyitis.
- a. **Nabopolassar, King of Babylon.**

Artaxarxes' Parents--

- 53. **Xerses I, King of Persia (18442, 79<sup>th</sup> ggf);** *Married* **Esther. (79<sup>th</sup> ggm)**

Esther's Father through Great-Great-Great-Great-GreatGrandfather--

- I. **Abihail.**
- A. **Shimei.**
- i. **Kish.**
- a. **Abiel.**
- I). **Zeror.**
- A). **Bechorath.**
- i). **Aphiah.**

Xerses's Parents—

- 54. **Darius I, King of Persia (18443);** *Married* **Atossa. (18444)**

Darius' Father--

- I. **Hystaspes.**

Atossa's Parents--

- 55. **Cyrus II "The Great", King of Persia (18445) ;** *Married* **Neithiyti. (81<sup>st</sup> ggm)**

Cyrus's Parents through Great-Great-Grandparents--

- I. **Cambyses I, King of Persia; Married A princess of the Mede.**

Cambyses' Father--

- A. **Cyrus I, King of Persia. (83<sup>rd</sup> ggf)**
- A princess of the Mede's Parents--
- B. **Astyages, King of the Mede.**
- i. **Cyaxares, King of the Mede.**
- a. **Khshathrita, King of the Mede.**

Neithiyti's Parents--

- 56. **Wahibre (Ha'a'ib.re)**
- 57. **Psamtek II Nefer.Ib.Re'**
- 58. **Necho II Wehem.Ib.Re'**
- 58. **Psamtek I Wahib.Re'**
- 59. **Necho I Men.Kheper.Re'**
- 60 **Nekau ba Irib Re'**
- 61. **Bakenranef Wah Ka Re'**
- 62. **Tefnakhte Shepses re'**
- 63. **Osorkon "C", Great Chief of Ma.**
- 64. **Pimay, Great Chief of Ma.**

65. **Shoshenk III, Great Chief of Ma; Married Es ankh Djed Bast. (93<sup>rd</sup> ggf)**

Es' Parents--

66. **Takelot "B", High Priest of Ptah at Memphis; Married Es.ankh Djed.Bast**

67. **Shoshenk "D", High Priest of Ptah at Memphis.**

68. **Osorkon II.**

69. **Takelot I.**

70. **Osorkon I; Married Maat 'Ka Re'**

Maat's Parents--

71. **Psusennes II, High Priest of Amun at Thebes.**

72. **Pinudjem II, High Priest of Amun at Thebes.**

73. **MenKheperre', High Priest of Amun at Thebes; Married Istemkheb.**

Istemkheb's Parents--

74. **Psibkha'emne I**

75. **Smendes, Governor of Tanis; Married Henttawy.**

Henttawy's Parents--

76. **Ramses XI, Pharaoh of Egypt. (104<sup>th</sup> ggf)**

77. **Ramses X, Pharaoh of Egypt.**

78. **Ramses IX, Pharaoh of Egypt.**

79. **Ramses VI, Pharaoh of Egypt.**

80. **Ramses III, Pharaoh of Egypt. Died 1151 B.C.**

81. **Seknakht, Prince of Egypt.**

82. **Ramses II, Pharaoh of Egypt. Died 1212 B.C.** An Egyptian King (pharaoh) of the 19th dynasty,

Ramses II (reigned 1304-1237 BC) is remembered for his military campaigns and his extensive building program, the remains of which are still conspicuous. Succeeding his father, Seti I, Ramses pursued a vigorous foreign policy by attacking the Hittites, the chief opponents of the Egyptian empire in the East. His first campaigns against them (1300-1299 BC) ended in an Egyptian retreat after a violent battle at Kadesh in Syria, during which Ramses narrowly escaped capture. He also fought in Trans-Jordan and Nubia and fortified the western coast road of Egypt against Libyan invaders.

Ramses was responsible for building many large temples, most notably that at Abu Simbel in Nubia. He also founded a new royal capital at Per-Ramesses ("the house of Ramses") in the Nile's eastern delta, where the Israelites may have labored before the Exodus. During his long reign, Ramses had more than 100 children, and by his death in 1237, he had outlived 11 sons. He was succeeded by the 12th, Merneptah.

83. **Seti I, Pharaoh of Egypt (111<sup>th</sup> ggf): Died 1279 B.C.; Buried Valley of the Kings, Egypt.** Seti I, the second King in the Egyptian 19th dynasty (reigned c.1318-c.1304 BC), succeeded his father, Ramses I. Seti made conquests in Syria and Palestine and is remembered for his work on the temples at Karnak and for his magnificent tomb at Thebes. He was succeeded by Ramses II.

84. **Ramses I, Pharaoh of Egypt:** *Died* 1291 B.C.; *Married Sitre* Ramses I, founder of the 19th dynasty of Egyptian kings (pharaohs), reigned for little more than a year, between 1320 and 1318 BC.

Apparently chosen to succeed by the last pharaoh of the 18th dynasty, Horemheb, in whose army he had been a commander. Ramses planned and started to build the colonnaded hall in the temple at Karnak.

Sitre's Parents--

85. **A prince of Egypt.** Brother to Tutankhamen.( <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tutankhamun> )

86. **Akhenaton (Ikhnaton), Pharaoh of Egypt;** *Died* 1334 B.C.; *Married Nefertiti.* (114<sup>th</sup> ggm)

Nefertiti's Parents--

□ **I. Yuya, High Priest of Mim at Akhmim;** *Married Tuya*

Akhenaton's Parents--

**87. Amenhotep III Pharaoh of Egypt** (115<sup>th</sup> great grandfather) ; *Died* 1349 B.C.; *Married* Tiye: *Born* 1400 B.C.; *Died* 1360 B.C. (See Egyptian Royal Ancestry)



# **Sassanid Empire (224-c. 670) نای‌ن‌اس‌اس**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ardashir\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ardashir_I)

## **Ardashir I**



**Ardashir I**, founder of the [Sassanid dynasty](#), was ruler of [Istakhr](#) (since 206?), subsequently [Persia](#) (since 208?), and finally "King of Kings of [Persia](#)" (since 226) with the overthrow of the [Parthian Empire](#). The dynasty Ardashir founded would rule for four centuries until overthrown by the [Rashidun](#) Caliphate in 651.

*Silver coin of Ardashir I with a fire altar on its verso (British Museum London)*

*Relief of Ardashir I, Naghsh-e-Rostam, near Persepolis, Iran*



Ardashir was born in the late 2nd century in [Istakhr](#), what is present-day [Fars](#) in [Iran](#), then a vassal kingdom of the [Parthian Arsacids](#). According to one tradition, he inherited the throne of [Istakhr](#) from his father Pāpağ (sometimes written as Pāpak or Babak) who had deposed the previous king [Gochihr](#) to gain the throne for himself. His mother may have been named Rodhagh. Prior to succeeding his father, Ardashir is said to have ruled the town of [Darabgerd](#) and received the title of

["argbadh"](#). Upon Pāpağ's death, Ardashir's elder brother Šāpūr ascended to the throne. However, Ardashir rebelled against his brother and took the kingship for himself in 208.

Most Scholars have assumed that Ardashir's father was Papak, a vassal king, and his grandfather was Sasan. However, there is another theory of his lineage, which is found in the Middle Persian book *Book of Deeds of Ardashir Son of Papak*. This story is later confirmed by Ferdowsi's *Shahname*. This theory suggests that Sasan married the daughter of Papak after the latter discovers that Sasan is of royal Achaemenid descent. Hence Ardashir was born. From here onwards Sasan disappears from the story and Papak is considered the father. Ardashir helped Papak conquer some parts of Fars. It is possible that after Papak's death, his son Shapur, had a short reign which was probably ended by an accidental death. Around 211/12 Ardashir became ruler of Papak's kingdom, which was confined to central Fars. Soon he extended his realm into Kerman to the east and Elymais to the west, and demanding fealty from the local princes of [Fars](#) and gaining control over the neighboring provinces of [Kerman](#), [Isfahan](#), [Susiana](#), and [Mesene](#).

This expansion came to the attention of the Arsacid Great King, [Artabanus IV](#), who ordered his vassal, the ruler of Khuzestan, to confront Ardashir. It was Ardashir, however, who emerged victorious in that battle. In 226, [Artabanus IV](#) himself invaded [Fars](#) to defeat the rebelling



Ardashir. The latter won the first battle, but with heavy losses on both sides. In the second battle, the Parthians suffered a greater loss, and Ardashir was again deemed the victor. Their armies clashed once again in a final battle at [Hormizdegan](#), near the modern city of [Bandar Abbas](#). At this encounter, the Parthian army was completely defeated, and [Artabanus IV](#) was killed. According to one account, Ardashir and Artabanus fought in close combat on horseback. Ardashir pretended to flee, turned around in the saddle and shot Artabanus through the heart.

## War with Rome

In the latter years of his reign, Ardashir I engaged in a series of armed conflicts with Persia's great rival to the west – the [Roman Empire](#).

Ardashir I's expansionist tendencies had been frustrated by his failed invasions of Armenia, where [a branch of the Arsacids](#) still occupied the throne. Given Armenia's traditional position as an ally of the Romans, Ardashir I may have seen his primary opponent not in the Armenian and [Caucasian](#) troops he had faced, but in Rome and her [legions](#).



*Ghaleh Dokhtar, or "The Maiden's Castle," Iran, built by Ardashir I in AD 209, before he was finally able to defeat the Parthian empire.*

In 230 Ardashir I led his army into the Roman province of [Mesopotamia](#), unsuccessfully besieging the fortress town of [Nisibis](#). At the same time, his cavalry ranged far enough past the Roman border to threaten [Syria](#) and [Cappadocia](#). It seems that the Romans saw fit to attempt a diplomatic solution to the crisis, reminding the Persians of the superiority of Roman arms, but to no avail. Ardashir I campaigned unsuccessfully against Roman border outposts again the following year (231). As a result, the Roman emperor [Alexander Severus](#) (222–235) moved to the east, establishing his headquarters at [Antioch](#), but experienced difficulties in bringing his troops together and thus made another attempt at diplomacy, which Ardashir I rebuffed.

In 237, Ardashir — along with his son and successor [Shapur I](#) (240/42–270/72), who was his co-ruler since 239/40 — again invaded Mesopotamia. The successful assaults on [Nisibis](#) and [Carrhae](#) and the shock this caused in Rome led the emperor to revive the Roman client-state of [Osroene](#). In 240/41, Ardashir I and Shapur finally overcame the stubborn fortress of Hatra. Ardashir I died in the year 242, but Shapur was already crowned as "king of kings" in 240..

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shapur\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shapur_I)

# Shapur I

**Shapur I** or also known as **Shapur I the Great** was the second [Sassanid](#) King of the [Second Persian Empire](#). The dates of his reign are commonly given as 240/42 - 270/72, but it is likely that he also reigned as co-regent (together with his father) prior to his father's death in 242.

Shapur was the son of [Ardashir I](#) (r. 226–240 [died 242]), the founder of the Sassanid dynasty and whom Shapur succeeded. His mother was Lady Myrōd who—according to legend—was an [Arsacid](#) princess. The Talmud cites a nickname for her, "Ifra Hurmiz", after her bewitching beauty.

## War against the Roman Empire

Ardashir I had, towards the end of his reign, renewed the war against the [Roman Empire](#). Shapur I conquered the [Mesopotamian](#) fortresses [Nisibis](#) and [Carrhae](#) and advanced into [Syria](#). [Timesitheus](#), father-in-law of the young emperor, [Gordian III](#), drove him back and defeated him at the [Battle of Resaena](#) in 243, regaining Nisibis and Carrhae. Timesitheus died shortly afterward, and [Philip the Arab](#) (244–249) murdered Gordian III after his defeat at the [Battle of Misiche](#). Philip then concluded an ignominious peace with the [Persians](#) in 244. With the Roman Empire debilitated by [Germanic](#) invasions and the continuous elevation of new emperors after the death of [Trajan Decius](#) (251), Shapur I resumed his attacks.

*A fine cameo showing an equestrian combat of Shapur I and Valerian in which the Roman emperor is seized, according to Shapur's own statement, "with our own hand", in year 256.*



Shapur conquered [Armenia](#), invaded Syria, and plundered [Antioch](#). Eventually, the Emperor [Valerian](#) (253–260) marched against him and by 257, Valerian had recovered Antioch and returned the province of Syria to Roman control. In 259, Valerian moved to [Edessa](#), but an outbreak of plague killed many and weakened the Roman troops defending the city which was then besieged by the Persians. In 260, Valerian arranged a meeting with Shapur to negotiate a peace

settlement but was betrayed by Shapur who seized him and held him prisoner for the remainder of his life. Shapur advanced into [Asia Minor](#), but was driven back by defeats at the hands of [Balista](#), who captured the royal harem. [Septimius Odenathus](#), prince of [Palmyra](#), rose in his rear, defeated the Persian army and regained all the territories Shapur had occupied. Shapur was unable to resume the offensive and lost Armenia again.

*The Humiliation of Valerian by Shapur I. Pen and ink, Hans Holbein the Younger, c. 1521*



One of the great achievements of Shapur's reign was the defeat of the Roman Emperor Valerian. This is presented in a mural at [Naqsh-e Rostam](#), where Shapur is represented on horseback wearing royal armour and crown. Before him kneels [Philip the Arab](#), in Roman dress, asking for grace. In his right hand the king grasps the uplifted arms of what may be Valerian; one of his hands is hidden in his sleeve as the sign of submission. The same scene is repeated in other rock-face inscriptions. Shapur is said to have publicly shamed Valerian by using the Roman Emperor as a footstool when mounting his horse. Other sources contradict and note that in other stone carvings, Valerian is respected and never on his knees. This is supported by reports that Valerian and some of his army lived in

relatively good conditions in the city of [Bishapur](#) and that Shapur enrolled the assistance of Roman engineers in his engineering and development plans.

*Wax figure of Shapur I in Fars History museum*



*Rock-face relief at Naqsh-e Rostam of Shapur (on horseback) with Philip the Arab and Emperor Valerian.*



# Narseh

*Image of King Narseh on a coin minted during his reign.*



**Narseh** (whose name is also sometimes written as **Narses** or **Narseus**) was the seventh [Sassanid](#) King of [Persia](#) (293–302), and son of [Shapur I](#) (241–272). Narseh overthrew the increasingly unpopular [Bahram III](#) in 293 with the support of most of the nobility.

During Narses' time, Rome was ruled by [Diocletian](#) and it was with Diocletian and his son-in-law [Galerius](#) that Narses was engaged in eight years of constant warfare.

In 296, fed up with incursions made by the Armenian [monarch Tiridates III](#), Narses invaded [Armenia](#). Surprised by the sudden attack, Tiridates fled his kingdom. The [Roman Emperor Diocletian](#) dispatched his son-in-law [Galerius](#) with a large army to Tiridates's aid.

Galerius invaded [Mesopotamia](#), which Narses had occupied hoping to check his advance. Three battles were fought subsequently, the first two of which were indecisive. In the third fought at [Callinicum](#), Galerius suffered a complete defeat and was forced to retreat. Galerius crossed the [Euphrates](#) into [Syria](#) to join his father-in-law Diocletian at [Antioch](#). On his arrival at Antioch, Galerius was rebuked by Diocletian who disgraced him for his shameful defeat at the hands of Narses. Vowing to take revenge, Galerius made preparations throughout the winter of 297 and invaded Armenia with 25,000 men.

Supported by the Armenians, Galerius surprised Narses in his camp and inflicted a crushing defeat on the latter forcing him to flee in haste. His wife, prisoners, his sisters and a number of his children were captured apart from his prodigious military chest. Eastern [Mesopotamia](#) was recovered by the Romans and Tiridates was reinstated as the monarch of Armenia.

But Galerius dismissed Aphraban without giving any definite answer, at the same time accusing the Persians of ill-treating [Valerian](#). In the meantime, he consulted Diocletian at Nisibis who persuaded Galerius to offer terms of peace to the Persians.

Narses did not survive for long after the conclusion of this humiliating treaty. He [abdicated](#) in 301, in favor of his son, [Hormisd](#), probably ashamed at the humiliation he had suffered. He spent the last years of his life in self-renunciation.

It is not known for how long Narses survived his abdication. However, it is well-known that Narses was already dead by the time of Hormisd's death in 309 for the throne passed onto Hormisd's still-unborn son [Shapur](#).

# Hormizd II

*Coin of Hormizd II as Kushansha.*

**Obv:** Corrupt Persian legend with name of Hormizd II. Characteristic lion head-dress of Hormizd II. Swastika between feet. Brahmi monogram to right.

**Rev:** Shiva with bull.

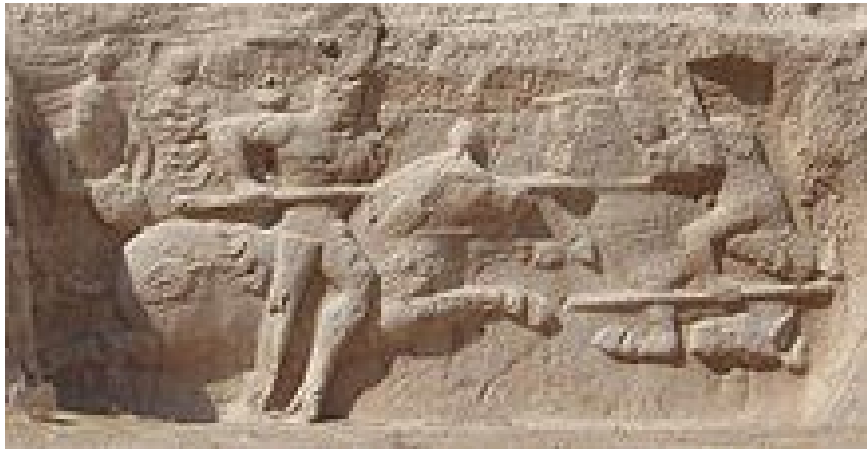


**Hormizd II**, was the eighth [Persian](#) king of the [Sassanid Empire](#), and reigned for seven years from 302 to 309. He was the son of [Narseh](#) (293–302),

After his death his oldest son [Adarnases](#), who had a cruel disposition, was killed by the grandees after a very short reign; another son, Hormizd, was held prisoner, while the throne was reserved

for the child of his concubine, [Shapur II](#). Another version has it that Shapur II was the son of Hormizd II's first wife, and that while still pregnant she was made to wear a crown over her pudenda so that the baby would be born as a king.

Relief "The Equestrian Victory of Hormizd II"



His son Hormizd escaped from prison in 323 with the help of his wife, and found refuge at the court of [Constantine I](#) (324–337) ([Zosimus](#) ii. 27; [John of Antioch](#), fr. 178; [Zonaras](#) 13–5). In 363, Hormizd served against Persia in the army of the Roman emperor [Julian](#) (361–363); in turn his son, of the same name, later served as proconsul.



# Shapur II

**Shapur II the Great** was the ninth King of the Persian [Sassanid Empire](#) from 309 to 379. During his long reign, the Sassanid Empire saw its first golden era since the reign of [Shapur I](#) (241–272).

*"King of kings of Iran and Aniran"*

## Early childhood



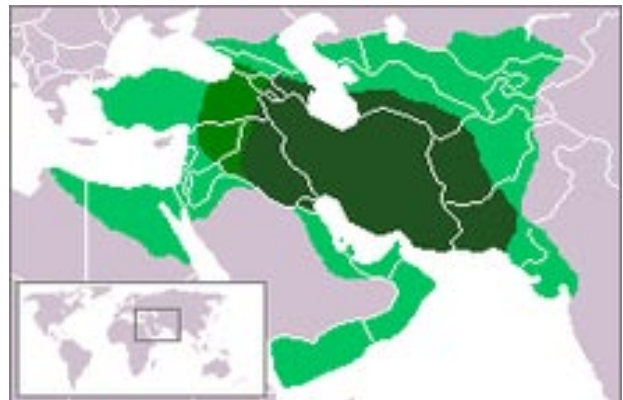
When King [Hormizd II](#) (302–309) died, Persian nobles killed his eldest son, blinded the second, and imprisoned the third ([Hormizd](#), who afterwards escaped to the [Roman Empire](#)). The throne was reserved for the unborn child of one of the wives of Hormizd II. It is said that Shapur II may have been the only king in history to be crowned *in utero*: the crown was placed

upon his mother's belly. This child, named Shapur, was therefore born king; the government was conducted by his mother and the magnates. But when Shapur II came of age, he turned out to be one of the greatest monarchs of the dynasty.

## Conquests

*Dark green: the Sassanid empire; Medium green: contested territory; Light green: temporarily occupied in the seventh century during war with the Byzantine Empire, three hundred years after Shapur's reign.*

During the early years of the reign of Shapur, [Arabs](#) crossed the [Persian Gulf](#) from [Bahrain](#) to "Ardashir-Khora" of [Pars](#) and raided the interior. In retaliation, Shapur led an expedition through [Bahrain](#), defeated the combined forces of the Arab tribes of "[Taghlib](#)", "[Bakr bin Wael](#)", and "[Abd Al-Qays](#)" and advanced temporarily into [Yamama](#) in central [Najd](#). Arabs named him, as "Shabur Dhul-aktāf" or "Zol 'Aktāf" that means "The owner of the shoulders" after this battle.



In 337, just before the death of [Constantine I](#) (324–337), Shapur II broke the peace concluded in 297 between [Narseh](#) (293–302) and Emperor [Diocletian](#) (284–305), which had been observed for forty years. A twenty-six year conflict (337–363) began in two series of wars, the first from 337 to 350. After crushing a rebellion in the south, he headed toward Mesopotamia and recaptured [Armenia](#). From there he started his first campaign against [Constantius II](#), a campaign which was mostly unsuccessful for Shapur II. He was unable to take the fortress of Singara in the [Siege of](#)

[Singara](#) (344). Shapur II also attempted with limited success to conquer the great fortresses of Roman [Mesopotamia](#), [Nisibis](#) (which he besieged three times in vain) and [Amida](#).

Although often victorious in battles, Shapur II made scarcely any progress. At the same time he was attacked in the east by nomad tribes, among whom the [Xionites](#) are named. He had to interrupt the war with the Romans and pay attention to the east. After a prolonged struggle (353–358) they were forced to conclude a peace, and their king, [Grumbates](#), agreed to accompany Shapur II in the war against the Romans.

In 358 Shapur II was ready for his second series of wars against Rome, which met with much more success. In 359, Shapur II conquered [Amida](#) after a siege of seventy-three days, and he took [Singara](#) and some other fortresses in the next year (360). In 363 the Emperor [Julian](#) (361–363), at the head of a strong army, advanced to Shapur's [capital](#) at [Ctesiphon](#) and defeated a superior Sassanid army at the [Battle of Ctesiphon](#), however he was killed during his retreat back to Roman territory. His successor [Jovian](#) (363–364) made an ignominious peace, by which the districts beyond the [Tigris](#) which had been acquired in 298 were given to the Persians along with Nisibis and Singara, and the Romans promised to interfere no more in Armenia. The great success is represented in the rock-sculptures near the town Bishapur in [Persis](#) (Stolze, *Persepolis*, p. 141); under the hoofs of the king's horse lies the body of an enemy, probably Julian, and a suppliant Roman, the Emperor Jovian, asks for peace.

Shapur II then invaded Armenia, where he took King [Arshak II](#), the faithful ally of the Romans, prisoner by treachery and forced him to commit suicide. He then attempted to introduce [Zoroastrian](#) orthodoxy into Armenia. However, the Armenian nobles resisted him successfully, secretly supported by the Romans, who sent King [Pap](#), the son of Arshak II, into Armenia. The war with Rome threatened to break out again, but Valens sacrificed Pap, arranging for his assassination in Tarsus, where he had taken refuge (374). Shapur II subdued the [Kushans](#) and took control of the entire area now known as [Afghanistan](#) and [Pakistan](#). Shapur II had conducted great hosts of captives from the Roman territory into his dominions, most of whom were settled in [Susiana](#). Here he rebuilt [Susa](#), after having killed the city's rebellious inhabitants.

By his death in 379 the Persian Empire was stronger than ever before, considerably larger than when he came to the throne, the eastern and western enemies were pacified and Persia had gained control over Armenia.

# Ardashir II

*High relief at Taq-e Bostan of the investiture of Ardashir II, flanked by Mithra and Ahura Mazda*



**Ardashir II** was the tenth [Sassanid](#) King of Persia from 379 to 383.

He is believed by some to be the **son** and by others to be the brother of Shapur II. However, it is well-known that under the reign of his predecessor, [Shapur II of Persia](#) (309–379), Ardashir II had served as governor-King of [Adiabene](#), where he had reportedly persecuted [Christians](#).

However, the acts of brutality against Christians attributed to him severely contradict the unanimous view that he was the most kind and virtuous of the Sassanian rulers. Ardashir II was given the epithet

"Nihoukar" or "Beneficient" by the Persians. The Arabs called him "Al Djemil" or "the Virtuous". According to the "Modjmel-al-Tewarikh," he took no taxes from his subjects during the four years of his reign, and thereby secured to himself their affection and gratitude.

## Relations With Armenia

Soon after his accession, events in [Armenia](#) seemed to occupy Ardashir's attention. [Arshak II](#)'s son [Pap](#) had been murdered during Shapur's reign and the [Romans](#) had replaced him with a certain [Varazdat](#) who was a distant member of the [Arshakuni](#) family. However, real power was in the hands of a certain [Moushegh](#) who appeared to be a noble in the Armenian court. Moushegh was suspected of having conspired with the Emperor of Rome and was murdered by Varazdat. This act roused the [indignation](#) of Moushegh's brother [Manuel](#) who rebelled against Varazdat and with the support of [Persia](#) deposed him and placed upon the Armenian throne Zermardukht, the widow of Pap and [Arshak III](#), Pap's son, who made Manuel the [Sparapet](#) or [Commander-in-chief](#). In return for their services, Manuel allowed the Persians to maintain a [garrison](#) in Armenia.

But this arrangement did not work for long. A [nobleman](#) named Meroujan wrongly informed Manuel that the [commandant](#) of the Persian garrison desired to capture him. Enraged, Manuel fell upon the ten thousand Persian soldiers stationed in Armenia and murdered them. But Manuel died soon afterwards and confusion followed. Desirous of maintaining peace in the borderlands, the Roman Emperor [Theodosius I](#) and Ardashir II decided upon a treaty. But Ardashir II died in 383 before the treaty could be signed. The treaty was eventually signed and [ratified](#) by his son Shapur III in the year 384.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shapur\\_III\\_of\\_Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shapur_III_of_Persia)

# Shapur III

*Image of Shapur III (l.) on a coin minted during his reign.*



**Shapur III** was the eleventh [Sassanid](#) King of Persia from 383 to 388. Shapur III succeeded his brother [Ardashir II](#) in the year 383.

Negotiations between the [Romans](#) and the [Persians](#) which had begun in the reign of [Ardashir II](#) culminated in a [treaty](#) of mutual friendship in the year 384.

According to this treaty, [Armenia](#) was partitioned between the Romans and the Persians. Therefore two kingdoms were formed, one a [vassal](#) of Rome and the other, of Persia. The smaller of these, which comprised the more western districts, which was assigned to Rome was committed to the charge of the [Arshak III](#) who had been made king by [Manuel Mamikonian](#), the son of the unfortunate [Pap of Armenia](#), and the grandson of the [Arshak II](#) contemporary with [Julian](#). The larger portion, which consisted of the regions lying towards the east, passed under the suzerainty of Persia, and was handed over to an [Arshakuni](#), named [Khosrov III](#), a [Christian](#). Thus friendly relations were established between [Rome](#) and [Persia](#) which survived for thirty-six years.

## Memorials of Shapur's Reign



Shapur III left behind him a [sculptured memorial](#), which is still to be seen in the vicinity of [Kermanshah](#). It consists of two very similar figures, looking towards each other, and standing in an arched frame. On either side of the figures are inscriptions in the Old [Pahlavi](#) character, whereby we are enabled to identify the individuals represented with the second and the third Shapur. They are identical in form, with the exception that the names in the right-

hand inscription are "Shapur, [Hormizd](#), [Narses](#)," while those in the left-hand one are "Shapur, Shapur, [Hormizd](#)." It has been supposed that the right-hand figure was erected by [Shapur II](#) and the other afterwards added by Shapur III; but the unity of the whole sculpture, and its inclusion under a single arch, seem to indicate that it was set up by a single sovereign, and was the fruit of a single conception.

Shapur III died in 388, after reigning a little more than five years. He was a man of simple tastes, and was fond of spending his time outdoors in his tent. One version says that, on one such occasion, when he was thus enjoying himself, there was a violent [hurricane](#) which blew the tent under which he was sitting. The falling tent-pole struck him fatally on his head resulting in his death a few days later. However, though most of his subjects believed in the authenticity of this story there were whispers that he could have been the victim of a conspiracy hatched by his courtiers.



# Bahram IV

*Image of Bahram IV (l.) on coin from his reign.*



**Bahram IV** was twelfth [Sassanid](#) King of Persia (388–399), son and successor of [Shapur III of Persia](#) (383–388), under whom he had been governor of [Kerman](#); therefore he was called **Kermanshah**. He later founded the city of [Kermanshah](#) in Western Persia which was called after him. It was a glorious city in [Sassanid](#) period about the 4th century AD when it

became the capital city and a significant health center serving as a summer resort for [Sassanid](#) kings.

[Armenia](#) had been divided during the reign of [Shapur III](#) according to the terms of a peace treaty. But this arrangement barely survived the reign of Shapur III. By about 390, [Khosrov III](#), the King of Armenia under Persian suzerainty grew wary of his subordination to [Persia](#) and entered into a treaty with the [Roman Emperor Theodosius I](#) who deposed [Arshak III](#) and made him the king of a united Armenia in return for his allegiance. Enraged Bahram IV took Khosrov prisoner and confined him to the Castle of Oblivion and made his brother [Vram-Shapuh](#) upon the Armenian throne. Khosrov had appealed to Theodosius for help but the latter refused to intervene as it would constitute a breach of the peace of 384.

*Hellenistic-era depiction of [Bahram](#) as [Hercules](#) carved in 153 B.C.*



Bahram IV is often regarded as a harsh man who entirely neglected his duties. His conduct, it is recorded, grew so unbearable that he was ultimately assassinated by his own troops who surrounded him and shot him with arrows.



# Yazdegerd I

*Coin of Yazdgard I, Marw mint*



**Yazdegerd I**, or **Izdekerti** ("made by God"), was the thirteenth [Sassanid](#) king of Persia and ruled from 399 to 421. He is believed by some to be the son of [Shapur III](#) (383–388) and by others to be **son of [Bahram IV](#)** (LG in Encycl. Britannica) (388–389). He succeeded to the Persian throne on the assassination of Bahram IV in 399 and ruled for twenty-one years till his death in 421.

Yazdegerd I's reign is largely uneventful. The king is described as being of a peaceful disposition. There were cordial relations between Persia and the [Eastern Roman Empire](#) as well as between Persia and the [Western Roman Empire](#). Early during his reign, Yazdegerd was entrusted the care of the Roman prince [Theodosius](#) by his father [Arcadius](#) on the latter's death in 408, and Yazdegerd faithfully defended the life, power and possessions of the Roman prince.

Yazdegerd promoted [Christianity](#) in the early years of his reign and later opposed it. His alternate persecution of [Zoroastrians](#) and later Christians earned him the epithets of **Al Khasha** or "the Harsh" and **Al Athim** or "the Wicked" and **Yazdegerd the Sinner**. However, his general disposition towards the citizens of the Persian Empire was good. They gave him the epithet of **Ramashtras** or "the most quiet".

The later part of his reign was occupied by his attempts to convert [Armenia](#) to Zoroastrianism. During his last days, there took place a civil war between his sons. [Bahram V](#) emerged victorious and claimed the throne. Yazdegerd I died in 421 and was succeeded by his son Bahram V or **Bahramgur**.

When [Bahram IV](#) was assassinated in 399, his son Yazdegerd succeeded him. The Persian soldiers who had murdered Bahram IV did not hurt him on account of his excellent character and fine disposition. The general tenor of his rule was quite peaceful.

## Relations with Rome

The [Ostrogoth](#) invasion of 386, the revolt of Maximus in 387, the Antioch revolt of 387, the invasion of [Gaul](#) in 388, the massacres at [Thessalonika](#) and the rebellion of Argobastes and Eugenius in 393 had severely weakened the [Roman Empire](#). Between 386 and 398, Gildo the Moor ruled an independent kingdom in [Africa](#), and in 395 the [Goths](#) took to arms under their leader [Alaric](#). But Yazdegerd on his accession to the throne desisted from assuming any aggressive posture towards the Eastern Roman Emperor [Arcadius](#) or the Western Roman Emperor [Honorius](#). Yazdegerd's extreme tranquility and his reluctance to invade the Roman Empire earned him the epithet "Ramashtras," "the most quiet," or "the most firm," he justified his assumption of it by a complete abstinence from all military expeditions.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Religious policy

According to Wein, Yazdegerd I was a wise, benevolent, and astute ruler.<sup>[8]</sup> He was also known for his religious tolerance, towards both Christians and [Jews](#). For example, the [Talmud](#) (Ksubos, 61a) relates that [Ameimar](#), [Rav Ashi](#), and [Mar Zutra](#) would sit in his court. However, excessive zeal of the [Christian bishop](#) of [Ctesiphon](#), Abdaas, provoked a reaction, and when he tried to burn the Great [Fire temple](#) of Ctesiphon, Yazdegerd I turned against the Christians (see following).

## Persecution of Christians

Yazdegerd immediately switched sides when Abdaas burnt down the fire temple at Ctesiphon and refused to rebuild it. The burning evoked a strong reaction from the Magi, and Yazdegerd was forced to take action. Yazdegerd responded by authorizing Zoroastrian priests to destroy Christian churches all over the Empire. Christians were arrested in large numbers. There was widespread [slaughter of Christians](#) in the Persian Empire for the next five years. Christian churches all over the nation were destroyed, and Christians driven off from the kingdom.

A few Christian subjects boldly confessed their faith in Christ, but many others sought to conceal their beliefs. However, they were all arrested and slaughtered in large numbers. Thus Isdigerd alternately oppressed both Zoroastrians as well as Christians and earned the disaffection of both the parties. He earned the epithets of "Al-Khasha" or "the Harsh," and "Al-Athim" or "the Wicked".

## War of succession

When Yazdegerd I was overcome by mortal illness in the year 419, Shapur immediately rushed to Ctesiphon to claim the Sassanian throne leaving behind a viceroy to govern Armenia. But the viceroy-designate was killed soon after Shapur left Armenia. A battle of succession followed and lasted for three years after Yazdegerd's death. Shapur was treacherously killed by the courtiers in the initial stages of the battle. Bahram V arrived from Hira and captured the throne after defeating the Persian nobles with an Arab army in a three-year-long battle.

# Bahram V

*Silver coin of Bahram V with fire temple on its verso (British Museum , London)*



**Bahram V** was the fourteenth [Sassanid](#) King of [Persia](#) (421–438). Also called **Bahramgur**, he was a son of [Yazdegerd I](#) (399–421), after whose sudden death (or assassination) he gained the crown against the opposition of the grandes by the help of [Mundhir](#), the [Arabic](#) dynast of [al-Hirah](#).

## Reign

Bahram V began his reign with a systematic persecution of the [Christians](#), among whom [James Intercisus](#).

## War with Rome

The persecution of [James Intercisus](#) led to a [war with the Eastern Romans](#).

In the year 421, the Romans sent their general [Ardaburius](#) with an extensive contingent into Armenia. Ardaburius defeated the Persian commander Narseh and proceeded to plunder the province of [Arzanene](#) and lay siege to [Nisibis](#). Ardaburius abandoned the siege in the face of an advancing army under Bahram, who in turn besieged Theodosiopolis.

## Invasion of the Huns

During the later part of Bahram V's reign, Persia was invaded from the north-east by [Hephthalite hordes](#) who ravaged northern Iran under the command of their [Great Khan](#). They crossed the [Elburz](#) into [Khorasan](#) and proceeded as far as the ancient town of [Rei](#). Unprepared, Bahram initially made an offer of peace and submission which was well-received by the Khan of the Hephthalites. But crossing [Tabaristan](#), [Hyrcania](#) and [Nishapur](#) by night, he took the [Huns](#) unawares and massacred them along with their Khan, taking the Khan's wife hostage. The retreating Huns were pursued and slaughtered up to the [Oxus](#). One of Bahram's generals followed the Huns deep into Hun territory and destroyed their power. His portrait which survived for centuries on the coinage of [Bukhara](#) (in contemporary [Uzbekistan](#)) is considered to be an evidence of his victory over the Huns.



*Bahram Gur is a great favorite in Persian literature and poetry. "Bahram and the Indian princess in the black pavilion." Depiction of a Khamsa (Quintet) by the great Persian poet Nizami, mid-16th-century Safavid era.*

## Legends associated with Bahramgur

Numerous legends have been associated with Bahram. One account says that he aided an Indian king in his war against China and that, in return for his help, the Indian king made over the provinces of Makran and Sindh to Persia. The Lurs of Persia, it is argued, are the descendants of musicians sent to Persia by the grateful Indian monarch. However there does not exist any historical proof in support of this story. Other accounts suggest that he married an Indian princess. However, the conclusion of such a marriage alliance is regarded as highly dubious once again due to lack of evidence. His name is also associated with a legendary Indian prince of the Punjab.

## Legacy

Bahram V has left behind a rich and colorful legacy which has survived to the present day. He is especially a favorite of the writers who have woven numerous legends and fantastical tales around him. His fame has survived the downplay of

Zoroastrianism and the Anti-Iranian measures of the Umayyads and the Mongols and many of the stories have been incorporated in contemporary Islamic lore.

His legacy even survives outside Iran. He is the King who receives [The Three Princes of Serendip](#) in the tale that gave rise to the word [Serendipity](#). He is believed to be the inspiration for the legend of Bahramgur prevalent in the Punjab.

For example, the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, by Edward Fitzgerald, quatrain 17:

*"They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:  
And Bahram, that great Hunter - the Wild Ass  
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep."*

To which Fitzgerald adds the following footnote: "Bahram Gur - *Bahram of the Wild Ass* from his fame in hunting it - a Sassanian sovereign, had also his seven palaces, each of a different colour; each with a Royal mistress within; each of whom recounts to Bahram a romance. The ruins of three of these towers are yet shown by the peasantry; as also the swamp in which Bahram sunk while pursuing his *Gur*."



# Yazdegerd II

*A coin of Yazdegerd II.*



**Yazdegerd II** ("made by God,"), fifteenth [Sassanid](#) King of [Persia](#), was the son of [Bahram V](#) (421–438) and reigned from 438 to 457.

In the beginning of his reign, Yazdegerd quickly attacked the [Eastern Roman Empire](#) with a mixed army of various nations, including his [Indian](#) allies, to eliminate the threat of a Roman build-up. The Romans had been constructing fortifications in the nearby Persian territory of [Carrhae](#), in anticipation of subsequent expeditions. The Roman Emperor, [Theodosius II](#) (408–450), asked for peace and sent his commander, [Anatolius](#), personally to Yazdegerd's camp. In the ensuing negotiations in 441, both empires promised not to build any new fortifications in their border territories. Yazdegerd, gathered his forces in [Neishabur](#) in 443 and launched a prolonged campaign against the [Kidarites](#). After numerous battles, he crushed them and drove them out beyond the [Oxus](#) river in 450.

During his eastern campaign, Yazdegerd grew suspicious of [Christians](#) in the army and the nobility and expelled many of them. He then persecuted the [Assyrians Christians](#) and, to a much lesser extent, [Jews](#). Advancing his pro-[Zoroastrian](#) policy, he battled an uprising of [Armenian Christians](#) in the [Battle of Vartanantz](#) in 451.

In his later years, Yazdegerd became engaged again with the Kidarites until his death in 457. He pursued strict religious policies and persecuted various [minorities](#).



*Depiction of the battle by Grigor Khanjian*



# Balash

*Coin showing Balash and a fire altar with two attendants.*



**Balash** (in the Greek authors, *Balas*; the later form of the name *Vologases*), the eighteenth [Sassanid](#) King of Persia in 484–488, was the brother and successor of [Peroz I of Persia](#) (457–484), who had died in a battle against the [Hephthalites](#) (White Huns) who invaded [Persia](#) from the east.

## Reign of Balash

Balash was made King of Persia on the death of his brother [Peroz](#) fighting the Huns.

Immediately after ascending the throne, he resolved to drive the Hephthalites out of Persia. With this goal in mind, he dispatched an armed contingent under an officer named [Sukra](#) or Sufraili to destroy the Huns. He surprised the Huns and forced them to enter into negotiations.

Soon after the victory over the Huns, Balash concluded peace with the Armenians. The conditions of the peace were as follows:

- (i) All existing fire-altars in [Armenia](#) should be destroyed and no new ones should be constructed.
- (ii) [Christians](#) in Armenia should have freedom of worship and conversions to [Zoroastrianism](#) should be stopped.
- (iii) Land should not be allotted to people who convert to Zoroastrianism
- (iv) The Persian King should, in person, administer Armenia and though the aid of Governors or deputies.

A few months later, [Zareh](#), son of Peroz rose in rebellion. Balash put down the rebellion and slew him.

Soon after this, [Kavadh](#), another son of Peroz revolted and being unsuccessful sought the assistance of [Hephthalites](#) and arrived in [Ctesiphon](#) at the head of a large Hephthalite contingent. Balash did not survive for long after this invasion.

Balash is praised by Christian historians as a mild and generous monarch, who made concessions to the [Christians](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peroz\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peroz_I)

# Peroz I

*Coin of Peroz I, showing the ruler, and a fire altar with two stylized attendants.*



**Peroz I** (Pirooz, Peirozes, Priscus, [Persian](#): "the Victor"), was the seventeenth [Sassanid](#) King of Persia, who ruled from 457 to 484. Peroz I was the eldest son of [Yazdegerd II of Persia](#) (438–457).

On the death of Peroz I's father, [Yazdegerd II](#), the younger son of the deceased Emperor,

Hormizd seized the throne in the absence of his elder brother Peroz who had been posted as the Governor of distant [Sistan](#) forcing Peroz to seek the protection of the Hephthalites.

The [civil war](#) in [Persia](#) had affected the nation so much as to cost a province. Vatche, the king of Aghouank (Albania), rebelled against Persian rule and declared himself independent while the brothers were busy fighting amongst each other. So once Peroz I ascended the throne in the year 457, he led an army into Albania and completely subjugated the nation.

## The First Campaign Against the Huns

No sooner had Persia recovered from the famine, than war broke out with the Huns of the north. Provoked by an insult heaped upon him by Khush-Newaz, Peroz led an invasion of the Hephthalite country forcing them to retreat. But when Peroz pursued the Hephthalites to the hills, he suffered a crushing defeat and was forced to yield to the Huns and pay them tribute. More importantly, he had to surrender his son [Kavadh I](#) to Khush-Newaz as [hostage](#).

## The Second Campaign against the Huns and Peroz I's Death

Towards the end of his reign, Peroz gathered an army of 50,000-100,000 men and, placing his brother [Balash](#) at the head of the government in [Ctesiphon](#), he invaded the Hephthalites in order to avenge the insult heaped upon him during the first campaign. He set up his position at [Balkh](#) and rejected the terms of peace offered by Khush-Newaz. However, when a showdown with the Persians seemed imminent, Khush-Newaz sent a small body of troops in advance in order to trick Peroz into an ambush. The plan was successful, and the Persians were defeated with great slaughter, Peroz being one of the victims. Khush-Newaz, however, treated the body of his erstwhile friend with dignity and dispatched it to Persia to be buried with full honors. Balash was crowned the next Emperor of Persia.

Soon afterwards, the Hephthalites invaded and plundered Persia. Persia, however, was saved when a noble Persian from the [Parthian family of Karen](#), [Zarmihr](#) (or Sokhra/Sufra), raised [Balash](#) (484–488), one of Peroz I's brothers, to the throne.

# Kavadh I

Image of Kavadh I on one of his coins.



**Kavadh I**, also spelled **Kaveh** and **Kavad** (born 449, ruled 488–531), was son of [Peroz I](#) (457–484) and the nineteenth [Sassanid](#) King of Persia from 488 to 531. He was crowned by the nobles in place of his deposed and blinded uncle [Balash](#) (484–488).

At this time the empire was utterly disorganized by the invasion of the [Ephthalites](#) or White Huns from the east. After one of their victories against Peroz I, Kavadh I had been a hostage among them for two years, pending the payment of a heavy ransom. In 484 Peroz I had been defeated and slain with his whole army. Balash was not able to restore the royal authority. The hopes of the magnates and high priests that Kavadh I would suit their purpose were soon disappointed.

## Mazdaki sect

Kavadh I gave his support to the [communistic](#) sect founded by [Mazdak](#), son of [Bamdad](#), who demanded that the rich should divide their wives and their wealth with the poor. His intention evidently was, by adopting the doctrine of the Mazdakites, to break the influence of the magnates. But in 496 he was deposed and incarcerated in the "Castle of Oblivion ([Lethe](#))" in [Susiana](#), and his brother [Djamasp](#) (496–498) was raised to the throne.

Kavadh I, however, escaped and found refuge with the [Ephthalites](#), whose King gave him his daughter in marriage and aided him to return to Persia. In 498 Kavadh I became King again and punished his opponents. He had to pay a tribute to the Ephthalites and applied for subsidies to [Rome](#), which had before supported the Persians. But now the Emperor [Anastasius I](#) (491–518) refused subsidies, expecting that the two rival powers of the East would exhaust one another in war. At the same time he intervened in the affairs of the Persian part of [Armenia](#) and restored [Iberia](#) to Iran's effective control.

Kavadh I joined the Ephthalites and began war against the [Byzantine Empire](#). In 502 he took Theodosiopolis in Armenia; in 503 Amida on the [Tigris](#). In 505 an invasion of Armenia by the western Huns from the [Caucasus](#) led to an armistice, during which the Romans paid subsidies to the Persians for the maintenance of the fortifications on the Caucasus.

When [Justin I](#) (518–527) came to the throne in Constantinople, the conflict began anew. The Persian vassal, [al-Mundhir IV ibn al-Mundhir](#), laid waste [Mesopotamia](#) and slaughtered the monks and nuns. In 531 [Belisarius](#) was defeated at the [Battle of Callinicum](#). Shortly afterwards Kavadh I died, at the age of eighty-two, in September 531. During his last years his favourite son [Khosrau I](#) had had great influence over him and had been proclaimed successor.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khosrau\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khosrau_I)

# Khosrau I

*Hunting scene showing king Khosrau I.*



**Khosrau I** (also called **Xusro I**, **Khosnow I**, **Chosroes I** in classical sources, most commonly known in Persian as **Anushirvan**, [Persian](#): meaning *the immortal soul*), also known as **Anushiravan the Just** (Born c. 501, ruled 531–579), was the favourite son and successor of [Kavadh I](#) (488–531), twentieth [Sassanid](#) Emperor (Great King) of Persia, and the most famous and celebrated of the Sassanid Emperors.

He laid the foundations of many cities and opulent palaces, and oversaw the repair of trade roads as well as the building of numerous bridges and dams. During Khosrau I's ambitious reign, art and science flourished in Persia and the Sassanid

Empire reached its peak of glory and prosperity. His rule was preceded by his father's and succeeded by [Khosrau II](#)'s (590–628) whose reign came to be considered the *dark age* in the history of the Sassanid Empire.

## Early life

According to early historical sources, Khosrau I was Kavadh I's third son through a [hephthal](#) princess [Newandukht](#), granddaughter of [Hephthal III](#), commonly called [Turandot](#). His mother endeavored to ascend him to throne, then expatriated his half-brother, Kavoos, first son of Kavadh I, to Mazandaran. After proclaimed as [heir apparent](#), he appears to have had a major influence over his father [Kavadh I of Persia](#) and helped him in the worst situations during the later years of his rule. He was apparently also behind many of his father's decisions.

According to the Roman Historian [Procopius of Caesarea](#), Kavadh I tried to have his third son Khosrau adopted by the Eastern Roman emperor [Justin I](#) in the mid-520s. This is the first time that Khosrau is mentioned in the sources. After Romans and Persians had failed to reach an agreement about the adoption, a new war began in [526](#) which was to last until [532](#).

## Conquests

At the beginning of his reign Khosrau I concluded an "Eternal Peace" with the [Roman Emperor Justinian I](#) ([527–565](#)) in 532, who wanted to have his hands free for the conquest of [Africa](#) and [Sicily](#). But his successes against the [Vandals](#) and [Goths](#) caused Khosrau I to begin the war again in [540](#).

He invaded [Syria](#) and sacked the great city of [Antioch](#), deporting its people to [Mesopotamia](#), where he built for them a new city near [Ctesiphon](#) under the name of "Khosrau-Antioch" (*Veh Antiok Xusro*) or "Chosro-Antioch": the account of [Procopius](#) in his *De bello Persico ii* reads as:

“ Xusro I founded a city in [Assyria](#), in a place that was a day's march away from the city of [Ctesiphon](#); he named it 'Xusro's Antioch' and settled all captives from Antioch there, for whom he even had a bath and a [hippodrome](#) built and whom he provided also with other comforts. For he brought along the charioteers and musicians from Antioch and other [Romans](#). Moreover, at public expense he took more care in catering for these people from Antioch than was customary for captives, and (he did so) for their entire life, and gave orders to call them 'the royal ones' so that they would not be responsible to any magistrate but the king alone. When one of the other Romans had escaped and managed to seek refuge in Xusro's Antioch and when one of the inhabitants claimed that he was a relative, the owner was no longer allowed to remove this captive, not even if one of the highest ranking Persians happened to have enslaved the man. ”

In 545, an armistice was concluded, but in 547 the Lazi returned to their Roman allegiance and the [Lazic War](#) resumed, continuing until a truce was agreed in 557. At last, in 562, a peace was concluded for fifty years, in which the Persians left Lazica to the Romans, and promised not to persecute the [Christians](#), if they did not attempt to make proselytes among the [Zarathustrians](#); on the other hand, the Romans had to pay annual subsidies to Persia.

Meanwhile in the east, the [Hephthalites](#) had been attacked by the [Turks](#) ([Göktürks](#)). About 560, Khosrau I united with them to destroy the Hephthalite Empire. In 567 he conquered [Bactria](#), while he left the country north of the [Oxus](#) to the Turks. From that time till the conquests by [Islam](#), Yemen was dependent on Persia, and a Persian governor resided here. In 572, [Armenia](#) and [Iberia](#) rebelled against Persia with Roman support, beginning a new war in which Khosrau I conquered the city of [Dara](#) on the [Euphrates](#) in 573, but after a largely unsuccessful incursion of Anatolia in 576 he was heavily defeated by the Romans in a battle near [Melitene](#). He sued for peace in 579, but while negotiations with the Emperor [Tiberius II](#) (578–582) were still going on, Khosrau I died and was succeeded by his son [Hormizd IV](#) (579–590).

## Reforms

Khosrau I introduced a rational system of [taxation](#), based upon a survey of [landed possessions](#), which his father had begun, and tried in every way to increase the welfare and the revenues of his empire. In [Babylonia](#) he built or restored the [canals](#). His army was in discipline decidedly superior to the Romans, and apparently was well paid. He was also interested in [literature](#) and [philosophical](#) discussions. Under his reign, [chess](#) was introduced from [India](#) and many books were brought from India and translated into [Pahlavi](#). Some of these later found their way into the literature of the [Islamic world](#). His famous minister [Burzoe](#) translated Indian [Panchatantra](#) from [Sanskrit](#) into middle Persian language of [Pahlavi](#) and named it [Kelileh o Demneh](#). This [Middle Persian](#) version was a few centuries later translated by Iranian Muslims into Arabic and then found its way to Europe. The Arabic version was also used to render a [New Persian](#) version of the book.



# Hormizd IV

*Coin of Hormizd IV, found at Karakhodja, Chinese Central Asia.*



**Hormizd IV**, son of [Khosrau I](#), reigned as the twenty-first [King of Persia](#) from 579 to 590.

He seems to have been imperious and violent, but not without some kindness of heart. Some very characteristic stories are told of him by [Tabari](#). His father's sympathies had been with the nobles and the priests. Hormizd IV protected the common people and introduced a severe discipline in his army and court. When the priests demanded a persecution of the Christians, he declined on the ground that the throne and the government could only be safe if it gained the goodwill of both concurring religions. The consequence was that

Hormizd IV raised a strong opposition in the ruling classes, which led to many executions and confiscations.

When Hormizd IV came to the throne in 579, he killed his brothers. From his father he had inherited a war against the [Byzantine Empire](#) and against the [Turks](#) in the east, and negotiations of peace had just begun with the Emperor [Tiberius II](#) (47<sup>th</sup> great grandfather), but Hormizd IV haughtily declined to cede anything of the conquests of his father.

Determined to teach the haughty prince a lesson, the Roman General [Maurice](#) crossed the frontier and invaded Kurdistan. The next year, he even planned to penetrate into Media and Southern [Mesopotamia](#) but the [Ghassanid](#) sheikh al-Mundhir allegedly betrayed the Roman cause by informing Hormizd IV of the Roman Emperor's plans. Maurice was forced to retreat in a hurry but during the course his retreat to the Roman frontier, he drew the Persian general Adarman into an engagement and defeated him.

In 582, the Persian general Tamchosro crossed the Perso-Roman frontier and attacked Constantia but was defeated and killed. However, the deteriorating physical condition of the Roman Emperor Tiberius forced Maurice to return to Constantiople immediately. Meanwhile [John Mystacon](#), who had replaced Maurice, attacked the Persians at the junction of the Nymphius and the Tigris but was defeated and forced to withdraw. Another defeat brought about his replacement by [Philippicus](#).

Philippicus spent the years 584 and 585 making deep incursions into Persian territory.<sup>[1]</sup> The Persians retaliated by attacking Monocartium and [Martyropolis](#) in 585. Philippicus defeated them at Solachon in 586 and besieged the fortress of Chlomoron. After an unsuccessful siege, Philippicus retreated and made a stand at Amida. Soon, however, he relinquished command to Heraclius in 587.

In the year 588, the Roman troops mutinied and taking advantage of this mutiny, Persian troops once again attacked Constantia but were repulsed. The Romans retaliated with an equally unsuccessful invasion of Arzanene, but defeated another Persian offensive at Martyropolis.

In 589, the Persians attacked Martyropolis and captured it after defeating Philippicus twice. Philippicus was recalled and was replaced by Comentiolus under whose command the Romans defeated the Persians at Sisauranon. The Romans now laid siege to Martyropolis but at the height of the siege news circulated in Persia about a Turkish invasion.

The Turks had occupied Balkh and Herat and were penetrating into the heart of Persia when Hormizd IV finally dispatched a contingent under the general [Bahram Chobin](#) to fight them back. Bahram marched upon Balkh and defeated the Turks killing their Khan and capturing his son.

Soon after the threat from the north was exterminated, Bahram was sent to fight the Romans on the western frontier. He was initially successful, warding off an Iberian offensive against Azerbaijan, raiding in Svaneti and defeating a Roman attack on Albania, but was defeated by the Roman general Romanus in a subsequent battle on the river Araxes. Hormizd, jealous of the rising fame of Bahram, wished to humiliate him and sent him a complete set of women's garments to wear. Bahram responded by writing him an extremely offensive letter. Enraged, Hormizd sent Persian soldiers to arrest Bahram but they moved over to Bahram's side. Now Bahram moved to Persia with a large army to depose the haughty monarch and place himself on the throne.

Besides, Hormizd's behavior had now turned so unbearable that his son, Khusrau broke into open revolt. With a civil war brewing in Persia, Hormizd did not survive on the Persian throne for long. The magnates deposed and blinded Hormizd IV and proclaimed his son [Khosrau II](#) King. The sources do not agree on how Hormizd was killed: Theophylact states that Khosrau killed him a few days after his father was blinded; the Armenian historian [Sebeos](#) states that Hormizd's own courtiers killed him.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khosrau\\_II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khosrau_II)

## Khosrau II

**Khosrau II** (**Khosrow II**, **Chosroes II**, or **Xosrov II** in classical sources, sometimes called *Parvez*, "the Ever Victorious" ) was the twenty-second [Sassanid King of Persia](#), reigning from [590](#) to [628](#). He was the son of [Hormizd IV](#) (reigned [579](#)–[590](#)).

Khosrau II was inferior to his grandfather in terms of proper education and discipline. He was haughty, cruel, and given to luxury; he was neither a warrior-[general](#) nor an [administrator](#) and, despite his brilliant victories, did not personally command his armies in the field, relying instead on the [strategy](#) and [loyalty](#) of his [generals](#). Nevertheless [Tabari](#) describes him as:



*Excelling most of the other Persian kings in bravery, wisdom and forethought, and none matching him in military might and triumph, hoarding of treasures and good fortunes, hence the epithet Parviz, meaning victorious.*

According to legend, Khosrau had a [shabestan](#) in which over 3,000 [concubines](#) resided.

*Gold coin with the image of Khosrau II*

In [622](#), the Byzantine Emperor [Heraclius](#) ([45th great grandfather](#)) (who had succeeded [Phocas](#) in [610](#) and ruled until [641](#)) was able to take the field with a powerful force. In [624](#), he advanced into northern [Media](#), where he destroyed the great fire-temple of [Ganzhak](#) ([Gazaca](#)). Several years later, in [626](#), he captured Lazistan ([Colchis](#)). Later that same year, Persian general [Shahrbaraz](#) advanced to [Chalcedon](#) and attempted to capture [Constantinople](#) with the help of [Persia's Avar](#) allies. His maneuver failed as his forces were defeated, and he withdrew his army from [Anatolia](#) later in [628](#).

Following the [Khazar invasion of Transcaucasia](#) in [627](#), Heraclius defeated the Persian army at the [Battle of Nineveh](#) and advanced towards [Ctesiphon](#). Khosrau II fled from his favourite residence, Dastgerd (near [Baghdad](#)), without offering resistance. Meanwhile, some of the Persian grandees freed his eldest son [Kavadh II](#) (he ruled briefly in 628), whom Khosrau II had imprisoned, and proclaimed him King on the night of [23–4 February](#), 628. Four days afterwards, Khosrau II was murdered in his palace. Meanwhile, Heraclius returned in triumph to Constantinople and in 629 the True Cross was returned to him and Egypt evacuated, while the Persian empire, from the apparent greatness which it had reached ten years ago, sank into hopeless anarchy. It was overtaken by the armies of the first [Islamic Caliphs](#) beginning in [634](#).

## Muhammad 's letter to Khosrau II

Khosrau II is also remembered in [Islamic](#) tradition to be the Persian king to whom [Muhammad](#) had sent a messenger, [Abdullah ibn Hudhafah as-Sahmi](#), along with a letter in which Khosrau was asked to preach the religion of Islam. In [Tabari](#)'s original Arabic manuscript the letter to Khosrau II reads:

ميحرل انمحرل الله مسب  
نا دوش و ملوسر و مللاب نمآ و يدهل اعبتا نم يلع مالس . سرفلا ميظع ىرسك ىلا لالا لوسر دمحم نم  
سانلا ىلا لالا لوسر ىناف ، لالا اعذب كوعدا . ملوسر و مدبع دمحم نا و مل كي رشال هدحو لالا الا لالا  
سوجمل مئا ناف تييبا ناف . ملست ملساف . نيرفالكلا يلع لوقلا قحي و ايح ناك نم رذنا ل قفاك  
كيلع .

English translation:

*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful*

*From Muhammad, Messenger of God, to Chosroes, Ruler of Persia. Peace be on him who follows the guidance, believes in God and His Messenger and bears witness that there is no one worthy of worship save God, the One, without associate, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. I invite you to the Call of God, as I am the Messenger of God to the whole of mankind, so that I may warn every living person and so that the truth may become clear and the judgement of God may overtake the disbelievers. I call upon you to accept Islam and thus make yourself secure. If you turn away, you will bear the sins of your [Zoroastrian](#) subjects.*

*The assassination of Chosroes, in a Mughal manuscript of ca 1535, Persian poems are from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh*



The [Persian](#) historian [Tabari](#) continues that in refusal and outrage, Khosrau tore up Muhammed's letter and commanded [Badhan](#), his vassal ruler of [Yemen](#), to dispatch two valiant men to identify, seize and bring this man from [Hijaz](#) (Muhammad) to him. Meanwhile, back in [Madinah](#), Abdullah told Muhammad how Khosrau had torn his letter to pieces and Muhammad's only reply was, "May his kingdom tear apart", and predicted that Khosrau's own son shall kill him. The narration carries on with accounts of their encounter and dialogue with Muhammad and conversion of Badhan and the whole Yemenite Persians to Islam subsequent to receipt of shocking tidings of Khosrau's murder by his own son, [Kavadh II](#).



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kavadh\\_II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kavadh_II)

## Kavadh II

*Coin of Kavadh II*



**Kavadh II** (Siroes), twenty-third [Sassanid](#) King of Persia, son of [Khosrau II](#) (590–628), was raised to the throne in opposition to his father in February 628, after the great victories of the Emperor [Heraclius](#) (610–641). He put his father and eighteen brothers to death, began negotiations with Heraclius, but died after a reign of a few months.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purandokht>

## Borandukht



[Ferdowsi](#) refers to Purandokht in his epic poem, the [Shahnameh](#). She was committed to reviving the memory and prestige of her father, during whose reign the Sassanid Empire had grown to its largest territorial extent.

**Buran** or **Poran** (or more correctly **Purandokht**) was the daughter of the King [Khosrau II of Persia](#) (590–628). She was one of only two women on the throne of the [Sassanid dynasty](#) (the other was her sister and successor [Azarmidokht](#)). She was the twenty-sixth Sassanid monarch of Persia, reigning from 629 to 631. When Purandokht ascended to the throne after the murder of the general [Shahrbaraz](#), who killed her nephew [Ardashir III](#), she attempted to bring stability to the empire. This stability was brought about by a peace treaty with the [Byzantine Empire](#), the revitalization of the empire through the implementation of justice, reconstruction of the infrastructure, lowering of taxes, and minting coins. She was largely unsuccessful in her attempts to restore the power of the central authority which was weakened considerably by civil wars, and resigned or was murdered soon after.

*King and monarch of [Persia](#), 630 – 631*



*Queen Poran, the second to last woman on the throne of the Sassanid dynasty, 630.  
State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia.*



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yazdgerd\\_III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yazdgerd_III)

## Yazdgerd III

*Coin of Yazdgerd III, Sakastan mint, Dated RY 11.*



**Yazdgerd III** (also spelled *Yazdegerd* or *Yazdiger*, [Persian](#): "*made by God*") was the twenty-ninth and last king of the [Sassanid dynasty](#) of [Iran](#) and a grandson of [Khosrau II](#) (590–628). His father was Shahryar whose mother was Miriam, the daughter of the [Byzantine Emperor Maurice](#) (18266, 46<sup>th</sup> ggf). Yazdgerd III ascended the throne on 16 June 632 after a series of internal conflicts.

Yazdgerd III reigned as a youth and had never truly exercised authority. The [Muslim conquest of Persia](#) began in his first year of reign, and ended with the [Battle of al-Qādisiyyah](#). Yazdgerd sought an alliance with Emperor [Heraclius](#), who was an old rival of the [Persian Empire](#).

Following the battle of al-Qādisiyyah, the Arabs occupied [Ctesiphon](#), and the young King fled eastward into [Media](#) going from one district to another, until at last he was killed by a local miller for his purse at [Merv](#) in 651. The battle also saw the alleged alliance of [Emperor Yazdegerd III](#) with [Emperor Heraclius](#) (45<sup>th</sup> ggf), who then married off his grand daughter Manyanh (43<sup>rd</sup> ggm, see *Byzantine Royal Ancestry*) to Yazdgerd as a symbol of alliance.

[Ferdowsi](#) a contemporary of [Mahmud of Ghazni](#) recounts the killing of Yazdgerd by the miller at the behest of [Mahuy Suri](#)

“ Mahui sends the miller to cut off his head on pain of losing his own, and having none of his race left alive. His chiefs hear this and cry out against him, and a [Mobed](#) of the name of Radui tells him that to kill a king or prophet will bring evil upon him and his son, and is supported in what he says by a holy man of the name of Hormuzd Kharad Shehran, and Mehronush. The miller most unwillingly goes in and stabs him with a dagger in the middle. Mahui's horsmen all go and see him and take off his clothing and ornaments, leaving him on the ground . All the nobles curse Mahui and wish him the same fate. ”

The [Zoroastrian religious calendar](#), which is still in use today, uses the [regnal year](#) of Yazdgerd III as its base year. Its [calendar era](#) (year numbering system), which is accompanied by a Y.Z. suffix, thus indicates the number of years since the emperor's coronation in 632 AD.

Yazdgerd's son [Pirooz II](#) fled to [China](#). Yazdgerd's daughter [Shahrbanu](#) is believed to be the wife of [Husayn ibn Ali](#). Yazdgerd's other daughter Izdundad was married to [Bustanai ben Haninai](#), the Jewish [exilarch](#). The Bahai religious leader [Bahá'u'lláh](#)'s ancestry can be traced back to Yazdgerd III.