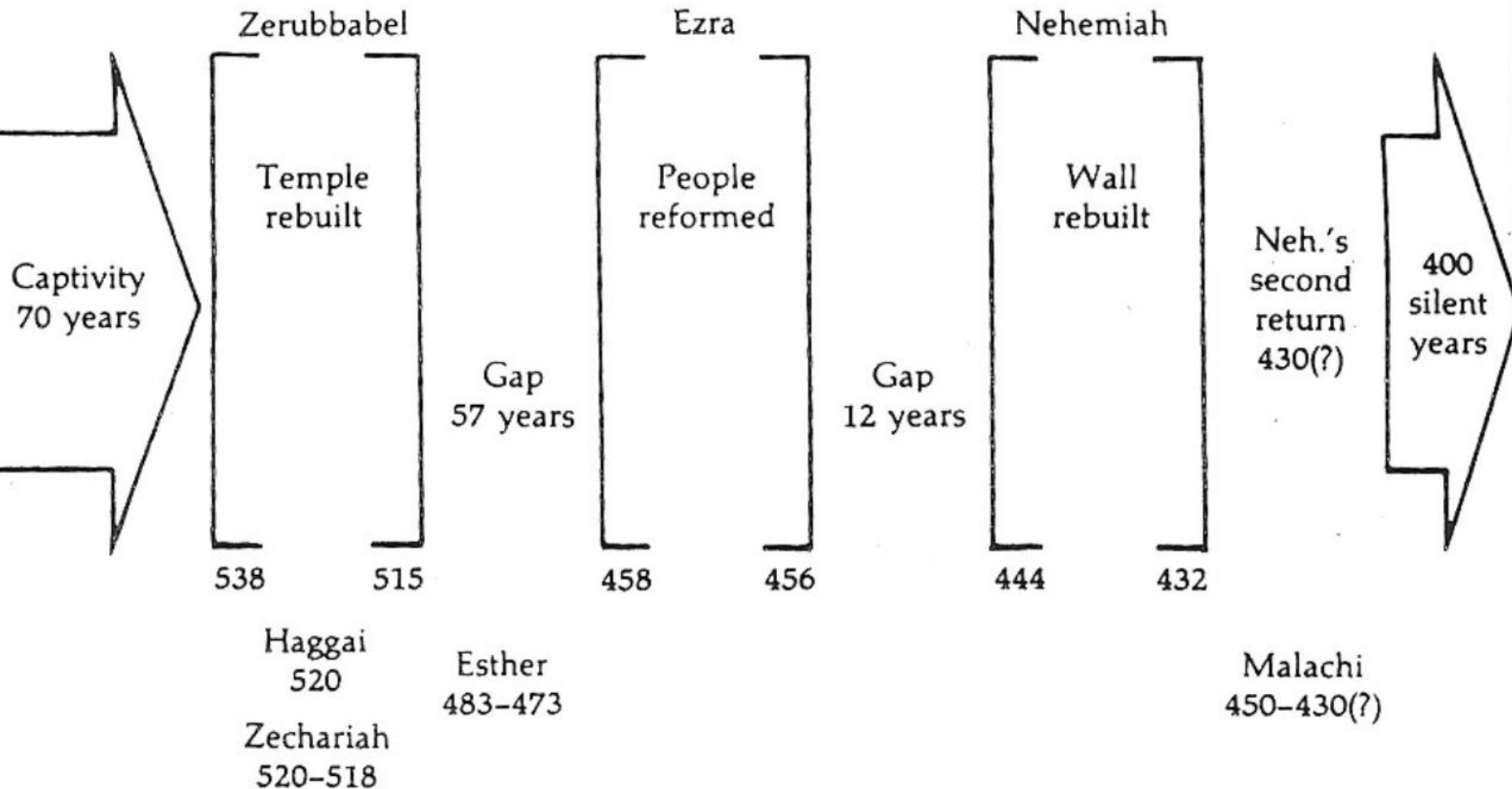


The Three Returns from Exile



Text order: Ezra 1-6 | Esther | Ezra 7-10 | Nehemiah

Books Connected to Ezra 1-6

#1 & #2 – **Jeremiah & Isaiah** – Prophesied the fall of Judah & Jeremiah even lived through the fall of Judah.

#3 & #4 & #1 – **2 Kings & 2 Chronicles & Jeremiah** – Recorded the fall of Judah.

#5 – **Ezekiel** – Prophesied in Babylon to the people of Judah who had been taken captive into Babylon from Judah.

#1 & #2 – **Jeremiah & Isaiah** – Prophesied the return of some to Judah to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, recorded in Ezra 1-6.

#6 – **Daniel** – Acknowledged the prophesy of the return of some to Judah to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.

#7 – **Ezra** – Records the return of some to Judah to rebuild the temple as well as the rebuilding.

#8 & #9 – **Haggai & Zechariah** – These 2 prophesied were sent by God to Jerusalem to rebuke the leaders in Jerusalem for not completing the temple.

Introduction to Ezra & Nehemiah & Esther

History of Israel and Judah's Captivities

1. **722BC** – The northern kingdom of Israel was taken captive by Assyria. Unfortunately, Judah didn't learn the lesson.
2. **605-586BC** – Judah was taken into captivity in phases by Babylon. They still didn't listen to God's prophets. Some of the prophecies were Isaiah 39:5-7, Jeremiah 25:1,8-9,20:4b, 21:7b.

The three waves of Nebuchadnezzar's invasions

1. **605BC** – During the reign of Jehoiakim.
2. **597BC** – During the reign of Jehoiachin.
3. **588-586BC** – During the reign of Zedekiah.

But the Lord also prophesied a return to the land

1. **The Lord gave encouragement through prophets.** Some of the prophecies were Isaiah 44:28-45:5, Jeremiah 25:10-13, 29:10-14, Daniel 9:1-2.

The three waves of Jewish repatriations

1. **538BC** – Led by Zerubbabel due to a proclamation of Cyrus.
2. **458BC** – Led by Ezra due to the approval of Artaxerxes.
3. **445BC** – Led by Nehemiah due to the approval of Artaxerxes.

Overview of Ezra/Nehemiah/Esther

Overview (in chronological order)

1. **Ezra 1-6 – 538BC – Repatriation under the leadership of Zerubbabel.**
This covered a 23-year period from 538-515BC.
This was done to rebuild the temple, completed in 515BC while Darius I was king.
2. **Esther – 484 or 483BC – The people in Persia who didn't return.**
Esther covers Jewish people who stayed in Babylon.
The book began in the year 484 or 483BC (3rd year of Ahasuerus-Esther 1:1,3).
(Again, the events of this book occurred during the gap between Ezra 6 & 7).
3. **Ezra 7-10 – 458BC – Repatriation under the leadership of Ezra.**
This covered the events under Ezra after his return.
And there was a gap of 57 years between Ezra 6 & 7
(From the completion of the temple in 515BC to Ezra's repatriation in 458BC).
This was done to beautify the temple & rebuild the people's spiritual condition.
4. **Nehemiah – 445BC – Repatriation under the leadership of Nehemiah.**
Nehemiah led this repatriation to rebuild the city and the walls of the city.

Ezra & Nehemiah could have likely been titled as follows

1. **Zerubbabel** – Instead of Ezra 1-6.
2. **Ezra** – Instead of Ezra 7-10.
3. **Nehemiah** – For Nehemiah.