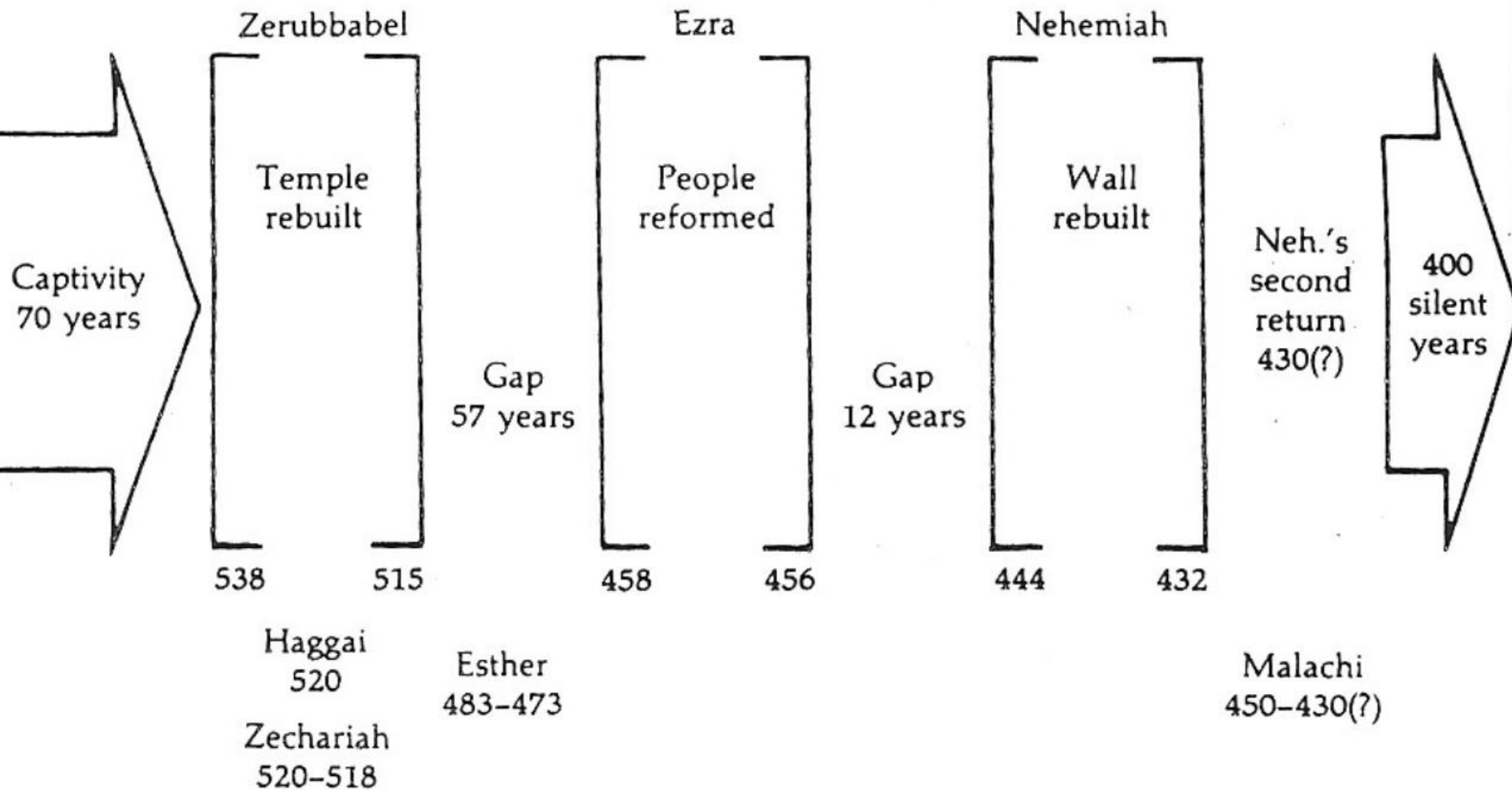


The Three Returns from Exile



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

Kings: Cyrus | Xerxes | Artaxerxes

Significant Kings of Babylon & Persia (Medo-Persia)

Kingdom	King	Aliases	Birth	Years of Reign	Years	Mentioned in the Bible?
Babylon	Nabu-apla-usur	Nebopolassar	658	626-605	21.0	
	Nabu-kudurri-usur	Nebuchadnezzar II	634	605-562	43.0	Kings / Chron / Ezra / Neh / Esther / Isaiah / Jeremiah / Dan
	Amel-Marduk	Evil-Merodach	Unknown	562-560	2.0	2 King 25:27, Jeremiah 52:31
	Nergal-shar-usur	Nergal-sharezer/Neriglissar	Unknown	560-556	4.0	
	Labashi-Marduk	--	Unknown	556	-	
	Nabu-na'id	Nabonidus / Belshazzar	Unknown	556-539	17.0	Daniel 5,7,8
Medes / Persia	Cyrus the Great	Cyrus	598-600?	559-530 *	29.0	Isaiah 44:28-45:5
	Cambyes II	--	Unknown	530-522	8.0	
	Bardiya	Smerdis or Pseudo-Smerdis	Unknown	522	-	
	Darius I the Great	Not the Darius of the book of Daniel	550	522-486	36.0	Ezra / Neh / Hag / Zec
	Xerxes I the Great	Ahasuerus	518	486-465	21.0	Ezra / Es / Dan
	Artaxerxes I Longimanus	Artaxerxes	Unknown	465-424	41.0	Ezra / Neh

* - Cyrus conquered Babylon & Belshazzar in 539 BC.

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.

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.

Haggai & Zechariah – Timing (Ezra 5)

Time marker #1 – Haggai 1:1-15 – Haggai message #1.

Haggai 1:1 – Darius 2nd year & 6th month (520BC).

The people began to OBEY the Lord in Haggai 1:12.

Time marker #2 – Haggai 2:1-9 – Haggai message #2.

Haggai 2:1 – Darius 2nd year & 7th month (520BC).

God told them NOT to be discouraged.

Time marker #3 – Zechariah 1:1-6 – Zechariah message #1.

Zechariah 1:1 – Darius 2nd year & 8th month (520BC).

A call to return to God...Don't be like your fathers

Time marker #4 – Haggai 2:10-23 – Haggai messages #3 & #4.

Haggai 2:10 – Darius 2nd year & 9th month (520BC).

Will the people obey the Lord and receive His blessings?

Time marker #5 – Zechariah 1:7-6:15 – Zechariah messages #2.

Zechariah 1:7 – Darius 2nd year & 11th month (520BC).

Eight visions to encourage God's people.

Time marker #6 – Zechariah 7-14 – Zechariah messages #3.

Zechariah 7:1 – Darius 4th year & 9th month (518BC).

7-9 – Four parts of an answer about a question on fasting.

10-14 – Two revelations of the coming king (suffering & reigning).