

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE OLD TESTAMENT

Exile & Return – a Chronological Overview

1. Exile

Date BC	Assyrian / Babylonian Empire – Characters & Events	Jewish People – Characters & Events	Biblical Source
722	Shalmaneser, king of Assyria	Samaria falls to Assyria	2 Kings 17
605	Battle of Carchemish – Egypt & Assyria defeated & end of Assyrian Empire.	Daniel and group deported to Babylon	2 Kings 24:1 Daniel 1:1-7
597	Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon	King Jehoiachin, Ezekiel & 10,000 other captives deported to Babylon	2 Kings 24:8-17 Ezekiel 1:1-3
586		Jerusalem falls and is destroyed	2 Kings 25 2 Chronicles 36:15-21

2. Return

Date BC	Persian Empire – Characters & Events	Jewish People – Characters & Events	Biblical Source
558-529	Cyrus II, the Great		Ezra 1
539 539-7	Conquest of Babylon King Cyrus decrees the return and the rebuilding of Jerusalem	Edict to rebuild temple	2 Chronicles 36:22-23 Ezra 1
538		The first exiles return, led by Zerubbabel	Ezra 2 (nb – the Nehemiah mentioned in Ezra 2:2 is not <i>the</i> Nehemiah)
536		Work on the temple begins but is halted by opposition	Ezra 3:8 Ezra 4:24
529-3	Cambyses II (Ahasuerus)		Ezra 4:6
523-522	Smerdis / Bardiya (Artaxerxes; commonly considered a usurper)		Ezra 4:7
522-485	Darius I, the Great		Ezra 4:5
520		Encouraged by Haggai & Zechariah, work on the temple resumes	Ezra 5 & 6 Haggai 1:1 Zech. 1:1
516		Temple dedicated	Ezra 6:15
485-464	Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)	Queen Esther	Esther 1

464-424	Artaxerxes I (Longimanus)		Ezra 7:1
458		Ezra comes to Jerusalem	Ezra 7:1-10
445		Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem	Nehemiah 1 & 2
		Work on the walls begins & is completed in 52 days	Nehemiah 3 – 6
		More exiles return	Nehemiah 7
		Ezra reads the law of the Lord, the people repent and make a new covenant	Nehemiah 8 – 10
		A census of the residents of Jerusalem	Nehemiah 11:1-12:26
		The walls are dedicated	Nehemiah 12:27-47
		Nehemiah returns from a visit back to Babylon to find the people have broken their covenant, and instigates further reforms	Nehemiah 13
435		The prophetic ministry of Malachi	Malachi