

# AIMS Teacher Notes

## Old Testament Survey 3 - Solomon to Nehemiah



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Student Notes

## **Outline and Purpose of Course**

### Outline

This is the second part of the three part teaching on OT Survey:

Old Testament Survey 1 – Overview and the Torah

Old Testament Survey 2 - Joshua to David

Old Testament Survey 3 – Solomon to Nehemiah

### Purpose

The purposes of this course are:

1. To let the student see the overarching story of God's redemptive work in the Old Testament.
2. To show the student how the books of the OT flow and fit together and lead into the New Testament.
3. To give the student tools to study each book of the Old Testament in context.

### What the student should know by the end of the course

1. The student should be able to name all 39 books of the OT in order.
2. The student should know the overarching themes running through the OT and how it points to Jesus.
3. The student should be able to name the major people and events of the OT and show how they fit into God's overarching plan.
4. The students should know the basic outline and message of each OT book (in the section).

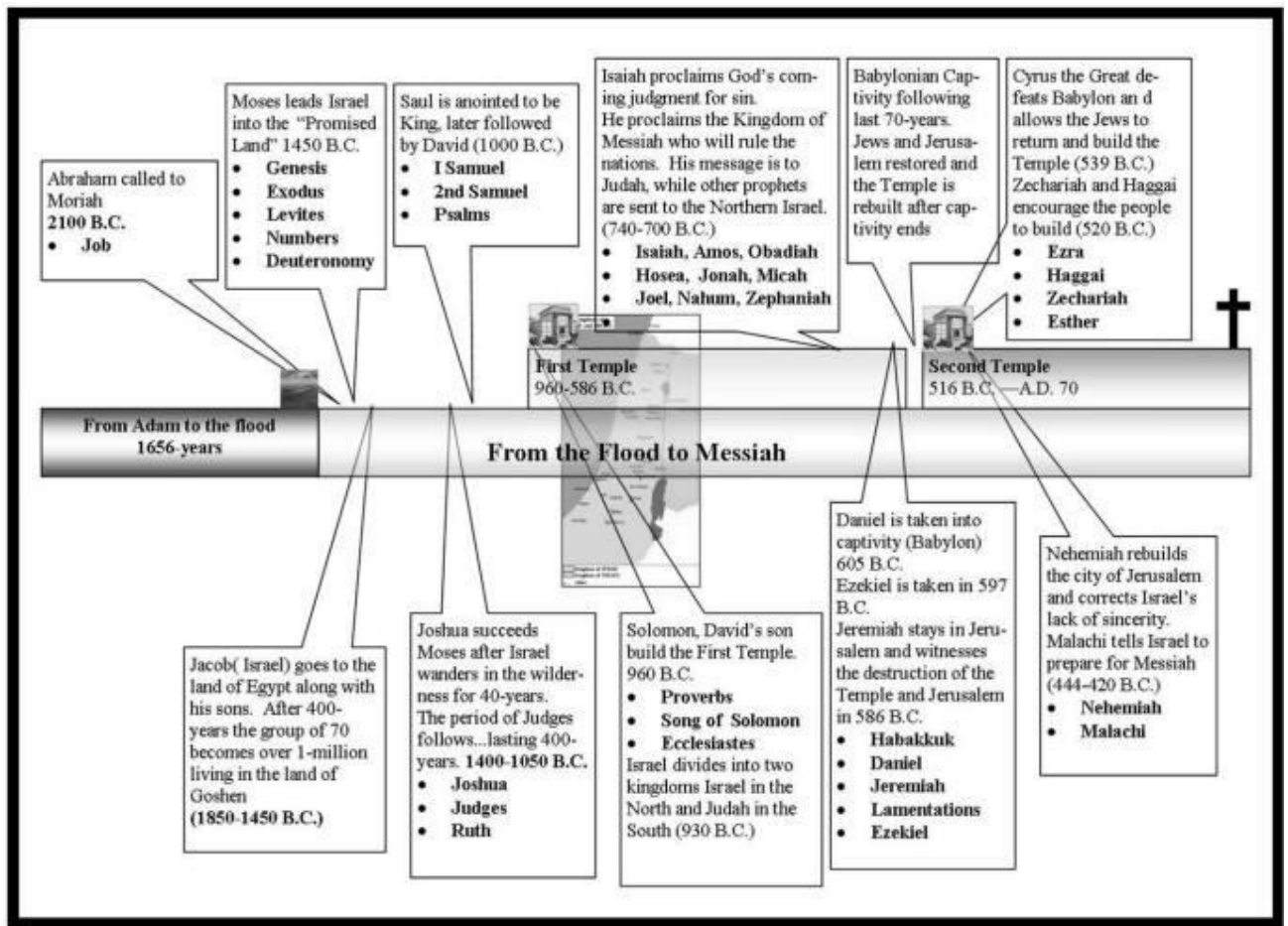


Figure 1: Chronology of the Writing Prophets

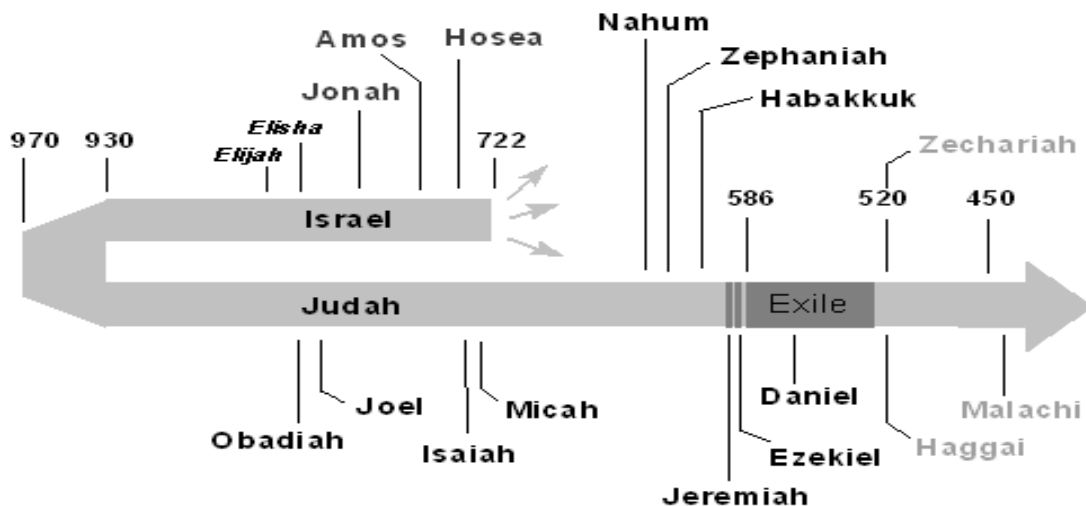


Figure 1: Chronology of the Writing Prophets

## (1) Solomon

### (a) Summary

The time of King David and King Solomon was the golden age of Israel. David's military skill had relieved his kingdom from the constant threat of foreign invasion, and had established an empire over the surrounding region. Solomon's diplomatic skill maintained this empire without the need for further war and his building of the Temple produced spiritual security for the people. Solomon was prolific in art and science, having written three of the books of our modern Bible (see below). Early in his reign, God promised him great wisdom, and in fact his wisdom was legendary in his own time and today.

### (b) Writings of Solomon

**PROVERBS** - This book is a compendium of proverb collections. Although Solomon inspired the development of the book, its entire content did not derive from him. A proverb is a short, pithy saying with practical implications. The ones included here cover a variety of subjects, for example, chastity, control of the tongue, laziness, knowledge, relations with others, justice. Perhaps above everything else in Proverbs there is the reiterated assertion that the source of true wisdom is "the fear of the Lord".

**ECCLESIASTES** - In English, the title means "Preacher". Traditionally held to have been written by Solomon. The author's purpose is to prove the vanity of everything "*under* the sun". This truth is first announced a fact, then proved from the "Preacher's" experience and observations. Finally, the author shows that the fullness of life is found only in the recognition of things "*above* the sun", things spiritual as well as material.

**THE SONG OF SOLOMON** - This book, the only one in the Bible that has love for its sole theme, is a collection or cycle of marriage songs. The composition is *traditionally* by Solomon. The Song is didactic and moral in its purpose, and has traditionally been interpreted as showing God's love for His Chosen People and Christ's love for His Bride, the Church.

### (c) Lessons from Solomon

1. **God can use us, regardless of our background** (2 Samuel 12:24)
2. **Prayer can change your life** (2 Chronicles 1:10)
3. **God is honoured by excellence** (2 Chronicles 2:5)
4. **True Wisdom glorifies God** (1 Kings 4:29,32 and 1 Kings 10:24)
5. **It takes great integrity to handle success/prosperity** (2 Chronicles 9:22 and 1 Kings 11:7)
6. **Bad company corrupts good character** (1 Kings 11:4)

## (2) The Kingdom Divided and Exile (1 & 2 Ki and 2 Ch)

### (a) The Reasons for the Split

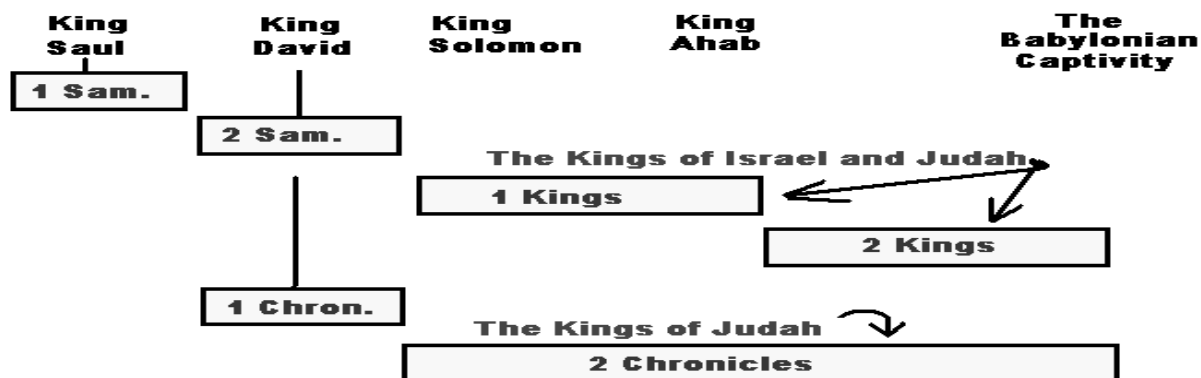
The event that Jewish Tradition marks as the beginning of the end for the Jewish kingdom was Solomon’s marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh. That single act undermined him in his role as leader.

When Solomon died his son Rehoboam became king (I Kings 11:43). He was young, vain, unaccomplished, overbearing and prone to follow bad advice. Solomon had not died a popular king. Nevertheless, if Rehoboam would have put the peoples’ best interests first they would have followed him. However, if he was going to continue to exploit and tax the people heavily for his own grandiose pleasures, then they did not want him. The prophets and sages of the Sanhedrin advised him to go easy on the people. *“Gain their confidence. The throne is not that secure. Do not say or do anything rash that might break up the Jewish people.”* In one of the most foolish decisions of all time, Rehoboam listened to the advisors who told him to deal harshly with the people: *“My father chastised you with whips. I will whip you with scorpions”* (I Kings 12:14).

Jeroboam, a brilliant scholar, was waiting in the wings just for a moment like that. He was the newcomer with bundles of charisma promising change. That is why right after Rehoboam made his fateful speech the people came to Jeroboam and asked him to be king (I Kings 12:20). The ten northern tribes followed him in a bloodless rebellion. Combined they owned 75% of what was once a single kingdom. They also had a much more powerful army. Indeed, during much of the nearly two centuries of its life the Northern Kingdom was a formidable empire in its own right.

By contrast, Judea, which according to most estimates never had more than 600,000 people during the First Temple era, controlled not more than a few square miles of hilly, unfertile land. However, they possessed one great asset: Jerusalem. Jeroboam made his fateful decision to forbid the Jews under his control from going to Jerusalem (1 Kings 12:26-27). To enforce his decree, he mobilized the military and placed armed guards all along the border. In effect, he made the Berlin Wall. That act sealed the schism between the north and south.

### (b) Events covered in 1 & 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.



# THE KINGS OF JUDAH & ISRAEL

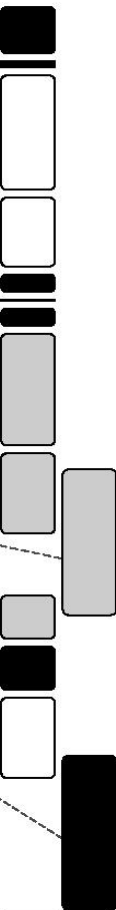
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## KINGS OF JUDAH

REHOBOAM	930-913 BC	17 YRS
ABIJAH	913-910 BC	3 YRS
ASA	910-869 BC	41 YRS
JEHOSHAPHAT	872-848 BC	25 YRS
JEHORAM	848-841 BC	7 YRS
AHAZIAH	841 BC	1 YR
ATHALIAH	841-835 BC	7 YRS
JOASH	835-796 BC	40 YRS
AMAZIAH	796-767 BC	29 YRS
AZARIAH	792-740 BC	52 YRS
JOTHAM	750-735 BC	16 YRS
AHAZ	735-715 BC	16 YRS
HEZEKIAH	715-686 BC	29 YRS
MANASSAH	697-642 BC	55 YRS
AMON	642-640 BC	2 YRS
JOSIAH	640-609 BC	31 YRS
JEHOAHAZ	609 BC	3 MTHS
JEHOIAKIM	609-598 BC	11 YRS
JEHOIACHIN	598-597 BC	3 MTHS
ZEDEKIAH	597-586 BC	11 YRS

JUDAH EXILED BY BABYLON (586 BC)

KINGDOM DIVIDES (922 BC)



SAUL	1050-1010 BC	40 YRS
DAVID	1010-970 BC	40 YRS
SOLOMON	970-930 BC	40 YRS

## KINGS OF ISRAEL

JEROBOAM I	930-909 BC	22 YRS
NADAB	909-908 BC	2 YRS
BAASHA	908-886 BC	24 YRS
ELAH	886-885 BC	2 YRS
ZIMRI	885 BC	7 DAYS
TIBNI	885-880 BC	5 YRS
OMRI	885-874 BC	11 YRS
AHAB	874-853 BC	21 YRS
AZAZIAH	853-852 BC	1 YR
JORAM	852-841 BC	11 YRS
JEHU	841-814 BC	28 YRS
JEHOAHAZ	814-798 BC	17 YRS
JEHOASH	798-782 BC	16 YRS
JEROBOAM II	793-753 BC	41 YRS
ZECHARIAH	753 BC	6 MTHS
SHALLUM	752 BC	1 MTH
MENAHM	752-742 BC	10 YRS
PEKAHIAH	742-740 BC	2 YRS
PEKAH	752-732 BC	20 YRS
HOSHEA	732-722 BC	9 YRS

ISRAEL ASSIMILATED BY ASSYRIA (722 BC)

# Rulers and Prophets of Israel and Judah

KINGDOM OF ISRAEL	PROPHETS	KINGDOM OF JUDAH
<b>Jeroboam I</b> 931-910	925 B.C.	<b>Rehoboam</b> 931-913
<b>Nadab</b> 910-909		<b>Abijah</b> 913-911
<b>Baasha</b> 909-886	900 B.C.	
<b>Elah</b> 886-885		<b>Asa</b> 911-870
<b>Zimri</b> 885 (7 days)		
<b>Omri</b> 885-874	875 B.C.	
<b>Ahab</b> 874-853		<b>Jehoshaphat</b> 870-848 (coregent with Asa 873-870)
<b>Ahaziah</b> 853-852	<b>Elijah</b> 850 B.C.	<b>Jehoram</b> 848-841 (coregent with Jehoshaphat 853-848)
<b>Joram</b> 852-841	<b>Elisha</b> <b>Obadiah</b>	<b>Ahaziah</b> 841 (1 year)
		<b>Athaliah</b> 841-835
<b>Jehu</b> 841-814	<b>Joel</b> 825 B.C.	
		<b>Joash</b> 835-796
<b>Jehoahaz</b> 814-798	800 B.C.	
<b>Jehoash</b> 798-782		<b>Amaziah</b> 796-767
<b>Jeroboam II</b> 782-753 (coregent with Jehoash 793-782)	<b>Jonah</b> 775 B.C.	
<b>Zechariah</b> 753/752 (6 months)		<b>Uzziah</b> 767-740 (overlap/coregent with Amaziah 792-767; isolated 751-740)
<b>Shallum</b> 752 (1 month)	<b>Amos</b> 750 B.C.	<b>Jotham</b> 740-736 (coregent with Uzziah 751-740; abdicates 736)
<b>Menahem</b> 752-742		<b>Ahaz</b> 736-729 (coregent with Jotham 744-736)
<b>Pekahiah</b> 742-740	<b>Hosea</b> 725 B.C.	
<b>Pekah</b> 740-732		<b>Hezekiah</b> 729-686 (regent for Ahaz 729-715)
<b>Hosea</b> 732-722	<b>Isaiah</b>	
<b>FALL OF SAMARIA, 722</b>	<b>Micah</b> 700 B.C.	
	675 B.C.	
		<b>Manasseh</b> 686-642 (coregent with Hezekiah 696-686)
	650 B.C.	
	<b>Zephaniah</b> 625 B.C.	<b>Amon</b> 642-640
	<b>Nahum</b>	<b>Josiah</b> 640-609
	<b>Habakkuk</b> 600 B.C.	<b>Jehoahaz</b> 609 (3 months)
		<b>Jehoiakim</b> 608-598
	<b>Jeremiah</b>	<b>Jeconiah</b> 598/597 (3 months; coregent with Jehoiakim 608-598)
	<b>Ezekiel</b> 575 B.C.	<b>Zedekiah</b> 597-586
	<b>Daniel</b>	<b>FALL OF JERUSALEM, 586</b>

**NOTE ABOUT DATES**  
 While scholars' opinions about the dates of kings' reigns and the timing so some prophets' ministries may vary, the dates on this chart are based on the best knowledge and evidence available to us at this time. Most reputable scholars' dates will be close, though not necessarily identical, to these. There simply isn't enough specific information available in the biblical record to identify the timing of each king's reign with certainty.

## (c) Orientation of 1 & 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles

1 & 2 Kings were originally a single book in the Hebrew canon, but were later divided in order to fit onto two scrolls. The author of these foundational books is unknown, but some scholars believe that these books were compiled before the time of the exile, with some final editing that took place during the exile. Like Samuel and Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles were also originally one book in the Hebrew canon most probably written after the Exile by Ezra (c.450BC). 1 & 2 Chronicles are complimentary books to Samuel and Kings, covering roughly the same historical time period from the beginning of King Saul's reign (1043 B.C.) to the end of the southern kingdom of Judah (586 B.C.).

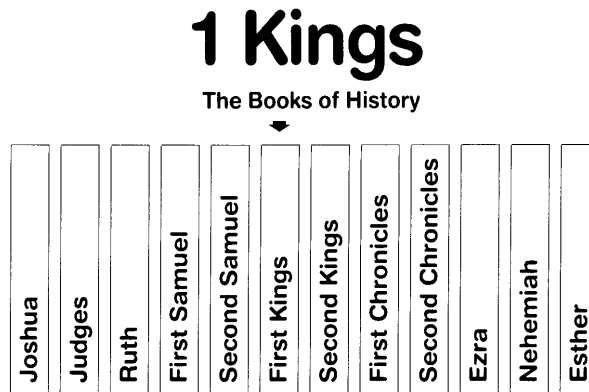
<b>1 &amp; 2 Kings in Contrast</b>	
<b>1 Kings</b>	<b>2 Kings</b>
Begins with King David	Ends with the king of Babylon
Opens with Solomon's glory	Closes with Jehoiachin's shame
Begins with the blessings of obedience	Ends with the curse of disobedience
Opens with the building of the temple	Closes with the burning of the temple
Traces the progress of apostasy	Describes the consequences of apostasy
Shows how kings failed to rule God's people	Depicts consequences of that failure
Introduces the prophet Elijah	Introduces the prophet Elisha
Emphasizes the patience of the Lord	Confirms the Lord's sure punishment of sin

### Comparison of Kings and Chronicles

Area of Focus	1 & 2 Kings	2 Chronicles
<b>Geographic</b>	Northern and southern kingdoms	Southern Kingdom only
<b>National Identify</b>	The Throne (Kings)	The Temple (Priesthood)
<b>Historical</b>	Civil and political history	Sacred history
<b>Office</b>	Prophet	Priest
<b>Wars</b>	More prominent	Less prominent
<b>Purpose</b>	Indict two kingdom	Encourage the remnant

## (d) 1 Kings

1 Kings



### Purpose/Theme:

First Kings records the glory of the Jewish nation under King Solomon, and the tragic split of the kingdom into Israel in the north, and Judah in the south. It is at this time that we also see the rise of the prophets as a powerful religious force.

### Key Verses:

"Be strong, show yourself a man, and observe what the Lord your God requires: Walk in his ways, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements . . . so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go" (2:2-3).

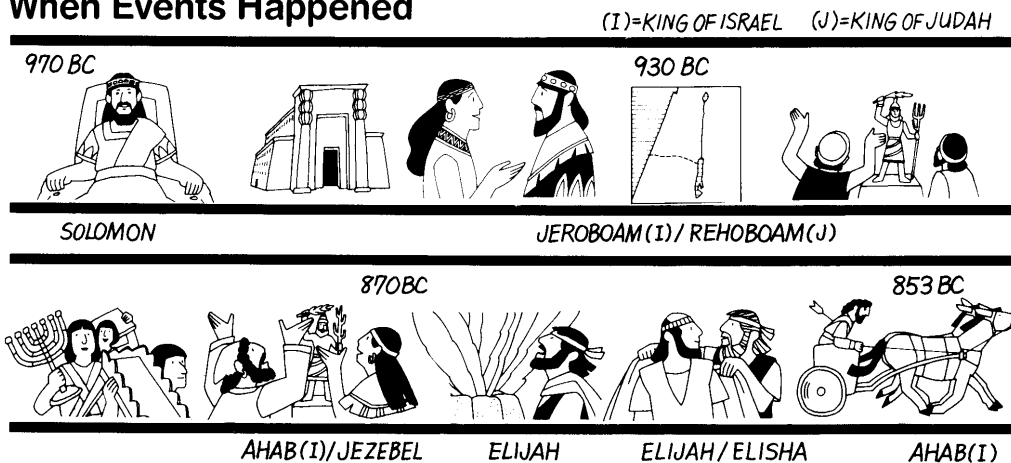
### Main People:

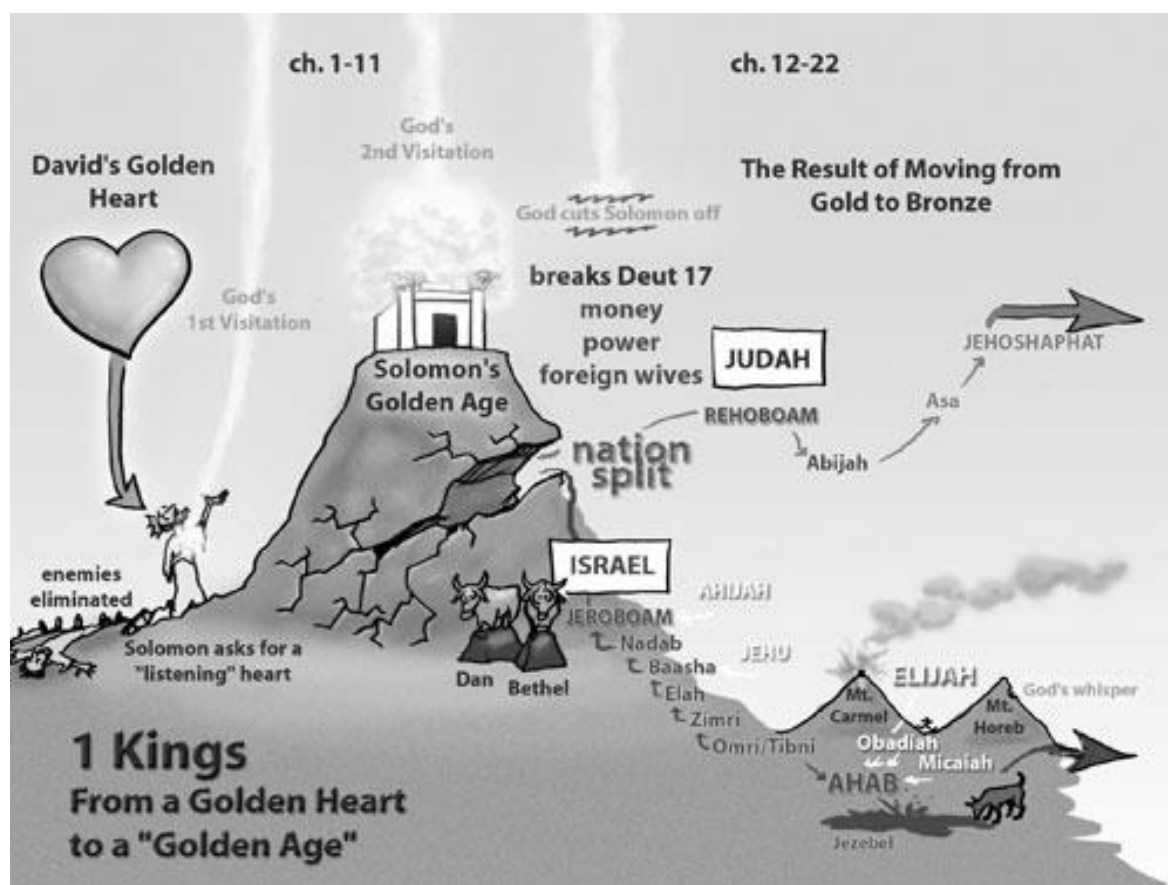
David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Nathan, Jeroboam, Ahab, Jezebel, Elijah, Elisha

### Outline:

- The reign of Solomon (1 Kings 1—10)
- The death of Solomon and division of the kingdom (1 Kings 11—16)
- King Ahab and his wife Jezebel introduce Baal worship (1 Kings 16)
- The prophet Elijah defeats the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 17,18)
- Ahab does evil (1 Kings 19—22)

### When Events Happened





Explain the pictorial outline of 1 Kings above in your own words and state what lessons you learn from it:

### ***Solomon's Golden Age ch. 1-11***

David was a man after God's own heart. As we read last week, we realize that David was not a perfect man, yet David had two strengths that endeared him to the Lord. First, he was honest with God. He had a vital relationship with the Lord, warts and all. Second, he saw his role as king to be that of the servant of the people. He did not exalt himself into grandiose positions. He was a humble warrior/servant/king. This is what God desired. David had a golden heart.

Solomon succeeded David on the throne of Israel. Solomon began well and ended in tragedy. The downfall of Solomon's reign was that he externalized the gold. He forgot that the gold that God desires for His people is the golden shine of a surrendered heart, not the gold shine of a big building or a powerful nation.

David's son started well by asking God for a discerning heart. He asked for understanding to be able to govern the people with fairness. Through Solomon's wisdom the nation of Israel experienced a "Golden Age" of peace and prosperity. During this time Solomon became a prolific author, songwriter, and scientist.

Then everything changed. Solomon violated the law regarding the king found in Deuteronomy 17 and amassed for himself great wealth, great military power, and a vast harem of foreign wives who wooed him with their pagan gods. In the end, Solomon abandoned Yahweh, followed after his wives' gods, and was cut off from the blessing of God.

### ***Israel's Bronze Age ch. 12-22***

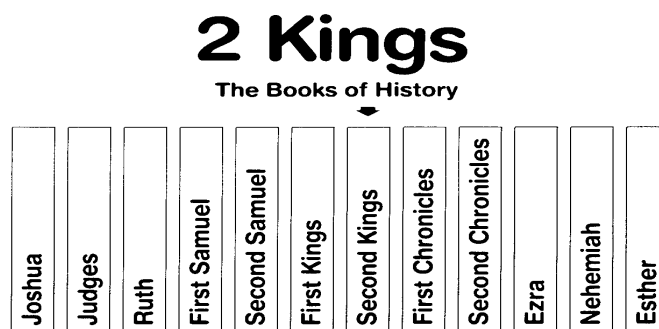
After Solomon's death his son, Rehoboam, took the throne of David and made things in Israel go from bad to worse. Because of his stubbornness and detachment from the plight of the lower class, the ten tribes of Israel rebelled against the house of David and split Israel into two kingdoms.

Symbolic of this tarnishing of Solomon's "Golden Age," 1 Kings 14:25-28<sup>L</sup> tells of how the Egyptians stole all the gold from the temple, forcing Rehoboam to replace it with Bronze. Visualizing Rehoboam's guards standing with bronze shields in place of the once brilliant shields of gold is a fitting picture for the mockery that the monarchy of Israel was about to become.

The rest of 1 Kings and the entire book of 2 Kings is the story of the downward spiral of both kingdoms, Judah and Israel, that led to their ultimate destruction. Similar to the story of the Judges, these tales are full of bad kings being scolded by unwelcomed prophets. These kings plunged the nations deeper and deeper into idolatry and separation from the true Kingdom of God.

## (e) 2 Kings

2 Kings



### Purpose/Theme:

Second Kings was written to record the last years of the Jewish people as a nation, and its captivity by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

### Key Verse:

"The Lord rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence" (17:20).

### Main People:

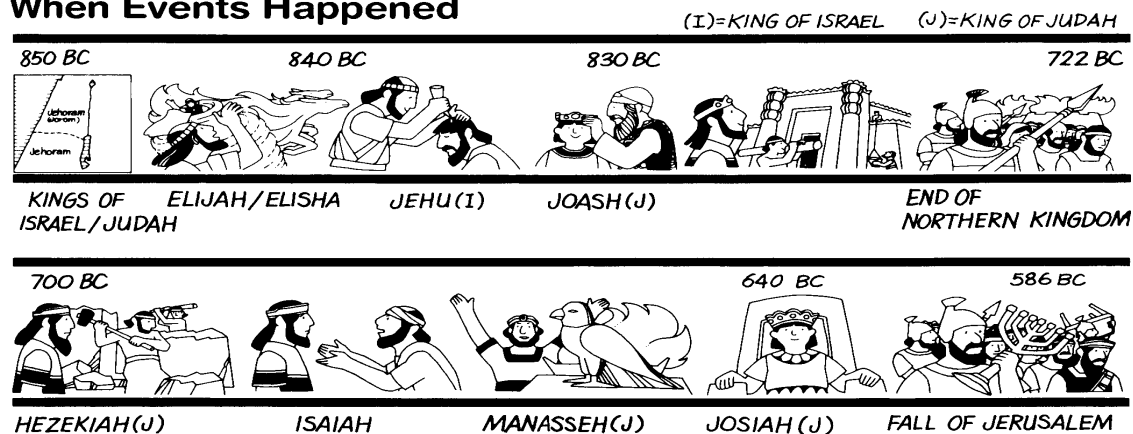
In ISRAEL—Elijah, Jehu, Jeroboam II

In JUDAH—Joash, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Manasseh, Josiah

### Outline:

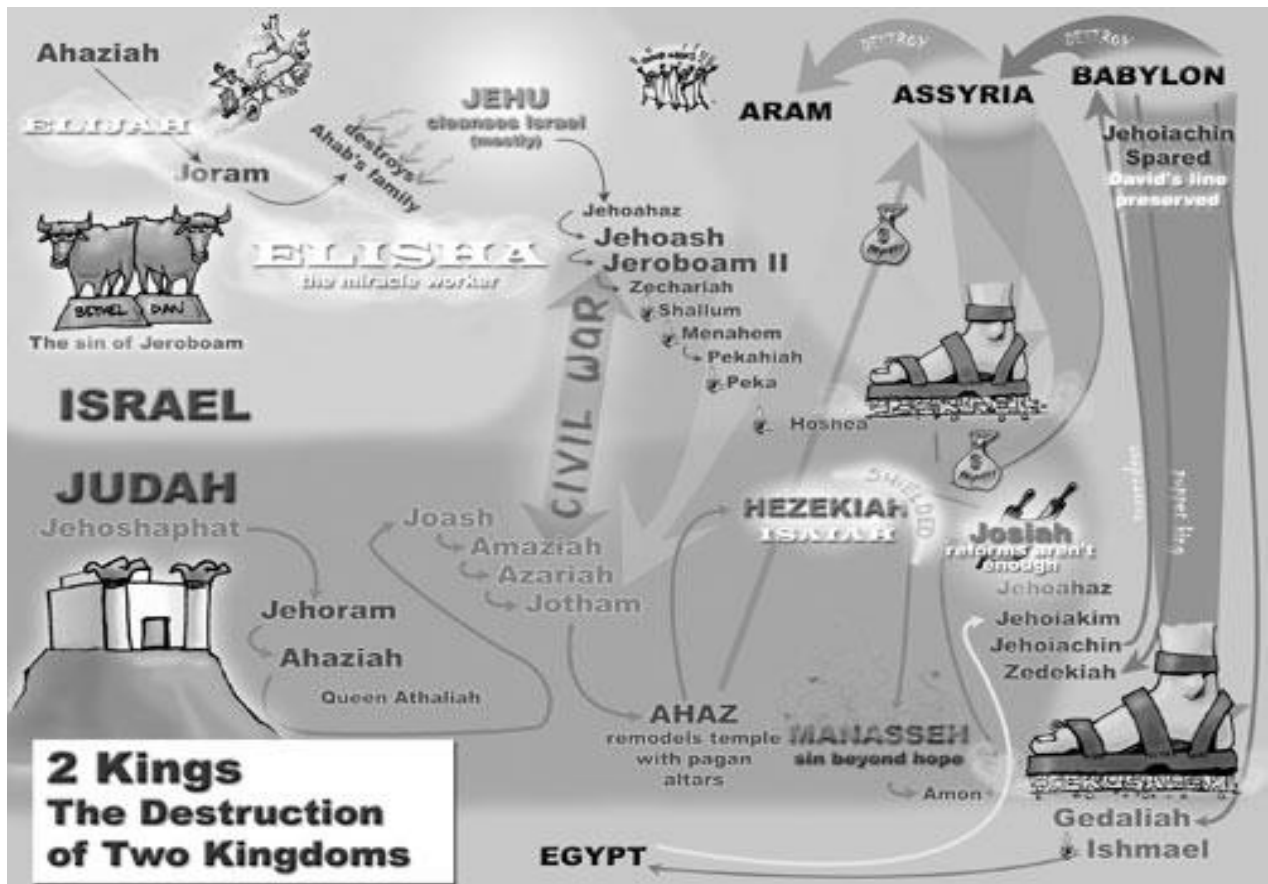
- The ministry of Elijah (1 Kings 17—22; 2 Kings 1,2)
- The ministry of Elisha (2 Kings 1—9:13)
- The last days of Israel (2 Kings 10—17)
- The last days of Judah (2 Kings 18—25)

### When Events Happened



2 Kings records the history of both kingdoms and the tragic ends of them both.

In 725 B.C. the Northern kingdom was destroyed by Assyria and in 605 BC the Southern kingdom was conquered by Babylon and the Temple destroyed. The North Kingdom of Israel wouldn't repent and was destroyed. The South Kingdom of Judah wouldn't repent as they felt safe because they had the temple (Jeremiah told them to repent) and they were taken captive into Babylon. This marked the end of the monarchy (until the true king, Jesus, came).



## Elisha

Elisha was the spiritual successor to Elijah. After the mighty prophet of 1 Kings was whisked away by the chariot of fire, Elisha took command of the spiritual leadership of Israel. The first seven chapters of the book are dedicated to the amazing ministry of this miracle-working man of God. It is an interesting study to compare the life of Elisha with the life of Jesus. They did similar miracles, went to similar places, and taught similar things. When Elisha died the kingdom of Israel quickly unraveled and was destroyed.

## Jehu

Jehu was an "almost, but not quite" kind of king. On the good side, he single-handedly served as the vehicle through which God eradicated the line of Ahab from the face of the planet. He purged Israel of the paganism introduced by Jezebel and watched as the dogs fulfilled prophecy while munching on her body. On the down side, Jehu did not rectify the sin of Jeroboam and left the golden bulls standing in Israel. He took the nation to the one-yard line, and then fumbled the ball. He got rid of most of the cancer, but left enough of a seed behind to metastasize and kill the whole nation.

## Destruction of Israel

Finally, in 721 B.C., God used the nation of Assyria to utterly destroy the kingdom of Israel. All ten tribes that comprised that kingdom were annihilated by the intermarriage that was forced upon them by their Assyrian oppressors.

## Hezekiah

The story of Hezekiah is a brief breath of fresh air in the middle of a putrid history. Hezekiah did what no other king had done since David; he destroyed the high places and brought the focus of worship in Judah back to the temple where it belonged. The syncretism of the high places was the constant virus that kept the nation from experiencing true health in the presence of God. Because of Hezekiah's reformation the imminent invasion from Assyria was miraculously abated as Sennacherib, their pompous king, was sent running back to Nineveh with his tail between his legs.

## Manasseh

One of the most radical, whiplash-inducing reversals of all time was the succession of Manasseh to his father's throne. If Hezekiah was the most righteous king of post-David Judah, then Manasseh was the most wicked. In a matter of a few short years Manasseh not only reintroduced the paganism that Hezekiah had destroyed, he also plunged the nation even deeper into evil that was beyond comprehension. The witchcraft and demonism that Manasseh allowed, even within the temple walls, left an irrevocable bitterness in God's mouth that He was not able to forget. Manasseh sealed Judah's doom.

## Josiah

Two generations after Manasseh's reign of sin, a second king like Hezekiah ascended to the throne. Through a reconnection to the Law of Moses, Josiah spearheaded a radical reformation of Judah's religious landscape. While Josiah's reforms were true, thorough, and authentic, they were too late. God spared Josiah in response to his devotion, but the nation itself could not escape from the damage that Manasseh had done. As soon as Josiah was gone, the threads of the nation began to unravel.

## Destruction of Judah

In 586 B.C., after several years of oppression and messing around with a puppet king on the throne of Jerusalem, Babylon finally burned Jerusalem to the ground, Temple and all. King Nebuchadnezzar was the instrument that God used to bring judgment to His wayward children. It was a dark day when the smoke of the burning Temple reminded the world of God's promise to Solomon when he had built that beautiful building. God warned Solomon that if the people ever lost their focus and turned their hearts toward other gods that He would remove His protective presence from the Temple and in burning ruins would become the laughing stock of the world. And so it was.

## Jehoiachin spared

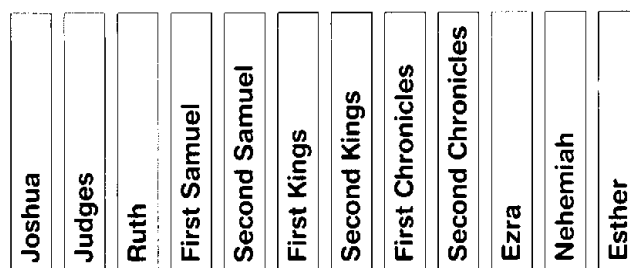
Although it occupies very little space in the context of the whole book, the fact that Jehoiachin surrendered and was taken as a prisoner to Babylon is incredibly significant to the big picture of God's master plan of redemption. God had promised David that the king of Israel would always come from his line. Had Jehoiachin been killed (as most kings would have been at the hands of the conquering empire) then the line of David would have been destroyed. When we read in Matthew 1, in the genealogy of Jesus, we see that Jehoiachin (he is called Jeconiah in Matthew's gospel) is listed. Jehoiachin stands as a glimmer of hope and a reminder to the fact that God is the God of covenant. No matter how bad things get, He will never break His promises. God always keeps a remnant of hope among His people. God loves us and does not desire to see us suffer the way we do. Our suffering is the result of our own poor choices. Yet, God will not give up on us. Through God's faithfulness, He preserved the line of David and made the way for the ultimate King, the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, to come into the world and settle the score once and for all.

## (f) 2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles

# 2 Chronicles

The Books of History



### Purpose/Theme:

To continue retelling of the history of Judah under King Solomon, with special focus on the Temple and the neglect of true worship.

### Key Verse:

"But will God really dwell on earth with men? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!" (6:18)

### Main People:

Solomon and the rulers of Judah

### Outline:

- The numbers in parentheses are chapter numbers.
- The reign of Solomon (1—9)
  - Solomon's request (1)
  - Solomon's Temple (2—7)
  - Solomon's success (8,9)
- The rulers of Judah (10—36)
  - Rehoboam (10—12)
  - Abijah (13)
  - Asa (14—16)
  - Jehoshaphat (17—20)
  - Jehoram (21)
  - Ahaziah, Athaliah
  - Joash (22—24)
  - Amaziah (25)
  - Uzziah (26)
  - Jotham (27)
  - Ahaz (28)
  - Hezekiah (29—32)
  - Manasseh, Amon (33)
  - The fall of Jerusalem (36)

### When Events Happened

SECOND CHRONICLES



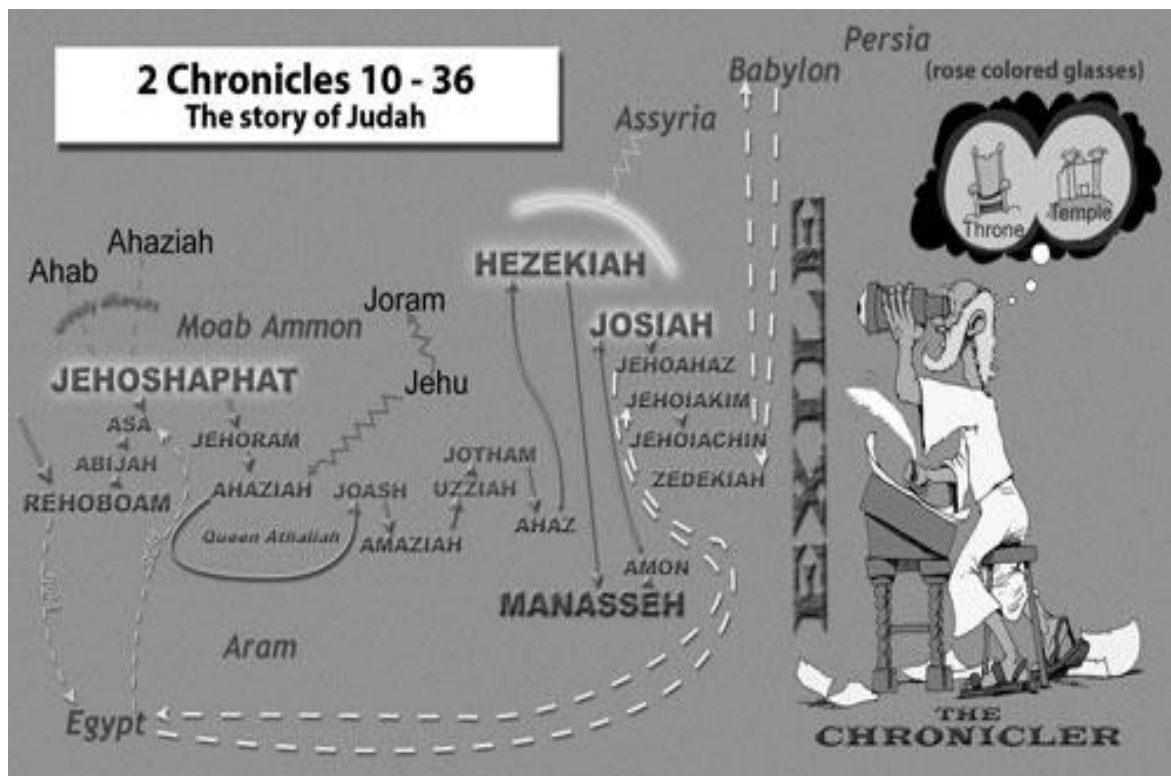
## Outline of 2 Chronicles

- I. The Reign of Solomon (chaps. 1-9)
- II. The Reign of the Davidic Dynasty (chaps. 10-36)
- III. The Babylonian Conquest and Exile (36:17-21)
- IV. The decree of Cyrus (36:22-23)

### 2 Chronicles at a Glance

Focus	Reign of Solomon			Reigns of the Kings of Judah		
Reference	1:1-----	2:1-----	8:1-----	10:1-----	14:1-----	36:1-----36:23
Division	Inauguration of Solomon	Completion of the Temple	The Glory of Solomon's Reign	The Division of the Kingdom	The Reforms of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah & Josiah	The Fall of Judah
Topic	The Temple is Constructed			The Temple is Destroyed		
	Splendor			Disaster		
Location	Judah					
Time	971 – 931 B.C. (40 years)			931 – 538 B.C. (393 years)		

Based on Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts, p. 147, copyright 1993 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.



In 2 Chronicles we leave the era of the united monarchy, when Israel was one united kingdom, and enter the tumultuous time of the divided kingdom when brother fought brother.

It is interesting to compare this chart to that of 2 Kings. In 2 Kings there is a balanced presentation of the kings and events that took place in both the Northern Kingdom Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. This is not the case in 2 Chronicles. Remember, all that matters to the Chronicler is the throne of David and the Temple. Neither of these things have anything to do with Israel. The Only time Israel gets any ink from the Chronicler is when it directly interacts with a Judean King. Otherwise, they don't exist.

As you read this history, keep a watchful eye for how the Chronicler is revolving his story around the Temple. When the Temple is in good shape, so is the kingdom. When the Temple is in disarray, all hell breaks loose. Notice how 2 Kings ends with Jehoiachin in Babylon, while 2 Chronicles ends with the Persians allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem after 70 years of exile. Why? To rebuild the Temple of course!

## **(g) Messianic Christology as Seen in 1 & 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles**

1 Kings: Like David, Solomon is one of the greatest types in the Old Testament of Jesus, portraying the Messiah in His future reign on earth. Solomon especially does this as his fame, glory, wealth, and honor all speak of the Messiah in His earthly kingdom. Solomon also portrays Christ in the great wisdom he demonstrated. It is interesting to note that the Messiah is never called the Son of Solomon.

2 Kings: Elijah naturally anticipates the forerunner of Christ in John the Baptist (Matt. 11:14; 17:10-12; Luke 1:17) and Elisha in many ways reminds us of Jesus Christ in His ministry. Note the comparison:

2 Chronicles: Elijah is noted for great public acts, while Elisha is distinguished by the large number of miracles he performed, many of them for individual needs. Elijah's ministry emphasized God's law, judgment, and severity. Elisha supplemented this by demonstrating God's grace, love and tenderness. Elijah was like John the Baptist, thundering the message of repentance for sin. Elisha followed this up by going about, as Jesus did, doing deeds of kindness, and by doing miracles attesting that the words of the prophets were from God.

## **(h) Contribution to the Old Testament**

1. First and Second Kings records the division and eventual collapse of monarchy. These books provide the historical record of Israel's kings which serves to indict them for failing to lead the people in keeping the covenant. With just a few exceptions, the kings did not live up to God's pattern for monarchy that was set by David.

2. First and Second Chronicles reveals how the covenants promises were applied. These books show how the removal of God's people from the land is related to God's unconditional covenant promises to :

- Abraham (promise of possessing the land) by showing how Israel would always hold the "title deed" to the land. Yet because they disobeyed, they would lose their right to enjoy the land.
- David (promise of an eternal throne) by always having one of David' descendants on the throne of Judah during the monarchy. Even after the collapse of monarchy, God kept his promise of an eternal throne alive by preserving a remnant of Judah through the captivity.

From this remnant of Judah would come Jesus the Messiah, the true Messianic King of the Jews, and the long-awaited “Son of David.”

## (i) Helpful hints for reading Kings and Chronicles

1. Understand the historical context from which the Chronicler wrote. These books were written after the exile during the Era of Restoration. This was a period of identity crisis for God’s people. The author’s positive perspective seeks to establish a sense of continuity for God’s people by linking their glorious past with the present glory of the temple and priesthood.
2. Note the differences in focus between Chronicles and Kings. Chronicles focuses on the underlying spiritual issues behind the events of Kings. In places, the author of Chronicles give us insight into the spiritual dimension of the actions of the kings. For example, in 1 Chr. 21.1, the author says that it was Satan that incited David to take a census of the number of fighting men in Israel. This spiritual commentary provides us with a fuller understanding of the events of the monarchy.

## (3) Prophets to the Divided Kingdom

### a. Isaiah

<b>The Book of Isaiah</b>															
Focus	Judgment is Coming								Glory Will Follow						
Divisions	Judgment on Judah		Judgment on Judah's Neighbors				Judgment on All the Earth		Historical Interlude		Deliverance of God's People		Deliverance for God's People		Future of God's Delivered People
	1	12	13	27	28	35	36	39	40	48	49	57	58	66	
Topics	Visions		Burdens		Woes		Wars		Worship						
	Sermons of Condemnation						Parenthesis		Sermons of Comfort						
Place	Judah & Her Neighbors								Israel & the World						
Time	About 40 Years (722-681 B.C.)								Thousands of Years						
Author	The Prophet Isaiah														

**Brief Summary:** The Book of Isaiah reveals God’s judgment and salvation. God is “holy, holy, holy” (Isaiah 6:3), and therefore He cannot allow sin to go unpunished (Isaiah 1:2; 2:11-20; 5:30; 34:1-2; 42:25). Isaiah portrays God’s oncoming judgment as a “consuming fire” (Isaiah 1:31; 30:33).

At the same time, Isaiah understands that God is a God of mercy, grace, and compassion (Isaiah 5:25; 11:16; 14:1-2; 32:2; 40:3; 41:14-16). The nation of Israel (both Judah and Israel) is blind and deaf to God’s commands (Isaiah 6:9-10; 42:7). Judah is compared to a vineyard that should be, and will be, trampled on (Isaiah 5:1-7). Only because of His mercy and His promises to Israel, will God not allow Israel or Judah to be completely destroyed. He will bring restoration, forgiveness, and healing (43:2; 43:16-19; 52:10-12).

Isaiah is called the mini Bible as chapters 1-39 reveal OT judgment and chapters 40-66 reveal NT mercy and salvation (OT has 39 books, NT has 27 books).

**Part 1: chapters 1-39 Destruction is coming, Judah beware!**

During this section Isaiah is preaching during the impending and ever-growing threat of the Assyrian Empire. The first three kings under his ministry do not listen to his message and the pagan idols remain in the temple and the people continue to oppress the poor and think like the pagans. The climax of the section is when King Hezekiah changes things and destroys the idols and ceases paying homage taxes to Assyria. This was a bold step of faith that Hezekiah made, and God honored it. Assyria was defeated by the Babylonians and Jerusalem experienced a season of peace.

**Part 2: chapters 40-66 The Messiah is coming, World prepare!**

Hezekiah’s son, Manasseh became king and took the city in a 180 degree turn, deeper into sin than it had ever been. This broke Isaiah’s heart. Tradition tells us that Manasseh had Isaiah thrown in prison and eventually sawed in half. During this dark time is when the focus of Isaiah’s teaching went beyond the bleak and inevitable annihilation of Jerusalem to the future hope of the Messiah. From his dark dungeon, Isaiah preaches messages of hope that have lit up the centuries since they were first uttered.

## b. Minor Prophets of the Divided Kingdom

### MINOR PROPHETS part 1

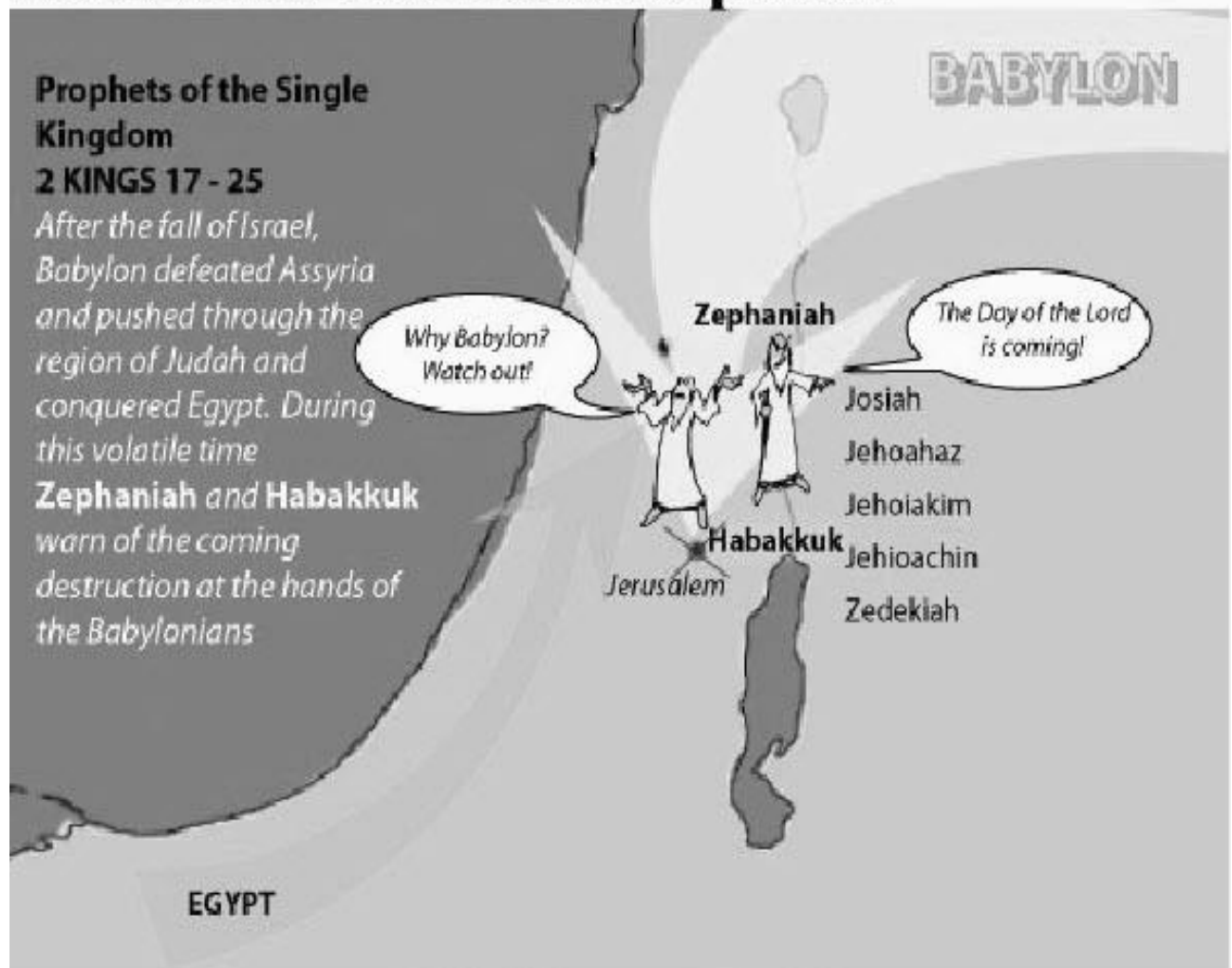
*Prophet of the Divided Kingdom*  
**2 KINGS 1-10**  
*During the skirmishes with Moab, Obadiah chastises Edom (descendents of Esau) for sitting by and doing nothing to defend Israel.*

A map of the Divided Kingdom of Israel and Judah. A prophet, Obadiah, is shown standing on the border between Israel and Edom. A speech bubble from him says, "You should have helped your brother!". The locations of Samaria and Jerusalem are marked on the Israel side, and the word "EDOM" is written in large letters on the Edomite side.

*Prophets of the Assyrian Invasion on Israel*  
**2 KINGS 10 - 17**  
*In the final days of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, six prophets preach of the coming destruction that would come at the hands of the Assyrians.*  
*Before the destruction **Jonah** calls Assyria to repentance.*  
**Hosea, Amos, and Joel** preach of imminent doom.  
**Micah** warns Judah to not be smug in their safety.  
*After the destruction, **Nahum** condemns Assyria for taking credit for their victories.*

A map of the Assyrian Invasion on Israel. The Assyrian Empire is shown to the north, with the word "ASSYRIA" in large letters. Six prophets are depicted with speech bubbles: Amos says "You've been measured!"; Hosea says "You're a prostitute!"; Joel says "The locusts are coming!"; Micah says "You're Day in court is coming!"; Jonah (before invasion) says "Assyria, prepare to be used by God"; and Nahum (after invasion) says "you will be destroyed like a flood". The locations of Samaria and Jerusalem are marked on the Israel side.

## MINOR PROPHETS part 2



**HOSEA** - Sometimes called the "Prophet of Divine Love," Hosea was a native of Israel and was called to be God's spokesman during that kingdom's darkest hour. The apostasy of his own people was enough to break Hosea's heart, but he also bore a heavy cross in his own life - his wife had proved unfaithful. In this bitter experience Hosea came to fathom God's love for his erring children and pleads with his people to repent and avail themselves of God's divine compassion and a love that will not let Israel go.

**JOEL** - Traditionally called the "Prophet of Pentecost," since his prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit (2:28ff.) is quoted by Peter (Acts 2:16) as being fulfilled at Pentecost, Joel was the kind of man who could see the eternal in the temporal. The occasion of his message was a devastating locust plague, which he interpreted as foreboding the Day of the Lord when God would act directly to punish His people for their sins. Joel calls upon the people of Judah to repent, promising that repentance will bring God's blessings, material and spiritual.

**AMOS** - Among the "writing" prophets Amos was the first of a new school, for, like Elijah and John the Baptist, he denounced sin with rustic boldness. A shepherd and native of Judah, he was called by God to prophesy to the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II (786-746 B.C.). Sparing no one, the prophet fearlessly announced the impending judgment of God. Although the dominant note of the book is judgment, the final words promise the restoration of a righteous remnant.

**OBADIAH** - This shortest of the prophetic books, containing only 21 verses, is a scathing denunciation of the Edomites, descendants of Esau, who from the beginning had been hostile to Israel. Its message is primarily one of destruction and doom for Edom. The latter part of the prophecy is concerned with the Day of the Lord when God's judgment will be upon other nations as well as Edom and concludes with the promise that "the kingdom shall be the Lord's".

**JONAH** - The Old Testament counterpart of John 3:16, this book declares the universality of God's love embracing even pagan nations. Its authorship and historicity are disputed. If one is willing to accept the miraculous, there is no compelling reason to deny its historicity. There is a strong possibility that the book is *about* Jonah and not *by* him. The author relates how Jonah refused God's call to preach to the people of Nineveh, his punishment for this disobedience, his ready response to a second summons, and his bitter complaint at God's sparing the city following her repentance. Christ Himself alludes to Jonah when speaking of His own death and Resurrection (Matt. 12:39, 16:4; Luke 11:29-32).

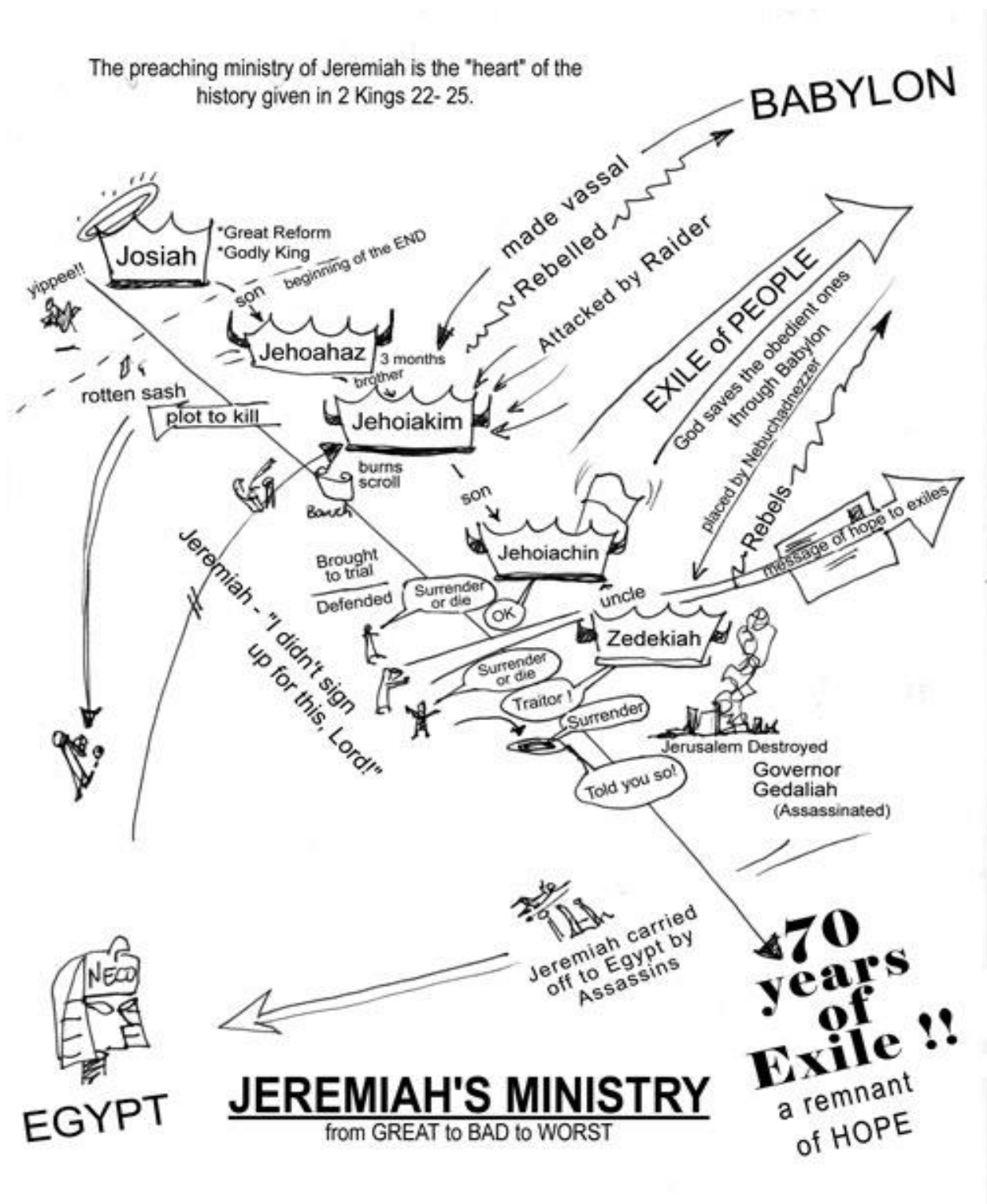
**MICAH** - The Prophet Micah was a younger contemporary of Isaiah and spoke at a time when conditions in Judah paralleled those in the northern kingdom of Israel during Amos' day. Micah's messages are strikingly similar to those of Amos: many of the same sins are denounced and the same rugged, direct, indignant, and convincing language is used. While announcing God's certain judgment upon sin, he also spoke of a sure deliverance to come through the Messiah whose place of birth he predicts.

**NAHUM** - This book is a vivid prediction of the approaching downfall of Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, one of the most warlike of the ancient heathen nations. Of the Prophet Nahum, whose name means "consolation" or "comfort", little is known. His purpose was to comfort his people, long harassed by Assyria, with the promise that this cruel and oppressing people would soon meet destruction at God's hand.

**HABAKKUK** - While this book is true prophecy, its method is quite different from other writings of the prophets. Dramatically constructed in the form of dialogue, this book contains the prophet's complaints (questions) and God's reply to them. In God's answers Habakkuk discovers the doorway leading from questioning to affirmation, through which he enters into a faith that enables him to affirm, "I will rejoice in the Lord... God, the Lord, is my strength."

**ZEPHANIAH** - This book, though brief, is comprehensive, embracing the two great themes of prophetic teaching: judgment and salvation - both extending to all nations. In some great catastrophe of his day, perhaps the Scythian invasion (c. 626 B.C.), Zephaniah sees God's terrible judgment upon the nations, including Judah. He exhorts the people to repent and assures them that God will dwell in the midst of a righteous remnant following repentance.

## c. Jeremiah



**Brief Summary:** The Book of Jeremiah is primarily a message of judgment on Judah for rampant idolatry (Jeremiah 7:30-34; 16:10-13; 22:9; 32:29; 44:2-3). After the death of King Josiah, the last righteous king, the nation of Judah had almost completely abandoned God and His commandments. Jeremiah compares Judah to a prostitute (Jeremiah 2:20; 3:1-3). God had promised that He would judge idolatry most severely (Leviticus 26:31-33; Deuteronomy 28:49-68), and Jeremiah was warning Judah that God's judgment was at hand. God had delivered Judah from destruction on countless occasions, but His mercy was at its end. Jeremiah records King Nebuchadnezzar conquering Judah and making it subject to him (Jeremiah 24:1). After further rebellion, God brought Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian armies back to destroy and desolate Judah and Jerusalem (Jeremiah chapter 52). Even in this most severe judgment, God promises the restoration of Judah back into the land God has given them (Jeremiah 29:10).

He starts off in ministry preaching during the reign of Josiah. King Josiah was the one who was appalled by what his evil grandfather Manasseh had done and spent his career rebuilding the Temple, tearing down all the pagan idols and altars, and retraining the people to obey the Law of Moses. What preacher would not enjoy that scenario? The king asked him to go up and down the streets telling the people to repent and get right with God. The young preacher Jeremiah must have strutted with confidence during this early preaching. After all, he had the king and the king's army backing up his message!

Then Josiah died and it was the beginning of the end. The chart shows the succession of kings that followed Josiah and the various, and increasingly difficult, levels of interaction Jeremiah had with these rulers. In three months time Jehoahaz reintroduced all the paganism of his great grandfather Manasseh. Jeremiah called, "foul" and accused Jehoahaz and all his people of stinking like a rotten loincloth (by the way, not a good idea if you want to be "in" with the powers that be). There was a plot to kill Jeremiah after that. Fortunately for Jeremiah, Jehoahaz was quickly captured by the Pharaoh of Egypt and taken into captivity. Pharaoh Neco placed Jehoahaz's half brother Jehoiakim on the throne in Jerusalem as a puppet king. During Jehoiakim's reign the world powers were shifting hands and his vassalship was taken out of the hands of the Egyptians and assumed by the Babylonians.

From that point on Nebuchadnezzar was the clear and present danger for the city of Jerusalem. During Jehoiakim's reign Jeremiah did two things. First, he wrote down all his really juicy messages on a scroll and had his partner, Baruch, read it to the king. Basically, the message said, "The Lord is going to use Babylon to destroy you. If you want to repent, He's ready to stop the process." Jehoiakim took the scroll and burned each section right after Baruch read it. I don't think he was clearly getting the point. From that point on Jeremiah's life became a game of cat and mouse with the kings of Judah. Jeremiah was brought to trial for treason and treachery, but there were still a few good men left in the city at this point that came to his aid.

The second thing Jeremiah did during this time was to complain. You'll find interspersed amongst his messages of warning and woe to the king, the occasional aside to God that goes something like this, "Excuse me Lord! I didn't sign up for this. I liked the good old days with Josiah when my words had power. Now I speak what you ask and the people mock me, hate me, and try to seriously hurt me. Can I get off the ride now, I'd really like to go home." Don't blame him. I think I would have complained as well (as a matter of fact, I think I have whined like that a few times). In the end the Lord would remind him that all that is required of him is obedience...nothing more. God was not judging him based upon his audience approval or his "ratings." God wanted nothing more than absolute surrender. This was a dark time for Jerusalem that wasn't going to get better and somebody had to deliver the message.

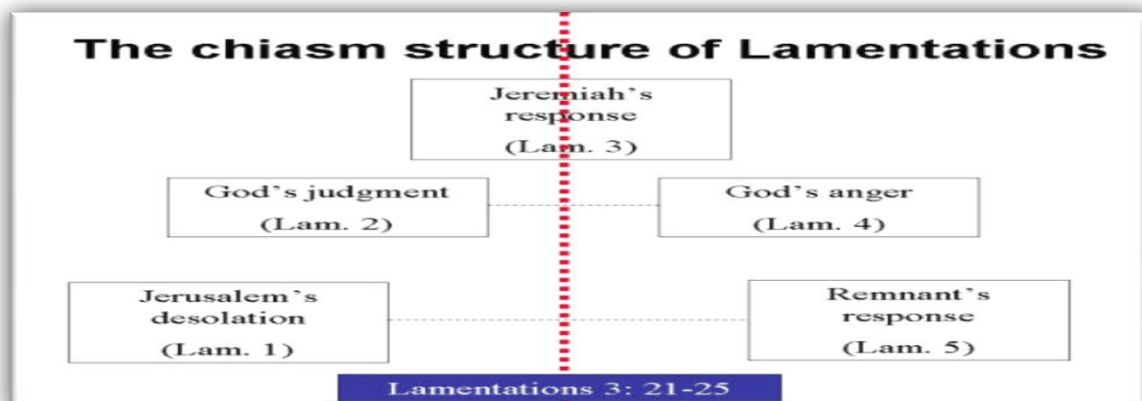
After Jehioakim died, his son, Jehoiachin, took over. Even though he was evil like his father, Jehoichin did something right. Out of all the kings in this story, he was the only one who actually listened to Jeremiah. By this time God had already determined that Jerusalem was going to be destroyed at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Yet, God took compassion on His people and offered a way out for those who would be willing to listen to the words of Jeremiah and

obey. Jeremiah told the people to surrender to Babylon and God would spare their lives. “What! Surrender to the enemy?!? How could this be the word of God?” Well, it was. Now whether Jehoiachin was actually a smart man and was willing to obey the word of God, or was just a plain coward and didn’t want to fight against Babylon is a question for debate. In either case, Jehoiachin did surrender to Nebby and was carried off to Babylon along with all the important people of the city and anyone who wanted to obey Jeremiah’s instructions. This is the actual beginning point of the Babylonian Exile.

Neb left behind Jehoiachin’s uncle, Zedekiah, to be the puppet king over the stragglers left behind. Like many people who are placed in power, Zedekiah thought he was tougher than he was and decided to rebel against Babylon. Bad idea. During this part of the story things got really ugly for Jeremiah. The people hated him because they thought he was a traitor for telling everyone to surrender. Their hatred for him got him thrown into a few different kinds of prisons – a dungeon, courtyard confinement, and a mud-filled well. Zedekiah toyed with Jeremiah’s emotions as he would have secret midnight consultations with the prophet, making Jeremiah think he might be willing to listen to God. In the end, he did not and ended up getting the entire city ransacked and completely razed to the ground, Temple and all.

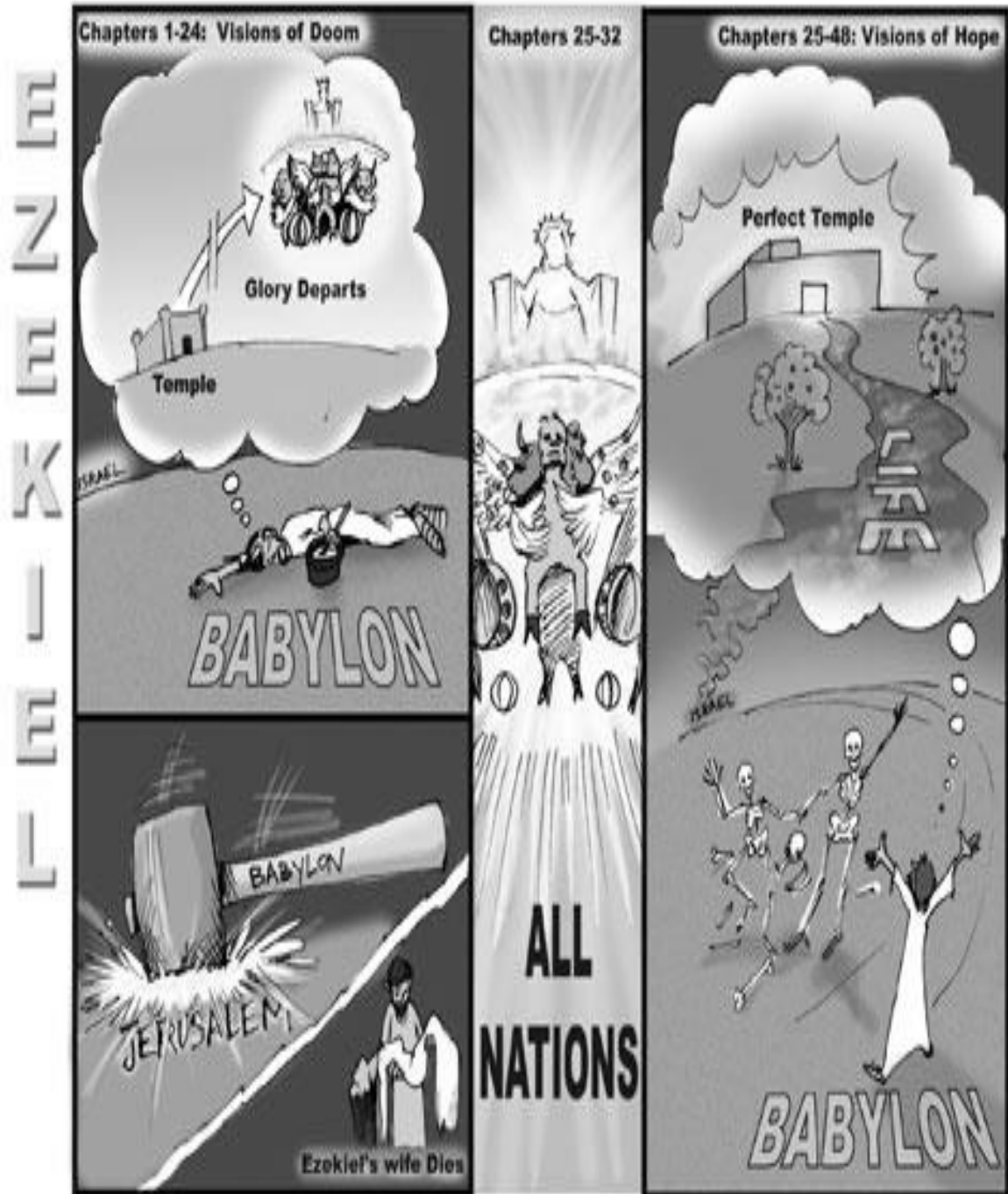
Jeremiah stood there and watched his beautiful city -- the holy city of God, the city that was to shine like a light to the world demonstrating God’s holiness and goodness – get burned to the ground, nothing more than a billowing plume of wretched smoke. Where were the good times with Josiah? Where was the hope? There are two answers to this question. In chapters 29 – 31 we have the record of a beautiful message of hope that Jeremiah sent to his brothers and sisters of Jerusalem that had been taken to Babylon. In that letter he told them not to be afraid. He said that God would care for them in Babylon and that He would use the time to heal the land until it was ready to start over. It is here that frames the context for the famous words, “*for I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*” For the people there was hope, but for Jeremiah there was none. As he watched the smoke rise to the sky and blot out the sun, moon, and stars, he penned the words of Lamentations and wept bitterly for his beloved city. Then he was caught up in another political mess as the governor of the region, Gedaliah, was assassinated by a band of rebels. These rebels grabbed Jeremiah and dragged him off to Egypt in order to escape the wrath of Babylon. That is the last we know of Jeremiah. Bummer.

**LAMENTATIONS** - Entitled in most English versions *The Lamentations of Jeremiah*, this book is placed immediately after Jeremiah in the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate* and *English Bible*. In the Hebrew text it is found among the "Writings". Ancient tradition states that Jeremiah was the author. The book is composed of five poems, lamenting the siege and destruction of Jerusalem (586 B.C.). The poet also makes sincere confession of sin on behalf of the people and leaders, acknowledges complete submission to the will of God, and finally prays that God will once again smile upon His people and restore them to their homeland.



## (4) The Prophets of the Exile

### (a) Ezekiel



**Brief Summary:** Ezekiel spoke to Jerusalem, but from a very different perspective. Ezekiel was born during the reign of Josiah, as Jeremiah was preaching about reformation and the King was cleansing the Temple. Ezekiel was born the son of a priest and was most likely trained from an early age to know the Law (especially since Josiah had just found the book of the Law and reformed the Temple) and the rituals of the priestly sacrifices. As this young priest-in-training grew up, he watched the heat of reform grow colder and fires of Jeremiah's preaching grow hotter. At 25 years of age he was taken with the second wave of exiles, along with King Jehoiachin, to Babylon. Ezekiel's ministry took place completely in the foreign country of Babylon, among the exiled Jews.

For five years after his deportation, he lived as a priest without a Temple. His people were dazed and confused. They were captives in a foreign land and their king had been deposed. They were beaten down and all had been lost; all except one glimmer of hope. Even though their king had been deposed, the Temple was still standing. God was still on His throne. It was just a matter of time before God would raise up His mighty arm and vindicate them, pushing the Babylonians back into their own country and exalting Jerusalem once again. Or so they thought.

The young Ezekiel was most likely inclined to believe in this line of thinking. After all, he knew the promises that Yaweh had made to Abraham and David. He knew that God would not be mocked by pagan Gentiles. As Ezekiel was taking a walk that day along the Kebar canal in his exiled detention camp, he may have been envisioning the defeat of the Babylonians and the restoration of his beloved city. Then it happened. God got hold of Ezekiel. God came to him in a terrible, dumbfounding vision of power and glory. But it wasn't the fiercesome image of beasts and fire that left Ezekiel dumbfounded. No, it was something far worse. God had told Ezekiel that all hope was lost for Jerusalem; that their worst fears were about to come true. Ezekiel was commissioned by God to be the bad guy and deliver a message of destruction to the people in Exile. The people had completely misunderstood their relationship with God and had treated His covenant with contempt, using it to elevate their own social standing and keep the poor and the foreigners out. God would no longer tolerate their syncretistic, watered-down, self-serving religion, and was going to finally remove His presence from the Temple and let the Babylonians completely destroy Jerusalem.

Ezekiel's style was unconventional and memorable, to say the least. For the next few years this young priest-turned-prophet would use bizarre visuals (like starving himself, knocking down a model of the city, and burning a cooking pot), point his finger at the social elite, and ultimately watch the love of his life die, in order to get the point across. His words were powerful, his message was harsh, but his heart was pure and focused completely on the reality of the Yaweh he met by the canal. "We may be sure that the encounter at the water's edge transformed what may have been for Ezekiel a matter of intellectual worldview and professional training into the most intensely personal and experiential core of his whole life and identity."<sup>1</sup>

Ezekiel's book can be divided into three sections:

Part 1: Ezekiel preaches to the Exiles about the coming destruction of Jerusalem. Doom and Gloom. (chs. 1-24)

Part 2: Ezekiel preaches against the sins of all the nations surrounding Jerusalem. "Jerusalem may have fallen, but you're next!" (chs. 24-32)

Part 3: Ezekiel preaches a message of hope and a vision for a resurrected and restored Jerusalem. Hope is reborn! (chs. 33-48)

## **(b) Daniel**

### ***Phase 1: Nebuchadnezzar (chs. 1-4)***

Chapter 1 describes the conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Along with many others, Daniel and his three friends were deported to Babylon and because of their courage and the obvious blessings of God upon them, they were “promoted” in the king’s service (Daniel 1:17-20). During this phase Daniel experienced a great deal of power and influence in Babylonian government. While his three colleagues were not treated as nicely as he was. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that only Daniel could correctly interpret. His dream of a great statue represented the kingdoms that would arise in the future. Nebuchadnezzar made a great statue of himself and forced everyone to worship it. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused and were miraculously spared by God despite being thrown into a fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar is judged by God for his pride, but is later restored once he recognized and admitted God’s sovereignty.

### ***Phase 2: Belshazzar (chs. 5, 7-8)***

This is the dark phase of Daniel’s career. When Belshazzar took over the throne from Nebuchadnezzar things changed drastically for Daniel. We don’t know exactly what happened, but the fact that he had to be summoned from apparent obscurity indicates that Daniel had been discarded by the new monarch and forgotten. Daniel chapter 5 records Nebuchadnezzar’s son Belshazzar misusing the items taken from the Temple in Jerusalem and receiving a message from God, written into the wall, in response. Only Daniel could interpret the writing, a message of coming judgment from God. It was during this time that Daniel’s dreams became tormented and his vision of the political future of the world turned beastly. In Chapter 7 God gave Daniel a vision of four beasts. The four beasts represented the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Ch 8 contains a vision involving a ram, a goat, and several horns – also referring to future kingdoms and their rulers.

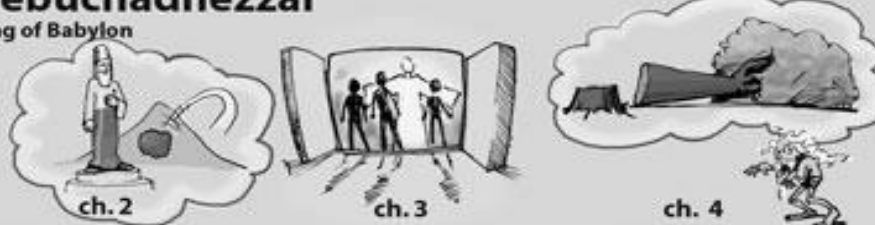



### ***Phase 3: Darius (ch. 6,9)***

After evil Belshazzar got his just rewards, the Median Empire took over for a short while. Under Darius, Daniel was restored to a political office. However, the new Median ruling class and “wise men” were not very happy with this “old school” foreigner having such prestige in their government. In this section we see that good people are often misunderstood and often set up for a fall. Through Daniel’s faithfulness he was spared from the mouths of the lions and was once again exalted to a high position. Daniel chapter 9 records Daniel’s “seventy weeks” prophecy. God gave Daniel the precise timeline of when the Messiah would come and be cut off. The prophecy also mentions a future ruler who will make a seven-year covenant with Israel and break it after three and a half years, followed shortly thereafter by the great judgment and consummation of all things.

### ***Phase 4: Cyrus (chs. 10-12)***

Daniel ended his political career under the Persian king, Cyrus. While Daniel was once again restored to a high position as he was under Nebuchadnezzar, he probably had a very different perspective on things. No longer was he focused on politics and power. He had been humbled and broken. Now his focus was on God and on the Kingdom of God at work in the world. He was spending time in God’s word, and upon reading the prophecy of 70 years in Jeremiah 25, Daniel became convicted that God’s Kingdom was indeed supreme and he began earnestly seeking God’s heart on this matter. Chapters 10-12 are God’s response to a truly broken and repentant man who was desperately seeking to make sense out of his world.

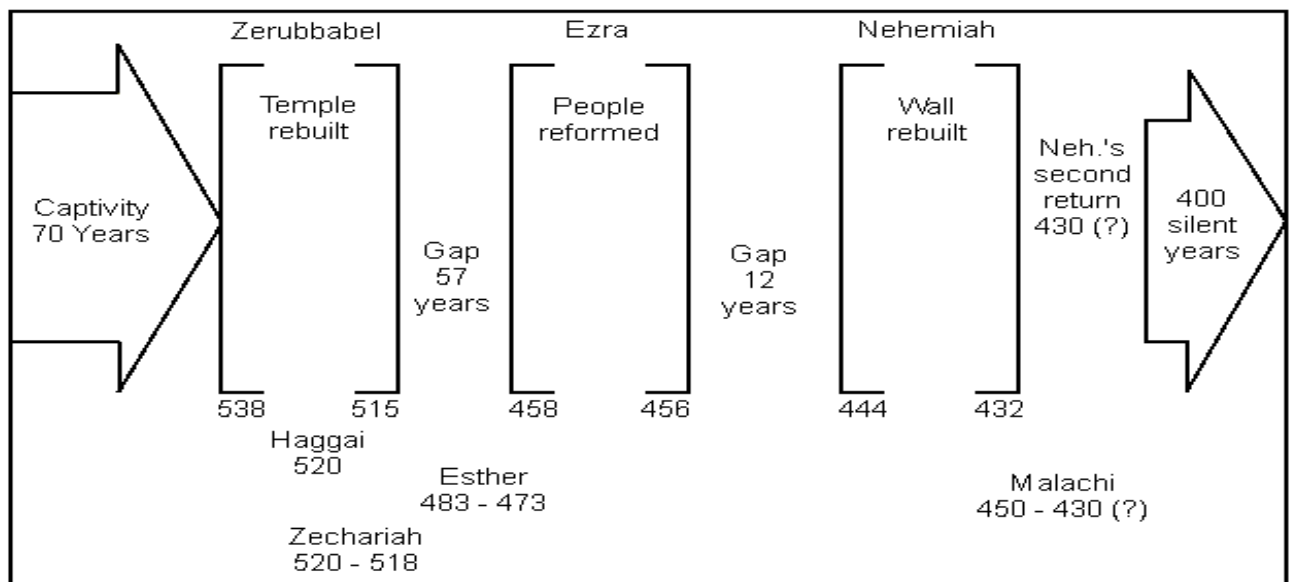
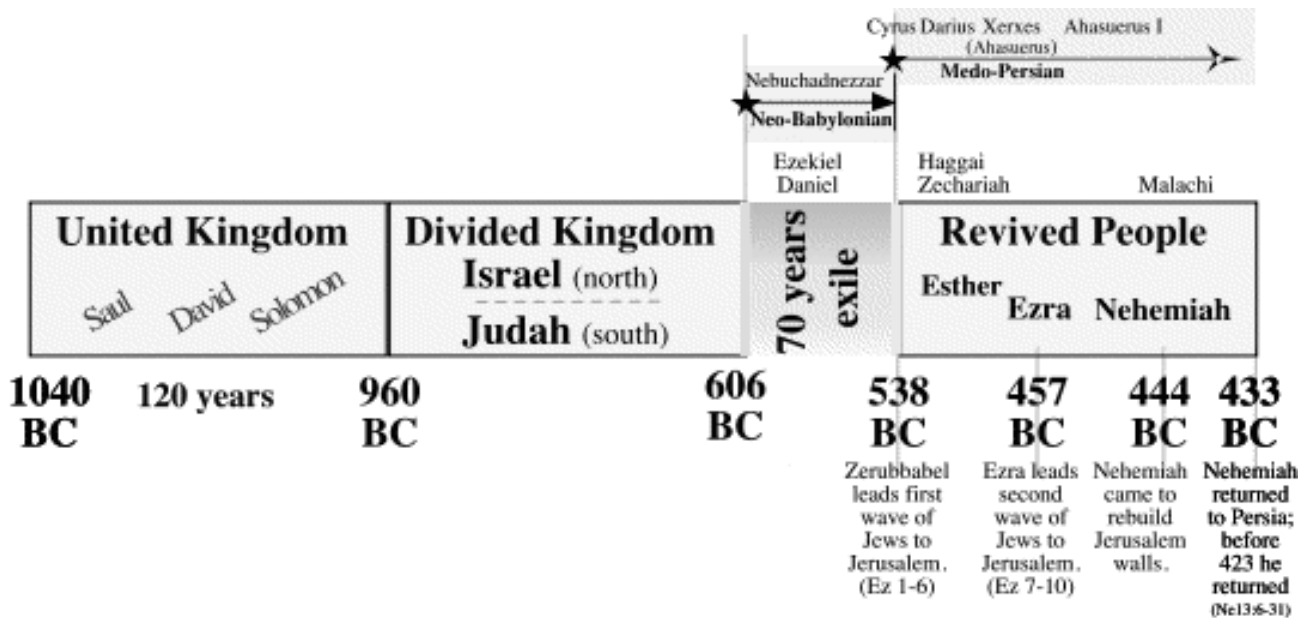
**DANIEL** a young Jerusalemite taken by Nebuchadnezzar from under Jehoiakim's reign and placed in the Babylon University ch. 1

Stand Strong!	<p><b>Nebuchadnezzar</b> King of Babylon</p>  <p>ch. 2                      ch. 3                      ch. 4</p>
Sometimes it gets dark	<p><b>Belshazzar</b> King of Babylon</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Era of Daniel's Darkness</p>  <p>ch. 5                      ch. 7                      ch. 8</p>
God will be exalted	<p><b>Darius</b> King of the Medes</p>  <p>ch. 6                      ch. 9</p>
God will Prevail	<p><b>Cyrus</b> King of Persia</p>  <p>ch. 10-12                      <b>Michael in cosmic battle!!</b></p> <p>4 Persian Kings    ONE MIGHTY KING    North vs. South    Deceiver King → The Abomination the causes Desolation</p>

The BIG QUESTION: Does this prophecy:  
 a) end with Antiochus Epiphanes  
 b) point beyond this to the end of time (John's Revelation)

**(5) The Return – Ezra and Nehemiah**

**(a) Overview – Chronology of events and people.**

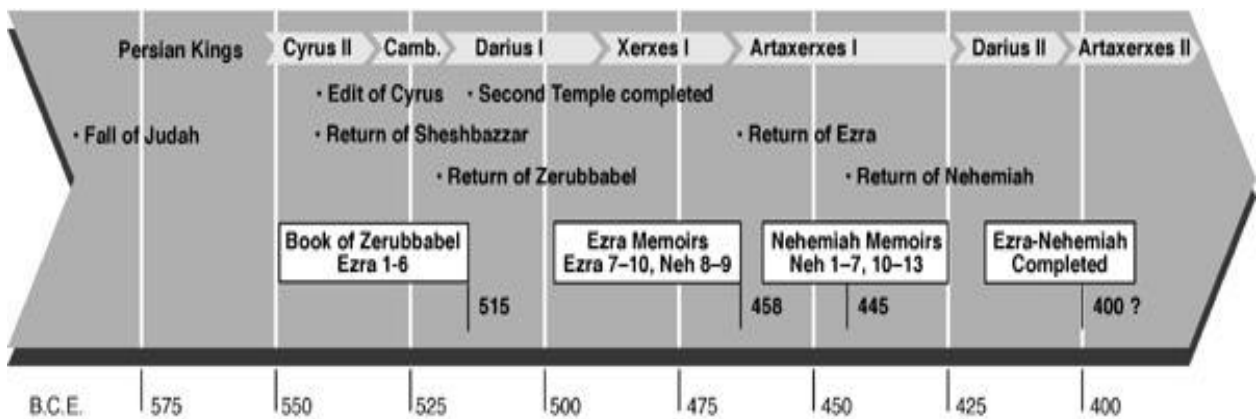
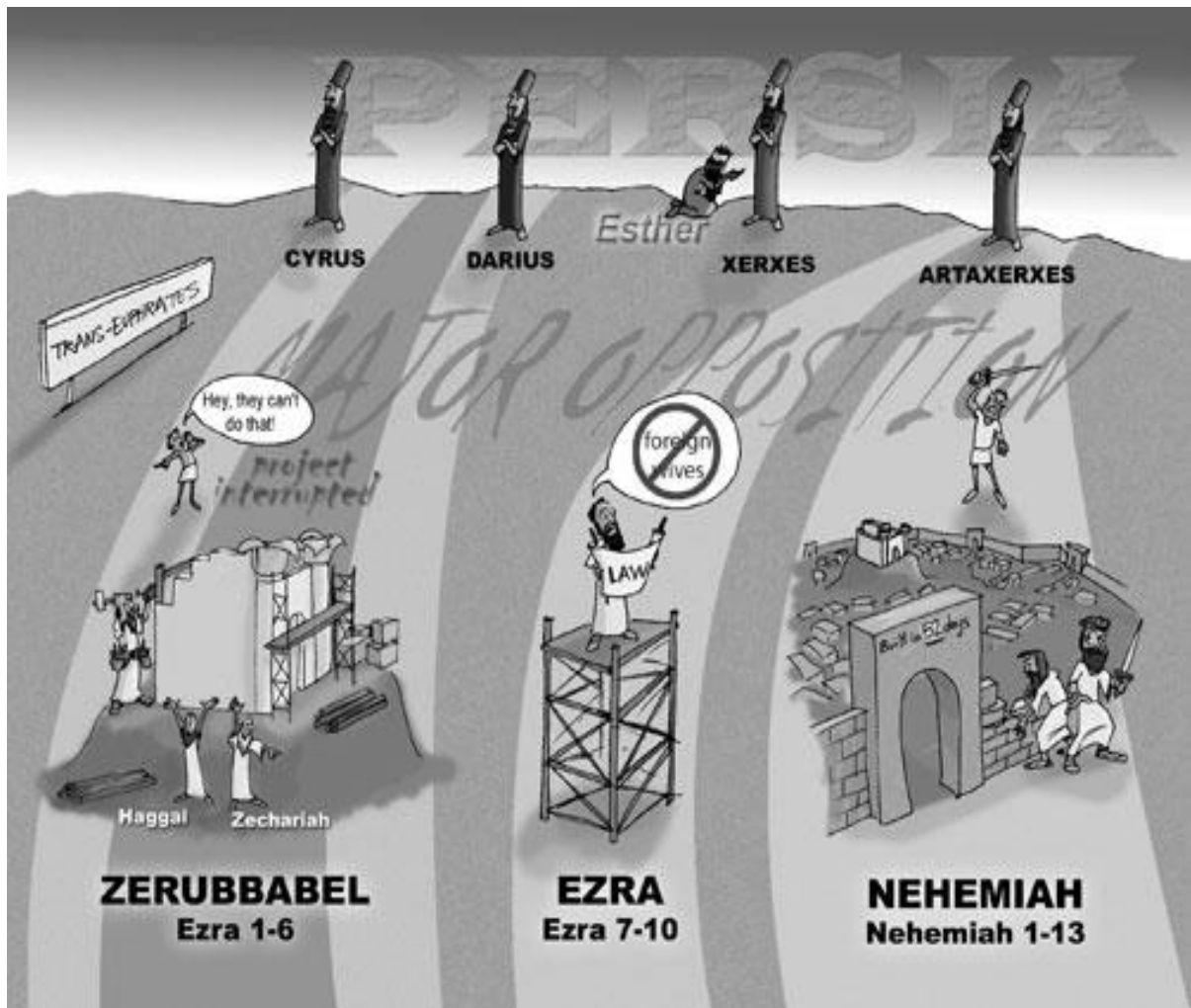


**The Three Returns from Exile**

**Return under Zerubbabel = Restoration of true WORSHIP**

**Return under Ezra = Restoration of true WORD**

**Return under Nehemiah = Restoration of true WAY**

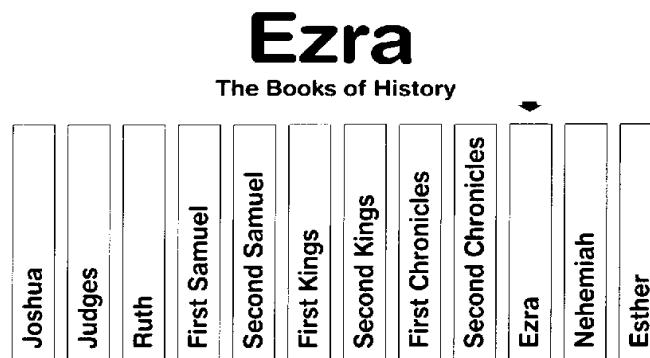


## Chronology of the Persian Period

PERSIAN KING	DATES	BIBLICAL CORRELATION	GREEK CORRELATION
CYRUS	539-530	Return of Zerubbabel and Jeshua (Ezra 1-3)	
CAMBYSES	530-522	Rebuilding at Jerusalem stopped (Ezra 4)	
DARIUS I	522-486	Haggai and Zechariah prophesy (520) Temple completed (516) (Ezra 5-6)	Greeks defeat Persians at Marathon (490)
XERXES	486-464	Story of Esther (Esther 1-9)	Greeks defeat Persians at Thermoplae (480 and Salamis (479) Herodotus 485-425
ARTAXERXES I	464-423	Return of Ezra (458) (Ezra 7-10) Return of Nehemiah (445) (Nehemiah 1-2) Prophecy of Malachi (433)	Golden Age (461-431) Pericles (460-429) Athens rules
DARIUS II	423-404	B I B L I C A L  S I L E N C E	Peloponnesian Wars (431-404) Athens falls (404) Sparta rules
ARTAXERXES II	404-359		Socrates (470-399) Plato (428-348) Aristotle (384-322)
ARTAXERXES III	359-338		Philip II of Macedon defeats Greeks at Chaeronea in 338
ARSES	338-335		
DARIUS III	335-331		Alexander the Great overthrows Persian Empire
ALEXANDER	336-323		Establishment of Greek Empire

## (b) *Ezra*

Ezra



### Purpose/Theme:

The Babylonians are now conquered by the Persians. This account is of Ezra the priest being allowed to lead a return to Palestine in the fifth century a.c., to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem.

### Key Verse:

"The Lord our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage" (9:8).

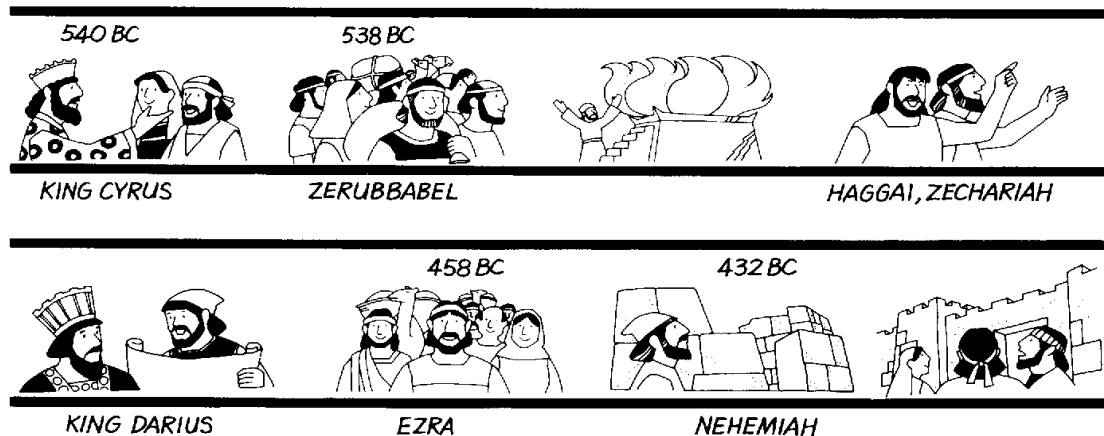
### Main People:

Sheshbazzar, Ezra

### Outline:

- The return under Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1—6)
  - The decree of the Persian king (Ezra 1)
  - The census of the people (Ezra 2)
  - The rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra 3—6)
- The return under Ezra (Ezra 7—10)
  - The return to Jerusalem (Ezra 7,8)
  - Dealing with the people's sins (Ezra 9,10)

### When Events Happened



### 1. Christ as Seen in Ezra:

In keeping with the Davidic covenant and God's promises to keep the line of descendants alive for Messiah, Son of David, Ezra and Nehemiah show how God continued to keep His promises by restoring His people to their land.

## 2. Ezra Outline

<b>The Book of Ezra</b>						
Focus	Rebuilding the Temple		58 Year Gap (The Book of Eather)	Rebuilding the People		
Divisions	Temple Commission	Temple Completion			Priests & Pilgrims	Pollution & Purging
	1	3			7	8
		4			9	10
Topics	Return Under Zerubbabel				Return Under Ezra	
	Material Restoration				Spiritual Restoration	
Place	Persia to Jerusalem				Persia to Jerusalem	
Time	23 Years (538-515 B.C.)				1 year (457 B.C.)	
Author	Ezra				Ezra	

- Key words/phrases—Restoration and “house of the Lord.” (*temple*)
- God’s people in Babylonian captivity for 70 years
- Cyrus, King of Persia, defeated Babylon in 539 B.C.
- Issued a decree sending the Jews back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple,
- Zerubbabel and Jeshua led the first group—42,360 Jews.
- Returned home with the temple vessels taken by Nebuchadnezzar.
- First built an altar to worship God and observed the Feast of Tabernacles.
- Began the task of rebuilding the temple.
- The temple work was halted for ten years.
- Prophets Haggai and Zechariah urged the people to continue.
- Persian governor Tattenai ordered a check of whether the work was authorized.
- Temple rebuilt with part of the Persian royal treasury —Passover kept for the first time since captivity.
- 60 years later Ezra led the second group back.
- Ezra is priest and scribe. Has risen to a high position under King Artaxerxes.
- King sent money to be used in offering sacrifices, or for other things.
- 1500 returned, including 240 Levites for the temple service.
- They delivered money to the temple officials.
- Ezra exposed sin in the camp – intermarriage and corruption of priests.
- People repent and change ways.

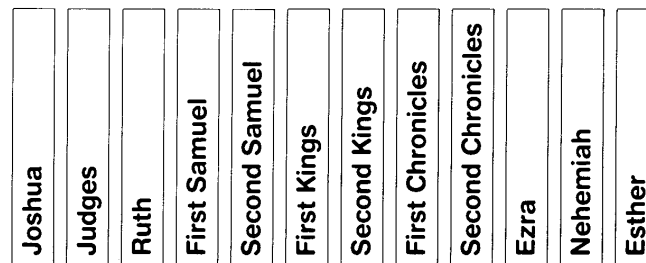
## (c) Nehemiah

Nehemiah

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# Nehemiah

The Books of History



### Purpose/Theme:

Only a few years after Ezra served as a priest during the “restoration” of the Jews from Babylon, Nehemiah followed as governor. This book describes his leadership in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and renewing the covenant.

### Key Verse:

“So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart” (4:6).

### Main Person:

Nehemiah

### Outline:

- The rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1—7)
- The repairing of the agreement with God (Nehemiah 8—10)
- The reforming of the nation (Nehemiah 11—13)

### When Events Happened



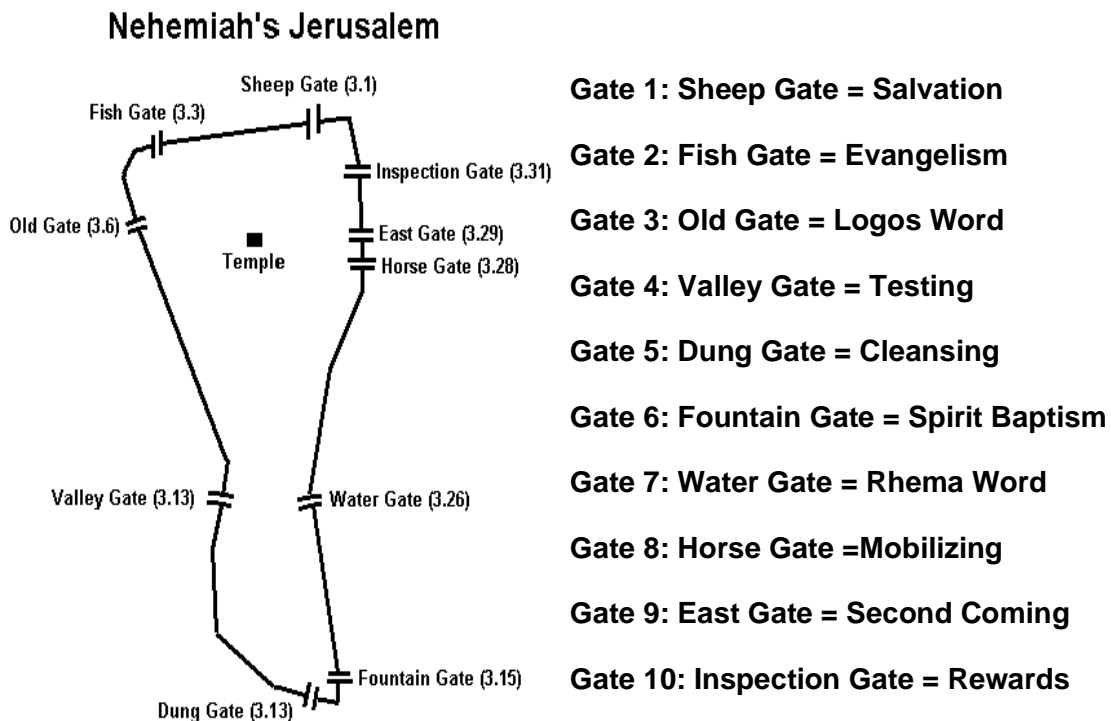
## 1. Messianic Christology as Seen in the Book of Nehemiah:

Nehemiah surely portrays Jesus in his willingness to leave his high position in order to bring about His work of restoration. Further, the decree of Artaxerxes marks the beginning point of Daniel’s prophecy of seventy weeks of years which, though interrupted by an unspecified time, begins the countdown for the return of Messiah (Dan. 9:25-27).

## 2. Leadership Lessons from Nehemiah

1. God's leader responds to a call (1:1-4; 2:12b)
2. God's leader cares for the people and their situation ( 2:17, 20)
3. God's leader helps define the reality of the situation (2:17)
4. God's direction and vision are sought by the leader and people ( 2:12)
5. Prayer is essential to know God's will
6. God's vision is simple ( "rebuild the wall.")
7. God's leader builds a team (2:18b,chapter 3).
8. God's leader keeps the real purpose before the people (6:15-16;8; 12:27).
9. God's leader is not discouraged by adversity (6:3)
10. God always has another vision

## 3. Picture of Spiritual Restoration



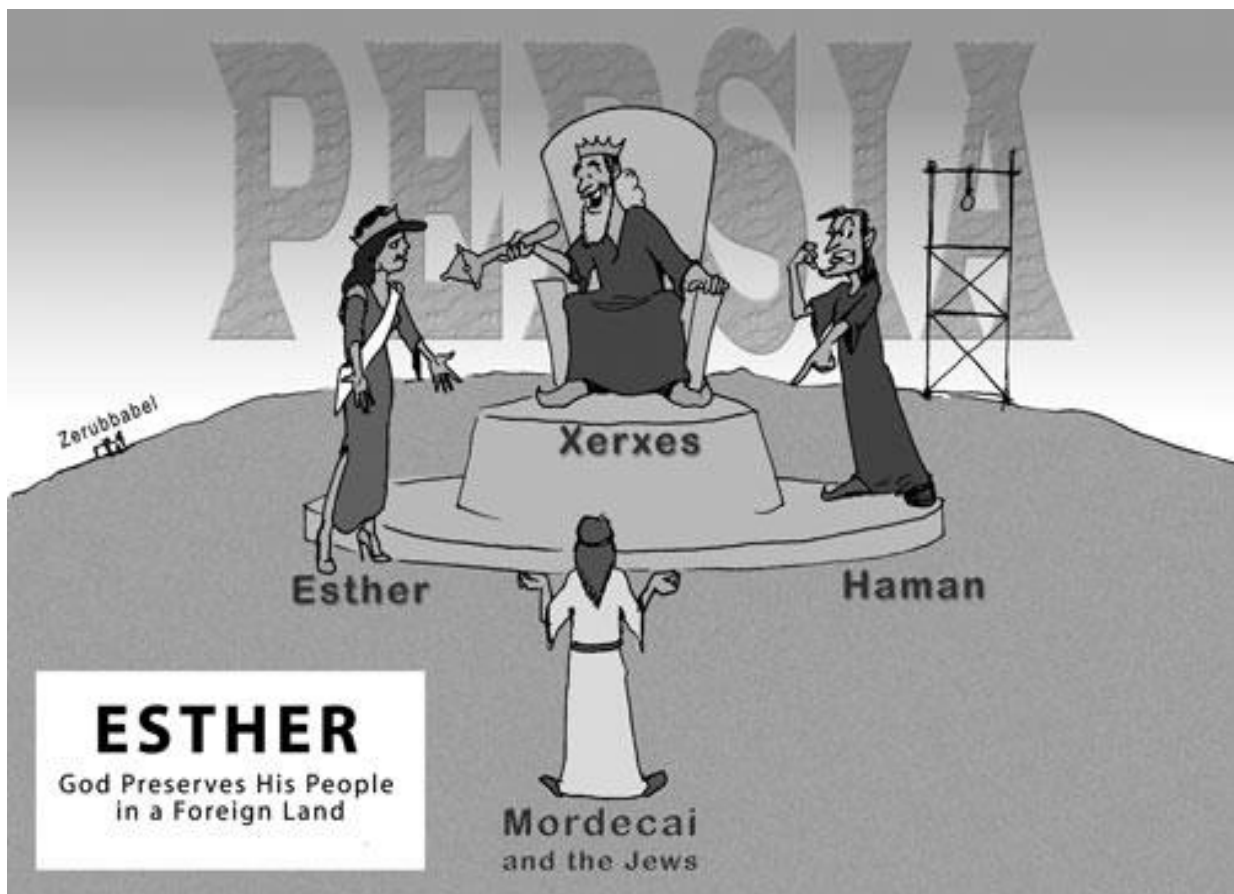
## 4. An Outline of the Book of Nehemiah

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>REBUILDING OUR FAITH</i></b> <b>An Outline of Nehemiah</b></p>	<p>Nehemiah has two natural divisions. One focuses on the actual building of the Jerusalem walls while the later describes the shaping of the hearts of God's people there.</p>
<p><b>A. Devotion to God’s Mission (1-6)</b></p> <p><b>1. Seeing the Need (1)</b></p> <p><b>2. Meeting the Challenge (2)</b></p> <p><b>3. Building with Obstacles (3-6)</b></p> <p>a) Completion Gained by Unity (3) b) Threats Overcome by Boldness (4) c) Distress Solved by Sacrifice (5) d) Rumors Silenced by Prayer (6)</p>	<p>Chapters 1-6 focus on God’s work through Nehemiah and the people to rebuild Jerusalem walls. Enemies attacked the people at their many vulnerable places to hinder them from their work. Hopelessness, anger, doubts, intimidation and fears were all targeted to hold this people back. Nehemiah as a type of Christ led the people forward into completion of their task of building the kingdom of God.</p>
<p><b>B. Dedication to Spiritual Renewal (7-12)</b></p> <p><b>1. Steps to Restoration (7-9)</b></p> <p>a) Reorganization (7) b) God’s Word (8) c) Repentance (9)</p> <p><b>2. Importance of Commitment (10-12)</b></p> <p>a) Covenant (10) b) Appointments (11) c) Leaders (12)</p> <p><b>3. Necessity of Purging (13)</b></p>	<p>Chapters 7-13 focus on the work of God in the hearts of the people. Attention was given to proper leadership, purity of the people, commitment to God and His Word and Nehemiah’s cry for help. Nehemiah bravely led the people into a deeper walk with God and built a community around Him.</p>

## (d) Esther

### 1. Outline of Book

- i. **FEASTS OF XERXES (CH. 1-2)**  
King deposes Queen Veshti (Ch. 1)  
Esther crowned Queen (Ch. 2)
- ii. **FEASTS OF ESTHER (CH. 3-7)**  
Mordecai uncover plot to destroy Jews (Ch. 3)  
Mordecai asks Esthers help (Ch. 4)  
Esther Intercedes (Ch. 5)  
Mordecai Vindicated (Ch. 6)  
Haman Hanged (Ch. 7)
- iii. **FEASTS OF PURIM (CH. 8-10)**  
Mordecai takes Haman's place (Ch. 8)  
Feast of Purim (Ch. 9)  
Mordecai's Greatness (Ch. 10)



## 2. The message of Esther

The Book of Esther is designed to show God's providential care of His people. Though the name of God is not mentioned, the hand of God, ruling and over-ruling the events for the preservation of His people, can be seen throughout. God was hiding His face from His people on account of their sins; they had deliberately chosen to continue in the land of their captivity among the heathen, instead of availing themselves of the opportunity of returning to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel. Through the Jew's prayer and fasting after they heard the royal decree for their destruction (4:1-3,16) and Esther's intercession they were saved.

The king holding out the golden sceptre has been an encouragement to many a saint of God in bringing their petitions to the King of kings. We need never fear that our King will refuse us an audience or that we shall incur His anger by drawing nigh; but there are seasons when He seems in a special manner to hold out the golden sceptre, and to give us more abundant access to Him in prayer.

The Feast of Purim, instituted by Esther and Mordecai, witnesses still, not only to the truth of the narrative, but to a nation's gratitude and a memorial throughout all generations of their deliverance.

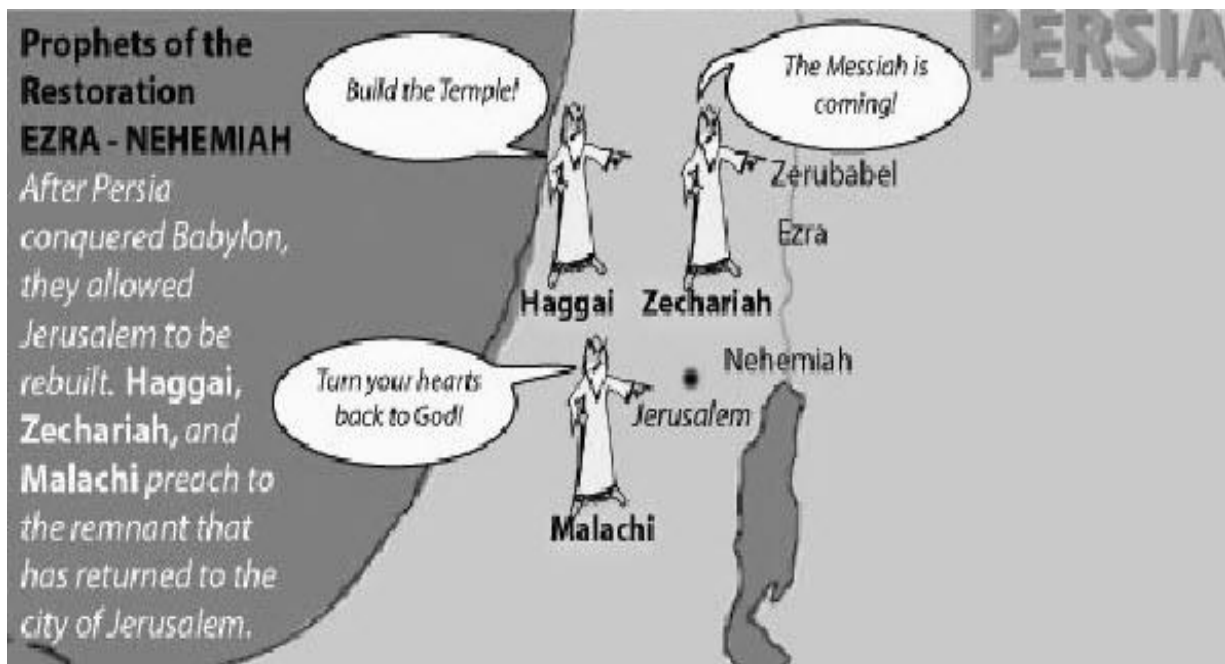
Behind the personal enmity of Haman (Ch 3) was the deeper malignity of Satan, seeking to make void the promises of God through the destruction of the whole Jewish race; for Xerxes was king over all the Jews in Palestine as well as over those in Persia and Babylon. Satan knew that the great Deliverer who was to arise of the House of David was to destroy his power.

The great practical lesson for us is the importance of using God-given opportunities. The power of life and death lies in these opportunities both to us and to others. We may be tempted to think that our opportunities are so insignificant, our circle of influence so small, that they are of little importance; if we were a great queen, like Esther, it would be a different matter. But *"who knows whether you are come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"* (4:14).

## 3. Messianic Christology of Esther

There have been various attempts to trace elaborate types in the Book of Esther, but the simple fact stands out that here was one who was willing to lay down her life for her people. It is here that we find Christ in the Book of Esther. A picture of Him who was not only willing, but who actually did lay down His life for us, and through whose intercession salvation is assured to us.

## (e) The Minor Prophets of the Return



**HAGGAI** - This book, the first among the writings of the post-Exilic prophets, consists of four prophecies delivered within the space of 4 months, some 15 years after the return of the first exiles to Jerusalem. Work on the second Temple has begun shortly after the exiles' arrival, but had been delayed for almost two decades. Haggai comes forward with a series of timely and vigorous messages challenging the people to respond wholeheartedly to a noble task - rebuilding the House of God.

**ZECHARIAH** - Sometimes called the "Apocalypse of the Old Testament", this book contains the messages of the Prophet Zechariah, a contemporary of Haggai. The main division of the book (1-8, 9-14) are noticeably dissimilar in both style and subject matter, a fact that has led some to assign the last division (9-14) to another author. The first eight chapters are primarily concerned with the rebuilding of the Temple, although the language used is highly symbolical. Chapters 9 to 14 deal with "last things", the "end time". Many Messianic references are found, and the writer foresees the Day of the Lord when Israel will be restored, the nations judged, and God's kingdom triumphant.

**MALACHI** - The name of the last book of the Old Testament and of the Prophet whose oracles it contains. Malachi (from Hebrew meaning "my messenger") is an invaluable source concerning the Judean Jews during the Persian period. Two themes are predominance: the sin and apostasy of Israel (1-2); and the coming judgment upon the faithless, with blessings promised for those who repent (3-4). The growing Messianic expectation in the Old Testament is apparent in Malachi by the announcement of God's "messenger of the covenant", by whose coming Israel will be purified and judged; and of the return of the Prophet Elijah who will proclaim the Day of the Lord.