

# The End of the Southern Kingdom: A Remnant is Preserved

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## PUTTING THESE EVENTS IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE:

1. United Kingdom - **120** years
2. Northern Kingdom - **209** years
3. Southern Kingdom - **326** years

## BABYLONIANS CONQUER THE ASSYRIANS:

- **626** B.C. – **96** years after Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Babylon rebelled against Assyria,
- **612** B.C. – **14** years later, Babylon overthrew Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria. Note: This takes place about **150** years after Nineveh had been spared from the destruction, having repented at the preaching of Jonah in about **762** B.C
- **605** B.C. – **7** years later, the armies of Babylon defeated the armies of Egypt at Carchemish, thus positioning itself as a world empire. Carchemish was located on the frontier between Turkey and Syria. . When the Assyrian capital Nineveh was overrun by the Babylonians in **612 BC**, the Assyrians moved their capital to Harran. When Harran was captured by the Babylonians in **610 BC**, the capital was once again moved, this time to Carchemish. Egypt was allied with the Assyrian king Ashur-uballit II, and marched in **609 BC** to their aid against the Babylonians. The Egyptian army of Pharaoh Necho II was delayed at Megiddo by the forces of King Josiah of Judah. Josiah was killed and his army was defeated. The Egyptians and Assyrians together crossed the Euphrates and laid siege to Harran, which they failed to re-take and retreated back to northern Syria. The Egyptians met the full might of the Babylonian army led by Nebuchadnezzar II at Carchemish where the combined Egyptian and Assyrian forces were soundly destroyed by the Babylonians and the Assyrian Empire collapsed.

## BABYLON TURNED ITS ATTENTION TOWARD JUDAH:

Three deportations from Jerusalem to Babylon (900 miles away) over a period of 19 years.

- **605** B.C. – Nebuchadnezzar overcame King Jehoiachin and carried off key hostages including Daniel (**16** years old) and his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

- **597 B.C. – 8 years later**, the rebellion of Jehoiachin brought further punishment. Nebuchadnezzar made him submit a second time.
- **586 B.C. – 11 years later**, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem from **588 B.C.** to July **586 B.C.**, a period of **1 year & 7 months**. Note: The Ark of the Covenant probably disappeared during this siege.
- One month later on **August 15, 586 B.C.**, Nebuchadnezzar and his army burned the city of Jerusalem and its temple, the one Solomon built some **367 years** earlier.
  - NOTE:** **656 years** later to the month, Titus and the **12<sup>th</sup>** and **15<sup>th</sup>** Roman legions burned Herod's Temple as predicted by Christ in Matthew 24:2. This occurred on the **10<sup>th</sup> of August, A.D. 70** (the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av) in Jewish calendar reckoning, the very day when the King of Babylon **burned the Temple in 586 B.C.**
- **October 539 B.C.** in one night the Babylonian Empire fell to the Medes and the Persians . . . Thus becoming the Medo-Persian Kingdom.
  - 200 years (two centuries) before it happened. **Isaiah 45:1-2** names Cyrus (a Persian king) as the one who would allow the Jews to return to their homeland. "Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held -- To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut: will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron."
  - Darius continued Cyrus the Great's policy of restoring the Jewish people to their homeland.

### THREE RETURNS FROM BABYLON BACK TO JERUSALEM OVER A PERIOD OF 92 YEARS.

- **536 B.C. –** Led by **Zerubbabel**. 42,360 Jews returned. Temple was rebuilt.
  - Work began in 536 B.C. . . Was discontinued in **534 B.C.**
  - Work was resumed in **520 B.C.** . . . Completed in **516 B.C.**
  - **6 years** of actual work was done over a **20-year** period of time.
  - The work was begun under **Cyrus** and completed under **Darius**.
  - Israel's Three Temples:
    1. Solomon's Temple stood for **400 years** (979-589 B.C.). Plundered within five years of Solomon's death, was destroyed by the Babylonians in **586 B.C.**

2. Zerubbabel's Temple stood for **500** years (520-20 B.C.)  
Enlarged and beautified by Herod.
3. Herod's Temple stood for **90** years (20 B.C. – A.D. 70)
4. Destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70

Note: Before Solomon's Temple there was the Tabernacle.

Only a tent, it was God's

Localized dwelling-place in Israel for **400** years. Most of the time it was at Shiloh.

- **456** B.C. – 80 years later – Led by Ezra – The law was restored. 1754 males returned.
- **444** B.C. – 12 years later – led by Nehemiah – The wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt in 52 days. Nehemiah came with an army escort.

**Great statements in Nehemiah:**

- **1:7** – “. . . Both my Father's house and I have sinned.”
- **2:17** – “. . . Come and let us build . . .”
- **4:6** – “. . . We built the wall . . .”
- **4:6** – “. . . For the people had a mind to work.”
- **4:9** – “. . . We made our prayer to God . . .”
- **4:19** – “. . . The work is great and extensive . . .”
- **4:20** – “. . . Our God will fight for us.”
- **6:3** – “. . . I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down . . .”
- **6:8** – “. . . But you invent them in your heart.”
- **6:9** – “. . . Oh God, strengthen my hands.”
- **6:15** – “. . . The wall was finished . . .”
- **6:16** – “. . . For they perceived that this work was done by our God.”

**THE BOOKS OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, & ESTHER FORM THE CLOSING SECTION OF OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.** They tell the story of (1) the Jews' Return from Babylon, (2) the Rebuilding of the Temple and of Jerusalem, and (3) the establishment of the Jew's National Life in their home land. They cover about 100 years (**536-432** B.C.) The last three of the Prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi lived and worked in the era of the Jews' restoration.

There were two distinct periods:

1. **536-516** B.C. (20 years) in which, under Zerubbabel the Governor and Joshua the Priest, the Temple was rebuilt (Ezra 3-6. To this period belonged Haggai and Zechariah.
2. **457-432** B.C. (24 years) in which, under Nehemiah the Governor and Ezra the Priest, the wall was rebuilt and Jerusalem was restored as a fortified city. To this period belonged Malachi.
  - **Ezra** gives an account of both periods.
  - **Nehemiah** gives an account of the second period.
  - **Esther** comes in between the two periods.

**CHRONOLOGY OF THE RESTORATION:**

- 536 B.C.** - 49,897 return from Babylon to Jerusalem
- 536 B.C.** - In the 7<sup>th</sup> month they built the altar and offered sacrifices
- 535 B.C.** - Work on the Temple began and stopped
- 520 B.C.** - Work on the Temple was renewed by Haggai and Zechariah
- 516 B.C.** - Temple was completed
- 478 B.C.** - Esther becomes Queen of Persia
- 457 B.C.** - Ezra goes from Babylon to Jerusalem
- 444 B.C.** - Nehemiah rebuilds the wall of Jerusalem in just 52 days
- 432 B.C.** - Nehemiah returns again from Babylon
  - Israel had been taken captive by **ASSYRIA** in **722 B.C.**
  - Judah had been taken captive by **BABYLON** in **605 B.C.**
  - Return from the captivity was permitted by **PERSIA** in **536 B.C.**

**NOTE:** As the policy of Assyrian and Babylonian kings had been to deport conquered peoples, that is, take them away out of their own lands, and scatter them in other lands, so the policy of Persian kings, exactly the opposite, was to repatriate those peoples, that is send them back to their own lands. Persian kings were more humane than Assyrian and Babylonian kings.

**THE REMNANT**

- “Remnant” appears **65** times in the Bible . . . **60** of those times it refers to the remnant God will preserve for bringing His Son into the world.
- **Isaiah 37:31** – “And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, And bear fruit upward.”
- **Isaiah 10:21**- “A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God.”
- **Jeremiah 23:3** – “I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.”
- **Micah 7:18** – “Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.
- **Zechariah 8:11-12** – “But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as I did in the past," declares the LORD Almighty.  
 "The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of this people.”

**100** years later, the Old Testament closed with the last Old Testament historical book to have been written being the Book of **Nehemiah**. The last Old Testament prophetic book to have been written was the Book of **Malachi**. For all practical purposes, Old Testament events and history end with the Book of Nehemiah.