

## Key Dates in the Chronology of Ezra & Nehemia, and Related Books

2019

Time-line	Persian king	Year B.C.	Return	Event	Key figure	Bible reference
540	Cyrus 539 - 530 (Cambyses) (530 - 522)	539	1. Return	Writing on wall. Babylonian king Belshazzar dies.	Daniel Sheshbazzar (= Zerubb.?) Zerubbabel & Jeshua	Dan 5:30-6:1 [Engl. 5:30-31]; 1:21
530		538 *		Cyrus issues edict.		Ezra 1:1; 2:1 (70 yrs. after 605 **)
520		536		Altar built. Temple founded. building stops soon due to opposition		Ezra 3:2; 3:8-10 Ezra 4:4/5 (cf. below)
520	Darius I 522 - 486	520		building resumed, again opposed		Hag, Zech, Ezra 4:24; 5:3 - 6:13
510		515		Temple dedicated.		Ezra 6:15-16
500						
490						
480	Xerxes I = Ahasueros I 486 - 464	486?		further accusations	Esther	Ezra 4:6 (see above)
470		479		Esther becomes queen.		Est 2:17
460	Artaxerxes I = Artashasta I 464 - 423	465?	2. Return	another letter against the Jews	Ezra	Ezra 4:7-23 (see above)
450		458		Law re-instituted.		Ezra 7:8; 8:31 / 7:10/14/25
440		457		separation from pagan women		Ezra 10:17
440		445	3. Return		Nehemia	***
440		445		Wall built. Jerusalem repopulated. Reforms.		Nehemia 2:1/9
430		433		Neh. back in Persia; time of Malachi's ministry?		Neh 6:15 (dedication 12:27ff.)
430		?		Nehemia returns to Jerusalem		Malachi
420		approx.		Composition of 1-2 Chronicles (by Ezra?)		Neh 13:6f.

\* This is also the year when Daniel is thrown in the lions' den (ch. 6), and sees the vision about the 70 weeks (ch. 9). His last vision follows two years later (ch. 10).

\*\* The "70 years" in Jer 25:11-12; 29:10; Dan 9:2; 2Chr 36:20-22 seem to be a round number (NIV Study on Jer 25). TOTC on 2Chr 36: "This seventy-year period is probably best understood qualitatively rather than quantitatively, as a symbol of a human lifespan (cf. Ps. 90:10). An entire generation had to be removed ... More mathematical approaches measure the time from the first exile (605 BC) to Cyrus' edict (539 BC) or from the destruction of the first temple (587 BC) to the reopening of the second (516 BC), but this seems less satisfying." TOTC on Dan 9 adds: "The period of Jerusalem's abandonment, when no worship was offered there, was much less than 70 years (587-538)."

\*\*\* Ezra's ministry continues during Nehemia's ministry (see Neh 8:1; 12:36 [445 B.C.]).

Disclaimer: Some resources differ by +/- 1 year in the dating. The purpose of this chart is to give an overview, not to be scholarly in this regard.

Sources: Bible Knowledge Comm. (652/654). Lexikon zur Bibel. NLT. NIV Study B. (671 etc.). TOTC Ezr/Neh (10-17, 146ff.), Dan. Vanheiden: Bibelchronik, vol. 3. Walton: Chronol. Tabellen (71f.).

