

Survey of Israel's History

1. Formation as a **Family** (**Genesis**)
2. Formation as a **Nation** (**Exodus–Deuteronomy**)
3. Conquest and Division of the **Land** (**Joshua**)
4. Rule by **Judges** (**Judges, Ruth, 1 Sam 1–7**)
5. The **Monarchy and Captivity** (**1 Sam 8 through 2 Chronicles**)

Judah was taken into captivity to Babylon in three stages—

- 1) 606 B.C.—Nebuchadnezzar took the leading nobles of Judah into captivity (such as Daniel)
- 2) 597 B.C.—Nebuchadnezzar took all people of importance (including Ezekiel)
- 3) 586 B.C.—final deportation and destruction of the Temple

6. Restoration Period

Judah was restored from captivity in three phases—

- 1) 536 B.C.—exactly 70 years *after* the first deportation (Jer 29:10)
 - a. Cyrus of Persia (Ezra 1:1–3) issued decree allowing Israelites to return
 - b. Judah's leader was Zerubbabel
 - c. Purpose of the 49,000 who returned at this time was to rebuild the temple
 - d. Prophets: Haggai and Zechariah
 - e. Scripture: **Ezra 1–6**
- 2) 458 B.C.
 - a. Ezra the priest led this group to Jerusalem
 - b. 2000 returned to restore true worship of the Lord
 - c. Scripture: **Ezra 7-10**
- 3) 444 B.C.
 - a. Nehemiah was the leader during this phase
 - b. Purpose was to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, establish peace and security (cf. Neh 1:3)
 - c. Prophet: Malachi
 - d. Scripture: **Nehemiah**
- 4) Relationship of the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther
 - a. Ezra, Nehemiah – deal with remnant that returned
 - b. Esther – dealt with those who stayed behind (events occurred between Ezra 6 & 7)

The OT Historical Books

1. These Books:

- 1) **Record** the outworking of God's covenant promise to Abraham of a land for His people
- 2) **Reveal** that obedience to God's Law brings blessing, disobedience brings curses
- 3) **Attack** idolatry as the great obstacle to man coming to God and the great defiler of His name

2. Chronology of the Historical Books

- 1) Union of 12 independent tribes
 - a. Dates: 1407–1050 B.C.
 - b. Books: **Joshua, Judges, Ruth**
- 2) The Monarchy—United, then Divided
 - a. Dates: 1050–586 B.C.
 - b. Books: **1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles**
- 3) Israel's Exile and Return from Exile
 - a. Dates: 606–396 B.C.
 - b. Book: **Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah**

3. Practical Importance

- 1) For Israel – We must remember that the original readers were Israelites! The intent of these books was to learn about their God, know their history as God's people, and gain instruction and encouragement to live as God's people.
- 2) For the Church – As all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable (2 Tim 3:16–17), from these books we are admonished by Israel's example (1 Cor 10:11), gain encouragement to hope (Rom 15:4), and learn about God and righteous living (2 Tim 3:16).