



The Bible: Then and Now

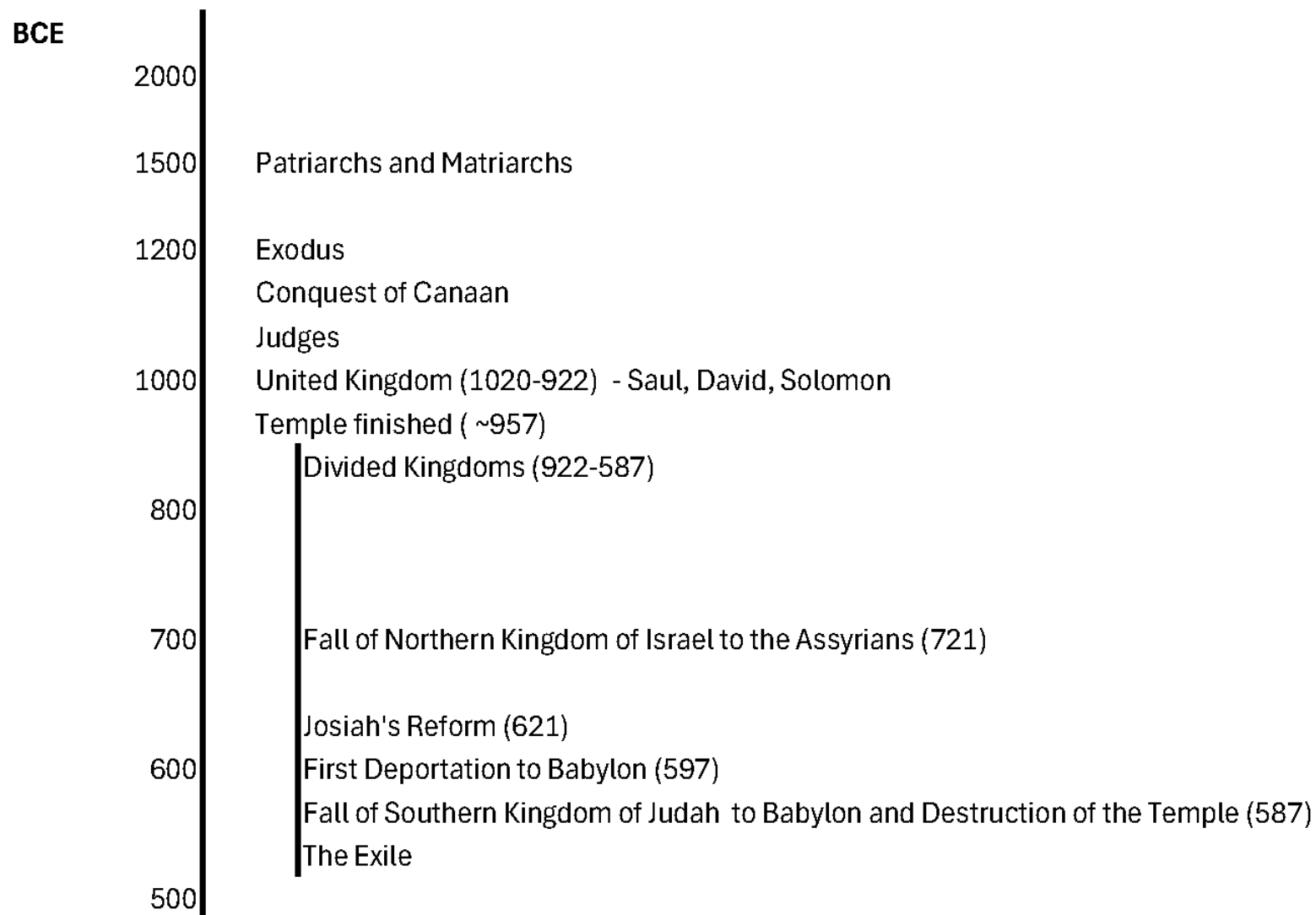
C. David Grant, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Religion
Texas Christian University
d.grant@tcu.edu

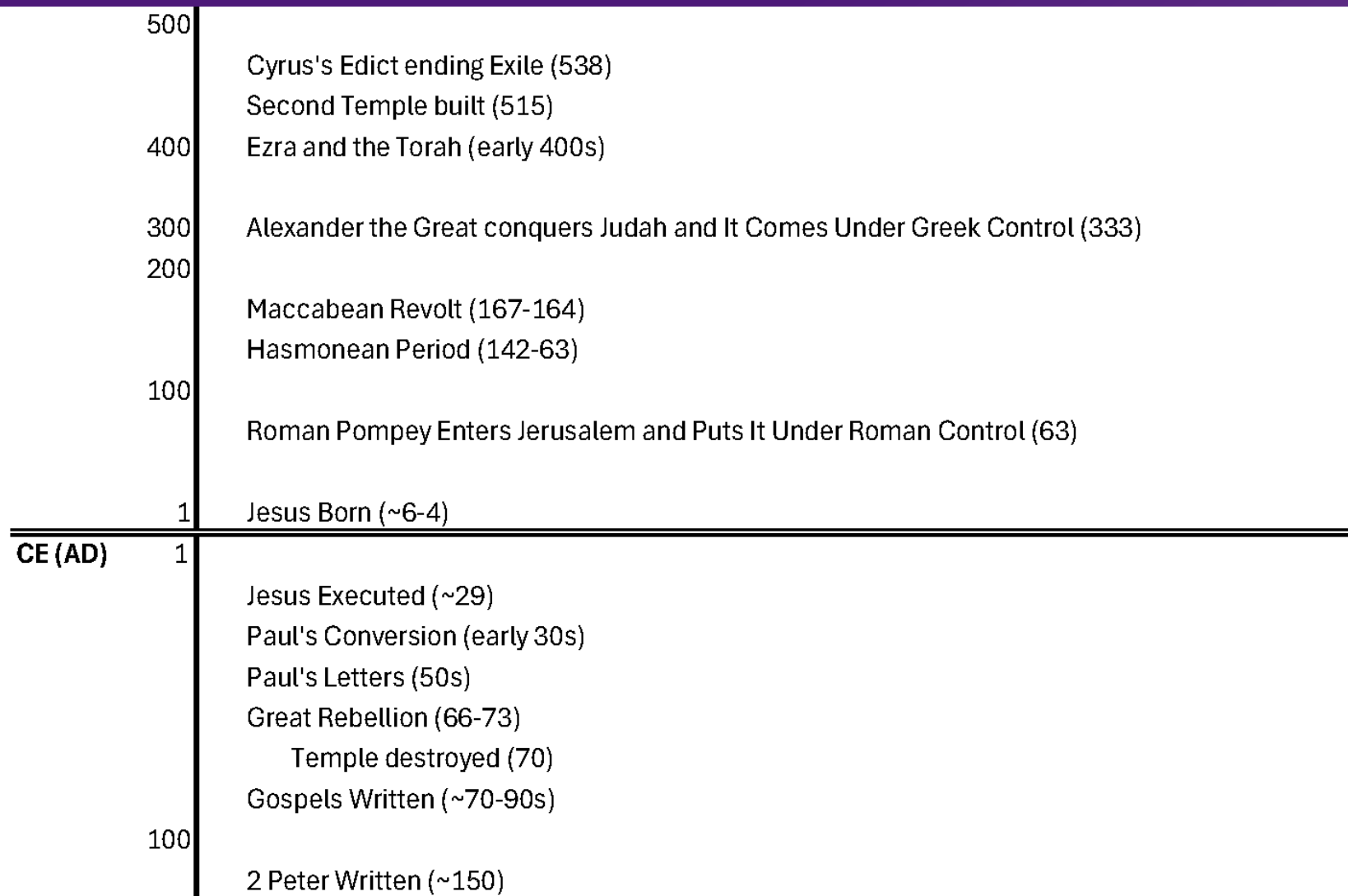


A Flyover of the History Behind the Biblical Narrative



Background Timeline for the Bible

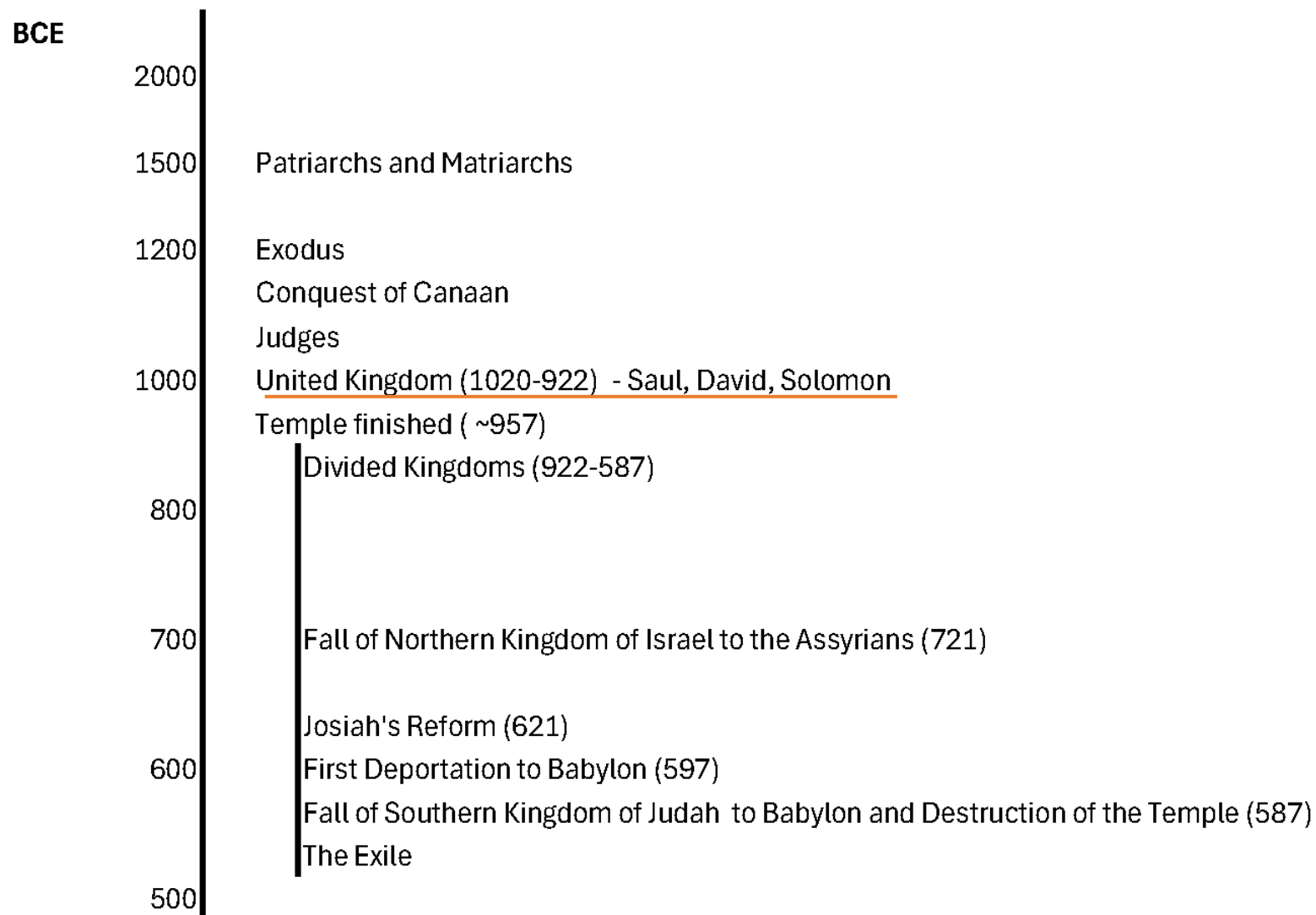




Prepared by C. David Grant
Spring 2025



Background Timeline for the Bible





The Beginning of the Monarchy, ~ 1022 BCE

When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. ...Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah ⁵ and said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations.” ⁶ But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to govern us.” Samuel prayed to the LORD, ⁷ and the LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸ Just as they have done to me from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you. ⁹ Now then, listen to their voice; only, you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.”...

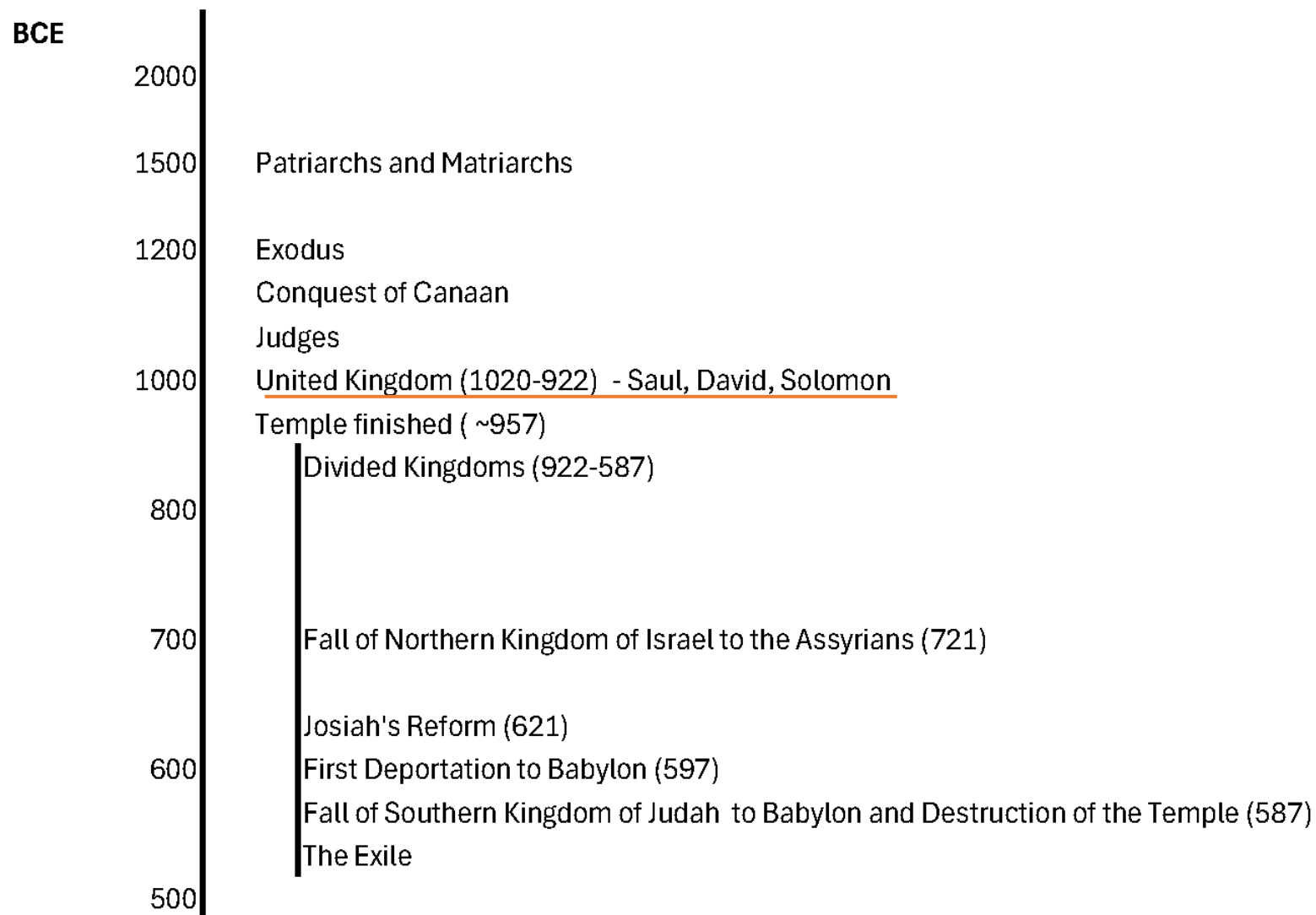


But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, “No! We are determined to have a king over us, 20 so that we also may be like other nations and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles.” 21 When Samuel heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD. 22 The LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to their voice and set a king over them.”

1 Samuel 8:1, 4-7, 19-22

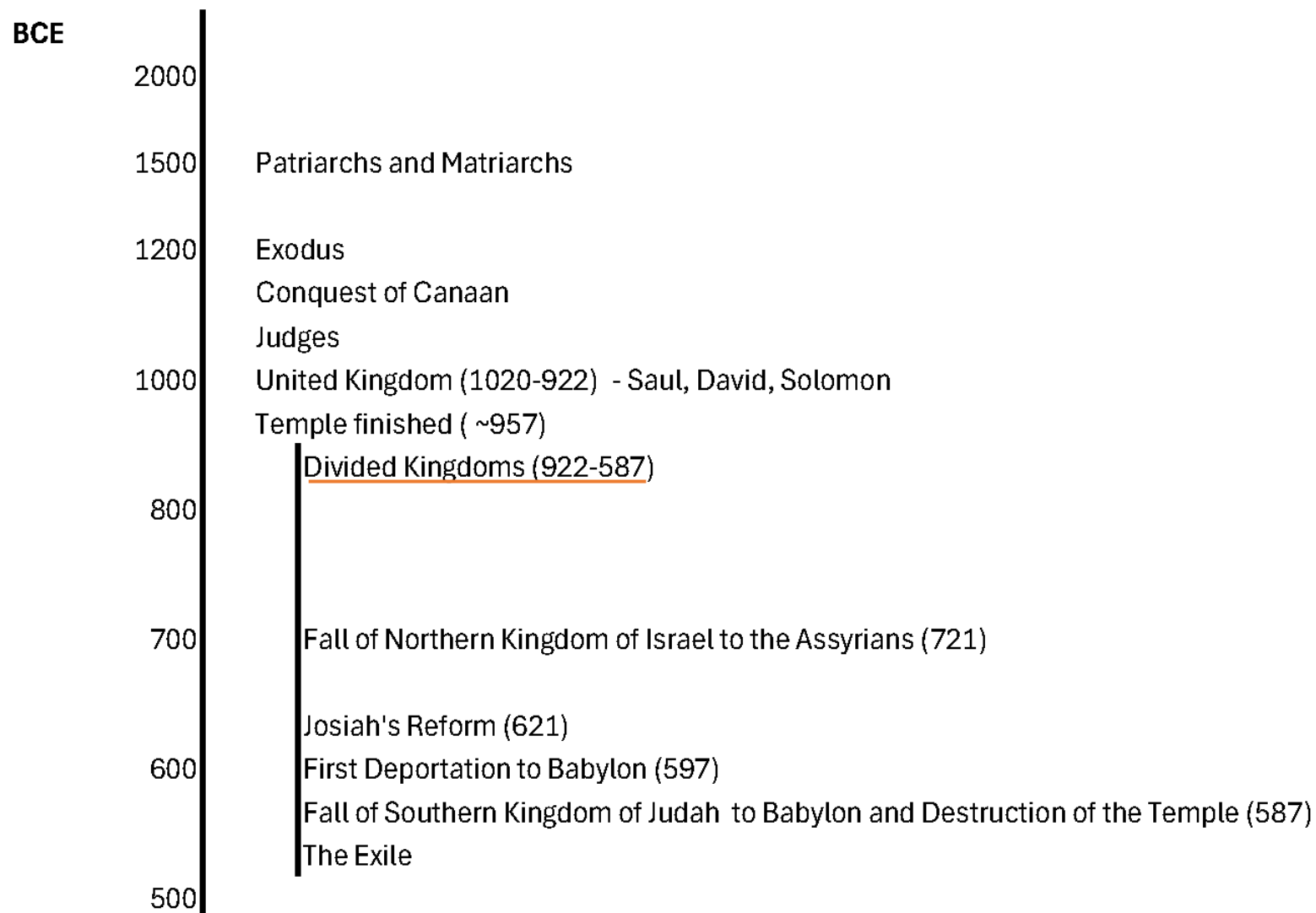


Background Timeline for the Bible





Background Timeline for the Bible





The Kingdom Divides into Judah and Israel, 922 BCE

Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king.... Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, 4 “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now, therefore, lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you.” ... The king [Rehoboam] answered the people harshly.... “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.” 15 So the king did not listen to the people.... When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king, “What share do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, O David.” ... So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

1 Kings 12:1, 3-4, 14-16,19



Kings of
Judah &
Israel

Rehoboam (922-915)
Abijam (915-913)
Asa (913-873)

Jehoshaphat (873-849)

Jehoram (849-842)
Ahaziah (842)

Athaliah (842-837)
Jehoash (837-800)
Amaziah (800-783)
Uzziah (783-742)
Jotham (742-735)

Ahaz (735-715)

Hezekiah (715-687)

Jeroboam (922-901)

Nadab (901-900)
Baasha (900-877)
Elah (877-876)
Zimri (876)

Omri (876-869)
Ahab (869-850)
Ahaziah (850-849)
Joram [Jehoram](849-842)

Jehu (842-815)

Jehoahaz (815-801)
Jehoash (801-786)
Jeroboam II (786-746)
Zechariah (746)

Shallum (745)
Menahem (745-738)
Pekahiah (738-737)
Pekah (737-732)
Hoshea (732-721)

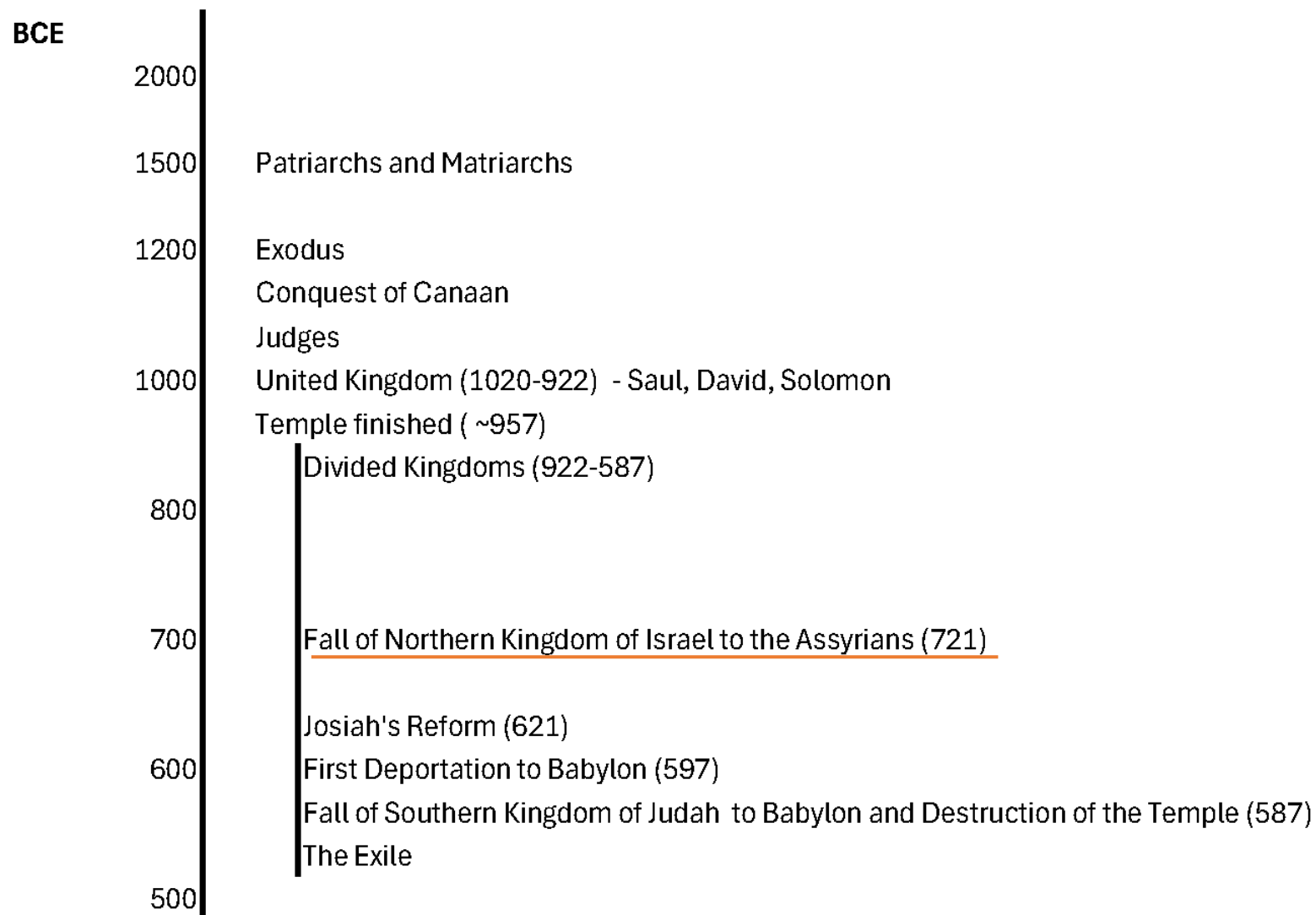
Fall of Samaria (722)

Omri

Jehu



Background Timeline for the Bible





The Fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, 721 BCE

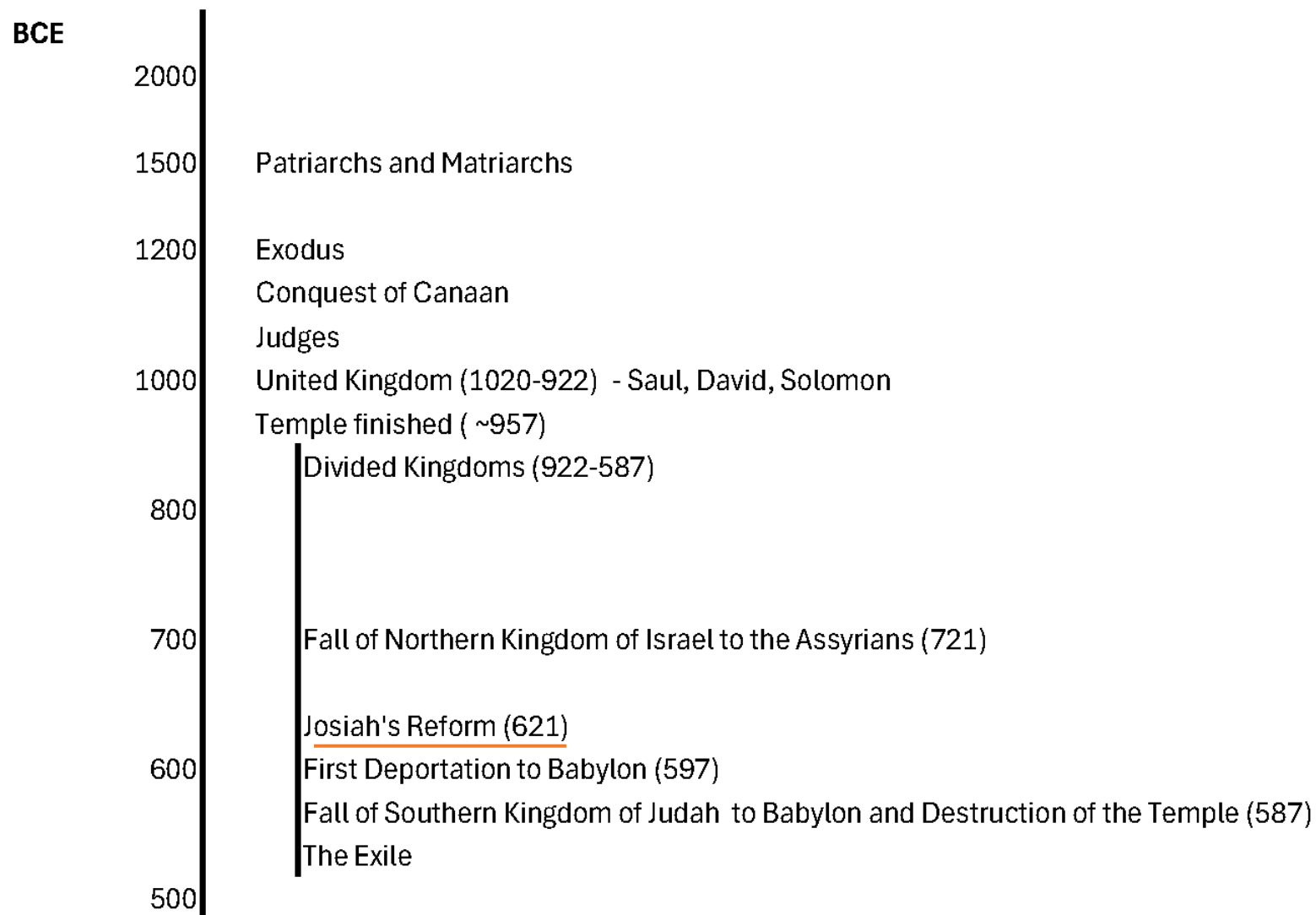
⁵ Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria; for three years he besieged it. ⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria; he carried the Israelites away to Assyria. He placed them in Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

⁷ This occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They had worshiped other gods ⁸ and walked in the customs of the nations whom the LORD had driven out before the people of Israel and in the customs that the kings of Israel had introduced.

2 Kings 17:5-8



Background Timeline for the Bible





Josiah's Reform 621 BCE

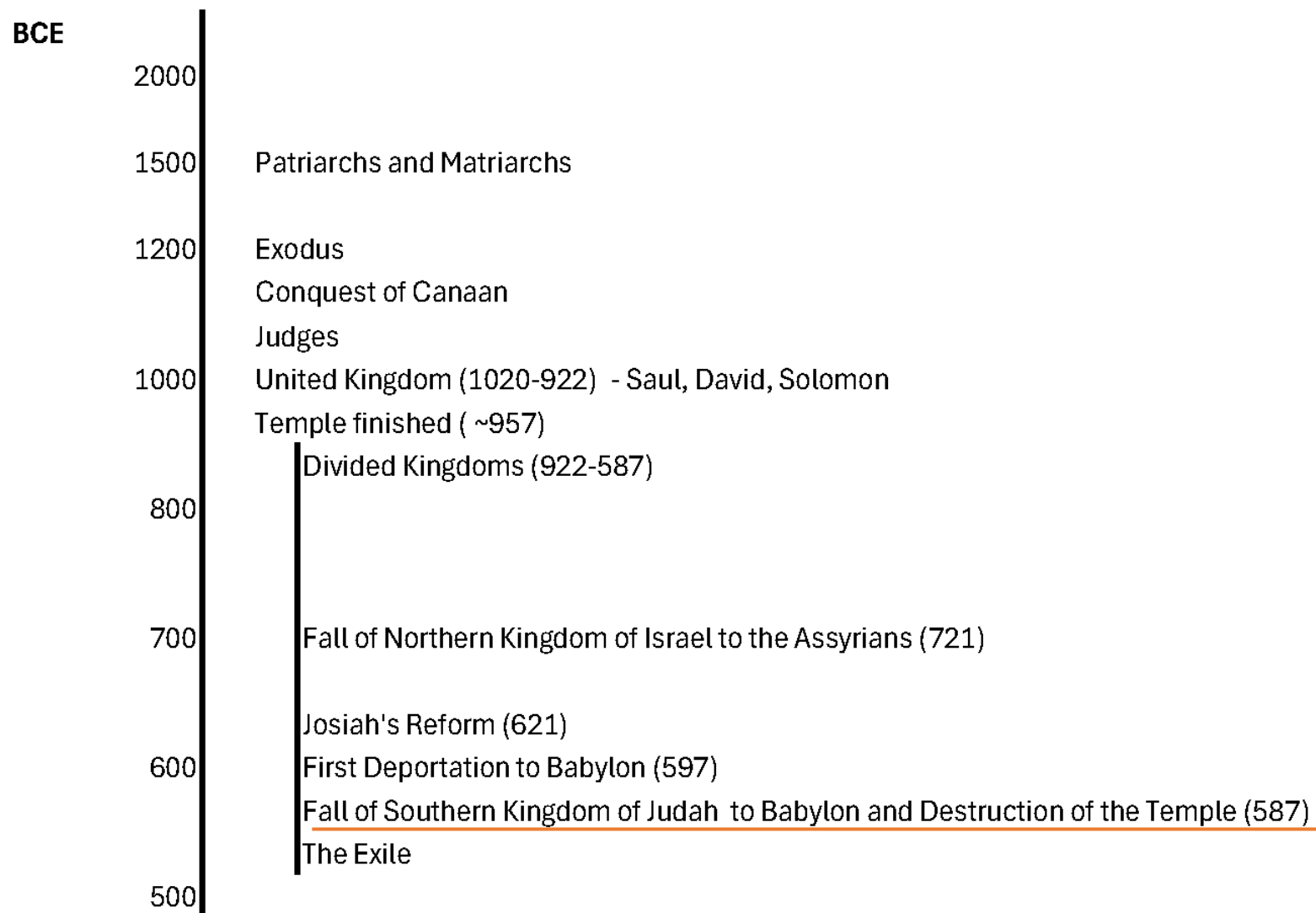
In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan son of Azaliah son of Meshullam, the secretary, to the house of the LORD...The high priest Hilkiah said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." When Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, he read it. ...Shaphan then read it aloud to the king. When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes....

Then the king directed that all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem should be gathered to him. The king went up to the house of the LORD, and with him went all the people of Judah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. All the people joined in the covenant.

2 Kings 22:3, 22:8, 22:11, 23:1-3



Background Timeline for the Bible

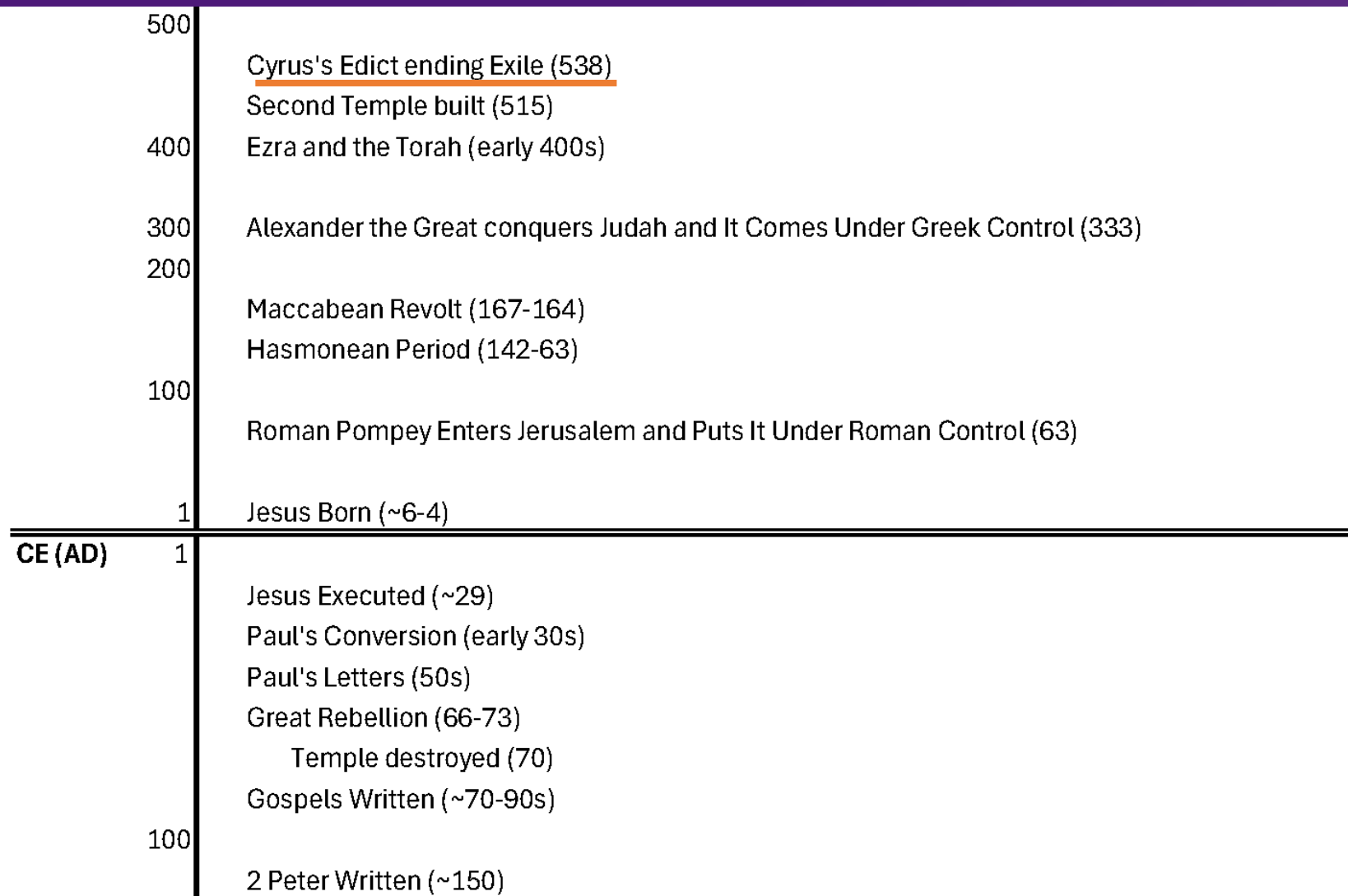




The Fall of Jerusalem & Beginning of the Exile, 586 BCE

⁸ In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He burned the house of the LORD, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. ¹⁰ All the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem. ¹¹ Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had defected to the king of Babylon—all the rest of the multitude. ¹² But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest people of the land to be vinedressers and tillers of the soil.

2 Kings 25:8-12

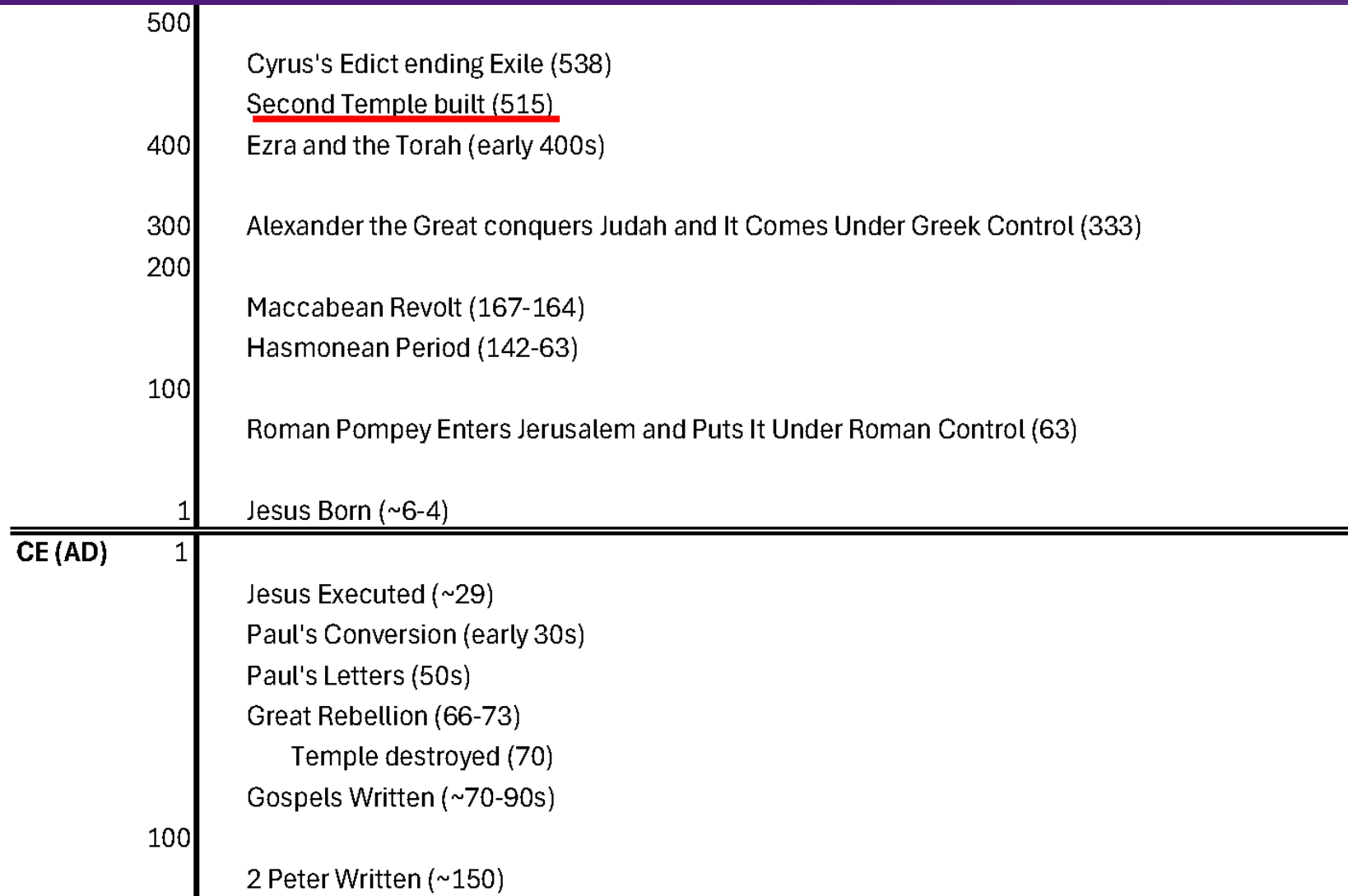




Cyrus's Edict, 538 BCE

² “Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³ Let any of those among you who are of his people—may their God be with them!—go up to Jerusalem in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; he is the God who is in Jerusalem. ⁴ And let all survivors in whatever place they reside be assisted by the people of their place with silver and gold, with goods, and with livestock, besides freewill offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem.”

Ezra 1:2-4





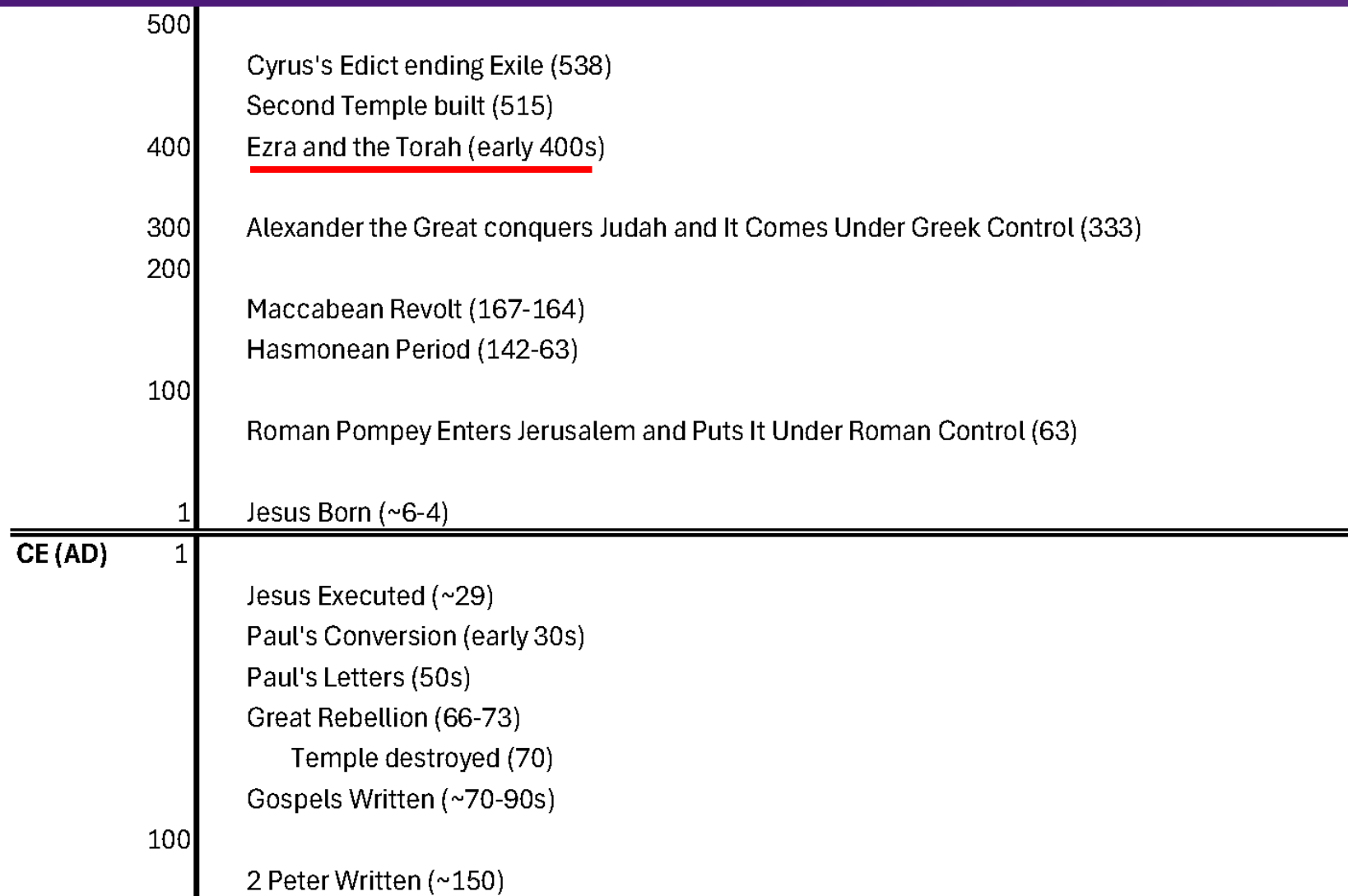
Rebuilding of the Temple (Second Temple) ~515 bce

Then, according to the word sent by King Darius, Tattenai, the governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates did with all diligence what King Darius had ordered. ¹⁴ So the elders of the Jews built and prospered, through the prophesying of the prophet Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo. They finished their building by command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus, Darius, and King Artaxerxes of Persia, ¹⁵ and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

¹⁶ The people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.

¹⁷ They offered at the dedication of this house of God one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

Ezra 6:13-17



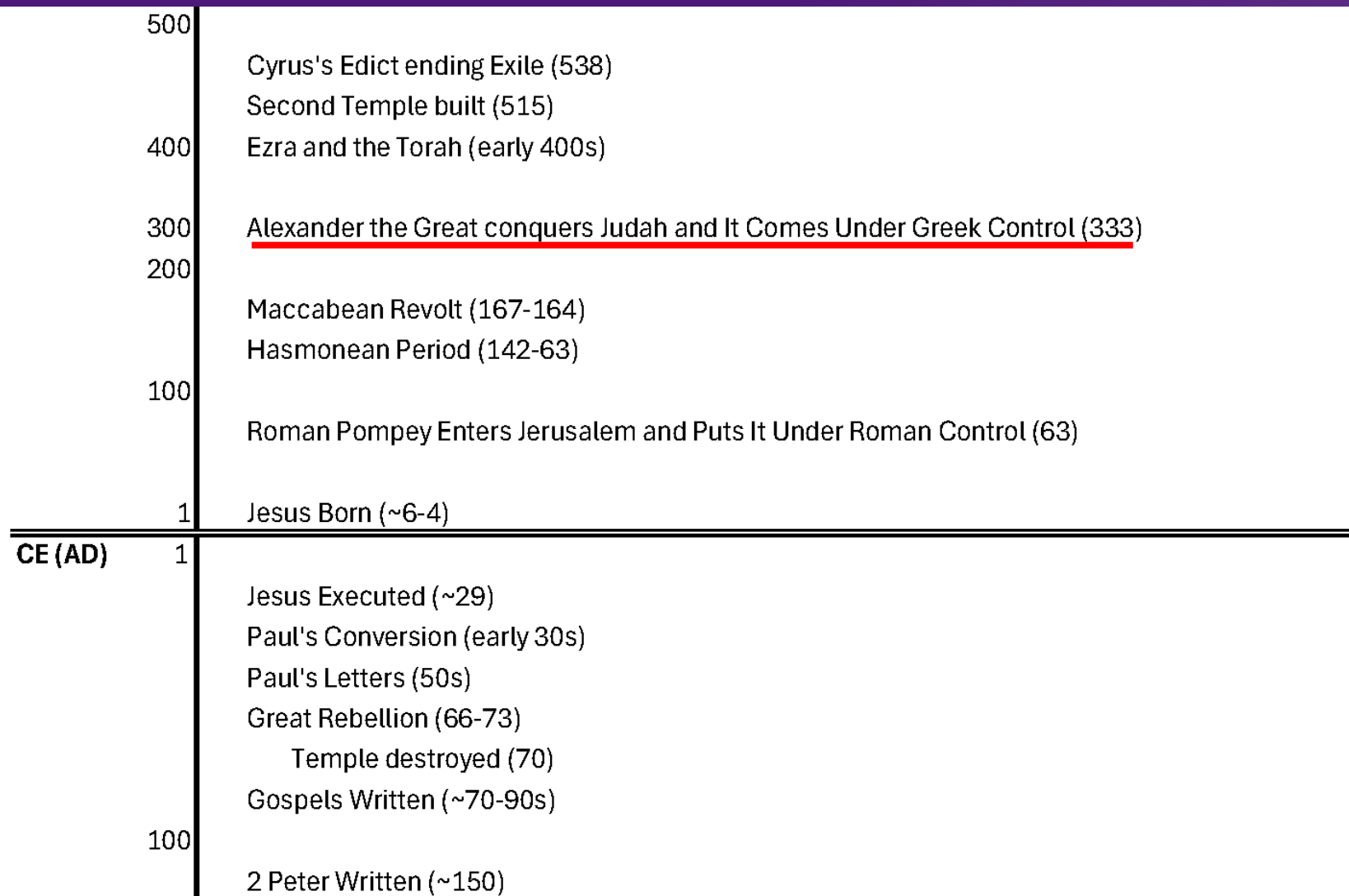
Prepared by C. David Grant
Spring 2025



Ezra Brings the Torah to Jerusalem and Reads It, Early 400s

When the seventh month came, the Israelites being settled in their towns,... all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. ² Accordingly, Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand, and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.... And day by day, from the first day to the last day, Ezra read from the book of the law of God. They kept the festival seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance.

Nehemiah 7:73, 8:1-3, 18



Prepared by C. David Grant
Spring 2025

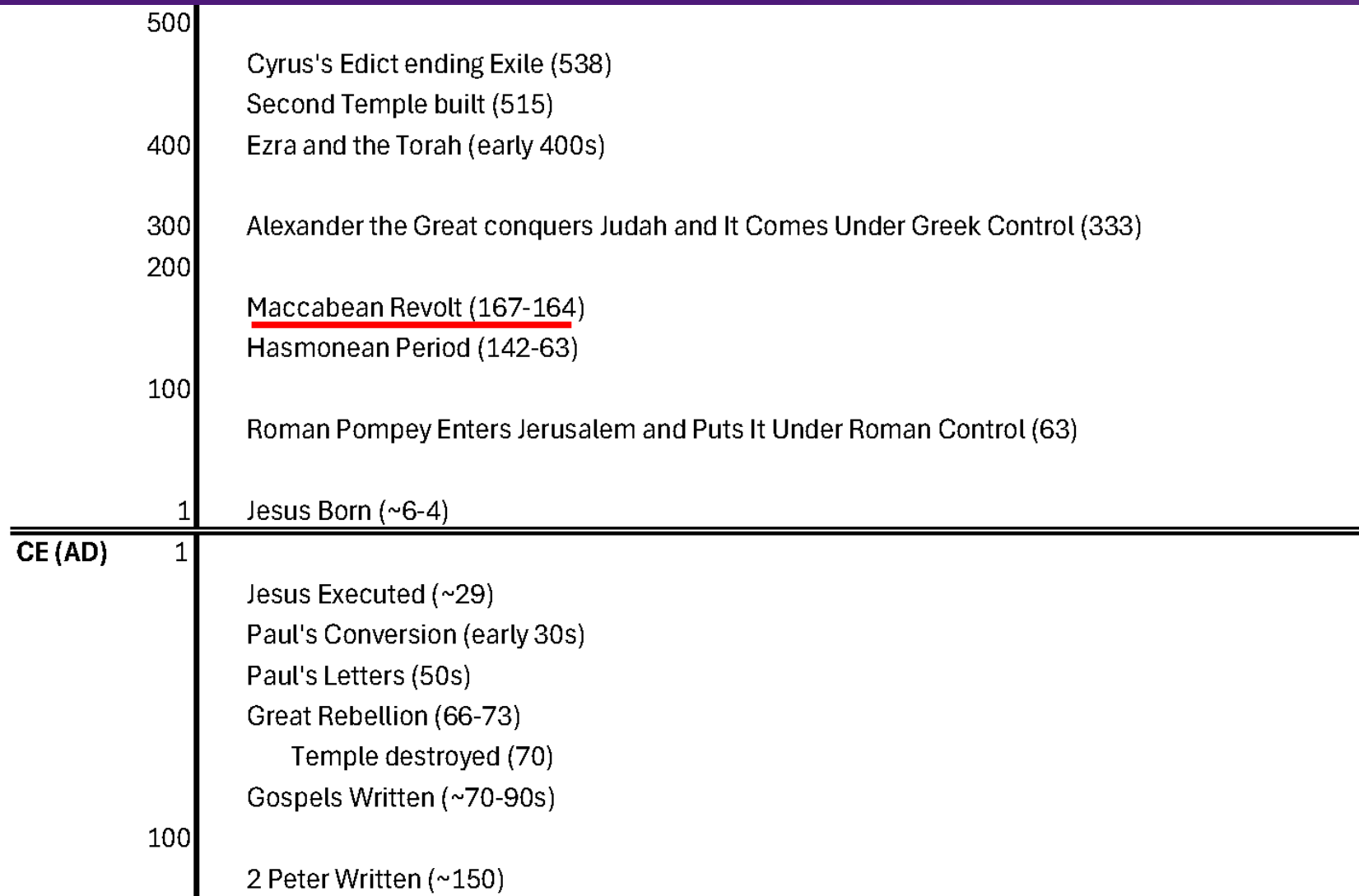


Alexander the Great, the Ptolomies and Seleucids, 333 BCE

¹ After Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came from the land of Kittim, had defeated King Darius of the Persians and the Medes, he succeeded him as king. (He had previously become king of Greece.) ² He fought many battles, conquered strongholds, and slaughtered the kings of the earth. ³ He advanced to the ends of the earth and plundered many nations. When the earth became quiet before him, he was exalted, and his heart was lifted up. ⁴ He gathered a very strong army and ruled over countries, nations, and princes, and they paid him tribute.

⁵ After this he fell sick and perceived that he was dying. ⁶ So he summoned his most honored officers, who had been brought up with him from youth, and divided his kingdom among them while he was still alive. ⁷ And after Alexander had reigned twelve years, he died.

⁸ Then his officers began to rule, each in his own place. ⁹ They all put on crowns after his death, and so did their descendants after them for many years, and they caused many evils on the earth.



Prepared by C. David Grant
Spring 2025



Antiochus IV Epiphanes Outlaws Jewish Practices, 167 BCE

From them came forth a sinful root, Antiochus Epiphanes, son of King Antiochus; he had been a hostage in Rome. He began to reign in the one hundred thirty-seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks.... Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people and that all should give up their particular customs.... He directed them to follow customs strange to the land, to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane Sabbaths and festivals, to defile the sanctuary and the holy ones, to build altars and sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice pigs and other unclean animals, and to leave their sons uncircumcised.

1 Maccabees 1:10, 44-48



Outbreak of the Maccabean Revolt, 167 BCE

In those days **Mattathias** son of John son of Simeon, a priest of the clan of Joarib, moved from Jerusalem and settled in Modein. ² He had five sons: John surnamed Gaddi, ³ Simon called Thassi, ⁴ **Judas called Maccabeus**, ⁵ Eleazar called Avaran, and Jonathan called Apphus....The king's officers who were enforcing the apostasy came to the town of Modein to make them offer sacrifice. 16 Many from Israel came to them, and Mattathias and his sons were assembled.... a Jew came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice on the altar in Modein, according to the king's command. 24 When Mattathias saw it, he burned with zeal, and his heart was stirred. He gave vent to righteous anger; he ran and slaughtered him on the altar. 25 At the same time he killed the king's officer who was forcing them to sacrifice, and he tore down the altar.... Then he and his sons fled to the hills and left all that they had in the town.

1 Maccabees 2:1, 15, 23, 27



Simon's Victory Over the Seleucids, 142 BCE

In the one hundred seventieth year the yoke of the nations was removed from Israel, ⁴² and the people began to write in their documents and contracts, “In the first year of Simon the great high priest and commander and leader of the Jews.”... Those [Seleucids] who were in the citadel at Jerusalem were prevented from going in and out to buy and sell in the country. So they were very hungry, and many of them perished from famine. ⁵⁰ Then they cried to Simon to make peace with them, and he did so. But he expelled them from there and cleansed the citadel from its pollutions. ⁵¹ On the twenty-third day of the second month, in the one hundred seventy-first year, the Jews entered it with praise and palm branches, and with harps and cymbals and stringed instruments, and with hymns and songs, because a great enemy had been crushed and removed from Israel.

1 Maccabees 13:41, 49-51



The Hasmonean Period 142 BCE – 63 BCE

The Roman Period (63 BCE – through NT period)

- Pompey enters Jerusalem and besieges the Temple (63 BCE)
- Jesus born (~6-4 BCE)
- Jesus executed (~29-30 CE)
- Paul's conversion (early 30s CE)
- Paul's letters (in the 50s CE)