

A Brief Timeline of Biblical History

- Sumer** (5500-2270 BCE) Fertile Crescent
(Sumerian city states – invented writing, the wheel, irrigation, cultivation of wheat. They are also the originators of the Great Flood story which includes an ark, animals going in two by two and a dove and a raven)
- Egypt** (2900 – 312 BCE)
(Pyramids very early, long history of strong and weak kingdoms)
- Akkad** (2270-2100 BCE) Fertile Crescent
(Gave us the Akkadian language and legend of Sargon of Akkad being saved by his mother floating him in a reed basket)
- Kingdom of Ur** (2100-2000 BCE)
(The region from which Abraham came...probably as Ur was falling apart)
- Assyria, Early** (2000 – 1200 BCE)
(Most famous was Hammurabi – his law code is reflected in Torah)
- Patriarchs** (2000 – 1600? BCE)
(Always a tentative guess)
- Hebrews in Egypt** (1600-1200 BCE)
(There are records of a wide variety of people groups coming and going from Egypt)
- Hittites** (1600-1200 BCE)
(Controlled much of what is now Turkey – enemies of Egypt –perfected the chariot)
- Sea Peoples** (1200s-1100s BCE)
(These were people who came from across the Mediterranean and destroyed all Middle Eastern Empires except for Egypt. They are the ancestors of the Philistines and other major tribes that settled in the coastal areas of Palestine)
- Exodus** (1200??? BCE)
(This is our best guess but would accord with a period in which peoples are moving throughout the region and in which Egypt is struggling to maintain some control over invaders)
- Conquest and Judges** (1200-1050 BCE)
(The infiltration of Judea was a long process as was the ongoing conflict with those who were already settled in the land.)
- Assyria, Middle** (1100 BCE)
(Assyria has a short revival in which it once again conquers the Fertile Crescent)

United Kingdom of Israel (1050 – 922 BCE)

(This is the brief period of time in which Saul, David and Solomon ruled a united Israel)

Assyria, Late (935- 627 BCE)

(Assyria begins its slow but steady conquest of Fertile Crescent, Babylon (Iraq), Persia, Turkey, Middle East and Egypt. They were a brutal Empire that were bent on world domination)

Kingdom of Israel (northern Kingdom) (922-721 BCE)

(This kingdom would be defeated by the Assyrians who would disperse its people across the Assyrian Empire. Other people would be brought in to settle the area...who become known as Samaritans)

Babylon, Late (626-529 BCE)

(This kingdom had existed since around 2000 BC, and had competed with and been subjugated by the Assyrians. They and the Assyrians spoke the same language and worshipped the same gods. Assyrians always saw themselves as less than the more cultured Babylonians. Eventually Assyria would be torn apart by civil war which allowed Babylon and its allies to take Assyria's capital and eventually destroy its army)

Kingdom of Judah (southern kingdom) (922-587 BCE)

(Judah, whose capital was Jerusalem managed to survive the Assyrians but not the Babylonians who destroyed Jerusalem, the Temple and the monarchy)

Persian Empire (550-330 BCE)

(This is the first Persian Empire built by Cyrus the Great, who is called in scripture, the messiah. This Empire allowed Jews to return from exile and supported their rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple)

Return from Exile (538-398 BCE)

(The Jews are allowed to return and rebuild. This is done in a series of returns stretching across almost 150 years)

Greek Empire (330-165 BCE)

(This empire began with Alexander the Great and continued with the Jews under the Ptolemys and then the Seleucids)

Maccabees (160-63 BCE)

(This was the last period of Jewish independence. It began with a war against the Seleucids and ended with the Romans ended a Jewish Civil War)

Roman Empire (63 BCE – 600s CE)

(Romans took control and Herod the Great expanded the Temple. After his death the area would be ruled by his sons and Romans until the Jewish revolt in 66-73 AD, which ended with the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem. The last Jewish revolt would be the Bar Kokhba Revolt in 132-135.