

The Historical—Redemptive Time Line for the Book of Esther

Event	Time Line	Leaders	Notes
Fall of Babylon	538 BC	King Belshazzar of Babylon; King Darius the Mede	Daniel 5 Daniel 5:30-31
Rise of Medo-Persian Empire	538-536 BC	Cyrus the Great (II Chron. 36:22-23)	Possibly another Gentile king who was the recipient of the grace of God in salvation (Ezra 1:1-4)
First Wave of Returnees under Zerubbabel (Ezra 1-6)	536 BC	Zerubbabel was the governor; Joshua (or Jeshua) was the high priest. (Zech. 3; Ezra 3:2) Prophets Zechariah and Haggai were contemporaries.	City and Temple reconstructed during “perilous times” Daniel 9:25
Second Temple complete (Ezra 6)	515 BC		
Events of the book of Esther	485 – 465 BC	King Xerxes I (Ahasuerus) (ruled between 486-465 BC) Finally assassinated (Esther 2:21-23 a failed plot to kill the king.)	Xerxes I suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Greeks between Esther chapters 1-2
Second Wave of Returnees under Ezra (Levitical priest) (Ezra 7-10)	458 BC	King Artaxerxes I (ruled between 465-425 BC); son of Xerxes I	It is possible that Esther was his step-mother and thus he was very favorable to the Jewish people during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.
Third Wave of Returnees under Nehemiah (Government representative of King of Persia)	445 BC	King Artaxerxes I still on the throne. According to Neh. 1, Nehemiah was his cupbearer.	Nehemiah and Ezra instituted major reforms during their respective administrations.
Fall of Persia	332 BC		End of the Old Testament canon with the book of Malachi.
Rise of Greek Empire under Alexander the Great	332 – 63 BC	Upon death of Alexander the Great , the empire would be divided by four of his generals. The kingdom of Syria and the kingdom of Egypt would be constant sources of grief for God’s people during this time. (Dan. 11)	Alexander Hellenized the entire known world and gave us the style of Greek that would be used in the writing of the New Testament
Roman dominance and influence arrives in Judea	63 BC	King Herod the Great would be made governor of Judea	Birth of Jesus would occur during his reign. The final demise of the Roman Empire occurred in AD 476.