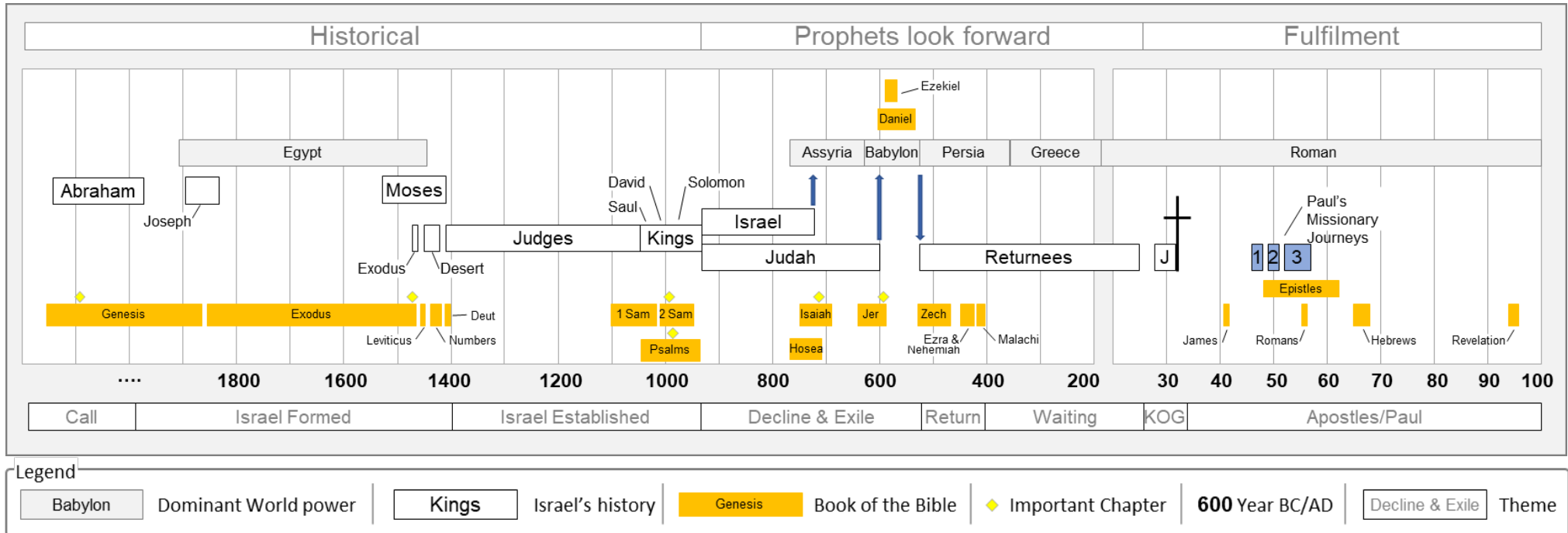
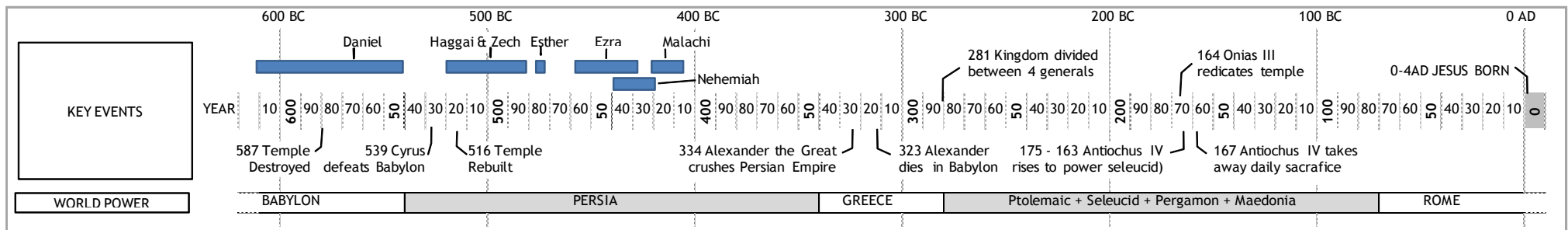


BIBLICAL BACKGROUND TO DANIEL

Graphic below attempts to position some of the Old Testament books in time and to show key events in Israel's history. This intended to aid thinking about how God's plans are progressively revealed through history and point to Jesus. (Note there is a future age to come as we look forward to Jesus's return not shown in this view)

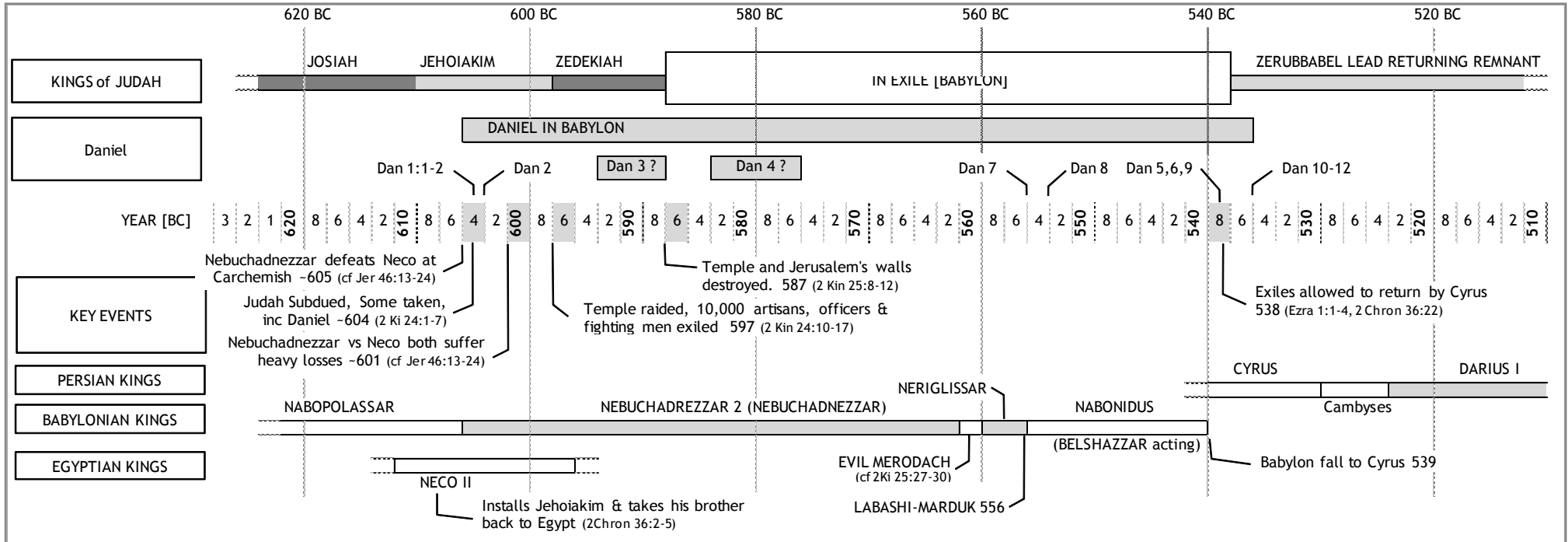


A theme that stretches the breadth of the bible is God's people in God's place living under his rule and blessing. Two highlights of this theme are when they enter the promised land under Joshua, and the Temple is built and filled with God's glory. But soon after, things decline. The nation divides, then in 722 BC Israel is conquered by Assyria and taken into exile due to covenant unfaithfulness. Whilst Judah remains, they too continue in unfaithfulness. Around 600BC Babylon takes control and eventually destroys the Temple. This appears to be a reversal of God's plans – His people reject His rule, are not in His place and are in danger of disappearing as God's people altogether. However, the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel provide hope that God still has positive plans for his people. Daniel powerfully portrays through imagery that the hope of immediate return and renewal (which does happen under Ezra and Nehemiah) is not the full picture, instead a longer view is required. Do not lose hope by focusing on the power of the kingdoms and kings that can be seen, rather look to God and his eternal plans. Whilst there will be trouble for a time, God will put an end to sin and bring in eternal righteousness. Today, we see God clearly fulfills his plans in Jesus.



Timeline 600BC to 0AD: Selected world events.

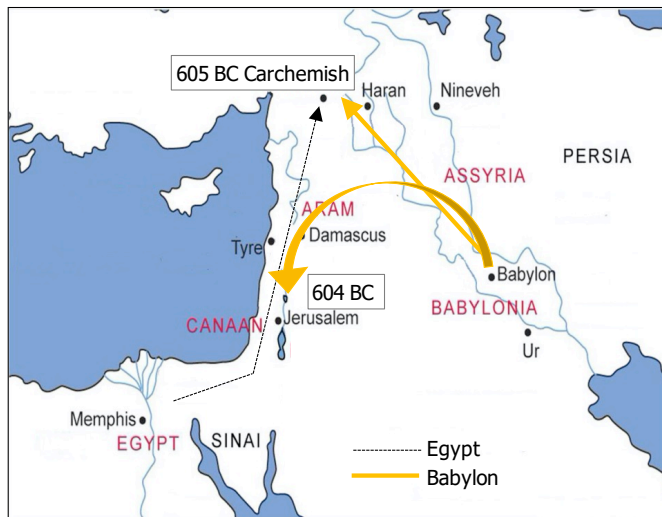
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO DANIEL



SUMMARY OF WORLD EVENTS

605BC: Assyria's power was waning; Babylon's was on the rise. Egypt marched north to support Assyria against Babylon at Carchemish. Nebuchadnezzar launches a surprise attack and crushes the Egyptians. Nebuchadnezzar stops pursuing the Egyptians to return home as news of his father death reaches him.

604BC: Next year he returns and subdues all of Egypt's territory including Jerusalem. This is a possible date for when Daniel was taken into captivity.



601BC Nebuchadnezzar attacks Egypt again, but this time Egypt is prepared and both sides suffer heavy losses, and Nebuchadnezzar retreats. Buoyed by this "success", many states withhold tribute including Jehoiakim king of Judah.

598BC Nebuchadnezzar sets out again and ruthlessly puts down the rebels one by one – in this campaign Judah surrenders and many are deported, and the temple treasures taken. Mattaniah, (renamed Zedekiah) is put in charge.

587BC Judah rebels again and Nebuchadnezzar returns, lays siege and then storms the city, destroying its temple and walls.

