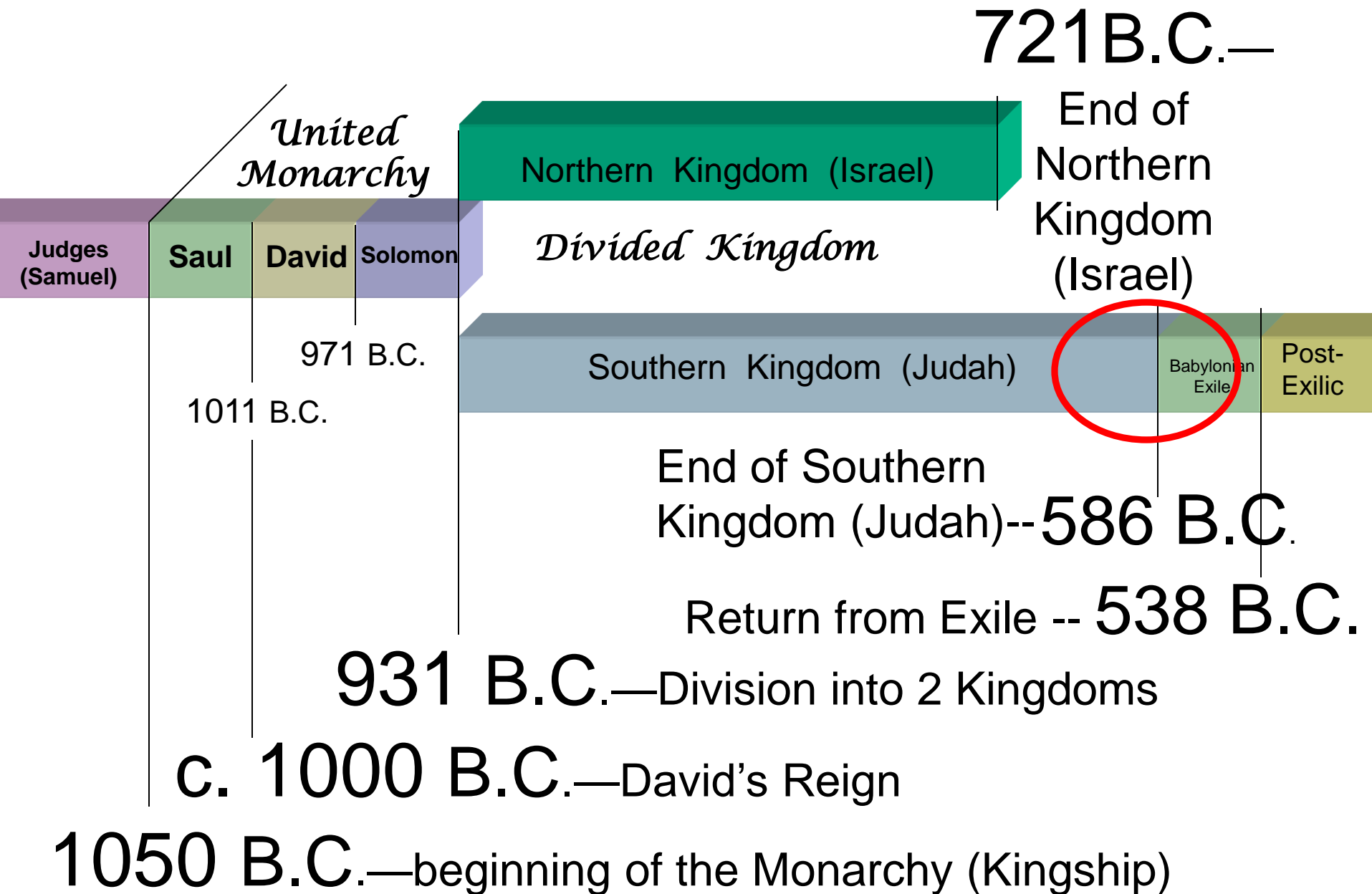
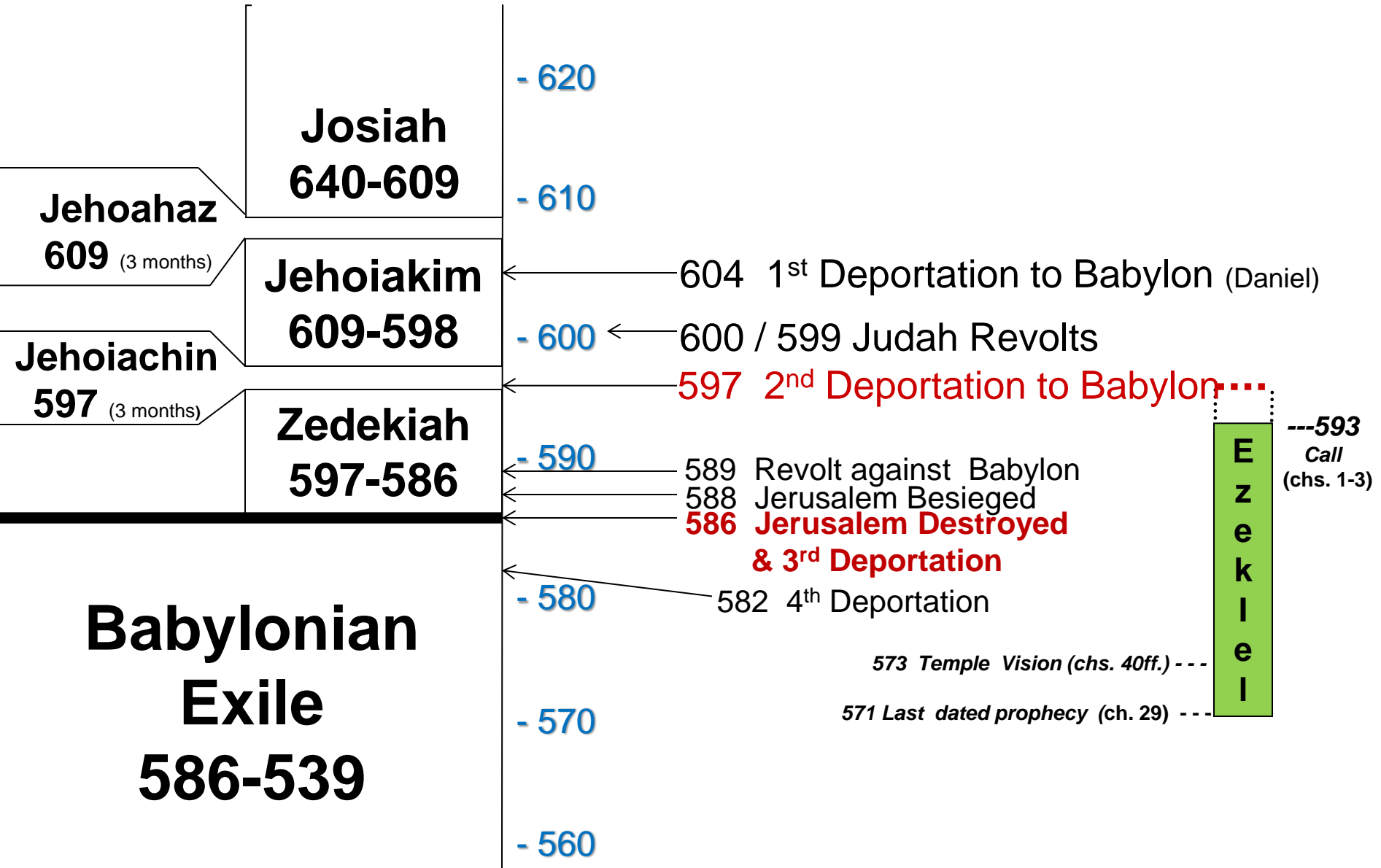


Key Dates in Israel's History of the Kingdom

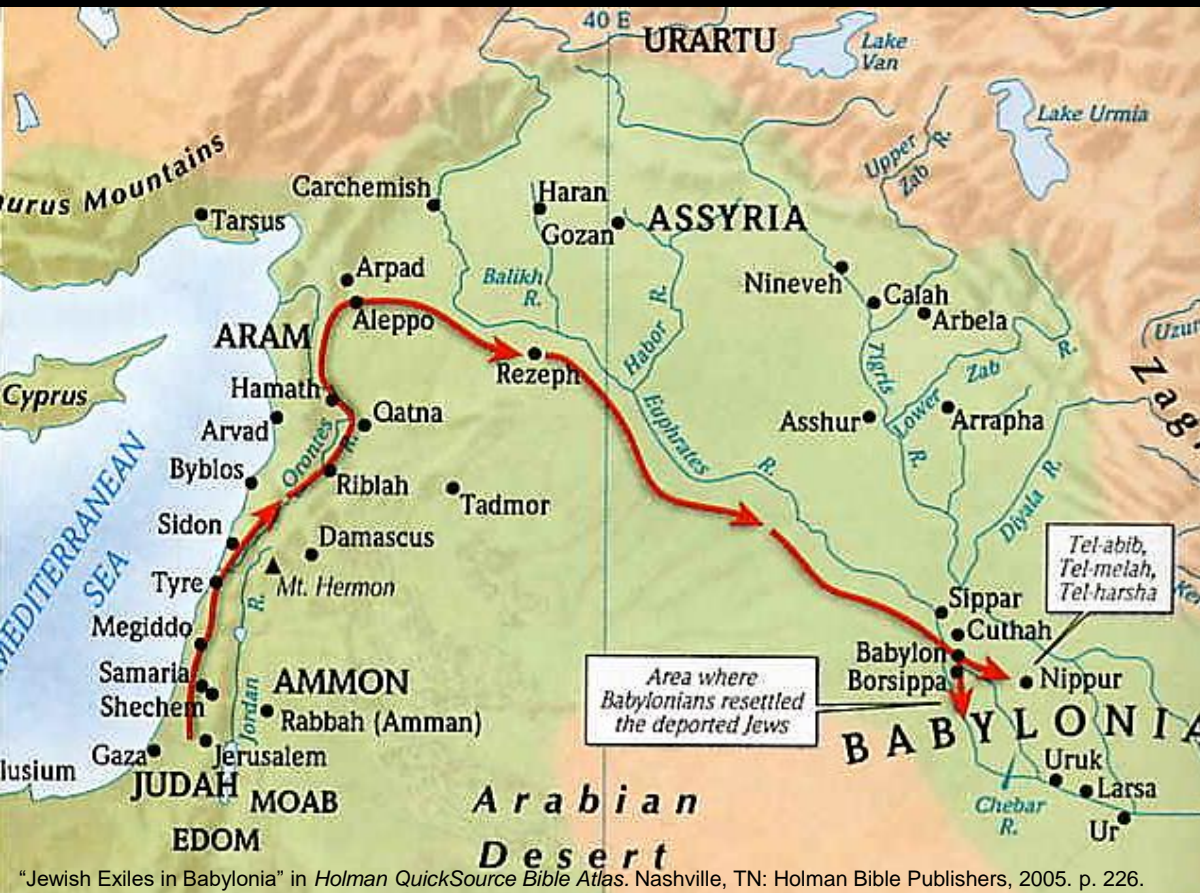


Judah: end of 7th - beginning of 6th Centuries B.C.



2 Kings 24 (NIV)

⁸ Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. ¹⁰ At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it, ¹² Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him. In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. ¹⁴ He carried all Jerusalem into exile: all the officers and fighting men, and all the skilled workers and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.



597 B.C.

(deportation of Ezekiel to Babylonia)



<http://oneyearbibleimages.com/nebuchadnezzar.jpg>

593 B.C.

(Ezekiel's Call to be a Prophet)



Ezekiel 1 ^(NIV)

² On the 5th of the month —it was the 5th year of the exile of King Jehoiachin [= 593 B.C.]—

³ the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians.

Ezekiel 3 ^(NIV)

¹⁵ I came to the exiles who lived at Tel Aviv near the Kebar River. And there, where they were living, I sat among them . . .

Ezekiel

▶ Location of Prophesying:
in Exile in Babylonia
at Tel Abib by River Chebar
(Kabaru canal near Nippur)
[presumably taken into exile in 597 B.C.]

▶ Dates of his Prophecies:
593 – 571 B.C.

▶ Social Status:
of priestly lineage
(but cannot serve as such in Exile)

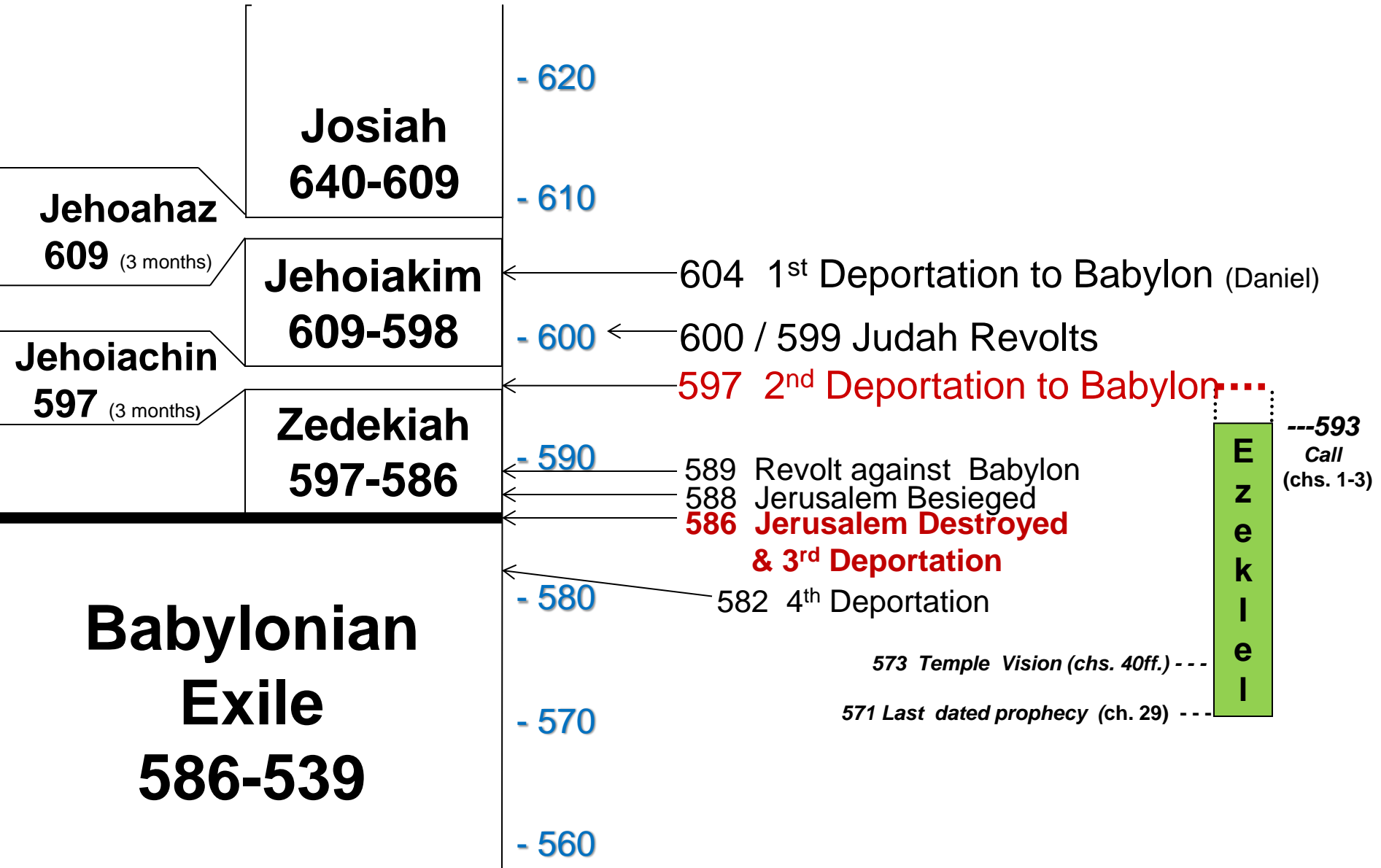
▶ His Immediate Genealogy:
son of Buzi
(but nothing is known about Buzi)

Ezekiel

▶ But no other personal information is known about Ezekiel, except that he was married (see 24:15ff. that refers to her death)

* Prophetic Books are always focused on recounting the Content of the Prophetic Word (the Messages), and never on giving us details about the Prophet (the Messenger)

Judah: end of 7th - beginning of 6th Centuries B.C.





586 B.C.,

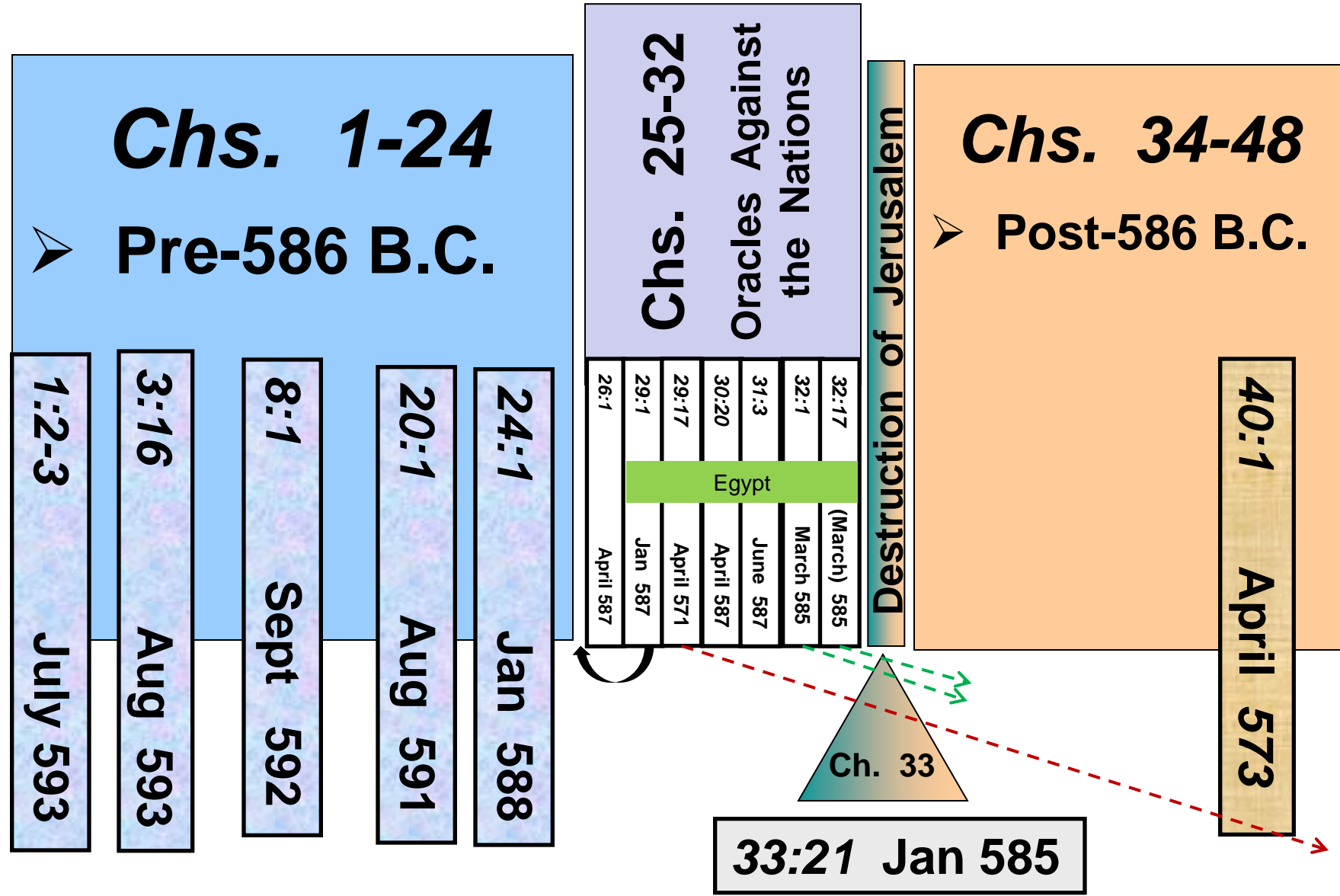
after a 1½ year siege,
the Babylonians captured
the city of Jerusalem

-- burned it & the Temple,
and took the majority of the survivors
into Exile

--thus ending the Southern Kingdom of Judah

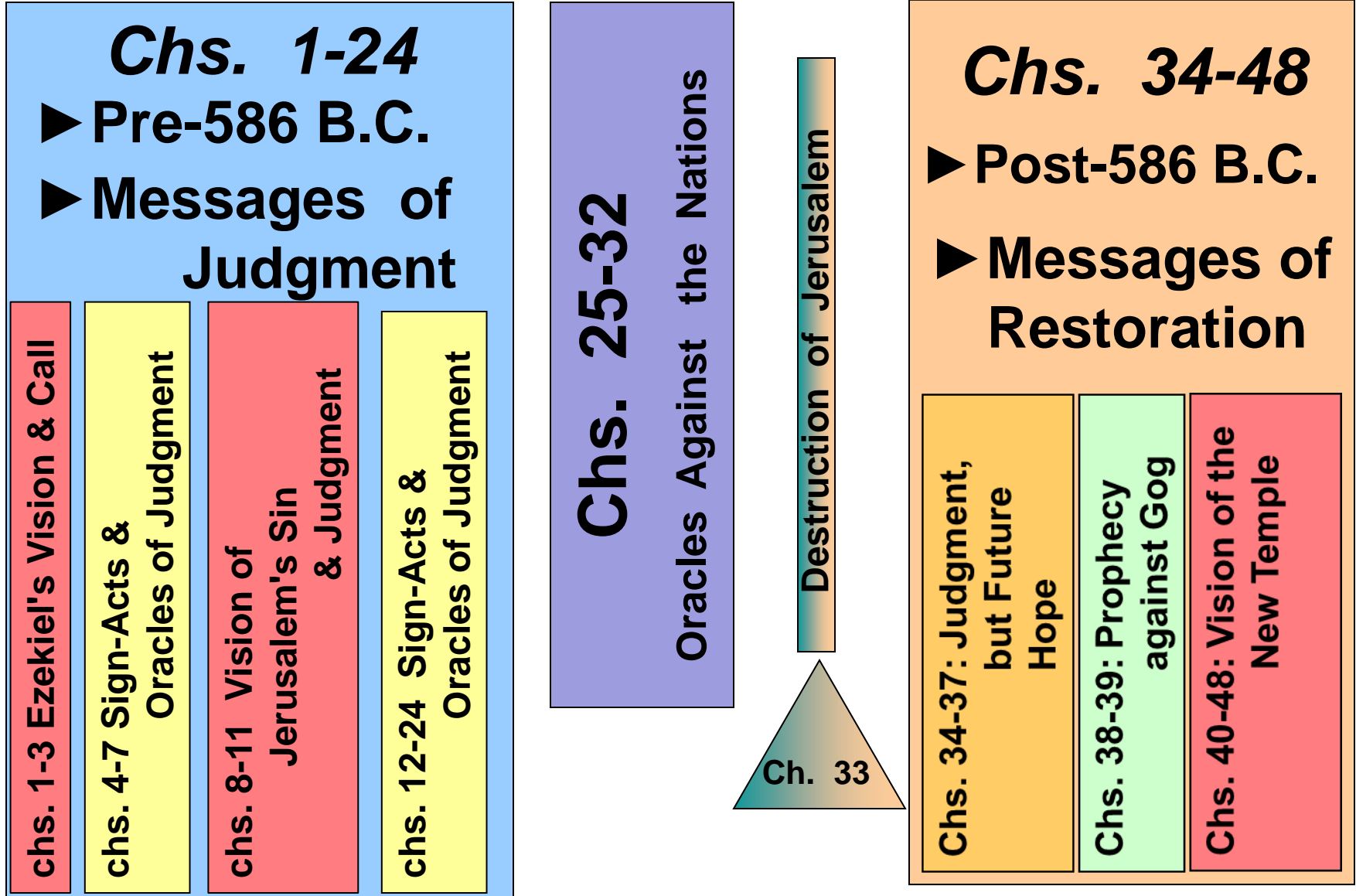
Book of Ezekiel: Structure

- 1) Chronological Sequence based on Dated Prophecies
- 2) Thematic Grouping of the Oracles against the Nations (chs. 25-32)



Book of Ezekiel: Structure

3) Thematic Movement: from “Judgment” → to “Restoration”



Popular Expectations which Ezekiel's prophecies were addressing

Prior to 586 B.C. (Fall of Jerusalem) →

People's Expectation, Hope, & Held Conviction:

- Exile would end very soon
with a return of the Exiles to Judah
- God would in some way defeat the
invading Babylonians
& thus deliver Jerusalem
- God's Presence was assured with His
People because of the Temple
in Jerusalem

► Expectations were based on a "solid" Theological Foundation,
referred to as "Popular Theology"

The “Popular Theology” that Ezekiel’s prophecies were countering

- 1) Popular theology →
focused only on the promise aspect
of the relationship with God

Covenant

Popular Theology:

- ▶ God’s Covenant with his people was unbreakable, irrevocable

∴ God was bound by the covenant to ultimately Bless His people & God would always Deliver his people

Ezekiel:

- ▶ God’s Covenant could be (temporarily) broken & was severed because of the people’s worshipping other gods
 - ▶ God’s Blessings were contingent upon the people’s obedience
- ∴ Since the people had violated the covenant, God was bringing judgment upon them & unless they repented, the destruction would be complete

The “Popular Theology” that Ezekiel’s prophecies were countering

- 1) Popular theology →
focused only on the promise aspect
of the relationship with God

Land

Popular Theology:

► God had irrevocably promised the Land to his people (Promise to Abraham)

∴ God would never allow the Land to be conquered by an enemy,
or allow the people to be permanently exiled from the Land

Ezekiel:

► Possession of the Land was Contingent upon the People’s Obedience

∴ God was about to remove the People from the Land (Exile) & the Land would be desolated by the Babylonians because of disobedience

The “Popular Theology” that Ezekiel’s prophecies were countering

- 1) Popular theology →
focused only on the promise aspect
of the relationship with God

Jerusalem & Temple

Popular Theology:

- ▶ Jerusalem was God’s chosen city (Promise to David)
 - ▶ God’s Presence permanently dwelt in Jerusalem in the Temple
- ∴ God would never allow the city or the Temple to be destroyed, but would always deliver it (**“Inviolability of Zion”**)

Ezekiel:

- ▶ **God’s protecting Jerusalem & God’s continued Presence was contingent upon the people’s obedience to God**
- ∴ **Jerusalem & the Temple would fall, be destroyed, & be abandoned, since God was withdrawing his presence from the Temple, thus allowing it to be destroyed, because the people were worshipping other gods**

The “Popular Theology” that Ezekiel’s prophecies were countering

- 1) Popular theology →
focused only on the promise aspect
of the relationship with God

Kingship Dynasty of David

Popular Theology:

- ▶ The line of David was divinely chosen as a dynasty (Promise to David)
- ∴ God had ensured a descendent from the line of David would always ruled over Judah
- ∴ The Davidic Kingship would always exist,
Meaning, also, the Political entity of Judah would never cease to be

Ezekiel:

- ▶ **God’s Promise to David could be interrupted by the people’s disobedience to God**
- ∴ **because the people were worshipping other gods, the king would be taken captive into exile, & there would no longer be a Davidic king in Judah**

The “Popular Theology” that Ezekiel’s prophecies were countering

- 1) Popular theology →
focused only on the promise aspect
of the relationship with God
- 2) Popular theology →
because God had delivered in past,
he was expected to do so in the present
- 3) Popular theology →
resulted in **false** sense of hope that God would
deliver, protect, let nothing catastrophic
occur to HIS people in the present situation

Ezekiel's Pre-586 B.C. Messages

Persuasive Purpose:

▶ attempted to remove the “*false*” hopes
of a soon return from exile
& of a deliverance for Judah / Jerusalem
based on the people’s “Popular Theology”

- by giving the theological explanation
for the impending judgment,
through repeatedly citing the people’s Covenant
Transgressions,
which showed that the People deserved
the declared punishment
- by stressing the certainty & extensiveness of that judgment,
which would be carried out by the Babylonians,
who were the human instruments God was using
to execute the punishment
against His People (Judah)