

## Dates for the Latter Prophets and the Writings

In the course of our treatment of the Latter Prophets, many dates will be mentioned in class and in the assigned readings. Some of these dates are debated, so in the list below I have provide references to two books where you can find further information. “Bandstra” means Barry L. Bandstra, *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999). “Shanks” refers to a collection of articles edited by Hershel Shanks in *Ancient Israel from Abraham to the Roman Destruction of Israel*, 2nd edition (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1999). Bandstra gives the more traditional dates, while the articles in the collection edited by Shanks represent more recent research. Where the two dating systems differ, footnotes are provided below.

Being able to put the Latter Prophets and the books contained in the Writings into their proper chronological sequence can help you understand the relationships between these documents.

**All dates are BCE unless otherwise indicated.**

### **The Assyrian Period (Compare Bandstra, p. 352 and Shanks, p. 137)**

783—732<sup>1</sup> Uzziah (Azariah) rules in Judah.

c. 760—750 **Amos** prophesies in Israel.

c. 750—725 **Hosea** prophesies in Israel.

750—732 **Rezin** reigns in Damascus (Aram/Syria).

c. 740—700 **Isaiah of Jerusalem** prophesies.

742 Isaiah of Jerusalem experiences his **call vision** (Isaiah 6).

737—732 **Pekah** rules in Israel (Samaria).

735—727<sup>2</sup> **Ahaz** rules as king of Judah.

734—732 Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Samaria wage war against Judah  
(This is known as the **Syro-Ephraimite War**. See Isaiah 7—8.)

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<sup>1</sup>Bandstra gives the dates for Uzziah as 783—742.

<sup>2</sup>Bandstra gives the dates for Ahaz as 735—715.

- 732 **Tiglath-Pileser III** of Assyria **conquers Damascus**.  
c. 730 **Micah** prophesies in Judah.  
726 **Shalmaneser V** becomes king of Assyria, and Hoshea (who was by now king of Israel) becomes his vassal.  
724 Shalmaneser V put **Samaria under siege**.  
722/721 **Samaria fell** to the Assyrians.  
721/720 **Sargon II** becomes king of Assyria and **deports large numbers of people from Israel** (the Northern Kingdom).  
727—697<sup>3</sup> **Hezekiah** rules as king of Judah and institutes religious and civil reforms.  
701 **Sennacherib** (who had become king of Assyria in 704) put Jerusalem under siege, but failed to capture the city. See Isaiah 36—39.

### **The Babylonian Period (Compare Bandstra, p. 366)**

- c. 640—622 **Zephaniah** prophesies in Judah.  
640—609 **Josiah** rules as king of Judah and institutes religious and civil reforms.  
627 **Jeremiah** begins his prophetic ministry.  
622 **Josiah's Reform** begins.  
c. 620 **Nahum** prophesies.  
609 **Josiah is killed** by Pharaoh Neco.  
Jehoahaz (Shallum) is made king but is soon removed by Neco and replaced by his brother **Jehoiakim**.  
Jeremiah delivers his **Temple Sermon**.  
c. 608—598 **Habakkuk** prophesies in Judah.  
605—562 Nebuchadnezzar rules as Emperor of the Babylon Empire.  
605 Battle of **Carchemish**.  
**Jeremiah's scroll** is read to Jehoiakim, who burns it.

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<sup>3</sup>Bandstra gives the dates for Hezekiah as 715—687. This is unlikely to be correct. Hezekiah was in power at the time Samaria fell to the Assyrians in 722/721 BCE. He came to power while Hoshea, the last king of Israel, was ruling in the north (See 2 Kings 18:1 and 9—10).

- 598—597 **Nebuchadnezzar lays siege to Jerusalem.** Jehoiakim dies, and **Jehoiachin becomes king** of Judea. Nebuchadnezzar captures Jerusalem and deports thousands of refugees (including **Jehoiachin** and **Ezekiel**) to Babylon. He appoints **Zedekiah** as king of Judah. Jeremiah confronts Hananiah, who broke his **ox yoke**.
- 597—587 **Zedekiah**, appointed by the Babylonians, reigns in Jerusalem.
- c. 593—571 **Ezekiel** prophesies to the deportees in Babylon and even to the people left behind in Judah.
- 593 Ezekiel experiences his **throne-chariot vision**, his prophetic call.
- 588 Again the Babylonians lay **siege** to Jerusalem.  
**Jeremiah is imprisoned.** (32:2—3a; 37:11—16; 38:6)
- 587 **Jerusalem is destroyed** (along with its temple to Yahweh) and more Judeans are deported to Babylon.  
**Gedaliah** is appointed governor of Judea.  
**Obadiah** prophesies against the Edomites.
- 582 Gedaliah is assassinated.  
**Jeremiah flees** to Egypt.
- 571 **Ezekiel** delivers his **last dated message**.
- 562 **Jeremiah dies** in Egypt.
- 550 Cyrus comes to power in Persia.
- c. 546—538 **Second Isaiah** prophesies, offering hope to the deportees in Babylon.

### **The Persian Period (Compare Bandstra, p. 370)**

- 538 **The Edict of Cyrus:** Cyrus of Persia releases the Judean exiles in Babylon, allowing them to return to their homeland. **Sheshbazzar** leads a group of Jews back to Judea and begins to rebuild the temple, but soon abandons the project.
- 537—520 **Third Isaiah** prophesies to the repatriated Judeans.
- 530 Cyrus of Persia dies.
- 522 **Zerubbabel** (governor) and **Joshua** (high priest) lead a second group of Jews back to Judea.

- 520           **Haggai** prophesies to the repatriated Judeans; **Reconstruction of the temple** to Yahweh in Jerusalem **begins**.
- c. 520—518 **Zechariah** prophesies to the repatriated Judeans.
- 515           **The reconstruction of the Jerusalem temple is completed** (516 according to Purvis & Meyers).
- c. 500-450 **Malachi** prophesies to the repatriated Judeans.
- 486—465   Xerxes I (called Ahasuerus in the book of Esther) reigns as Emperor of the Persian Empire.
- 458           **Ezra** leads a group of Jews back to Judea and leads them to recommit themselves to “the law of Moses.”
- 445           **Nehemiah** leads the people to rebuild the **walls of Jerusalem**. He also returned authority to the **Levites**.
- c. 400       The book of **Jonah** is composed?; **Second Zechariah** (Zechariah 9—14) is written.
- c. 400—350 The book of **Joel** is compiled.

### **The Hellenistic Period (Compare Bandstra, pp. 489—490)**

- 333           In the battle of Issus, **Alexander the Great** wrenches control of Palestine away from the Persian Empire.
- c. 250?     The **Septuagint**, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, is produced
- 175           Antiochus IV “Epiphanes” ruler of the Seleucid Empire, begins an aggressive policy of **Hellenization**.
- 167           **Antiochus IV** vandalizes the Jerusalem temple, sacrificing pigs on its alter.
- 164           The Jews wrest control of Jerusalem away from the Seleucid Empire and rededicate its temple to Yahweh. This event is celebrated as **Hanukkah**.
- 63           Romans take control of Palestine.
- c. 6         **Jesus of Nazareth** is born (Our modern calendar is about 4 to 6 years off).
- 70 CE       The Romans destroy Jerusalem, including its temple to YHWH.