

Old Testament Timeline: An Overview*

The following dates (all B.C.) are close approximations based on correlating dates between the Bible and other ancient Near Eastern sources (largely from Assyrian accession lists, Babylonian king-lists, or Egyptian historical sources). Often dates can be confirmed between the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires by narratives recording contacts between these two countries.

Patriarchs to Judges (c. 2166–1030)

	1446 Date for Exodus**	1260 Date for Exodus**
Abraham	2166–1991	2000–1825
Isaac	2066–1886	1900–1720
Jacob	2006–1859	1840–1693
Joseph	1915–1805	1749–1639
Moses' birth	1526	1340
Exodus	1446	1260
Desert wanderings	1446–1406	1260–1220
Entrance into Canaan	1406	1220
Period of the judges	1375 to 1050–1030	1210 to 1050–1030

United Monarchy (c. 1050–931)

	Dates	Notes
Saul's reign	1050–1030 to 1010	Numerals relating to Saul's age and length of reign may be missing in the Hebrew text (see 1 Sam. 13:1 ***)
David's reign	1010–971	
Solomon's reign	971–931	

Divided Monarchy to Exile (931–586)

Kingdom divided	931	See The Divided Kingdom: Kings of Judah and The Divided Kingdom: Kings of Israel
Syro-Ephraimite war	740–732	Pekah (Israel) and Rezin (Syria) pressure Jotham and Ahaz (Judah) to join their opposition to Tiglath-pileser III (Assyria)
Fall of Samaria (Israel)	722	Shalmaneser V (727–722) and Sargon II (722–705) of Assyria
Josiah's reforms	628	
Battle of Carchemish	605	Daniel and three friends exiled to Babylon
Jerusalem attacked	597	Nebuchadnezzar II takes exiles to Babylon including Jehoiachin and Ezekiel
Fall of Jerusalem (Judah)	586	Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon

Return from Exile (539–445)

Fall of Babylon	539	Cyrus of Persia (539–530)
1st return of exiles to Jerusalem	538	
Temple building begins	536	
Temple completed	516	Darius I (522–486)
Esther in palace of Xerxes	478	Xerxes I/Ahasuerus (485–464)
2nd return of exiles to Jerusalem under Ezra	458	Artaxerxes I (464–423)
3rd return of exiles to Jerusalem under Nehemiah	445	

*See also [Historical Books Timeline](#); [The Divided Kingdom: Kings of Judah](#) and [The Divided Kingdom: Kings of Israel](#).

**See [The Date of the Exodus](#).

***Possible dates for the beginning of Saul's reign are calculated based on other data in the OT: e.g., David's age at accession and length of reign ([2 Sam. 5:4–5](#)); Ish-

bosheth's age when he became king (2 Sam. 2:10); and Jonathan's probable age in relation to both Ish-bosheth and David, presuming that Jonathan was Saul's firstborn son (1 Sam. 14:49; 31:2) and was at least 20 when referred to as a commander of troops early in Saul's reign (1 Sam. 13:2).

Source: <http://www.esvbible.org/resources/esvsb/chart-ot-timeline/>