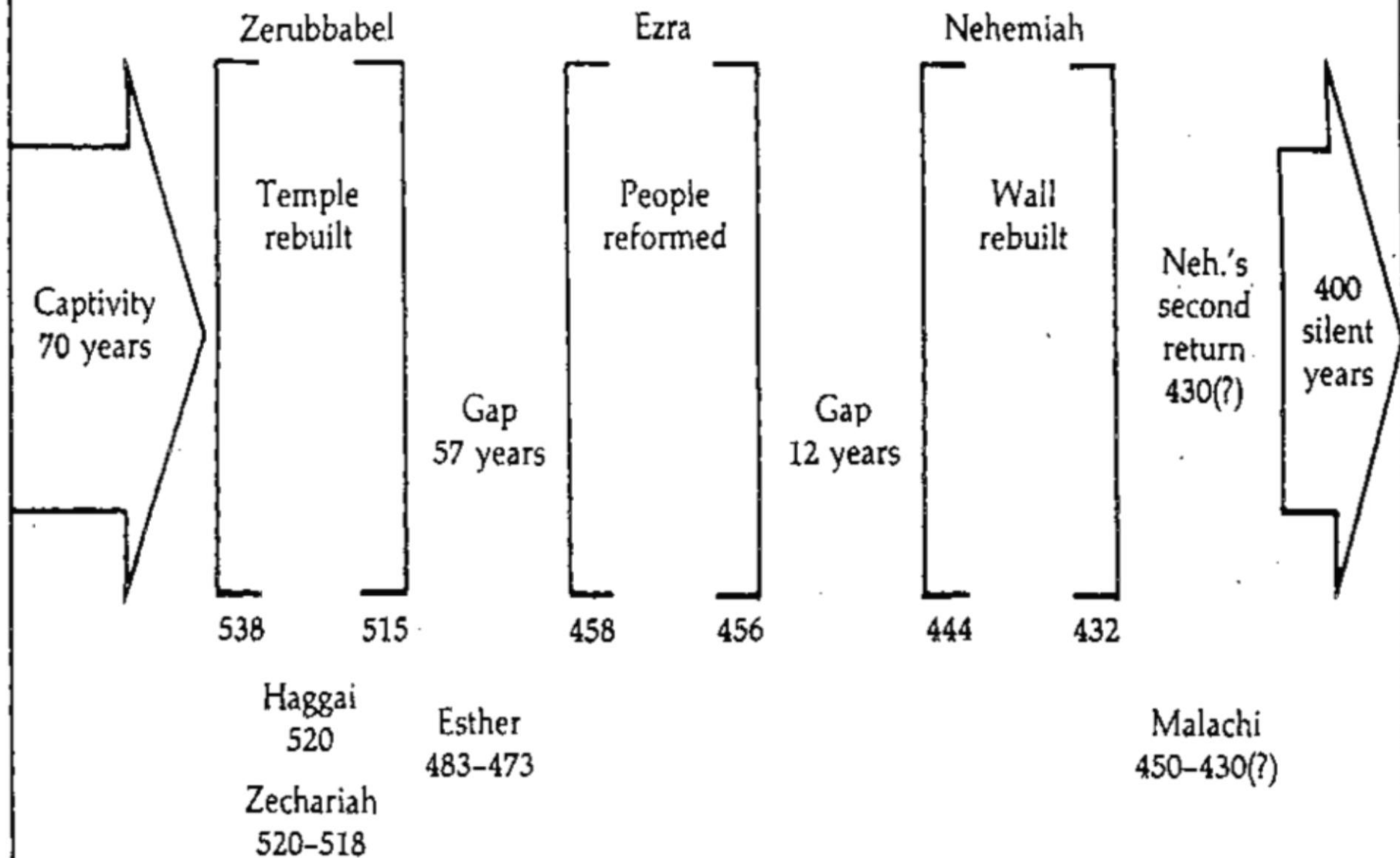


“One Story”

Coming Home (Again)

(Ezra- Nehemiah)

The Three Returns from Exile



Purpose

To demonstrate the sovereignty and faithfulness of God in the restoration of the Jews to their land despite both external and internal problems.

(1)Return from exile

(2)Rebuilding of the temple

(3)Re-establishment of religious life

(4)Rebuilding of the walls

(5)Reconstitution as covenanted people

EZRA

- i) The name Ezra means "God helps."**
- ii) He was a descendant from the priestly line of Aaron, and the author of the Old Testament Book of Ezra.**
- iii) He was the leader of a group of Jews returning to Jerusalem from the Babylonian Exile in 458 BC, during the reign of King Artaxerxes.**

Outline of Ezra

book Ezra covers two distinct time periods:-

- (a) Chapters 1—6: First exilic return under and rebuilding of the temple.
- (b) Chronologically, 4:6 fits between chapters 6 & 7 while 4:7-23 refers to events between Ezra 7 and Nehemiah 1.

Ezra grouped them here to highlight the persistent opposition to God's people over the years and God's ability to overcome.

Emphasis: To restore the Temple

(2) Chapters 7—10: Events after Ezra returned from Persia in 458 B.C. where Ezra enters the historical picture.

(There is a shift from the third person to the first person (7:27-9:15))

Emphasis: To restore the People

c) Lesson from Ezra

i) God's sovereignty to use even non-believers to fulfill his purpose

(a) Ez 1:1-2; 5:5, 11, 12; 6:22; 7:23

(b) The temple reconstruction was finished “by the command of the God of Israel and by the decree of Cyrus...” (Ezra 6:14)

ii) What is true redemption?

(1) Return from exile

(2) Rebuilding of the temple

(i) It symbolized God's presence:

(ii) It symbolized worship.

(3) Reconstitution as covenanted people

(a) God's Redemption: The Exodus motif (1:6)

(i) Israel threw off its vesture of statehood and monarchy and saw itself as what it truly is: a covenanted people.

(4) God's Holiness: Sanctification

(a) Divorce foreign wives (Ezra 7)

iii) How to be an effective teacher of God's Word (7:10)?

(1) Study the law of the Lord,

(2) Practice it

(3) Teach it.