## BIBLE

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## Chapter 13

## The Persian Period





## Exile in Assyria, Babylon and Egypt

2 Kings 17.6; 18.11; 24.11-16; 25; Ezra 2.59; 8.17;
Nehemiah 7.61; Jeremiah 29; 42-46; 52; Ezekiel 1.1-3; 3.15 The exile, marking the beginning of the Jewish diaspora, resulted from the deportations of the northern kingdom of Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C., the southern kingdom of Judah to Babylon in 597, 587 and 582 B.C., and the flight of many of the remaining population of Judah to Egypt after an unsuccessful uprising against the Babylonian governor in Mizpah in 582 B.C.

## Palestine in the Post-Exilic Period

Ezra 2.21-35; Nehemiah 3.1-32; 7.26-38
When the Persian king Cyrus II (550-529 B.C.) conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. with hardly a battle, Judah became the Persian province Yahud.

The whole of Palestine was part of the 5th Persian satrapy of Abar-Nahara ("[the land] beyond the [Euphrates] River"); cf. map 19. The satrapy was divided into provinces, two of which were Samaria and Yahud. The capital of Samaria was Shechem, with the holy mountain of Gerizim. In Nehemiah's time the governor of Samaria was Sanballat, and the governor of Ammon was Tobiah. Both governors together with the provinces of Ashdod and Edom were opposed to Nehemiah and his plans to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

There is a list of Jewish cities in Nehemiah 11.25-35, but it probably reflects a different period, possibly including places where the inhabitants escaped deportation in 587 B.C. The places Lod, Hadid and Ono which are mentioned in Ezra 2.33 and Nehemiah 7.37 must have been outside the province of Yahud.




