

THE 430 YEARS OF EXODUS 12:40 – THE 400 YEARS OF GENESIS 15:13

The following material is being presented here to give a more accurate understanding of the 430 years of Exodus 12:40, and the 400 years of Genesis 15:13, and the approximate number of years the Israelites were in slavery in Egypt.

This can be accomplished by looking at the ages of the men who lived through this period of time. God has recorded their ages at critical times in each of their lives to give us a better appreciation of the continuity and interaction of them and their history.

This continuity explains how their experiences and prophecies were passed down to Moses who recorded all of them for us. The starting point is Ex. 12:40-41. (Note: All scripture is quoted from the New King James version unless otherwise noted). *“Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of 430 years – on that very same day – it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.”* Note: Israel here represents the whole family beginning with Abraham.

Therefore, it means that the sojourn starts with Abraham and should not be taken to mean only the time the Israelites spent in Egypt as is shown in Galatians 3:16-17. *“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘and two seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to your Seed, Who is Christ. And this I say, that the law, which was 430 years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.’”*

The questions which need answers are: 1. At what point in Abraham’s life did the 430 years begin, and 2. When did the 400 years begin? The following will show their relative position in history.

The 400 year prophecy is stated in Genesis 15:13 *“Then He said to Abram: ‘Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them 400 years.’”* There are two important points to note here.

This prophecy pertains to Abraham’s descendants, not to him, and because he had no descendants at this time the starting point for the 400 years occurred in the future. Then when did the affliction begin?

Abraham was 100 years old at Isaac’s birth, and 75 years old when God gave him the first promise. Gen.12:4 *“So Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abraham was 75 years old when he departed from Haran.”* This would account for 25 years, so that the beginning of the 400 years would occur at another juncture in his life. That occasion is shown in Genesis 21:8 *“So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.”*

The key to the start of the affliction is found in Genesis 21:9. *“And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had born to Abraham, scoffing.”* The word “scoffing” in Strong’s is #6711, and is defined as “a verb meaning to laugh, to make a joke, to mock.” Genesis 21:9 may have the same sexual licentious overtones found in Exodus 32:6. *“They rose up early the next*

day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.” (#6711)

Genesis 21:12 explains who would be the seed of Abraham. *“But God said to Abraham, ‘Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called.’”* This verse puts God’s stamp of approval on Isaac as Abraham’s seed by Abraham sending Hagar and Ishmael away.

This is the point at which the 400 year prophecy begins; five years after Isaac’s birth. This is when God lets Abraham know that his seed is in Isaac and no other. Also, it was the scoffing of Isaac by Ismael that initiated the affliction. The 25 years, plus the 5 years totals 30 years; the difference between the 400 years and the 430 years.

It should be clear that the 400 years and the 430 years culminate at the same time in Exodus 12:40. This is confirmed in Acts 7:6. *“But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years.”*

Remember this prophecy saying that his offspring would be afflicted four hundred years. It can be seen as the starting point of the affliction in Genesis 21:9. *“And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had born to Abraham, scoffing.”*

Now the number of years of slavery in Egypt can be determined by beginning to count the years forward from Genesis 12:4 to determine the passage of time to the death of Joseph. This would have been the earliest point of time to start to figure the slavery of Israel.

Genesis 12:4	Abraham is 75 years old.	
Genesis 21:1-7	Abraham is 100 years old at Isaac’s birth.	
Genesis 25:26	Isaac is 60 years old at Jacob’s birth.	
Genesis 47:9	Jacob was 130 years old when he went to Egypt.	
Genesis 41:46-47	Joseph was 30 years old when he gave the Pharaoh the meaning of his dream at the start of the seven years of plenty.	
Genesis 47:9	Records that Jacob was 130 years old when he came to Egypt in the second year of the famine, making Joseph 30 plus 7 years of plenty, plus 2 years of famine, or 39 years when his father came to Egypt.	

The following is a summary of time from Abraham’s leaving Haran to go to the Promised Land and Jacob’s arrival in Egypt.

Abraham was 75 years old when he left Haran, and 100 years at Isaac’s birth	25
Isaac was 60 at Jacob’s birth	60
Jacob went to Egypt	130
This shows the elapsed time from the beginning of the 430 years to Jacob’s arrival in Egypt.	Total 215

Joseph dies at 110 years – see Genesis 50:22. 110 minus 39 = 71 years that the Israelites lived in Egypt peacefully (not in slavery) during Joseph’s lifetime. It took 215 years for Israel to

arrive in Egypt. 215 years plus 71 years to the death of Joseph is 286 years. Beginning with the original 430 years, minus the 286 years = 144 years of slavery in Egypt. These 144 years of slavery assumes that it started at Joseph's death.

Based on this the following observations can be made. The Israelites came out of slavery at the 430th year when Moses was 80 years old. Moses died at 120 years of age; (Deut.34:7), so subtracting 40 years of wandering would make Moses 80. Figuring back from 430 years, minus Moses' age of 80 at the time of the Exodus gives his birth year, which was 350 years after the original promise given to Abraham. The 350 years minus the 286 years to Joseph's death leaves 64 years meaning Moses was born 64 years after Joseph died.

This can be tied together when realizing that Moses' mother was the granddaughter of Levi. Num. 26:59. *"The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam."*

Two scriptures explain that Jochebed was the granddaughter of Levi. Exodus 6:18 says: *"The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel,"* showing that Amram, Moses's father, was a grandson of Levi through Koath, the son of Levi.

Amram married Jochebed, his father's sister. Exodus 6:20. *"Now Amram took for himself Jochebed, his father's sister, as wife;"* It clearly shows that Jochebed was the granddaughter of Levi, not his daughter. The word "daughter" in Numbers 26:59 is a general term which can be rendered granddaughter.

The beginning points of the two prophecies are 30 years apart, but once the 400 year prophecy begins they run simultaneously to the concluding point of Exodus 12:40. The most time the Israelites spent in slavery in Egypt would have been 144 years.

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