

[D-5] How Long Was Israel in Egypt?

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Chronology according to Jewish tradition {from The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar, by Arthur Spier, Feldheim Publishers, Jerusalem/New York, 1981, page 21}

Year	{A.H. - Anno Hominis – “Year of Man”}
1	Adam
1057	Noah 1056 years from the creation of man to Noah
1949	Abraham 892 years from Noah to Abraham *
2049	Isaac 100 years from Abraham to Isaac
2239	Entrance 190 years from Isaac to the Entrance to Egypt into Egypt
2449	The Exodus 210 years from Egypt to Exodus**
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The above chronology demonstrates that the Jews know and understand that Israel was only in Egypt a little over 200 years. **This chronology has two errors in it because the Jews do not accept the New Testament** which we will discuss in these notes. The first error is dating the birth of Abraham at 1949 A.H. {Anno Hominis – “Year of Man” counted from creation of Adam}- which was actually 2008 A.H. This error comes from the assumption that Abraham was born when Terah was 70 years old and is based on Gen 11:26. Abraham is named first in Gen. 11:26 because of his importance {a similar listing is in Gen. 5:32 with Shem, Ham, and Japheth where Shem is listed first even though the scriptures plainly tell us that Japheth was the oldest Gen.10:2, 21}, [the genealogy in Genesis chapter 10 demonstrates that **Shem was in fact the youngest.**] but Abraham wasn't born until Terah was 130 years old. We know this because Stephen in Acts 7:4 tells us that Abraham left Haran **after his father Terah's death** and **Terah was 205** {205 – 75 = 130} when he died and **Abraham was 75** at the time.

{01} Genesis	
King James 1769 Version	King James Paraphrase
(26) And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Gen. 11:26 KJV	(26) And Terah lived seventy years, and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran {1948 A.H./C-2094 B.C.}. ^f {01} Gen. 11:26 KJP
11:26f - Terah at age 70 fathered Nahor, Abram was born when Terah was 130 (Gen. 11:31-32; Gen. 12:4; Acts 7:4) Abram is named first because of His importance. - See note on Gen. 5:32. We know this because <u>Acts 7:4</u> tells us that Abram went to Canaan at age 75 after his father's death and Terah died at the age of 205 [see Gen. 11:32]. See <u>Appendix G: World Time Line of Biblical History</u>	

{01} Genesis	
King James 1769 Version	King James Paraphrase
(32) And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran. (Gen. 11:32)	(32) And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran {2083 A.H./C-1959 B.C.} ^h {01} Gen. 11:32 KJP

{44} Acts	
King James 1769 Version	King James Paraphrase
(2) And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, (3) And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. (4) Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. Acts 7:2-4 KJV	(2) And he {Stephen} answered, Men, brothers, and fathers, listen; The God of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, ^a (3) And said to him, Get out of your country, and away from your kindred, and come into the land which I shall show you. ^b (4) Then he came out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and lived in Haran: and from there, when his father was dead, ^c he removed himself into this land, in which you now live. {44} Acts 7:2-4 KJP
<p>7:4c – when his father was dead – by this we know that Abraham came to Canaan following the death of his father who was 205 at the time {Gen. 11:31-32} and Abraham was 75 years old at the time {Gen. 11:32 – 12:5} See Appendix G: World Time Line of Biblical History</p>	

Notice that the Jews believe Israel was in Egypt 210 years. They are actually off by 5 years. We know this by doing the chronology and using Paul's statement in Gal. 3:15-19. The Jews do not know the exact year because they do not believe the New Testament and Paul, so they are rounding the time off to 210 years when in actuality is was 215 years {see math below}.

{48} Galatians

King James 1769 Version	King James Paraphrase
<p>(15) Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though <i>it be</i> but a man's covenant, yet <i>if it be</i> confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.</p> <p>(16) Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.</p> <p>(17) And this I say, <i>that</i> the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.</p> <p>(18) For if the inheritance <i>be</i> of the law, <i>it is</i> no more of promise: but God gave <i>it</i> to Abraham by promise. Gal. 3:15-18 KJV</p>	<p>(15) Brothers, I speak after the manner of men; Though <i>it is</i> but a man's covenant, yet <i>if it is</i> confirmed, no man can disannul it, or add to it.</p> <p>(16) Now to Abraham and his Descendant were the promises made. He did not say, And to descendants, as of many; but as of one, And to your Descendant,^e Who is Christ.</p> <p>(17) And this I say, <i>that</i> the covenant, that was confirmed before by God in Christ, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years later,^f cannot void <i>the promise</i>, that it should make the promise of no effect.</p> <p>(18) Because if the inheritance <i>is</i> by the law, <i>it is</i> no more by promise: but God gave <i>it</i> to Abraham by promise. {48} Gal. 3:15-18 KJP</p>

3:17e - The Law was given on Mount Sinai 430 years after the promise was given to Abraham who was 75 years old at the time. Abraham lived to be 175 years old [Gen. 25:7] The Israelites came out of Egypt 430 years to the very day from the day the promise was given to Abraham. [Ex. 12:41] The promise given to Abraham 1/14/2083 A.H. The Jews came out of Egypt 1/14/2513 A.H. - See [Appendix G: World Time Line of Biblical History](#)

Note: this proves conclusively that the Jews were not slaves 400 years as so many misquote scripture. Every Jew knows this is true, but many Christians who do not understand King James English don't and many modern translations totally corrupt the scripture. - See notes on Genesis 12:1-4; 15:13; 50:26

Moses was 80 years old when he received the law {50 days after the Passover in 2513 A.H.}

Reckoning Jacob's age:

Jacob was 147 when he died, he had lived in Egypt 17 years {Gen. 47:28} {2315 A.H.}
He came to Egypt in the 2nd year of the famine at the age of 130 {147-17=130} {Gen. 45:6}
Joseph was 39 when Jacob came to Egypt {30+7+2=39} {2298 A.H.}
Jacob was 91 when Joseph was born {130-39=91} {2259 A.H.}
Jacob had been in the east 14 years when Joseph was born {Gen. 45:6; 47:28; 30:26; 31:41}
Jacob was 77 when he fled from Esau {91-14=77} {2245 A.H.}
Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born {Gen. 25:26} {2168 A.H.}
Abraham was 100 when Isaac was born {Gen. 21:15}{25 years after the promise was given}

By doing the math we know that Jacob entered Egypt **215 years** after the promise was given to Abraham {25+60+130=215} By subtraction **430 -215 = 215** we know that there was only **215 years** from the time Israel entered into Egypt until the Law was given to Moses.

Moses was 80 years old when he received the law.{2513 A.H.}
Joseph died at the age of 110 {Gen. 50:26} – which means he lived 71 years {110-39=71} after Israel came into Egypt. By subtraction {215-71-80 = 64} Moses was born only 64 years after Joseph's death which means that Moses' parents could well have known Joseph. This also means that there was only 144 years {215-71=144} years from the death of Joseph until Israel left Egypt. So the total number of years of actual slavery was at most 144 years.

If all this is true, where did the idea come from that Israel was in slavery for 400 years? It comes from a misunderstanding of two passages of scripture which we will now deal with.

{01} Genesis

King James 1769 Version	King James Paraphrase
<p>(13) And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land <i>that is</i> not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;</p> <p>(14) And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.</p> <p>(15) And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.</p> <p>(16) But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. Gen. 15:13-16 KJV</p>	<p>(13) And He said to Abram, Know for certain that your descendants shall be strangers in a land <i>that is</i> not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;^c</p> <p>(14) And also that nation, whom they shall serve, I will judge: and afterward they shall come out with great substance.</p> <p>(15) And you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.</p> <p>(16) But in the fourth generation^d they shall come here again: because the sin of the Amorites is not yet full.</p> <p align="center">{01} Gen. 15:13-16 KJP</p>

15:13c - Note: **Abraham's descendants would live in land that would not be theirs and would be afflicted,** but they were only in Egypt a total of 215 years. The **400 years is counted from Isaac's 5th birthday** – it is believed that women of that time period nursed their young and then weaned them at age 5 – see **Gen. 21:9**. Moses was born only 64 years after Joseph's death. The law of Moses was given **430 years after the promise** was given to Abraham who was 75 at the time. [Gal.3:15-19] Abraham lived 100 years after the promise was given to him. [Gen. 25:7] See Appendix G: World Time Line of Biblical History

15:16d - fourth generation - see note on 15:13 - four hundred years - See Ex. 6:20 Moses is actually the 5th generation through his father Amram, but 4th generation through his mother Jochebed. - see Ex. 2:1 and Ex. 6:20

The King James Version correctly translates the passage, but people don't understand or pay attention to the wording. Throughout their lifetimes, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob referred to themselves as strangers in the land in which they lived. Notice the passage says they will be strangers in the land and they will be afflicted 400 years {most of their lifetimes there were problems with the locals over wells that Abraham had dug}, and the land in which they will serve {namely Egypt}, God will judge. **It does not say they will be in bondage 400 years.** Isaac was born 25 years after the promise was given to Abraham who was 100 when Isaac was born. This means that the 400 year count began when Isaac was 5 years old. We are told that a great feast was held when Isaac was weaned in Gen. 21:8. We believe that is when the 400 year count began.

Since there was only 430 years from the time the promise was given to Abraham until the Law was given {50 days after the Passover} {Gal. 3:15-19} – for the descendants of Abraham to have been in slavery for 400 years, Abraham himself would have had to been in slavery for 70 years {100-30=70} since he lived 100 years after the promise was given {Gen. 25:7}. We know of course that was not the case.

{02} Exodus	
King James 1769 Version	King James Paraphrase
<p>(40) Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, <i>was</i> four hundred and thirty years.</p> <p>(41) And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.</p> <p>Ex. 12:40-41 KJV</p>	<p>(40) Now the history of the children of Israel, who lived in Egypt, <i>was</i> four hundred and thirty years {from the time the promise was given to Abraham [Gal. 3:15-19]}.^f</p> <p>(41) And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred thirty years, even to the very day {1/14/2513 A.H./C-1529 B.C.}^{g*} it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD {Jehovah} went out from the land of Egypt.</p> <p>{02} Ex. 12:40-41 KJP</p>
<p>12:40f -the sojourning (history) of the children of Israel - note the phrase "who lived in Egypt" identifies the descendants of Abraham as the ones being spoken of - they were NOT in Egypt 400 years since there was only 430 years from the promise given to Abraham to the Exodus {Gal. 3:15-19} - see following note</p> <p>12:41g - 430 years "to the selfsame day" - lit. to the very day the covenant was made with Abraham [2083 A.H.] See also Gal. 3:15-19 - 400 years from Isaac's 5th birthday, 215 years after Israel entered Egypt, 330 years after the death of Abraham, 144 years after the death of Joseph. Moses is 80 years old, Aaron is 83 years old.</p> <p>See: <u>Appendix G: World Time Line of Biblical History</u></p>	

Notice that Israel came out of Egypt **exactly 430 years to the very day** that the promise was given to Abraham. They came out of Egypt on the day of the Passover {which began at 6:00 p.m. the previous evening} which was the first month {Nisan [March-April]} the 14th day of the month {See Lev. 23:5}.