

THE SELFSAME DAY

GOD'S SET TIMES, WHICH HAVE AND WILL COME TO PASS

By Arlen L. Chitwood

“Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.

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” (Ex. 12:40, 41).

God works *with SET times* which He has pre-established. Until *these SET times* arrive, matters may appear *exactly* as they appeared to the Israelites and Egyptians alike throughout the years when the Israelites were in Egyptian bondage. Aside from conditions deteriorating, *LITTLE to NO change occurred throughout this time.*

BUT, when Moses appeared to the Jewish people a second time, *things began to change rapidly.*

A Set Time During Moses' Day

According to Ex. 12:40, 41, the Exodus from Egypt under Moses occurred, *to the VERY day, that a four-hundred-thirty-year sojourn of the Israelites ended.*

BUT, how can this possibly be the case? Following Biblical chronology back in time, four hundred thirty years would take one to the days of Abraham while he was still in Ur — prior to the birth of Isaac.

Thus, “the children of Israel” *did NOT exist* four hundred thirty years prior to the Exodus. Or, did they?

Then, there is *a four-hundred-year period seen back in Genesis in connection with the Exodus* (Gen. 15:13, 14; cf. Acts 7:6). Abraham’s seed, through whom the

nations were to ultimately be blessed, would sojourn “in a land that is not theirs” for *four hundred years*. *And it was ONLY at the end of this period of time that the Exodus under Moses would occur.*

Thus, there are both *four-hundred and four-hundred-thirty-year periods in connection with the Exodus from Egypt*. And, showing what is involved in distinctions between the two, along with showing the existence of the children of Israel four hundred thirty years prior to the Exodus, is quite simple *IF* Scripture is allowed to be its own interpreter.

1) Strangers and Pilgrims

It was *the SEED of Abraham* which was to sojourn in a strange land for *four hundred years*. *That seed* was born when Abraham was one hundred years old, which is *when the sojourn began relative to his seed in Gen. 15:13, 14.*

Then *the four-hundred-thirty-year sojourn* seen in Ex. 12:40, 41, also in connection with the Exodus, *can ONLY* date back to a time thirty years prior to the birth of Abraham’s seed. And, according to these two verses in Exodus, the children of Israel date back to this time as well, which could be seen *ONLY one way* — *a people in the loins of Abraham while he was still in Ur of the Chaldees* (cf. Gen. 12:1-3; 15:4; Josh. 24:2-14; Heb. 7:9, 10; 11:9).

Thus, the complete sojourn of the Israelites — existing four hundred thirty years prior to the Exodus, in the loins of Abraham — is seen going back thirty years behind the actual birth of Abraham’s seed, from whom the nation descended.

And, as can easily be shown, this time goes back to the very beginning, to the promise given to Abraham thirty years earlier, as seen in Gen. 12:1-3:

“Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

Note how the preceding is dealt with in Gal. 3:17, 18:

“And this I say, that 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.

For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”

(Note that “the covenant” [v. 17], having to do with “the promise” given to Abraham [vv. 17, 18], was *confirmed* to Abraham, in the land, several decades later [cf. Gen. 12:1-3; 15:7-21]. *The 430 years date back to the promise, not to the confirmation.*)

The Law, the Magna Charta for the kingdom, was given through Moses at Sinai during the first year following the departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

Thus, it was given the same year of the Exodus, four hundred thirty years after the promise. And, since Abraham was one hundred years old when Isaac was born, *beginning the four-hundred-year sojourn of His seed*, this promise, as previously seen, *could ONLY have occurred in Ur when Abraham was seventy.*

2) Viewing the Time Correctly

Individuals often come up with the erroneous idea, from a misreading of Gen. 15:14, that the Israelites spent four hundred years in Egyptian bondage. *BUT, that CAN'T be true.* Galatians 3:17 alone would show the fallacy of this type thinking.

Note in this verse that *ONLY* four hundred thirty years existed between the promise given to Abraham while still in Ur to the time of the giving of the Law — the same four hundred thirty years to which attention was called at the time that the Israelites departed Egypt under Moses in Ex. 12:40, 41.

Thus, Abraham’s seed (Isaac and his descendants) sojourned in a land not theirs for four hundred years; and an additional thirty-year sojourn is seen immediately preceding this time, going back to the promise given to Abraham in Ur, for reasons previously given.

And reference to the sojourn during this time can be seen in verses such as Gen. 37:1 and Ex. 6:2-4, verses explained in Heb. 11:8, 9, 13:

“And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan” (Gen. 37:1).

“And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord.

And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob...

And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them *the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers*” (Ex. 6:2-4).

“By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whether he went.

By faith *he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise...*

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that *they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth*” (Heb. 11:8, 9, 13).

Thus, the Israelites are seen in Scripture as *strangers and pilgrims throughout this time*, whether in Ur before Abraham departed (the Israelites seen in his loins), whether during the time Abraham and his seed dwelled in the land of Canaan, or whether between the time Jacob took his family down into Egypt and the subsequent Exodus from Egypt under Moses.

From the birth of Isaac, the seed of Abraham spent one hundred ninety years in the land of Canaan and two hundred ten subsequent years in Egypt, completing the full four hundred years (*cf.* Gen. 25:26; 47:9). And *ONLY* during a latter part of this time spent in Egypt was Israel under bondage to a new pharaoh, who had come into power while they were in Egypt.

This time of bondage *could NOT possibly* have been more than about one hundred forty years and may have been considerably less (times derived from Joseph’s age when the 210 years began [abt. 40], his age at the time of his death [110], and the fact that the persecution of the Israelites in Egypt began *ONLY* at a time following Joseph’s death [Gen. 41:46ff; 50:26]).

This persecution began following the ascension

of “a new king over Egypt [an Assyrian; Isa. 52:4], who knew not Joseph” [Ex. 1:8]). And we’re not told anything about the time which would have elapsed between Joseph’s death and the ascension of this new king.

Since the persecution existed at the time of Moses’ birth, with Moses being eighty years old at the time of the Exodus, *we can ONLY say that the persecution began sometime between about one hundred forty and eighty years preceding the Exodus.* There is *NOTHING* in Scripture which would allow the time when the persecution began to be determined any closer than this.

Note in Ex. 12:40, 41 that the “sojourning” of the Jewish people *is one thing*, the time that they “dwelt” in Egypt *is quite another.* The latter included the last 210 years of the 430 years seen in the former.

The KJV and NKJV are more in keeping with the Hebrew text on these two verses than are many other translations [*e.g.*, NASB, NIV].)

The Present and Future Day

The departure of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses forms a type, which will be fulfilled to the minutest detail under Christ in the antitype. This departure in the type will be fulfilled through a yet-future departure of the Israelites from that which Egypt typifies (the Gentile nations). And, as Moses led them out following his return to the Jewish people, Christ will lead them out following His return to the Jewish people.

And *ALL* the details seen in the type will occur in the antitype — from the death of the firstborn (future conversion of the nation) and restoration of the Jewish people to their land, to the destruction of Gentile world power, to the restoration of the theocracy to the Jewish people under a new covenant.

And, relative to *time*, these things *can ONLY occur in the antitype EXACTLY as seen in the type — to the very day, within a time which God has previously set. It can be NO other way.*

In Scripture, God is seen working *after ONLY one fashion throughout Man’s Day.*

In the opening verses of Scripture, He is seen working for six days, foreshadowing 6,000 years.

And throughout this time *He is seen working with three groups of people during SET times in three dispensations.*

And, as evident from the timing of the Exodus in relation to four hundred and four hundred thirty years of time (to the very day at the end of the latter period, and evidently the former as well), *ALL of God’s activities are undoubtedly SET in a perfect timing of this nature.*

Man’s Day itself *is NOT ONLY* set within a pre-determined time (6,000 years, no more, no less), *BUT* time occurring during the three dispensations *are SET with the same predetermined precision* (each lasting 2,000 years, completing the full 6,000).

God is seen intervening within man’s affairs *at the EXACT end of each dispensation*, and He is also seen acting at times during the dispensations with the same precision, having to do with pre-determined times (*e.g.*, timing of events seen in Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy, particularly between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks; also note when the kingdom is established — *NOT before, BUT at the FULL end of the prophecy; at the end of the FULL seventy weeks, at the end of the FULL four hundred ninety years.*)

Individuals, prefacing or following a particular statement, sometimes say, “If the Lord tarries...” *But the Lord is NOT going to tarry. The Lord works with SET times, and when these SET times arrive, He acts.*

The matter is EXACTLY as stated in Heb. 10:37:

“For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and *will not tarry.*”

The present dispensation *can ONLY last for a SET time, which is a PRESET 2,000 years.* The removal of the Church at the end of the dispensation will occur *at a SET time*; God’s dealings with Israel which follow will occur within *SET times*, as will events occurring during and at the end of this time.

This is simply the manner in which God does things, *which MUST be recognized.*

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