

## SEDER OLAM RABBAH

### ~~~ Part 3 ~~~

Abraham was told in the Covenant of the Parts (Genesis 15:13) *'Know for sure that your seed will be stranger'* etc., and this seed is Isaac as it is said (Genesis 21:12) *'For in Isaac your seed will be called'*.<sup>54</sup> And concerning Isaac, it is said (Genesis 25:26) *And Isaac was threescore years old when she [Rebekah] bore them [Esau and Jacob]*. And our father Jacob said to Pharaoh [in Egypt] (Genesis 47:9) *'The days of the years of my sojournings are a hundred and thirty years'* etc. So this is 190 [years from Isaac].<sup>55</sup>

They remained there 210 years,<sup>56</sup> an indication is with the years of Job that are in the same chapter of his birth as it is said: (Job 42:16) *And after this Job lived a hundred and forty years*, and it is further written (Job 42:10) *and the Lord gave*

*Job twice as much as he had before.*<sup>57</sup> It

is thus found that when Israel went down to Egypt Job was born, and that they came up, he died. Or, possibly, all the 400 years that Israel were in Egypt and those of Kohath from their coming down to Egypt, there was as it is written (Exodus 6:18) *And the years of the life of Kohath 133 years*. And (Exodus 6:20) *And the years of the life of Amram 137 years*. And 80 years for Moses.<sup>58</sup>

Events in Egypt	Year AM	Years in Egypt	Years in bondage
Birth of Levi	2194	-44	
Birth of Joseph	2199	-39	
Birth of Kohath (est.)	2228	-10	
Birth of Jochebeth	2238	0	
Jacob comes down to Egypt	2238	0	
Birth of Amram	2238	0	
Death of Joseph	2309	71	
Death of Levi	2331	93	
Bondage starts	2331	93	0
Death of Kohath (est.)	2361	123	30
Birth of Aaron	2371	133	40
Birth of Moses	2374	136	43
Death of Amram	2375	137	44
The Exodus	2454	216	123

<sup>54</sup> The text of Genesis 21:12 is followed by the next verse concerning Ishmael: (Genesis 21:13) *And also of the son of the bondwoman [Hagar] will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.*

<sup>55</sup> Because it is 60 years of Isaac's age when Jacob was born + 130 years until Jacob stood in front of Pharaoh.

<sup>56</sup> The Seder Olam assumes that the 400 years are counted from the birth of Isaac, but this assumption is not a certainty because the 400 years were announced to Abraham when he returned from Egypt; there is no reason to assume that the 400 years should be counted from the birth of Isaac for the only reason that he was stated to be the seed of Abraham: Ishmael was also declared as his seed, as above mentioned.

<sup>57</sup> In other words, if Job had lived 140 years after his ordeal, which is *twice as much as he had before*, he thus lived 70 years before his ordeal; so the Seder Olam concludes that he lived a total of 210 years; but, this is also subject to debate; the verse Job 42:10 refers to 140 years *after* Job had regained all his fortunes, including his 10 children; so before his ordeal there were 70 years, and after his recovery there were 140 years; but we must add the number of years from the end of his curse to the start of his full recovery, during which he had 10 children; if we assume the same model as for Jacob's 12 children, born with 7 months distance, and assuming Job had then two wives (*twice as much* also refers to his two wives after as compared to one before), this adds six years to the count of his life, thus a total of 216 years; this number matches our own calculation for the Exodus !

<sup>58</sup> Moses was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus (Exodus 7:7); he lived 120 years and spent his last 40 years in the desert wandering with the Israelites; the calculation is here to demonstrate that, unlike some historians have assumed that the sojourn in Egypt lasted 400 years, this simple calculation, even assuming the impossible combination that 3 generations (Kohath, Amram and Moses) succeeded one after the other at the death of one member, it would only total 133+137+80 = 350 years, so less than the assumed 400 years; therefore the

And then 430 years, what are they? (Genesis 15:13) *And they shall serve them and afflict them for 400 years.* This is to teach you that all the time that (Genesis 15:13) *thy seed shall be stranger in a land that is not theirs* is 400 years and *they shall serve them* are the years they were under servitude, and *afflict them* are the years of suffering and all are [within the] 400 years.<sup>59</sup>

(Exodus 1:6) *And Joseph died, and all his brothers.* Joseph died at the age of 110. You don't have that anyone from the tribes lived a shorter life than Joseph, and you don't have that anyone from the tribes lived longer than Levi. And during all the years that Levi was alive, Israel was not enslaved in Egypt, as it is said: (Exodus 1:6) *And Joseph died and all his brothers* etc. and (Exodus 1:8) *A new king rose* etc. and, from the moment Levi died, the Egyptians started to enslave them. From this they said [when] one of the brothers dies, all the brothers will take care [of his tribe], one of the group dies, all the group will take care. (Exodus 1:7-8) *And the children of Israel were fruitful and increased* etc. *And a new king rose* etc. It is found that from the moment Levi died until Israel came out of Egypt was 116 years.<sup>60</sup> And the bondage was no more, and no less than 86 years as being the years of Miriam [in Egypt]. And why was she called Miriam? Because of the bitterness.<sup>61</sup>

The Plagues over Egypt [lasted] 12 months as it is said: (Exodus 5:12) *And the people were scattered* etc. The passage of the straw is in Iyar and they came out (in Egypt) in Nisan. The Egyptians were stricken by 10 plagues during all the 12 months. The plagues on Job [also lasted] 12 months as it is said: (Job 7:3) *Yes I have passed on me lunar months in worthlessness and (now) wearisome nights are counted on me.* What is the counting of the nights, if not the counting of the moons?

The judgment of Gog in the future will be 12 months as it is said (Isaiah 18:6) *And the vulture shall cut them and all the beasts of the field shall freak them.*<sup>62</sup>

The judgment of the wicked in Gehenna is 12 months as it is said: (Isaiah 66:23) *And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Shabbat to another, all the flesh shall come to worship Me, says the Lord.* Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri said [there were 12 months] from Pesach to the assembly as it is said: (Isaiah 66:23) *from one Shabbat to another.*

And after 12 months, the criminals of Israel who transgressed the Torah and the commandments, their whole soul and their entire body will burn to ash and the Gehenna will throw them and the

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400 years count doesn't refer to the sole sojourn in Egypt but started before; yet, as Amram was born and died in Egypt (his name does not appear in the list of those who came down with Jacob and those who left with Moses), and that Moses was the last of his children, we can assume that Amram may have been born in the first year in Egypt and would have died in the year of the birth of Moses; thus their respective years tail one to another, with 137+80 years= 217 years; if we assume one year overlap, it makes 216 years total count until the Exodus.

<sup>59</sup> Yet this explanation does not cover the 430 years !

<sup>60</sup> Our own calculation shows it is 123 years, the difference being in the understanding of when to start the count of the 400 or 430 years before the freedom.

<sup>61</sup> The name Miriam (מִרְיָם) is from the same root as bitterness (מִרְוֹר); this is to show that she was born at a time when the bitter bondage had started, possibly also at the death of Kohath her grandfather, and father of Amram.

<sup>62</sup> There is analogy of words: *cut* (קָצַף) for *summer* (קִיץ), *freak* (תִּחַרְרַף) for *winter* (חֹרֶף); hence it is a whole seasonal cycle during which the calamities will apply , i.e. the vultures in the summer and the beasts in the winter.

Spirit will spread them under the soles of the feet of the righteous as it is said: (Malachi 3:21) *'And you shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I do make', said the Lord of the hosts.*

But for those who deny the resurrection of the dead, who say there is no Torah from Heavens, and those who mock the words of the Sages, the Gehenna will be locked on their face and they will be judged inside it for ever and ever, as it is said: (Isaiah 66:24) *And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of those who have rebelled against Me, because the worms in them will not die and the fire on them will not extinguish, and they shall an odium unto all creatures.* Moreover those who question [...] as it is said (Psalms 49:15) *Like sheep they are appointed to the nether-world, and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning and their form shall be for the nether-world to rot it.* Who caused [it to] them? Because they spread their hands in the fertilizer, as it is said: (Psalms 49:15) *rot/fertilize it.* And there is no fertilizer but a Temple, as it is said (I Kings 8:13) *'I have surely built Thee a house of fertilization/habitation, a place for Thee to dwell in for ever'.<sup>63</sup>*

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<sup>63</sup> A similarity is made on the root רבל between different verses, with meaning of rot and manure, but also fertilization and place to grow things.