

# ***Dating from Abraham to Moses***

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# *Dating from Abraham to Moses*

## **Introduction and the Results**

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There are many different dates offered for the Exodus that are based on different assumptions. The following dates are based on what the Bible says and a single event from the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam that is historical. The later chapters describe that event and how the other dates are found. To save readers from having to skip to the end, here are the results, starting with Abraham's birth and ending with Moses' death. A few major historical events are mentioned as well. As a bonus, a chart shows how Jacob's sons could have multiplied into two million people by the time of the Exodus.

## **Important Events**

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<b>Date (BCE)</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Other Events</b>
2144	Abraham born	2112: Ur restores Sumerian dominance
2069	Abraham arrived in Canaan	
2044	Isaac born	2004: Ur fell to Elam, effective end of Sumer
1984	Jacob born	
1969	Abraham died	
1944	Esau married	
~1910	Jacob went to Haran	
1893	Joseph born	
~1890	Jacob returns to Canaan	
1876	Joseph taken to Egypt	
1864	Isaac died	
1863	Joseph promoted to Vizier	
1856	Drought begins	
1854	Jacob in Egypt	
1837	Jacob died	
1783	Joseph died	1792–1750: Hammurabi, Babylon ~1650–1550: Hyksos rule northern Egypt
1527	Moses born	1521: Avaris, Hyksos stronghold, taken
1446	The Exodus	

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1407

Moses died

## **Israelite Population Growth**

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The following is an *entirely hypothetical* look at how the Israelites' population might have grown from the time Jacob's clan came to Egypt. Each row represents a 25-year generation. The population is assumed to have doubled each generation until the Egyptians enslaved the Israelites around 1550. After that, growth slows to a 75% increase, which prevents the population from getting excessively large.

<b>Year (BCE)</b>	<b>Rate of Increase</b>	<b>Population</b>
1854	Initial population	70
1829	x2	140
1804	x2	280
1779	x2	560
1754	x2	1,120
1729	x2	2,240
1704	x2	4,480
1679	x2	8,960
1654	x2	17,920
1629	x2	35,840
1604	x2	71,680
1579	x2	143,360
1554	x2	286,720
1529	x1.75	501,760
1504	x1.75	878,080
1479	x1.75	1,536,640
1454	x1.75	2,689,120

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## Determining the Dates

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The following provides the basis for the dates above. Note that these dates are approximate; relative periods in the Bible as well as uncertainty about dates from Egyptian history introduce the possibility that the dates are off by a year or two.

## The Exodus

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<sup>25</sup>In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt went to war against Jerusalem. (*1 Kings* 14:25, CSB)

This is the first event in the Old Testament that is known historically. This was Shoshenq I, king of Egypt, 943–922 BCE. He campaigned in Canaan in 925, shortly before his death.<sup>1</sup> This provides a historical anchor to use with the Old Testament's relative dates.

This indicates that Rehoboam became king in 930 and that Solomon died that year.

*1 Kings* 11:42 says that Solomon reigned for 40 years, putting the start of his reign at 970.

<sup>6:1</sup>Solomon began to build the temple for the Lord in **the four hundred eightieth year after the Israelites came out of the land of Egypt**, in the fourth year of his reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month. (*1 Kings* 6:1, CSB)

This verse is important because it tells us the year of the Exodus. Solomon started building the Temple in his fourth year, 966, so the Exodus occurred 480 years earlier in 1446.

*Exodus* 7:7 says that he was 80 years old when he spoke to Pharaoh in the year *before* the Exodus, which happened in the first month of the Israelite year. Thus, Moses was born in 1527, while the Egyptians were still driving out the Hyksos.

*Deuteronomy* 34:7 says that Moses died at 120, putting his death in 1407.

## The Israelites in Egypt

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<sup>40</sup>The time that the Israelites lived in Egypt was 430 years. <sup>41</sup>At the end of 430 years, on that same day, all the Lord's military divisions went out from the land of Egypt. (*Exodus* 12:40-41, CSB)

Moses said that the Israelites lived in Egypt for 430 years before the Exodus, which gives us a date of 1876. However, what he said was ambiguous; was he talking about Joseph's arrival or the entire clan's? The difference is 22 years. Various historical markers fit better with the 430 years starting with Joseph's arrival, and there is no reason to assume that Moses meant the later arrival of his father and brothers.

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<sup>1</sup> See Wikipedia, *Shoshenq I*, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoshenq\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoshenq_I).

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*Genesis* 37:2 says that Joseph was 17 years old shortly before his brothers sold him into slavery, so he was born in 1893. This also provides a date of roughly 1890 for when Jacob returned to Canaan.

*Genesis* 41:46 says that Joseph was 30 years old when Pharaoh promoted him in 1863. After seven years of abundance and two years of drought, Jacob and his sons moved to Egypt in 1854.

*Genesis* 50:26 says that Joseph died at 110, in 1783.

## **The Patriarchs**

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*Genesis* 47:9 says that Jacob was 130 years old when he spoke to Pharaoh, so Jacob was born in 1984.

*Genesis* 47:28 says that Jacob died at 147, in 1837.

*Genesis* 31:41 says that Jacob served Laban for a total of 20 years in Haran, so he arrived in Haran around 1910.

*Genesis* 25:26 says that Isaac was 60 years old when Esau and Jacob were born, so he was born in 2044.

*Genesis* 35:38 says that Isaac died at 180 in 1864.

*Genesis* 21:5 says that Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born, so Abraham was born in 2144.

*Genesis* 12:4 says that Abraham was 75 years old when he left Haran to move to Canaan in 2069.

*Genesis* 25:7 says that Abraham died at 175 in 1969.