

January 23-29

<u>January 23</u> Genesis 41-42
<u>January 24</u> Genesis 43-44
<u>January 25</u> Genesis 45-47
<u>January 26</u> Genesis 48-50
<u>January 27</u> Exodus 1-2; Psalm 90; Exodus 3
<u>January 28</u> Exodus 4-6
<u>January 29</u> Exodus 7-8

In this week's reading, the small tribe of Israel becomes the nation of Israel. Few, if any, stories better illustrate the providential working of God, as a family of fewer than eighty people become a nation of more than 600,000 adult men besides women and children.

Joseph is exalted from prison to the second-highest position in the most powerful nation on earth. He is in place to get Jacob to migrate to Egypt where the family will be protected through the famine. Although the Egyptians despised the Jews, Pharaoh protected them for Joseph's sake. Since they prospered and multiplied in Egypt, they had no reason to return to the land God had promised, but when Pharaoh made them slaves to keep them from joining an enemy to overthrow Egypt, they had not only protection so they could continue growing (as profitable possessions of Egypt), but also motivation to return to Canaan the first opportunity they had.

Some have understood Exodus 12:40 to say that the Jews were slaves for 430 years, but an examination of the genealogies shows that this was not the meaning. When they moved to Egypt, Levi already had his three sons (Genesis 46:11). Kohath was the father of Amram (Exodus 6:18), who was the father of Moses (verse 20). Kohath lived to be 133 (verse 18), Amram lived to be 137 (verse 20), and Moses was 80 when Israel left Egypt. Assuming that the sons were born around the middle of their fathers' lives, this puts Israel in Egypt around 250 years. When we subtract the years Joseph lived after they arrived, they were likely slaves for "only" about 175 years. The "sojourning" in Egypt apparently was counted from Genesis 12:10, when Abraham went to "sojourn" there. Living only two weeks' journey away (Deuteronomy 1:2), it seems Abraham's family maintained some attachment to the place, if only in heart. This also agrees with Paul in Galatians 3:17.

Psalm 90 is placed where it is because it was written by Moses and mentions that a normal lifespan is 70 years (verse 10) and says that if we make live until we are 80, life is about over. He must have written this before the end of Exodus 2, because he was 80 at that time and was about to begin his life's work. Otherwise, he would have known that productive life is possible well past 80.