

400 YEARS OF SLAVERY: GOD'S 15 PURPOSES

1. Being strangers in Egypt would create a feeling of family camaraderie with 12 branches on the family tree through many generations. Everyone even knew which of the 12 great-grandson of Abraham was his link to all his/her 4+ million neighbors who were also children of their patriarch Abraham.
2. Their presence in Egypt would break all ties and family loyalties with relatives back in Ur of the Chaldees (Persia, Iran), Abraham's idolatrous family.
3. 400 years would identify their population as a valid ethnic nationality with unique customs.
4. Separation from Canaanites would prevent the slow and casual intermarriage to their Canaanite neighbors which would have occurred if they had stayed in Canaan.
5. Separation from Canaanites would also prevent slow adoption of their idolatrous practices. They would all meet Jehovah at Sinai and receive not only the stone tablets, but also the entire Torah. They also had specific dietary laws, marriage customs, taxes, property ownership rules, etc.
6. Conquest of land would clearly define conquered property lines which had been assigned by God to Abraham.
7. It would also keep the Abrahamic monotheistic "system" pure with specific laws and allegiance to JHVH.
8. 400 years would be sufficient time to produce enough offspring to build an army (600,000) which could intimidate then defeat the Canaanites.
9. Develop a reputation to precede them into Canaan. Remember Jericho's fear of a nation which defeated pharaoh's army.
10. 400 years would also enable the Canaanites to build and fortify cities and develop farmlands which God would provide for the new nation at the takeover.
11. The division into the 12 tribes would also simplify the dispersion of the people into political entities each with their own geographical boundaries once they arrived in Canaan.
12. The tribal divisions would enable God to specify a few prophecies: Messiah and the priesthood especially.
13. Every Hebrew would get to see all the miracles done in Egypt as well as in the wilderness.
14. Separation as an ethnic group would also keep their language pure.

APPLICATION

15. I can expect that God has a positive outcome for bringing positive as well as seemingly negative circumstances into my life.