



1. Exodus 12:40

(מ) ומושב בני ישראל אשר ישבו במצרים שלשים שנה וארבע מאות שנה

(40) The length of time that the Israelites lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years;

2. Targum Jonathan on Exodus 12:40

(מ) ויומא דיתיבו בני ישראל במצרים תלתין שמיטין דשנין דסכומהון מאתון ועשר שנין ומנן ארבע מאה ותלתין שנין מן דמליל יי לאברהם מן שעתא דמליל עמיה בחמיסר בניסן ביני פסוגיאי עד יומא דנפקו ממצרים

(40) And the days of the dwelling of the sons of Israel in Mizraim were thirty weeks of years, (thirty times seven years,) which is the sum of two hundred and ten years. But the number of four hundred and thirty years (had passed away since) the Lord spake to Abraham, in the hour that He spake with him on the fifteenth of Nisan, between the divided parts, until the day that they went out of Mizraim.

3. Rashi on Exodus 12:40:2

בין הכל, משולד יצחק עד עכשיו, היו ארבע מאות, משנה לו זרע לאברהם נתקם פי גר יהיה זרעך, ושלשים שנה היו משוגגרה גזרת בין הבתרים עד שנולד יצחק; ואי אפשר לומר בארץ מצרים לבדה, שהרי קהת מן הבאים עם יעקב היה, צא וחשוב כל שנותיו וכל שנות עמרם בנו ושמונים של משה, לא תמצאם כל כך, ועל כרחך הרבה שנים היו לקהת עד שלא ירד למצרים, והרבה משנות עמרם ונבלעים בשנות קהת, והרבה משמונים של משה ונבלעים בשנות עמרם, הרי שלא תמצא ארבע מאות לביאת מצרים, והזקוקתה לומר על כרחך, שאף שאר הישיבות נקראו גרות ואפילו בתכרון שצאמר "אשר גר שם אברהם ויצחק" (בראשית ל"ה), ואומר "את ארץ מגריהם אשר גרו בה" (שמות ו'), לפיכך אתה צריך לומר "פי גר יהיה זרעך" משנה לו זרע, וכשתמנה ת' שנה משולד יצחק, תמצא מביאתו למצרים עד ציאתו ר"י, וזה אחד מן הדברים ששנו לתלמי המלך (מגילה ט):

Altogether from the birth of Isaac until now were 400 years, and we must reckon from that event, for only from the time when Abraham had offspring from Sarah could the prophecy (Genesis 15:13) "Thy offspring shall be a stranger" be fulfilled; and there had been 30 years since that decree made at "the covenant between the parts" until the birth of Isaac. It is impossible to say that this means that they were 430 years in the land of Egypt alone, for Kohath was one of those who came into Egypt with Jacob (Genesis 46:11); go and reckon all his years and all the years of Amram his son and the whole eighty years of Moses, the latter's son, until the Exodus and you will not find that they total to so many; and you must admit that Kohath had already lived many years before he went down to Egypt, and that many of Amram's years are included in the years of his father Kohath, and that many of the 80 years of Moses are included in the years of his father Amram, so that you see that you will not find 400 years from the time of Israel's coming into Egypt until the Exodus. You are compelled to admit, even though unwillingly, that the other settlements which the patriarchs made in lands other than Egypt come also under the name of "sojourning as a stranger" (גרות), including also that at Hebron, even though it was in Canaan itself, because it is said, (Genesis 35:27) "[Hebron] where Abraham and Isaac sojourned", and it says, (Exodus 6:4) "[the land Canaan], the land of their sojournings wherein they sojourned". Consequently you must necessarily say that the prophecy, "thy offspring shall be strangers... [four hundred years]" began only from the time when he had offspring. And only if you reckon the 400 years from the birth of Isaac will you find that from the time they came into Egypt until the time they left it, was 210 years (as alluded to in Genesis 15:13). This was one of the passages which they altered for king Ptolemy (Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 12:40; Megillah 9a).

4. Genesis 15:16

(טז) ודור רביעי ישובו הנה כי לא-שלם עון האמרי עד-הנה

(16) And they shall return here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

5. Exodus 6:16-26

(טז) ואלה שמות בני-לוי לתלדתם גרשון וקהת ומררי ושני בני לוי שבע ושלשים ומאת שנה: (יז) בני גרשון ולבני ושמעי למשפחתם: (יח) ובני קהת עמרם ויצהר וזכרון ועזיאל ושני בני קהת שלש ושלשים ומאת שנה: (יט) ובני מררי מחלי ומושי אלה משפחת הלוי לתלדתם: (כ) ויקח עמרם את-יוכבד דנתו לו לאשה ותלד לו את-אהרן ואת-מששה ושני בני עמרם שבע ושלשים ומאת שנה: (כא) ובני יצהר קרח ונפג וזכרי: (כב) ובני עזיאל מישאל ואלצפן וסתרי: (כג) ויקח אהרן את-אלישבע בת-עמינדב אחות נחשון לו לאשה ותלד לו את-נדיב ואת-אביהוא ואת-אלעזר ואת-איתמר: (כד) ובני קרח אסיר ואלקנה ואביאסף אלה משפחת הקרחי: (כה) ואלעזר בן-אהרן לקח לו מבנות פוטיאל לו לאשה ותלד לו את-פינחס אלה ראשי אבות הלויים למשפחתם: (כו) הוא אהרן ומשה אשר אמר יהוה להם הוציאו את-בני ישראל ממצרים על-צבתם:

(16) These are the names of Levi's sons by their lineage: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; and the span of Levi's life was 137 years. (17) The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their families. (18) The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel; and the span of Kohath's life was 133 years. (19) The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are

the families of the Levites by their lineage. (20) Amram took to wife his father's sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses; and the span of Amram's life was 137 years. (21) The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. (22) The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri. (23) Aaron took to wife Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. (24) The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. Those are the families of the Korahites. (25) And Aaron's son Eleazar took to wife one of Putiel's daughters, and she bore him Phinehas. Those are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites by their families. (26) It is the same Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, "Bring forth the Israelites from the land of Egypt, troop by troop."

6. I Chronicles 2:3-22

(ג) בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה עֵר וְאוֹנָן וְשֵׁלָה וְשֵׁלָה שְׁלוּשָׁה נִוְלַד לּוֹ מִבֶּת-שׁוּעַ הַכְּנַעֲנִית וַיְהִי עֵר בְּכוֹר יְהוּדָה רַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיְמִיתֵהוּ: (ד) וַתִּמְרָל פְּלֹתוֹ לַיְלָדָה לּוֹ אֶת-פְּרִיץ וְאֶת-זֶרַח כְּלִ-בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה חֲמִשָּׁה: (ה) בְּנֵי-פְרִיץ חֲצִרוֹן וְחִמּוּל: (ו) וּבְנֵי זֶרַח זְמִיר וְיִתְרוֹ וְהִימָן וְכַלְכַּל וְדָרַע כָּלֶם חֲמִשָּׁה: (ז) וּבְנֵי פְרִיץ עֶכָר עוֹכָר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל בְּחָרָם: (ח) וּבְנֵי אִיתָן עֲזַרְיָה: (ט) וּבְנֵי חֲצִרוֹן אֲשֶׁר נִוְלַד-לּוֹ אֶת-זֶרַח־מֵאֵל וְאֶת-רָם וְאֶת-פְּלֹתָי: (י) וְרָם הוֹלִיד אֶת-עֲמִינָדָב וְעֲמִינָדָב הוֹלִיד אֶת-נַחֲשׁוֹן נְשִׂיא בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה: (יא) וְנַחֲשׁוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת-שִׁלְמָא וְשִׁלְמָא הוֹלִיד אֶת-בְּעוֹזַי: (יב) וּבְעוֹזַי הוֹלִיד אֶת-עוֹבָד הוֹלִיד אֶת-יִשִׁי: (יג) וְאִישֵׁי הוֹלִיד אֶת-בְּכוֹרוֹ אֶת-אֱלִיאָב וְאֶת-בְּנָדָב הַשְּׁנַי וְשִׁמְעָא הַשְּׁלִישִׁי: (יד) וְנִמְנָאֵל הַרְבִּיעִי רַבִּי הַחֲמִישִׁי: (טו) אֲצִם הַשְּׁשִׁי דָּוִד הַשְּׁבִיעִי: (טז) וְאַחִיתֵיחֵם [וְאַחִיתֵיחֵם] צְרוּיָה וְאֶבְיָגַיִל וּבְנֵי צְרוּיָה אֲבָשָׁי וְיֹאָב וְעֵשָׂה־אֵל שְׁלִישָׁה: (יז) וְאֶבְיָגַיִל יָלְדָה אֶת-עֲמִשָּׂא וְאָבִי עֲמִשָּׂא יִתְרוֹ הַיִּשְׁמַעְעָאֵלִי: (יח) וְכַלְב בְּוֶ-חֲצִרוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת-עֲזוּבָה אִשָּׁה וְאֶת-יְרִיעוֹת וְאֵלָה בְּנֵיהֶם יֵשֶׁר וְשׁוּבָב וְאַרְדּוֹן: (יט) וְתַמָּת עֲזוּבָה וְנַחֲחִלוֹ כָּלֶב אֶת-אֶפְרָת וַתִּלְד לּוֹ אֶת-חִוּר: (כ) וְחוּר הוֹלִיד אֶת-אוּרִי וְאוּרִי הוֹלִיד אֶת-בְּצַלְאֵל: (כא) וְאַחֲרָיָה בְּאֶרְץ הַגִּלְעָד: (כב) וְשִׁגּוּב הוֹלִיד אֶת-יֵאִיר וַיְהִי-לּוֹ עֲשָׂרִים וְשְׁלוֹשׁ עָרִים בְּאֶרְץ הַגִּלְעָד:

(3) The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah; these three, Bath-shua the Canaanite woman bore to him. But Er, Judah's first-born, was displeasing to the LORD, and He took his life. (4) His daughter-in-law Tamar also bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah's sons were five in all. (5) The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. (6) The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all. (7) The sons of Carmi: Achar, the troubler of Israel, who committed a trespass against the proscribed thing; (8) and Ethan's son was Azariah. (9) The sons of Hezron that were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai. (10) Ram begot Amminadab, and Amminadab begot Nahshon, prince of the sons of Judah. (11) Nahshon was the father of Salma, Salma of Boaz, (12) Boaz of Obed, Obed of Jesse. (13) Jesse begot Eliab his first-born, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, (14) Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, (15) Ozem the sixth, David the seventh; (16) their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three. (17) Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite. (18) Caleb son of Hezron had children by his wife Azubah, and by Jerioth; these were her sons: Jeshar, Shobab, and Ardon. (19) When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. (20) Hur begot Uri, and Uri begot Bezalel. (21) Afterward Hezron had relations with the daughter of Machir father of Gilead—he had married her when he was sixty years old—and she bore him Segub; (22) and Segub begot Jair; he had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead.

7. Genesis 46:12

(יב) וּבְנֵי יְהוּדָה עֵר וְאוֹנָן וְשֵׁלָה וְפְרִיץ וְזֶרַח וַיָּמָת עֵר וְאוֹנָן בְּאֶרְץ כְּנַעַן וַיָּהֲנוּ בְּנֵי-פְרִיץ חֲצִרוֹן וְחִמּוּל: (12) Judah's sons: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah—but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan; and Perez's sons were Hezron and Hamul.

8. Numbers 7:12

(יב) וַיְהִי הַמִּקְרִיב בַּיּוֹם הַרְאִשׁוֹן אֶת-קָרְבָּנוֹ נַחֲשׁוֹן בֶּן-עֲמִינָדָב לְמִטֵּה יְהוּדָה: (12) The one who presented his offering on the first day was Nahshon son of Amminadab of the tribe of Judah.

9. Exodus 17:12

(יב) וַיְהִי מִשָּׁה כְּבָלָיִם וַיִּקְחוּ-אֹבֶבֶן וַיִּשְׁמֹוּ מִחֲתָיו וַיָּשִׁב עָלֶיהָ וְאֶהָרֹן וְאוּרִי תָקְמוּ בְּיָדָיו מִזֶּה אֶחָד וּמִזֶּה אֶחָד וַיְהִי יָדָיו אֲמוּנָה עַד-כֹּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ: (12) But Moses' hands grew heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur, one on each side, supported his hands; thus his hands remained steady until the sun set.

10. Numbers 32:41

(מא) וַיֵּאִיר בֶּן-מְנַשֶּׁה הֵלֵךְ וַיִּלְכַּד אֶת-חַטְוֵיתֵיהֶם וַיִּקְרָא אֶתְהֶן חַטְוֵי יֵאִיר: (41) Jair son of Manasseh went and captured their villages, which he renamed Havvoth-jair.

11. I Chronicles 7:20-27

(כ) וּבְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם שׁוֹתֵלַח וּבָרַד בְּנֵי וַתְּחַת בְּנוֹ: (כא) וַנְּבִד בְּנוֹ וְשׁוֹתֵלַח בְּנוֹ וְעִזָּר וְאַלְעָד וְהַרְגוּם אֲנָשֵׁי-גַת הַנּוֹלָדִים בְּאֶרְץ כִּי יָרְדוּ לְקַחַת אֶת-מִקְנֵיהֶם: (כב) וַיִּתְאַבֵּל אֶפְרַיִם אֲבִיהֶם יָמִים רַבִּים וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶתְחִי לְנַחְמוֹ: (כג) וַיָּבֹא אֶל-אִשְׁתּוֹ נַתָּהר וַתִּלְד לּוֹ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ פְּרִיעֵה כִּי בְרָעָה

הַיְתָה בְּבֵיתוֹ: (כד) וּבָתוֹ שְׁאֲרָה וּמָכָן אֶת־בֵּית־חֹרְזוֹן הַמִּתְחַלְּטוֹן וְאֶת־הַעֲלִיזוֹן וְאֵת שְׁאֲרָה: (כה) גֵּרְפָח בְּנוֹ גֵּרְשָׁף וְתַלַּח בְּנוֹ וְתַסוּ בְּנוֹ: (כו) לַעֲזֹן בְּנוֹ עִמְיָהוּד בְּנוֹ אֶל־יִשְׁמָעֵל בְּנוֹ: (כז) נֹון בְּנוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּנוֹ:

(20) The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, his son Bered, his son Tahath, his son Eleadah, his son Tahath, (21) his son Zabad, his son Shuthelah, also Ezer and Elead. The men of Gath, born in the land, killed them because they had gone down to take their cattle. (22) And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. (23) He cohabited with his wife, who conceived and bore a son; and she named him Beriah, because it occurred when there was misfortune in his house. (24) His daughter was Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth-horon, and Uzzen-sheerah. (25) His son Rephah, his son Resheph, his son Telah, his son Tahan, (26) his son Ladan, his son Ammihud, his son Elishama, (27) his son Non, his son Joshua.

12. Haggai 1:12

(יב) וַיִּשְׁמָע זְרֻבָבֶל וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־יְהוֹזָדָקְלָן הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל וְכָל־אֲלֹהֵיהֶם וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה:

(12) Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak and all the rest of the people gave heed to the summons of the LORD their God and to the words of the prophet Haggai, when the LORD their God sent him; the people feared the LORD.

13. I Chronicles 3:17-19

(יז) וּבְנֵי יְכִנְיָה אֶסֶר שְׁאֵל־מֵיֵאֵל בְּנוֹ: (יח) וּמִלְפִירָם וּפְדָיָה וְשֵׁנָאֶצָּר וְמִמְנָה הוֹשָׁע וּנְדָבְיָה: (יט) וּבְנֵי פְדָיָה זְרֻבָבֶל וְשִׁמְעִי וּבְנֵי־זְרֻבָבֶל מִשְׁלָם וְחַנְנִיָּה וְשִׁלְמִית אָחוֹתָם:

(17) and the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel his son, (18) Malchiram, Pedaiyah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah; (19) the sons of Pedaiyah: Zerubbabel and Shimei; the sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister;

14. Shadal on Exodus 6:20:1

(א) ויקח עמרם וגו': על כרחנו צריכים אנו לומר שהשמיט הכתוב קצת דורות בין קהת לעמרם, כי במדבר (ג' כ"ח) היו לקהת פקודים במספר כל זכר מבו חדש ומעלה 8600 ולא היו לו רק ארבעה בנים שהעמידו משפחות, הרי לכל אחד מארבעה בני קהת בנים 2150; והנה עמרם לא הוליד רק אהרן ומרים, ומשה לא הוליד רק שני בנים ואהרן ארבעה, ואיך יתכן שיהיו לעמרם, וכן ליציהרן ולחברון ועוזיאל 2150 נפשות בשנה השנית בצאתם מארץ מצרים? לפיכך צריך שנסכים עם I. B. Koppe במאמרו: "Israëlitas non 215, sed 430 annos in Aegyptio commoratos esse," Gottinga 1777. שאמר (והסכים עמו ראז') כי לוי קהת ועמרם לא היו דורות תכופים זה לזה, אך דורות אחרים היו ביניהם, ולפ"ז יתיישב כמשמעו מספר שלשים שנה וארבע מאות שנה שישבו בני ישראל במצרים, ולפ"ז יובן עוצם רבוי בני ישראל במצרים שלא אמרה תורה שהיה דרך נס ממש. וההכח יאסס (חלק ראשון עמוד ב') אומר כי השמות האלה הנזכרים כאן הם שמות המשפחות, כי יאמר שכל זמן שהיה האב חי על הרוב היו כל צאצאיו לאגודה אחת במשפחה אחת (אעפ"י שלפעמים היו הבנים מתפרדים בחיי אביהם, כגון יצחק וישמעאל בחיי אברהם, ויעקב ועשו בחיי יצחק), ובמות האב היתה המשפחה נחלקת ולפעמים גם אחר מיתת האב לא היתה מתחלקת עד אחר זמן מה. והנה משמעות הפרשה הזאת לפי דעתו היא כי משפחת לוי נשארה בתאר משפחה אחת ונקראת ע"ש לוי משך קל"ז שנים אחרי מות יעקב, ואז אחר זמן שמת לוי נחלקה לשלש משפחות, ע"ש גרשום קהת ומררי. וכן משפחת קהת עמדה לאגודה אחת קל"ג שנים, ואח"כ נחלקה לארבע משפחות. ובזמן יציאת מצרים כבר עברו קל"ז שנים שהיתה משפחת עמרם משפחה אחת, וממנה היו משה ואהרן. והנה אם תחבר שלשת המספרים האלה קל"ז וקל"ג וקל"ז ותוסיף עליהם י"ז שנה שעברו לישראל במצרים קודם מיתת יעקב יהיו ביחד תכ"ד שנים, כלומר קרוב לת"ל שנה. לפיכך (הוא אומר) כל מקום שנאמר בן יציהר בן קהת וכיוצא, ענינו מזרע יציהר מזרע קהת.

(1) We are forced to say that Scripture left out some of the generations between Kehat and Amram, for in [Numbers 3:28] the count for Kehat of all the males from a month and up was 8,600, and he only had four sons as his family, so each of those four sons would [have had to] have 2,150 sons. And behold Amram only had Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. Moses only had two sons, and Aaron four, so how is it possible for Amram, Yitzhar, Chevron, and Uziel to have 2,150 souls [each] in the second year after leaving the land of Egypt? Therefore, one must conclude as IB Koppe in his essay, "Israelitas non 215, sed 430 annos in Aegyptio commoratos esse," Gottinga 1777, where he said (and Rossenmueller agreed with him) that Levi, Kehat, and Amram were not in sequential generations, but rather other generations were between them. And according to this, one can answer as its plain meaning the number of 430 years that Israel was in Egypt [Exodus 12:40]. And according to this, the powerful procreation of the Israelites in Egypt can be understood, which the Torah did not speak of as an actual miracle. And the wise Jost (Volume 1 page 2) said that the names mentioned here are family names, so it is saying that so long as the father was still alive, the children stayed bonded together as one family for the most part (even though sometimes sons would divide their fathers household, as was the case for Isaac and Ishmael in the lifetime of Abraham, and Jacob and Esau in the lifetime of Isaac), and with the death of the father the family would split, and sometimes even after the death of the father they would not split off until some time. So the plain meaning of this section according to his opinion is that the family of Levi remained one family unit, and was called "Levi" for the span of 137 years after the death of Jacob, and then, after Levi died, the family split into three, the names of which being

Gershon, Kehat, and Merari. So, the family of Kehat stayed as one unit for 133 years, and afterward it was split into four families. And at the time of the exodus from Egypt, 137 years had already passed, and the Amram family was one family, of which came Moses and Aaron. So if you add together the three numbers of 137, 133, and 137, and add 17 years on that for how long the Israelites were in Egypt before Jacobs death, you have 424 years, meaning close to 430 years. Therefore (he says) whenever it says "the son of Yitzhar", "the son of Kehat", etc, it means "the descendant of Yitzhar", "the descendant of Kehat".

15. More Children: Rabbi Yaakov Medan <http://www.hatanakh.com/sites/herzog/files/herzog/Medan%201.pdf>

In order not to unnecessarily increase the Egyptian exile, and in order to maintain an understanding of the matter that accords with that of the Sages, Rashi, the Ramban and the other early commentators, we must find a way to answer Shadal's most relevant question. I believe that the key to the answer lies in the verse in Sefer Bereishit:

"Now, your two sons who were born to you in the land of Egypt, before I came to you in Egypt - they are mine; Ephraim and Menashe will be mine like Reuven and Shimon. And whoever is born to you, whom you bear after them, will be yours; they shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance." (Bereishit 38:5-6)

It seems to me, according to the literal text, that Yosef had more than two sons. This is what the verse is teaching us when it says, "To Yosef were born two sons BEFORE THE YEARS OF FAMINE BEGAN" (Bereishit 41:50), implying that later on more were born, and it is to these that Yaakov refers when he says, "whom you bear after them." These children are not listed in the genealogy of Yosef's sons, since they join in the inheritance of their brothers, Menashe and Ephraim. Similarly, the Tanakh lists ten sons of King David (six in Chevron - Shmuel II 3:2-5, and four in Jerusalem - Shmuel II 5:14), but Chazal speak of him having four hundred sons; indeed, the verses hint at many more children. Hence the names listed are only the heads of households, with these households numbering not only their sons but also their less important brothers. It is also possible that many of the descendants of the tribes were killed or died all kinds of terrible deaths during the Egyptian subjugation, and their children joined the families of their fathers' brothers, just as the orphaned Lot joined the family of Avraham. According to this approach, too, only the main heads of households are listed, each representing hundreds and thousands of people, just as each person listed among those who returned from Babylon with Zerubavel represented hundreds or even thousands of family members (see Ezra 2). Let us examine one example, which may serve to strengthen our assumption. Yaakov went down to Egypt with seventy souls. His sons went down, each with an average of four sons, and these sons in turn also had children. These children are the only ones mentioned in the census conducted in the fortieth year in the desert (Bamidbar 26), but clearly our assumption cannot be that Yaakov's children stopped bearing children from the time they reached Egypt. When they went down to Egypt they were still young - aged forty or a little more, at their peak (compare to the age at which Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov bore their children). Is it possible that the thirty-nine year old Yosef had no more children? Or Yehuda, aged forty-three? And why should we assume that Peretz, who was a whole generation younger than his father, stopped having children after Chetzron and Chamol, who went down with him to Egypt? But if he did indeed bear more children, why are the families of these other children not listed in the census of those who inherit the Land, in the fortieth year? We are forced to conclude, then, that those born in Egypt are subsumed under the households of their brethren who went down to Egypt, and that they join in their inheritance.

16. How many children would you need? R. Medan

....we may explain Chazal's teaching that the women used to bear "six at one time" (literally, "six from one belly"). This does not mean that the women used to bear sextets; that would be an altogether unnatural phenomenon. What the teaching means is that every mother ("belly") would bear six children during the course of her life. We may assume that, on average, these six children would be three sons and three daughters - and this accords with the size of the families noted in our parasha (keeping in mind that only the sons are listed). Let us now attempt to calculate of the numbers of Benei Yisrael: Based on the assumption that the generation that went down to Egypt numbered sixty males who were still of child-bearing age, the next generation would have numbered 180 males; the third generation - 540, the fourth - 1620, the fifth - 4860, the sixth - 14,580, the seventh - 43,760, the eighth - 131,280, and the ninth - some four hundred thousand. Assuming that it was the seventh, eighth and ninth generations that left Egypt, after about 190 years there were six hundred thousand, and after 210 years - all were aged 20. The miracle of the reproductive multiplicity in Egypt was therefore a "hidden" miracle - that despite the hardships of Egyptian subjugation and their persecution, women bore six children, and this average did not waver up until the time of the Exodus.

17. Levi? Either skipped generations as above, or (R. Medan):

To our view, the Tribe of Levi was exceptional in its much smaller number of generations. The reason for its limited population [4] may have been their custom of marrying late (perhaps wanting to observe the tradition of their forefathers), or because as prophets and Torah scholars (see Shmuel I 2:27 and the midrashim of Chazal) they separated themselves from their wives, and numbered only four generations