

Gen. 47:28

Jacob lived **seventeen** years in the land of Egypt, so that the span of Jacob's life came to **one hundred and forty-seven years**.

Gen. 37:2

This, then, is the line of Jacob:

At **seventeen** years of age, Joseph tended the flocks with his brothers, as a helper to the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah. And Joseph brought bad reports of them to their father.

Gen. 47:8

Pharaoh asked Jacob, "How many are the years of your life?" ⁹ And Jacob answered Pharaoh, "The years of my sojourn [on earth] are **one hundred and thirty**. Few and hard have been the years of my life, nor do they come up to the life spans of my fathers during their sojourns."

Gen. 41:46

Joseph was **thirty** years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt.—Leaving Pharaoh's presence, Joseph traveled through all the land of Egypt.

Gen. 50:22

So Joseph and his father's household remained in Egypt. Joseph lived **one hundred and ten years**.

Nahum Sarna, *Genesis* (JPS Torah Commentary)

seventeen years This is precisely as many years as Joseph had lived with his father in Canaan (37:2). There was a similar pattern for Abraham, who lived exactly as many years in his father's home (12:4) as in the lifetime of his son Isaac (21:5; 25:7).

one hundred and forty-seven The lifespans of the three patriarchs lend themselves to factorization according to the following pattern:

Abraham 175 = 5 x 5 x 7; Isaac 180 = 6 x 6 x 5; Jacob 147 = 7 x 7 x 3.

In this series, the squared number increases by one each time while the coefficient decreases by two. Furthermore, in each case the sum of the factors is 17.

Through their factorial patterns, the patriarchal chronologies constitute a rhetorical device expressing the profound biblical conviction that Israel's formative age was not a concatenation of haphazard incidents but a series of events ordered according to God's grand design.

		$9 \times 4^2 = 144$
Abraham:	175 =	7×5^2
Isaac:	180 =	5×6^2
Jacob:	147 =	3×7^2
		$1 \times 8^2 = 64$
Joseph	110 =	$2 \times 5 \times 11$

Claus Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*

Then comes the information about Jacob's age, of equal importance for P; he lived another 17 years in Egypt and the sum total of his life span was 147 years.

KIMHI: Just as Joseph lived in Jacob's care for 17 years, so Jacob lived in Joseph's care for 17 years.