

# MELITA THEOLOGICA

Vol. XV

July - Dec. 1963

No. 2

## LINKS BETWEEN THE THREE MAIN DIVISIONS

### GENEALOGY AND CHRONOLOGY

IN OUR previous articles\* we analysed the whole of Genesis after dividing it into three major parts, i.e., Patriarchal History 12-36, the kernel and the most important part of the whole work; Primordial History 1-11, introducing the history of the Patriarchs; and thirdly the History of Joseph 37-50 which accounts for the initial stages in the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Our analytical enquiry into the subject-matter of the work resulted in the discovery of various traditional strands which were merged into one to form our actual Genesis: two lines were disentangled in 1-11; three in 12-36; (three or) two in 37-50, seven threads in all. It remains now to study the relations between the several lines in one section and those in the others. Are they the same strands running throughout the whole work, or simply scattered bits of oral or written documents collected into one book by some compiler?

The clues for the solution of this problem are found in the chronological data and the genealogies scattered throughout Genesis. We start to study the genealogies and chronology of the book, dividing this chapter into two sections dealing with them respectively, without any reference to the division of Genesis established above.

#### Section I - GENEALOGIES

Genealogy in the first chapter of Genesis is a prominent feature and serves as a connection between Abraham and Adam. Besides these

\*Melita Theologica Vol. XI, pp. 1-13; Vol. XII, pp. 14-27; Vol. XIII, pp. 62-74. This series of articles consists of extracts from the Rev. Father C. Sant's thesis for his doctorate in Theology *The Literary Structure of the Book of Genesis*. Hence in this article and the next, which constitute the conclusion of the whole thesis, one finds references to parts which have not been published.

genealogical series we meet others in the rest of the work. Therefore we intend to study the features of these genealogies one by one to see if they could be classified into various groups so that each would form a complete genealogical series extending from Adam right up to Jacob's descendants. If such an enquiry leads to any concrete result, the step will be to enquire into the relations between these genealogical groups and the threads disentangled in the foregoing chapters. If it happens that the single sets of Genealogies correspond each to one of the above traditions and are coextensive with them, then we would have a confirmatory strong argument for our analysis.

In Genesis there are these sets of Genealogies: (1) 4, 1-2; (2) 4, 16-26; (3) 5, 1-32; (4) 6, 9-10; (5) 10, 1-32; (6) 11, 10-27; (7) 22, 20-24; (8) 25, 1-4; (9) 25, 12-17. 19-20; (10) 30, 1-24; (11) 35, 22-29; (12) 36, 1-29. 40-43; (13) 46, 8-27. An examination of the contents of these blocks would show that some of them are simply duplicates of one another; others differ from one another not in their contents but in the way they present names and in their point of view; others consist in a bare list of names and dates. The former are introduced for the sake of the narratives themselves, whereas the latter's writers are interested chiefly in blood relation and lineal descent.

*Examination of the several genealogical series.*

(1) 4, 1-2. Eve conceived and bore Cain and Abel. It serves as an introduction to the story of Cain and Abel.

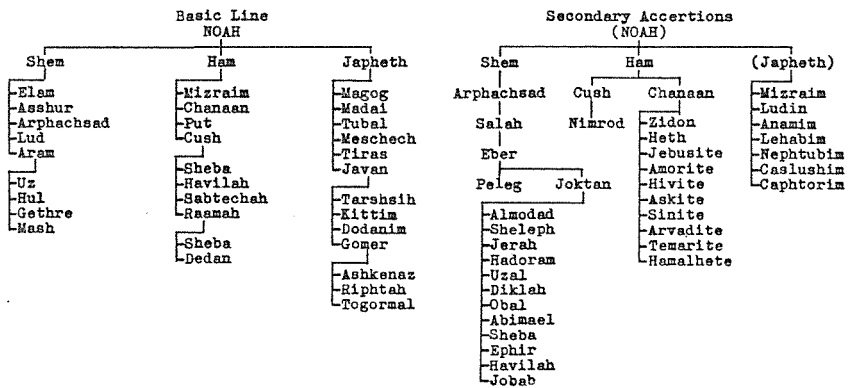
(2) 4, 16b-26. Cain's wife bore Enoch and so in this vein as far as Lamech. Historical information is profusely added to some of the names with the aim of accounting for the rise of city life and the discovery of trades. In v.v. 25-26 'Adam knew his wife again and she bore a son Seth', to whom Enos was born. The etymological explanation of some of the names is given.

(3) 5, 1-32. This, as it has been remarked above, consists of a series of stereotyped formulae: 'And A lived X years and begot B and A lived after he begot B for Y years and begot sons and daughters and all the days of A were Z years and he died'. The generations of Seth and Enoch except for their stylistic differences are a repetition of 4, 25-26. Dates and ages are carefully recorded and the series is introduced by the clause 'These are the generations (  $\text{נַחֲשָׁתִים}$  ) of Adam ...'. Historical annotation is totally lacking and women are not mentioned.

(4) 6, 9-10, 'These are the generations of Noah', (cfr. 5, 1) is followed

by the list of Noah's three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth without any reference to the mother. It is the introduction of the protagonist of the flood.

(5) 10, 1-32. This is the table of nations. The clause 'and these are the generations of the sons of Noah' is the inscription for the genealogical table of the posterity of Noah's sons Shem, Ham and Japheth. As we have already noted above (cfr. ch 7) this block has strong evidence of repetition and additional material to the basic scheme, hence we exclude v.v. 8-19, 24-30 from the original or rather underlying line. The characteristics of the latter in sharp contrast to those of the former are: a bare list of names without any historical reference, and the monotonous, though effective, repetition of fixed formulae: 'These are the sons of X after their families, after their tongues, in their lands and after their nations' which occurs three times; a conclusion to the single branches of Japheth, Ham and Shem respectively. These conclusions may be represented in a tabular form.



(6) 11, 10-27. A genealogical series extending from Shem to Abraham follows the introductory clause: These are the generations of Shem. It consists of a series of formulae with changed names and data as in the third genealogy. The emphasis is laid only on lineal descent and their ages. No woman is mentioned.

(7) 22, 20-24. This genealogy seems to be out of place here, unless it might be considered as a preparation to chapter 24 where the same data are given and the betrothal of Isaac and Rebeka are fully recorded. This section has nothing to do either with the sacrifice of Isaac, which precedes it or with the death and burial of Sarah, that follows in Ch.43.

Note the emphasis laid down on the role of women on equal footing with their husbands and the accentuation of their part in the generation of children.

(8) 25, 1-4. Ch.25 opens with a short note on Abraham's late wife Keturah. These verses seem to be added later. In ch.24 Abraham is represented as nearing his death and one may conjecture also, as we shall see later on, that the elder servant of his house, went to fetch a wife for Isaac after and not before Abraham's death (cfr. 24, 3ff); hence it was practically impossible for Abraham to marry Keturah after the nuptials of Isaac who was born when Abraham was already hundred years of age (21,5). Abraham married Keturah much before. This short Genealogy is distinguished for its emphasis on the mother.

(9) 25, 12-17. 19. The wording 'And these are the generations of Ismael' is the title of the genealogical table of Ismael's posterity. Here Hagar is introduced only to draw a distinction between Ismael and Isaac, the son of the promise. The rest is a methodical well-ordered list of names welded together by repetitive clauses or phrases, e.g. 'and these are their names, by their villages, and by their encampments' which reechoes other genealogical tables (cfr. 10, 1ff.) The generations of Isaac, Ismael's half brother, are brought in with v. 19 together with a concise note relative to his age and marriage already recorded in ch.24.

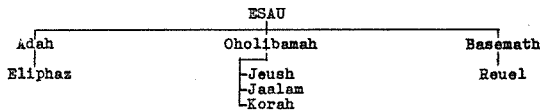
(10) 30, 1-23b. Strictly speaking, here the writer is not concerned with the genealogy as such, but simply with the story of the petty domestic jealousies of Rachel and Leah. Through their childish quarrels in which Jacob is embroiled, the twelve sons of Israel were born. The predominance of women, whose pliable instrument Jacob was, is the outstanding feature of this episode. The writer is interested in the etymological explanation of the names of the new-born babes but careless about chronological data.

(11) 35, 22-29. This is a note on Jacob's sons, repeating what has been already accounted for in 30, 1ff., whose wealth of anecdotal information is totally lacking here. It is only a bare list of names mentioning the wives only in so far as they afford a clue for the classification of the patriarch's sons. Reuben is the first born 'of Jacob' not 'of Leah', Benjamin is born in Mesopotamia, not in Canaan 35, 18. In vv. 28, 29 the writer gives us the sum total of Isaac's years when he died.

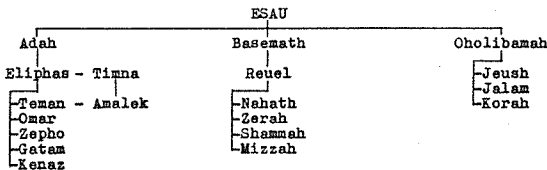
(12) 36, 1-30. 40-43. This genealogical list is subdivided into six sections; vv. 38-39 dealing with the Edomite kings. Some of these subsections repeat the same names recorded in others, but all of them have

an introductory formula separating them from one another. These formulae mark the beginning of each branch; 'And these are the generations of Esau' (v.1); 'And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites of mount Seir' (v.9); 'these are the dukes of the sons of Esau' (v.15); 'these are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land' (v.20); 'these are dukes of the sons of Esau' (v.40). Basing ourselves on this subdivision we have this representation:

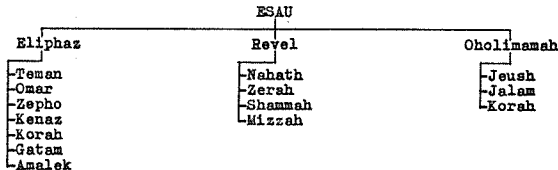
(a) These are the generations of Esau (v.1).



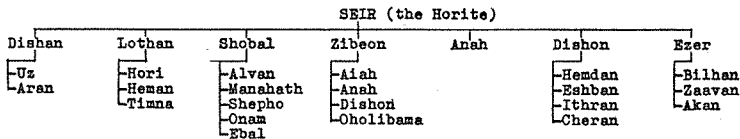
(b) And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites (v.9).



(c) These are the dukes of the sons of Esau (v.15).



(d) These are the sons of Seir the Horite (v.20).



(e) These are the dukes that came of the Horites (v.29). Lotan - Shobal - Zibeon - Anah - Dishon - Ezer - Dishan.

(f) And these are the names of the dukes that came of Esau (v.40). Timnah - Alvan - Jetheth - Oholibamah - Elah - Pinon - Kenaz - Teman - Mibzar - Magdiel - Iran.

Tables A.B.C.F. have several names in common referring to the same persons; so also D and E of the Horite. All this points to the merging into one of several sources. Notwithstanding, however, the possible use of different pre-existent documents, the compiler succeeded in giving a uniform style and order to the whole section. It is a bare enumeration of the names of the progenitors of various clans living in Canaan. VV. 6-8 account for the peaceful separation of Esau and Jacob, which is difficult to reconcile with the one in Chapters 27 and 23; hence this genealogy cannot belong to tradition A or B in Patriarchal history. VV. 31-39 show the signs of a later addition in its reference to the Jewish monarchy in these words: 'And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, *before there reigned any king over the children of Israel*'.<sup>1</sup> One may say that the primitive part consists of vv. 9-15; its introduction resembles others in other sections.

(13) 46, 8-27. Before giving an account of Jacob's Flight in Egypt the compiler enumerates in a genealogical list the names of all the immigrants with the patriarchs. This list, however, in its actual context presents several perplexities pointing to later touching. In its actual state, it is neither a complete list of Jacob's descendants because it excludes Er and Onan, nor an Enumeration of the immigrants into Egypt for it includes Jacob and his sons. The problem is further complicated when the LXX is compared with the MT, or when one works out the computation of numbers vv. 26-27. The original computation v. 15, v. 18-21 ( $70 = 33 + 16 + 14 + 7$ ) including Er and Onan, but excluding Dinah and Jacob. The secondary figure 66 ( $= 32 + 16 + 11 + 7$ ) excludes Er and Onan and Joseph and his two sons, but includes Dinah. To make up the original 70 it was necessary to reckon not only the family of Joseph (3) but Jacob himself. (Skinner, p. 495). In this list of the sons of Jacob entering the land of the Pharaohs, Er and Onan are embraced, whereas in reality they died in Canaan. Throughout the whole narrative Benjamin is represented as the youngest son of Jacob, that is, not more than 24 years of age, for Joseph was 30 years; is it possible then for him to have given birth to ten children? Lastly, how can the inclusion of Ephraim and Manasseh be explained if they had been already there?<sup>2</sup> We may conclude with Hummelauer: 'Quibus luce clarius demonstratum habes textum LXX aliqua exhibere nomina textui sacro de industria addita. Quodsi in textu LXX concedi id impune possit imo necessario debet

<sup>1</sup> Cfr. F. DE HUMMELAUER, l.c., p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> For further details cfr. F. DE HUMMELAUER, l.c.; SKINNER, l.c.; DRIVER, l.c.



nulla s. textus reverentia prohibemur, quominus in textu etiam hebraeo recepto similes additiones et fieri potuisse et fortasse factus esse adstruamus'. Notwithstanding this handling of the text, the form and spirit of the basic document have been kept: a bare list of men's names and some women's, who are given a secondary importance.

At this point one may add the genealogical narrative in 38 about Judah and Tamar. The interest of the whole story centres on the foundation of the Judahite tribe; again here as in many other genealogies the woman plays an important part. This is the pedigree resulting from an analysis of the story:

Shua's daughter - JUDAH - TAMAR

Er                      Onan                      Shelah      Phares                      Zerah

Through this brief survey one can see that not all these genealogical tables are drawn out on the same principles; nor do they betray the same characteristics. Some of them are simply lists of names with ages and dates added to them, couched in fixed formulae with rhythmic regularity; others play a subsidiary part in a larger narrative context, with no dates at all, and no fixed formulae. Taking these criteria as a basis for classification, we have these groups:

GROUP 1		3	4	5 (basic line)	6		9		11	12	13
GROUP 2	1	2		5(sec. parts)		7	8		10		

With respect to genealogy no. 5, which has been analysed into two lines, one secondary, the other primary, the former belongs to group 2, the latter to group 1.

These independent groups may be presented in parallel columns each to form a single genealogy running throughout Genesis.

A careful examination of these two genealogical tables would lead to the obvious conclusion that in Genesis two systems of genealogy are found: the first is complete, without any gaps, without any interest save that of showing the blood relationship of the main personalities of the drama that is being unfolded before us; the other one is fragmentary in character and is only a part of the narrative of the rise of civilization for which it serves only as a source of information. Both of them run throughout the whole work and at times they criss-cross one another. It is noteworthy, however, that series no. 1 grows more voluminous the



more it nears the end of the work: it extends from Adam to sons of Jacob, excluding always the collateral branches, keeping only in view the chosen people of God, who were to be the ancestors of the Hebrew theocratic nation; series 2 does not betray such an interest, it has a more universal appeal, and in fact it includes several names without any importance whatsoever except as founders of clans and tribes that were the neighbours of the Hebrews, or had some ethnic relation with them.

In the above sections Genesis was analysed into eight documents (oral or written), in which these two genealogies are embedded; therefore one may conclude that these lists are affording us a criterion to classify these eight documents into, at least, two groups. Obviously, it may be presumed that all the sections embedding the same genealogical line belong to the same source. Generally speaking genealogy no. 1, consisting of eight parts, clings to tradition 'C' and C of Primordial History 1-11 and of Patriarchal History in 12-36 respectively; it extends also to Joseph's history in 46, 8 ff. Part one (3) 5, 1-32 which we separated from its preceding context is the introduction to the whole line. It is continued in 6, 9-10 (4), the introduction to the deluge story according to line 'C' of primitive history, and recaptured in 10, 1-32 (5), to which other accretions of source 'A' cling. This thread reappears in 11, 10-27 (6) to connect Abraham with the patriarchs of old. At this point the genealogy stops to give place to the new narrative of the call of Abraham by God into Canaan. Genealogy 9 (25, 12-19) follows immediately the recording of Abraham's death, which explains the place of Israel's list of descendants before the history of Isaac is picked up. Therefore this list and its context have a common source. Genealogy no. 11 (35, 22-29) gives a concise list of Jacob's sons in Paddam-Aram (sic), to be followed immediately by the report of Isaac's death. Obviously, now the interest would shift on his sons: Therefore the writer inserts here the enumeration of Esau's posterity gen. 12 (36, 1-40) before starting to account for the history of Jacob's sons; and so the field is clear for Joseph's narrative. The list reappears in 46, 8 (gen. 13). We have already noted that this table cannot belong to the original threads R and J of this section. It may belong to the source of those sections which have been termed 'the third element'. In confirmation of this outline one may add: genealogy 9 with its context 25, 7-11 is intimately connected with ch. 23 of tradition C with its reference to Machpelah, Ephron, Zohar the Hittite, and the burial of Sarah; genealogy 11

with its name Paddan-Aram links with the promise in 28, 1 ff., assigned to C; genealogy 12 is but the sequel to and the continuation of genealogy 11. It is noteworthy that in this list there is no reference to the enmities between Ismael and Isaac ('and Isaac and Ismael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah' 25, 9) or Jacob and Esau ('... and went into a land away from his brother Jacob. For their substance was too great for them to dwell together' 36, 6, 7.)

The second series belongs to tradition 'A' and A in Primordial and in Patriarchal History respectively. The genealogical sections pertaining to genealogies 1-11 have already been examined; it remains to account for genealogies 7, 8, and 10. Genealogy 7 has nothing to do with Isaac's sacrifice, which precedes it, neither with Sarah's death following it; it is separated from the former by 'and it came to pass after these things' (22, 20) and from the latter by 'and the life of Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years' (23, 1). But it corresponds with the data in ch. 24, assigned to A, to which thread this genealogy is therefore attached. Genealogy 8 follows immediately the nuptials of Isaac with Rebekah. Its connection with its context is not so clear except for its reference to Isaac as the son of the promise in contrast of the son of Abraham's concubines, that were not heirs to the promise. Genealogy 10, or rather the history of the birth of Jacob's sons in Mesopotamia form part of a section identified with A. As we noted above it is very difficult to disentangle and trace any complete strand in this section and our conclusions with respect to it have only a provisional character. Yet since this genealogy compared with the others, manifests common features with them and since the latter have been connected with tradition A, there is a likelihood that the context of this birth-story belongs to A.

To sum up, tradition 'A' of Primordial History (1, 11) is linked with tradition A of Patriarchal History; tradition 'C' is the beginning of C in 11-36. It remains now to find a link between these threads and those in Joseph's history through an enquiry in the chronological data in Genesis.