order (xi. 14–xiii. 21, inserted after viii. 21); the demonstration that in each section of the fourfold narrative each of the writers is true to his *general* character; St John's eyes concentrated on the Divine Person of the Lord; St. Matthew's, too, concerned with the Teacher and His doctrine; St. Mark, amplifying accessories, giving details of circumstance and effect of teaching on the hearers, and rearranging the sequence of time; St. Luke, careful (*Fourfold Gospel*, 35 and 15) to bear out St. Mark's arrangement of events, silent where St. Mark is in absolute agreement with St. Matthew. For St. Matthew confines himself to oral teaching of the Lord in a certain period of His ministry, assumes in his readers a broad knowledge of the general facts (how natural in an early historian of such a life!), and scarcely deigns to chronicle lesser details or maintain strict order. As time goes on, it becomes necessary to supplement and make vivid the narrative by adding further details of personal reminiscence, correcting the sequence. But yet a third narrative is needed and forthcoming to clear away suspicion, it may be, of discrepance and incompatibility between the two former.

But it will be seen that all this harmony of the three so-called Synoptists depends absolutely upon the earliness and undoubted pre-eminence and completeness of St. John's narrative. When Mr. Halcombe is proving so logically the relation of St. Mark and St. Luke to St. Matthew, and gaining the sympathy of critics in the *Literary Churchman*, the *Christian World*, the *Church Review*, *John Bull*, and the *English Churchman*, we must not forget that this solution may only be accepted by those who go the entire length of his conviction. It rests absolutely on the priority of St. John: "The Synoptists presuppose the so-called Fourth Gospel," and we are perhaps insensibly led by a desire to accept the relations of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, as set forth in Mr. Halcombe's publications, to go on further to embrace his novel and revolutionary theory as to the date of St. John's Gospel.

"The Synoptic Gospels are all alike *acephalous*, or without beginning. Read alone, they would therefore convey an . . . . erroneous impression of their subject. Experience and common sense alike forbid us to suppose that any historian would write the second volume of a history on the chance of some one else at a future day writing the first."

It is then to the task of proving the priority of St. John that Mr. Halcombe's future efforts will be directed (see chap. x. of *Hist. Rel.*). He projects a collection by various authors of essays upon such subjects, to give from different points of view the same general principle. The acute and anonymous critic in the *Guardian* (1891) has noted difficulties which should be cleared. It remains for those to be removed. It is on the *positive* value of the theory as explaining the attitude and mutual relation of Matthew, Mark, and Luke that Mr. Halcombe should repose, and all who are attracted to such a lucid exposition of their harmony will do well to bestow further attention on the great principle upon which this harmony rests—the priority of St. John's Gospel.

The Early Narratives of Genesis.

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VI.

The Genealogy of the Sethites.

The Genealogy of the Sethites is contained in chapter v. The reader will observe at a glance how widely this genealogy differs from that of the Cainites (iv. 16–24) both in the general treatment and in the style and language. The compiler of the book here returns to the priestly narrative, as the critics term the literary source from which he drew the opening section of the Book of Genesis (i. 1, ii. 4 a).

We notice the same orderly grouping of the subject-matter that we remarked upon in that section. We find a return to the use of the Divine Name "Elohim." We find that in vv. 1–3 the language is based upon chap. i. 27. We find that the Hebrew words for "generations" (ver. 1), "male and female" (ver. 2), "beget" (ver. 3), are characteristic of this source of the narrative in other portions of Genesis. Elsewhere in the Pentateuch it is the same hand that introduces bare and formal

lists in the intervals of the history (*e.g.* x. 11–29, xxxvi., xlvi. 6–27). Thus, the change in the style and treatment, which a thoughtful reader is at first inclined to consider strange and abrupt, receives a natural explanation in the compilatory formation which scholars of all schools now recognise in the structure of the Book of Genesis.

The only extract from another source to be found in this chapter is, in all probability, ver. 29. In that verse we observe not only the change in the use of the Divine Name, but also a departure from the formal character of the genealogy, and a popular explanation of the name of Noah—popular, we may call it, for the name is not derived from *nahem*, "to comfort," but from *nu'akh*, "to rest." We should, therefore, probably be right in regarding this verse as an insertion by the compiler himself. At any rate, as it stands, it does not wear the look of being homogeneous with the remainder of the chapter.

The genealogy itself could hardly be simpler. Besides the names of the Patriarchs we are told nothing but their ages, both at the time of the birth of their first-born and at the time of their death, and the fact that each of the Patriarchs begat sons and daughters. Of the Patriarch Enoch alone is any further description given. There is no account of the rise of arts, or of the progress of civilisation or even of morality among the Sethites. The bare category, which records the succession, by the line of the eldest sons, in the family of Seth, implies the spread of a large population over the face of the earth. The faint outline which we thus obtain serves to bridge an interval of 1656 years, which, according to the Hebrew tradition, occurred between the Creation and the Flood. (In the Septuagint Version the same period appears as 2242 years, in the Samaritan as 1307.)

The chief difficulty arising from this chapter is presented by the immense prolongation of life. The explanations which have generally been put forward in order to account for the length of life of these antediluvian Patriarchs have not, it must be confessed, been very satisfactory. Most commonly, it is assumed that, in the generations of primeval man, the powers of human nature were fresher and stronger; that they had not yet been sapped by lust and self-indulgence; that health was better, and life therefore longer. But I cannot think that such an assumption can be seriously maintained in the present day: (*a*) I am not aware that physiologists have been able to show that man's physical vitality, in the infancy of the race, was greater than it has been in later times. (*b*) The analogy of savage tribes, in a stage of primitive barbarism, does not favour the theory of prolonged life in pre-civilised times. (*c*) There is nothing in the earliest Assyrian or Egyptian inscriptions from which we should infer that in pre-Abrahamic centuries a longer duration of life was enjoyed. (*d*) The literal acceptance of this extended span of life confronts us with fresh difficulties in the matter of the age of the Patriarchs at the time when their eldest children were born to them. None had children earlier than Mahalalel and Enoch; and they were already 65 years of age. Noah was 500 years old when Shem was born. (*e*) Assuming that the great event of the Deluge took place in the confines of an historic period, as is implied by the references to it in other literature, as well as by the Genesis account, the figures in chap. v. fail altogether to bridge the interval which the researches of natural science require us to interpose between the first appearance of man, and even the earliest records of Assyrian and Egyptian history which carry us back to 4000 B.C.

In order to escape these and similar difficulties, it has been suggested that the names of the ten Patriarchs represent different races or tribes, and that the years recorded in this chapter denote the period of the dynasties which ruled over them. The tendency to represent ethnology and geography by genealogy is exemplified, as we shall see, by chap. x.; but in the present chapter the allusion to the first-born, and the exceptional mention of Enoch, are rightly deemed fatal to this suggestion.

Still less probable, and surely less ingenuous, are the explanations which imagine that an antediluvian year was of shorter duration than the ordinary year; or that it consisted of three months until Abraham's time, of eight months until Joseph's death, and of twelve months since his day.

It seems more candid and natural to admit that Israelite tradition, like the traditions of other races, in dealing with personages living in prehistoric times, assigned to them an abnormally protracted period of life. Hebrew literature does not in this respect differ from other literature. It preserves the prehistoric traditions. The study of science precludes the possibility of such figures being literally correct. The comparative study of literature leads us to expect exaggerated statements in

any work incorporating the primitive traditions of a people.

The genealogy of the patriarchs effects the literary transition from the Creation to the epoch of the Deluge. It is necessary to the structure of the narrative; and it thus subserves the higher purpose fulfilled by the description of the events that have preceded and of the events that are about to follow—events of such transcendent importance in the spiritual teaching, which they conveyed and interpreted, as in a picture, to Israel.

It has been before pointed out that the selection of material for the composition of Genesis has preserved to us fragments of early traditions, to which very obvious parallels can be drawn from other literature. Thus Josephus, who seeks to justify the length of life recorded in this chapter, takes care to state that "Hesiod, Hecatæus, Hellanicus, and Acusilaus, and beside them Ephorus and Nicolaus relate that the ancients lived a thousand years" (Jos. *Ant.* i. 3. 9).

The unhistorical character of this chapter, no less than of the authorities cited by Josephus, is reflected in the length of life assigned to the Patriarchs. And it is worth while observing that, just as the Israelite and the Greek narratives pass from the stage of prehistoric tradition to that of national memoirs, so the span of life is reduced from that of fabulous length to that of normal duration. The antediluvian Patriarchs are credited with lives from 700 to 969 years; the postdiluvians lived from 200 to 600 years (xi. 10–32); the Israelite Patriarchs lived from 100 to 200 years; in the days of the Israelite monarchy the length of life (Ps. xc. 10) did not differ from that which we now enjoy.

We cannot here enter into the question as to the meaning of the names of the Sethite Patriarchs, or as to their connection with the Cainite Patriarchs. But it is interesting to notice that the numbers of the years mentioned in this chapter appear somewhat differently in the Samaritan and Septuagint versions. According to the Samaritan version, only 1307 years elapsed between the Creation of Man and the Flood; according to the Septuagint version, 2242 years. According to the Samaritan version, Jared was 62 (not 162) when Enoch was born; Methusaleh 67 (not 187) when Lamech was born; Lamech 53 (not 182) when Noah was born. According to the Septuagint version, Enoch was 190 (not 90) when Kenan was born; Kenan 170 (not 70) when Mahalalel was born; Mahalalel 165 (not 65) when Jared was born; Enoch 165 (not 65) when Methusaleh was born.

According to the Samaritan numeration, Jared, Methusaleh, and Lamech died in the year of the Flood. According to the Septuagint numeration, Methusaleh outlived the flood by fourteen years.

Although, as has already been pointed out, the genealogy gives us no account of the social or moral condition of the Sethite Patriarchs, we are left to infer from the narrative of the Flood, and from the incidental mention of Enoch, that the human race became rapidly sunk in iniquity. The interest of readers of this chapter is naturally centred upon Enoch. His removal from earth is obviously not to be explained, as some have suggested, upon the theory of an early death. In Israelite literature, premature death was never regarded as a mark of Divine favour; and, if Enoch had thus died in early life, we should have expected the use of the same phrase, "And he died," which occurs in the mention of the other Patriarchs. The ordinary interpretation is certainly the correct one of the words, "He was not; for God took him." "By faith," says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him" (Heb. xi. 5, cf. Ecclus. xliv. 16, xlix. 14).

In this mention of Enoch, we gain an assurance that, in the early traditions of Israel, a belief was current in the possibility of some other issue of life than mere physical dissolution. Such a belief was entertained in other Semitic races. The "apotheosis" of Hasisadra (Xisuthros), the Noah of the Babylonian inscriptions, has some points of correspondence with the translation of Enoch.

The Israelite narrative, in spite of its brevity, leaves us in no doubt as to the cause of the especial mark of Divine favour towards Enoch. Not for his greatness, nor for his heroic deeds, nor for his beauty, for which causes the privilege of "apotheosis" was granted in the tales of Greek and other mythologies, but for the simple reason that "he walked with God," was he "taken." The Patriarch's walk with God has become a by-word in religious literature.

Only in the case of Enoch and Elijah is "translation" mentioned in Scripture. The walk with God, unto the end, unto the death, is the beaten path of His saints on earth. "To be with Christ"

seemed to St. Paul to be far better; but even he was reserved to crown his witness by a martyr's death.

"THE SONS OF GOD AND THE DAUGHTERS OF MEN" (vi. 1–8).—The narrative of the Deluge is prefaced by a short description of the corruption of the inhabitants of the world. This passage is as remarkable for its general style as for its contents. It is unmistakably extracted from some very ancient source; and, on that account, has probably been here inserted by the compiler of the book. It gives in greater detail the same indictment of wickedness, which is repeated in vv. 11, 12; but it is not without difficulty, on account of its startling references to the marriages of "the sons of God" with the "daughters of men" (vv. 1–4).

Many have stumbled at the language here used. Occurring in the midst of a plain, straightforward narrative, no ground is offered for any but a simple and literal interpretation.

In favour of the explanation, which is sometimes put forward, that the verses only allude to the disastrous results of the intermarriage between the descendants of Seth and the descendants of Cain, nothing can be said to make it at all probable. It is incredible that the two families should suddenly be designated by the writer with these marked titles, without a word of explanation to guide the reader towards their right distinction. Again, we have no reason to suppose that the descendants of Seth were at all distinguished by their piety. Enoch "walked with God" and Noah "was a righteous man," but from the very language used in reference to these two Patriarchs, we might rather infer that they were virtuous exceptions. Why, then, should the Sethites be called "the sons of God?"

In the context of this particular section there is no mention of Sethites and Cainites; and it is the purest assumption to suppose that any contrast between the members of the two genealogies was here intended, when no clue is added as to their respective identification.

Equally improbable is the Jewish explanation, which identified "the sons of God" with the nobles and men of the upper classes, and "the daughters of men" with women of inferior rank and station. It is based on the use of "the sons of men" (*adam*), and the sons of noble men (*ish*)," rightly rendered in the Revised Version, "Both low and high" (Ps. xlix. 2); and it is illustrated by "Sons of the Most High. Nevertheless ye shall die like men (*adam*)," Ps. lxxxvii. 6, 7. But obviously such poetical usage is no safe key to the understanding of simple prose; and even if it were, while explaining "the daughters of men" (*B'noth adam*), it fails to give us a suitable parallel for the use of "the sons of God" in the sense of "the nobles." For, beyond all dispute, the occasional usage of such a phrase for the children of Israel, as the adopted family of God, affords no support to its technical application here, in the sense of "the upper classes."

We must surely adopt the simplest and most literal rendering. This is obtained from the usage of the expression "the sons of God" in other passages (Job i. 6, ii. 1, xxxviii. 7; Ps. xxix. 1, lxxxix. 6; Dan. iii. 25) where "angels" are clearly intended. Accepting that explanation for "the sons of God," we follow the analogy of the Hebrew passages, where the words occur, and we obtain the simplest and most natural antithesis to "the daughter of men."

What interpretation, then, does this solution afford us? Are we to suppose that angelic beings actually contracted marriage with terrestrial? That is the opinion of some.

It is preferable to regard the whole passage, which, as has been said, is undoubtedly an extract from some very ancient source, as a relic of an early Hebrew legend. In this legend, the marriages of the angels with the daughters of men were considered to account for the generation of giants, and to explain their daring and insolent confidence, as well as their exceeding sinfulness.

Whether the legend, from which the extract is made, included any earlier story of the Fall, has sometimes been questioned. It has been suggested that the present narrative, in its full original form, accounted for the origin of evil, which was deemed to have arisen from the confusion of the angelic and the human races. In any case, it was not unnatural that later tradition derived from these verses the idea of the fall of the angels from their first estate.

We may observe that the passage opens abruptly, without any direct connection with what has gone before, and that it is clearly marked off from what follows. The mention of the "Nephilim" contains a reference to a race not elsewhere so designated, but, presumably, mentioned in the narrative from which the section was derived.

While, of course, it is impossible to speak with any degree of certainty, there is considerable probability in the view, that vv. 1–3 epitomise a parallel or alternative version of the Fall. The temptation here comes from beings of a higher race; the entrance of sin and death is ascribed to the abandonment by the daughters of men of the position which God had allotted to them. Here, as in chap. iii., the woman as the weaker vessel yields to the temptation, and is the cause of sin and death prevailing among mankind.

The purpose of the insertion of the passage is obvious. It is to illustrate from the earliest traditions the current belief as to the enormity of the wickedness that prevailed in the prehistoric centuries. It is, indeed, coloured by primitive mythology: nor is this any loss. We are enabled thereby to see the method of the compiler. For while, as a rule, in the early chapters of Genesis the more distinctly mythological elements are removed from the narratives by the scrupulous care of the Israelite writer, traces of their original shape and colouring are occasionally to be seen; but perhaps nowhere else does this appear so distinctly as in this short section.

The Story of the Flood.

Chapters vi. 9—ix. 17.

Upon this narrative more interest is naturally centred than upon any other of the early narratives in Genesis. The vividness of the description, the wonderful character of the overthrow, the touches of detail in the story, the similarity to other accounts of a cosmical Deluge preserved in the records of other nations, combine to attract to it universal attention.

On this account more, probably, has been said upon these chapters than upon any other section of the same length in the whole of Genesis. There is, therefore, the less need here to enter with minuteness into the account of the Flood. In the present papers, it will only be possible to touch upon (1) the structure of the biblical narrative; (2) the parallel to it presented in Babylonian literature; (3) the historic character of the story; and then to supplement this treatment with a brief notice of the place occupied by the Flood in the religious teaching of Israel.

1. It is a fact now generally known, and universally recognised by all scholars, that the account of the Flood, preserved in the Book of Genesis, results from the combination of two slightly differing versions of the same story. The greater portion of the narrative has come down to us in the form in which it was preserved in the priestly narrative. But large extracts from the prophetic narrative, by the hand of the Jehovist, have also been retained, and their presence can unmistakably be recognised.

The two accounts are interwoven; but the distinctive features, both of their style and of their characteristic treatment, have enabled scholars to assign with some confidence the greater portion of the section, in its present literary state, to the one or the other document.

To the priestly narrative is generally assigned chaps. vi. 9–22, vii. 6, 11, 13–16*a*, 18–22, 24, viii. 1, 2*a*, 3*b*, 5, 13*a*, 14–19, ix. 1–17.

Characteristic of its style are the use of the Divine title Elohim, and of the Hebrew phrase "for after their kind," vi. 20, cf. i. 25; "male and female," vi. 19, cf. i. 27; "these are the generations," vi. 9, cf. x. 1; "in the selfsame day," vii. 13, cf. xvii. 23, 26; "establish . . . covenant," vi. 18, cf. ix. 9, 11–17; "increase and multiply," viii. 17, cf. ix. 1–7, etc., etc.

It is in this narrative that we find the precise mention of Noah's age (vii. 5–11), the exact dimensions of the ark (vi. 9–22), the depth of the Flood (vii. 20), and the covenant with Noah (ix.).

To the prophetic narrative is assigned the greater part of vii. 1–5, 7–9, 10, 12, 16*b*, 17, 22, viii. 6–12, 13*b*, 20–22.

Characteristic of its style is the use of the Divine name Jehovah (Jahveh), the use of the phrase "the male and his female" in vii. 2 (literally "the man and his wife," quite different from that used in vi. 19), the term "house" applied to the family of Noah in vii. 1, etc., the incident of the raven and the dove, and the most marked anthropomorphisms which occur throughout the story.

How completely separate the two accounts are will appear to the simplest reader in chapter vii., where we have two successive mentions of Noah entering the ark with his family and the animals, *i.e.* 7–9, and 13–16. The two documents containing the narrative undoubtedly were in general agreement. But they differed in certain points of detail, which the compiler, faithfully extracting from his authorities, made no attempt at reconciling completely. They are points, however, which have probably caught the attention of many a

student, and have seemed hard to understand. It is a matter for real gratitude on the part of Christian readers that criticism has been able so satisfactorily to explain many of the little knots that have seemed to make the thread of our narrative in some places difficult to unravel.

These points of unimportant divergence fall into three principal groups—(1) the number of the animals preserved, (2) the character and origin of the Flood, (3) its duration.

(1) As to the animals preserved in the ark, we find an interesting variation. The Prophetic, or Jehovist account, specifies seven of the clean and two of the unclean animals (vii. 2). Evidently, the thought underlying this distinction was that more of the clean animals should be brought into the ark than of the unclean, because Noah and his family might only obtain their food from the former. The distinction is interesting, if only because the division of animals into clean and unclean seems to have been very general in Western Asia; and the prophetic narrative may reflect the primitive tradition that survived from the prehistoric ancestors of Israel.

According to the priestly account, on the other hand, the animals went in two by two. The lives of Noah and his family were not perhaps regarded as being sustained by animal food (ix. 3). For their sustenance special provision was made (vi. 21). The pairs of animals were admitted into the ark with the purpose of preserving their species upon the earth. The writer did not recognise the division into "clean" and "unclean" at that early period. The "priestly" view of the Israelite history regarded such ceremonial distinction as having proceeded first from the Sinaitic legislation. Modern inquiry into Semitic institutions has shown that the Israelites shared with neighbouring races particular rules as to what was permitted to be eaten and what was not. The priestly narrator in all probability records the version of the tradition which had become current among the priests of Israel, and which was most consonant with the stricter ceremonialism that regarded all religious rules as dating from the wilderness.

Similarly the prophetic narrative contains, and the priestly omits, the account of Noah's altar and sacrifice in viii. 20–22.

(2) The Flood is attributed in the two accounts to different physical causes. In the Jehovist narrative the Flood arises from the continuous downfall of rain (vii. 12, viii. 2*b*). In the priestly narrative we find it is brought about as much by the breaking up of "the fountains of the earth" as by the opening of the windows of heaven (vii. 11, viii. 2*a*). Some great terrestrial commotion is thus implied.

(3) The most serious discrepancy of all relates to the duration of the Flood. In the Jehovist narrative, the whole period, occupied by the warning before the Flood, its prevalence and its subsidence, comprised but sixty-eight days. There were seven days of warning before the rain fell (vii. 10); there were forty days and nights during which the tremendous rain was incessant (vii. 12, viii. 6); there were three periods of seven days each, which marked the gradual absorption and final subsidence of the water (viii. 6–8, 10–12).

In the priestly narrative, on the other hand, the duration of the whole Flood catastrophe exceeded a year. It began on the seventeenth day of the second month, and it was not until the twenty-seventh day of the second month in the following year that the waters had abated from the earth. While we are not told exactly how long a year was, there is no reason to doubt that the writer regarded it as of equal duration with a year in the Israelite calendar. And this natural supposition is confirmed by the statement that for 150 days the waters of the Flood continued to rise and increase (vii. 24, viii. 3).

The difference between the two narratives betokens a distinct literary origin; and, as has been mentioned above, evidence to the same effect is forthcoming from the language in the corresponding portions.

The subject of the relation of the Genesis narrative of the Flood to the similar narratives which are to be found in other literature must form our starting-point for the next paper in this series.