

# CHAPTER 1

This chapter and many that follow it repeat the genealogies we have hitherto met with in the sacred history, and put them all together, with considerable additions. We may be tempted, it may be, to think it would have been well if they had not been written, because, when they come to be compared with other parallel places, there are differences found, which we can scarcely accommodate to our satisfaction; yet we must not therefore stumble at the word, but bless God that the things necessary to salvation are plain enough. And since the wise God has thought fit to write these things to us, we should not pass them over unread. All scripture is profitable, though not all alike profitable; and we may take occasion for good thoughts and meditations even from those parts of scripture that do not furnish so much matter for profitable remarks as some other parts. These genealogies,

- 1.** Were then of great use, when they were here preserved, and put into the hands of the Jews after their return from Babylon; for the captivity, like the deluge, had put all into confusion, and they, in that dispersion and despair, would be in danger of losing the distinctions of their tribes and families. This therefore revives the ancient landmarks even of some of the tribes that were carried captive into Assyria. Perhaps it might invite the Jews to study the sacred writings which had been neglected, to find the names of their ancestors, and the rise of their families in them.
- 2.** They are still of some use for the illustrating of the scripture-story, and especially for the clearing of the pedigrees of the Messiah, that it might appear that our blessed Saviour was, according to the prophecies which went before of him, the son of David, the son of Judah, the son of Abraham, the son of Adam. And, now that he has come for whose sake these registers were preserved, the Jews since have so lost all their genealogies that even that of the priests, the most sacred of all, is forgotten, and they know not of any one man in the world that can prove himself of the house of Aaron. When the building is reared the scaffolds are removed. When the promised Seed has come the line that was to lead to him is broken off. In this

chapter we have an abstract of all the genealogies in the book of Genesis, till we come to Jacob.

**I.** The descents from Adam to Noah and his sons, out of Genesis 5, (v. 1-4).

**II.** The posterity of Noah's sons, by which the earth was repopled, out of Genesis 10, (v. 5-23).

**III.** The descents from Shem to Abraham, out of Genesis 11, (v. 24-28).

**IV.** The posterity of Ishmael, and of Abraham's sons by Keturah, out of Genesis 25, (v. 29-35).

**V.** The posterity of Esau, out of Genesis 36, (v. 36-54). These, it is likely, were passed over lightly in Genesis; and therefore, according to the law of the school, we are made to go over that lesson again which we did not learn well.

## ~~1300~~ 1 CHRONICLES 1:1-27

### GENEALOGIES

This paragraph has *Adam* for its first word and *Abraham* for its last. Between the creation of the former and the birth of the latter were 2000 years, almost the one-half of which time Adam himself lived. Adam was the common father of our flesh, Abraham the common father of the faithful. By the breach which the former made of the covenant of innocency, we were all made miserable; by the covenant of grace made with the latter, we all are, or may be, made happy. We all are, by nature, the seed of Adam, branches of that wild olive. Let us see to it that, by faith, we become the seed of Abraham (~~1301~~ Romans 4:11, 12), that we be grafted into the good olive and partake of its root and fatness.

**I.** The first four verses of this paragraph, and the last four, which are linked together by Shem (v. 4, 24), contain the sacred line of Christ from Adam to Abraham, and are inserted in his pedigree, ~~1303~~ Luke 3:34-38, the order ascending as here it descends. This genealogy proves the falsehood of that reproach, *As for this man, we know not whence he is*. Bishop Patrick well observes here that, a genealogy being to be drawn of the families of the Jews, this appears as the peculiar glory of the Jewish nation,

that they alone were able to derive their pedigree from the first man that God created, which no other nation pretended to, but abused themselves and their posterity with fabulous accounts of their originals, the Arcadians fancying that they were before the moon, the people of Thessaly that they sprang from stones, the Athenians that they grew out of the earth, much like the vain imaginations which some of the philosophers had of the origin of the universe. The account which the holy scripture gives both of the creation of the world and of the rise of nations carries with it as clear evidences of its own truth as those idle traditions do of their own vanity and falsehood.

**II.** All the verses between repeat the account of the replenishing of the earth by the sons of Noah after the flood.

**1.** The historian begins with those who were strangers to the church, the sons of Japhet, who were planted in the isles of the Gentiles, those western parts of the world, the countries of Europe. Of these he gives a short account (v. 5-7), because with these the Jews had hitherto had little or no dealings.

**2.** He proceeds to those who had many of them been enemies to the church, the sons of Ham, who moved southward towards Africa and those parts of Asia which lay that way. Nimrod the son of Cush began to be an oppressor, probably to the people of God in his time. But Mizraim, from whom came the Egyptians, and Canaan, from whom came the Canaanites, are both of them names of great note in the Jewish story; for with their descendants the Israel of God had severe struggles to get out of the land of Egypt and into the land of Canaan; and therefore the branches of Mizraim are particularly recorded (v. 11, 12), and of Canaan, v. 13-16. See at what a rate God valued Israel when he gave *Egypt for their ransom* (<sup>248B</sup> Isaiah 43:3), and cast out all these nations before them, Psalm 70:8.

**3.** He then gives an account of those that were the ancestors and allies of the church, the posterity of Shem, v. 17-23. These peopled Asia, and spread themselves eastward. The Assyrians, Syrians, Chaldeans, Persians, and Arabians, descended from these. At first the originals of the respective nations were known; but at this day, we have reason to think, the nations are so mingled with one another, by the enlargement of commerce and dominion, the transplanting of colonies, the carrying away of captives, and many other circumstances, that no one nation, no, nor the greatest part of

any, is descended entire from any one of these fountains. Only this we are sure of, that God has *created of one blood all nations of men*; they have all descended from one Adam, one Noah. *Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us?* ~~<3020>~~Malachi 2:10. Our register hastens to the line of Abraham, breaking off abruptly from all the other families of the sons of Noah but that of Arphaxad, from whom Christ was to come. The great promise of the Messiah (says bishop Patrick) was translated from Adam to Seth, from him to Shem, from him to Eber, and so to the Hebrew nation, who were entrusted, above all nations, with that sacred treasure, till the promise was performed and the Messiah had come, and then that nation was made *not a people*.

## ~~<1028>~~ 1 CHRONICLES 1:28-54

### GENEALOGIES

All nations but the seed of Abraham are already shaken off from this genealogy: they have no part nor lot in this matter. *The Lord's portion is his people*. Of them he keeps an account, knows them by name; but those who are strangers to him he beholds afar off. Not that we are to conclude that therefore no particular persons of any other nation but the seed of Abraham found favour with God. It was a truth, before Peter perceived it, *that in every nation he that feared God and wrought righteousness was accepted of him*. Multitudes will be brought to heaven out of *all nations* (~~<6019>~~Revelation 7:9), and we are willing to hope there were many, very many, good people in the world, that lay out of the pale of God's covenant of peculiarity with Abraham, whose names were in the book of life, though not descended from any of the following families written in this book. *The Lord knows those that are his*. But Israel was a chosen nation, elect in type; and no other nation, in its national capacity, was so dignified and privileged as the Jewish nation was. That is the holy nation which is the subject of the sacred story; and therefore we are next to shake off all the seed of Abraham but the posterity of Jacob only, which were all incorporated into one nation and joined to the Lord, while the other descendants from Abraham, for aught that appears, were estranged both from God and from one another.

**I.** We shall have little to say of the *Ishmaelites*. They were the sons of the bondwoman, that were to be cast out and not to be heirs with the child of the promise; and their case was to represent that of the unbelieving Jews, who were rejected (<sup><R122></sup>Galatians 4:22, etc.), and therefore there is little notice taken of that nation. Ishmael's twelve sons are just named here (v. 29-31), to show the performance of the promise God made to Abraham, in answer to his prayer for him, that, for Abraham's sake, he should become a great nation, and particularly that he should beget twelve princes, <sup><R173></sup>Genesis 17:20.

**II.** We shall have little to say of the *Midianites*, who descended from Abraham's children by Keturah. They were *children of the east* (probably Job was one of them), and were separated from Isaac, the heir of the promise (<sup><R216></sup>Genesis 25:6), and therefore they are only named here, v. 32. The sons of Jokshan, the son of Keturah, are named also, and the sons of Midian (v. 32, 33), who became most eminent, and perhaps gave denomination to all these families, as Judah to the Jews.

**III.** We shall not have much to say of the *Edomites*. They had an inveterate enmity to God's Israel; yet because they descended from Esau, the son of Isaac, we have here an account of their families, and the names of some of their famous men, v. 35 to the end. Some slight differences there are between some of the names here, and as we had them in Genesis 36, whence this whole account is taken. Three of four names that were written with a *Vau* there are written with a *Jod* here, probably the pronunciation being altered, as is usual in other languages. we now write many words very differently from what they were written but 200 years ago. Let us take occasion, from the reading of these genealogies, to think,

**1.** Of the multitudes that have gone through this world, have acted their part in it, and then quitted it. Job, even in his early day, saw not only *every man drawing after him*, but *innumerable before him*, <sup><R213></sup>Job 21:33. All these, and all theirs, had their day; many of them made a mighty noise and figure in the world; but their day came to fall, and their place knew them no more. The paths of death are trodden paths, but *vestigia nulla retrorsum* — *none can retrace their steps*.

**2.** Of the providence of God, which keeps up the generations of men, and so preserves that degenerate race, though guilty and obnoxious, in being upon earth. How easily could he cut it off without either a deluge or a

conflagration! Write but all the children of men childless, as some are, and in a few years the earth will be eased of the burden under which it groans; but the divine patience lets the trees that cumber the ground not only grow, but propagate. As one generation, even of sinful men, passes away, another comes (~~2000~~Ecclesiastes 1:4; ~~0824~~Numbers 32:14), and will do so while the earth remains. *Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.*