

Notes for Scriptural Reasoning Tradition

The Scriptural Reasoning Society

Rashi Commentary on Genesis 6:9 and Genesis 17:1

Jonathan Gorsky

Genesis 6:9

9. These are the generations of Noah, Noah was a righteous man he was perfect in his generations; Noah walked with God.

These are the generations of Noah-Noah was a righteous man Since Scripture mentions him, it tells his praise, as it is said (*Prov. 10:7*): “The mention of a righteous man is for a blessing.” - [*Pesikta Rabbathi 12*]. Another explanation [for why the names of the children are not mentioned immediately following: “These are the generations of Noah”]: To teach you that the main generations [progeny] of the righteous are good deeds. — [*Mid. Tan. Noah 2*]

in his generations Some of our Sages interpret it favourably: How much more so if he had lived in a generation of righteous people, he would have been even more righteous. Others interpret it derogatorily: In comparison with his generation he was righteous, but if he had been in Abraham’s generation, he would not have been considered of any importance. — [*Sanh. 108a, Gen. Rabbah 30:9, Tan. Noach 5*]

Noah walked with God But concerning Abraham, Scripture says (below 24:40): “[the Lord] before Whom I walked.” Noah required [God’s] support to uphold him [in righteousness], but Abraham strengthened himself and walked in his righteousness by himself. — [*Tan. Noach 5*]

walked is here in the past tense. The following is the usage of the “*lammed*” : in the “heavy” form, [this refers to conjugations with a *dagesh* in one of the root letters, in this case, in the *lammed*], one form can be used [both] for the future [really the imperative] and the past tense. For example, (*Gen. ibid. 13*):“Rise, walk” is the future (i.e., imperative).“ Noah walked, 1v” is the past. (*I Sam. 12:19*):“Pray for your servants” is future (i.e., imperative), and (*I Kings 8:42*):“and he will come and pray toward this house,” is past, only that the “*vav*” at the beginning converts it to the future. — [as explained by Mizrachi]

Genesis 17:1

1. And Abram was ninety-nine years old, and God appeared to Abram, and He said to him, “I am the Almighty God; walk before Me and be perfect.”

I am the Almighty God Heb. - I am He Whose Godliness suffices for every creature. [that, is sufficient]. Therefore, walk before Me, and I will be your God and your Protector, and wherever it (this name) appears in Scripture, it means “His sufficiency,” but each one is [to be interpreted] according to the context. — [from *Gen. Rabbah 47:3*]

walk before Me As the *Targum* renders: “Serve Me, cleave to My service.”

and be perfect This too is one command following another command: be perfect in all My trials (*Mid. Ps. 119: 3*), i.e., “Walk before Me” with faith and honesty, and also be perfect in all My trials. [Mizrachi] According to its midrashic interpretation, walk before Me refers to the commandment of circumcision, and thereby, you will be perfect, for as long as the foreskin is upon you, I consider you imperfect (*Gen. Rabbah 46:1*). Another explanation: “and be perfect” - Now you are missing [control over] five organs: two eyes, two ears, and the male organ. I will add a letter to your name, and the numerical value of your letters [of your name] will be 248, corresponding to the number of your organs (*Tan. Lech Lecha 16, Ned. 32b*).

New Testament Texts Illustrating Differing Attitudes to Tradition

David Jackson

The Texts

- The English translations are from the New International Version (NIV).
- Conclusions about author and date are based on complex networks of interpretation of evidence, impossible to do justice to in brief notes.
- *Mark* is now usually thought of as the first Gospel to be written. Traditional scholars argue for Mark, the helper of Peter, in the late 50s to mid-60s. Sceptics favour an unknown editor up to a decade later.
- *Matthew* – sceptics say an unknown editor, up to the mid-80s. Less sceptical writers favour Matthew, the apostle, before 70.
- *John* – sceptics argue for an unknown writer, traditionalists for the apostle John. Date is anywhere between pre-70 and mid-90s.
- *Acts* – choice of author: an unknown (sceptics), Luke the travelling-companion of Paul (traditionalists); choice of date: 115-130 (a few ultra-sceptics), 80-95 (most modern scholars), as early as 62 (more traditional scholars).
- *1 Corinthians* – almost universally accepted as an authentic letter of Paul, written in the year 55 or 56.
- *Romans* – nearly all scholars acknowledge Paul as the author, with a date about 57.
- *2 Thessalonians* – writers disagree over the authorship: either Paul or an unknown forger; in consequence, date is also disputed: soon after 50, or as late as 100.
- *2 Timothy* – the author is Paul...or an unknown compiler of Pauline fragments...or a later writer pretending to be Paul; the date is in the early or mid-60s...or as late as the early 100s. Conclusions depend on differing interpretations of the evidence, and they in turn often depend on differing theological presuppositions.
- *1 Peter* – the majority recognise Peter as the author, with a date in the early or mid-60s. Sceptics posit an unknown, writing in the late 90s or early 100s.
- *Galatians* – almost universally acknowledged as by Paul, with a date that could possibly be as early as the year 48.
- *Philippians* – again, just about every scholar accepts Pauline authorship. Disagreements exist over the date...late 50s or early 60s.

Some of the Vocabulary (More information is to be found in the endnotes)

- παραδιδωμι (paradidōmi) – I hand over, pass on.
- παραλαμβάνω (paralambanō) – I receive.
- παραδοσις (paradosis) – a tradition.
- παραθήκη (parathēkē) – a deposit, something entrusted.
- παρατιθημι (paratithēmi) – I give over, entrust.
- υπακούω (hupakouō) – I obey.
- φυλάσσω (phulassō) – I guard, observe.
- τηρεω (tēreō) – I observe, keep.
- κρατεω (krateō) – I hold fast.
- κατεχω (katechō) – I hold fast, keep.
- εντελλομαι (entellomai) – I command, ordain.
- δεω (deō) – I bind, forbid, restrict.
- λυω (luō) – I loose, allow, permit.
- τυπος (typos) – a form, pattern, model.
- υποτυπωσις (ypotypōsis) – model, example, standard.