THE NUMBERS OF GENESIS V 3-31: A SUGGESTED CONVERSION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

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Introduction

Gen. v 3-31 purports to give a genealogical listing of the pre-Flood patriarchs from Adam, the first man, to Noah, the man of the Flood—ten generations inclusive. For each patriarch listed, except Noah, the account gives three numbers: the man's age at the birth of his named son, the number of years he lived after this event, and the sum of these figures, his total lifespan. For Noah, it identifies three sons and gives only his age at their birth. Appendix I gives the numbers in the three principal forms of the text (MT, Samaritan Pentateuch, LXX), the dating in relation to the birth of Adam, and the dating of the Flood.

The numbers given in this list have been a problem for many generations of commentators. They can be neither the "true" ages of these individuals nor "real" ages invented for them. Why were these particular numbers chosen? Is there an underlying pattern? Is the time-span covered by the list significant? What is the relationship of the three forms of the text to their common source?

This article briefly reviews the numbers as we have them in the three major forms of the text, and presents a possible common source set. It then presents a hypothesis about their arithmetic development and the implications of this development for the evolution of the list. Finally, it considers the questions of authorship and purpose, relating the Gen. v list to the similar list of Gen. xi 10-26.

Different Forms of the Text

There is great similarity among the three ancient texts of Gen. v: MT, SP, and LXX. This similarity implies a common original,

presumably the work of "P". However, there are significant variations also, most of which appear to be purposeful alterations, not random errors.

The MT

In the MT, the ages at fatherhood generally decline from Adam's 130 to half that number (65) for Mahalalel and Enoch. However, the ages for Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech are marked exceptions to this pattern, all being significantly higher than Adam's. Of these three, Methuselah died in the year of the Flood and Jared and Lamech before it. If their ages at fatherhood had been the same as those of Mahalalel and Enoch, all three would have outlived the Flood. Even if their ages had been the same as Adam's, Methuselah and Lamech would have outlived the Flood.[1] Hence, there is reason to believe that the ages of these three patriarchs were altered to accommodate the date of the Flood.[2]

Noah's age at fatherhood (500) is far beyond the range of the rest. This suggests the possibility that it is part of, or derived from, a different tradition.[3] It may have been part of the Flood account, which gives Noah's age at the Flood as 600 years. Alternatively, it may have been derived from that datum. When the Flood came, Noah's sons were married, but had no children. They were probably not much older than the other patriarchs were when they fathered children Therefore, they must have been about 100 years

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[1] The numbers for age 65 and for age 130 are as follows

	Age = 65				Age = 130			
	b	l	B	D	b	l	B	D
Jared	65	962	460	1422	130	962	460	1422
Enoch	65	365	525	890	130	365	590	955
Methuselah	65	969	590	1559	130	969	720	1689
Lamech	65	777	655	1432	130	777	850	1627
Noah			720				980	
(Flood)			(1320)				(1580)	

[2] John D Davis, "Antediluvian Patriarchs", *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* I (Chicago, 1915), pp 139-40, acknowledges the possibility of this alteration without endorsing it

[3] Robert R Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (New Haven, Conn , 1977), pp 160-1

old at the Flood, and Noah must have been about 500 years old when they were born.[4]

The lifespans are all within a fairly narrow range, except those of Enoch and Lamech. Enoch's span is sharply lower, accounted for by the tradition of his dying or disappearing early in life.[5] Lamech's span is significantly lower than the range of the rest. If it had been even 100 years greater, still at the low end of the range, Lamech would have far outlived the Flood. Hence, there is reason to believe his lifespan has been shortened to accommodate the date of the Flood.[6]

The Samaritan Pentateuch

In the SP, the ages at fatherhood match the MT for all except Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech. Jared's age is exactly 100 years ledss than in the MT and Methuselah's 120 less. Lamech's is 129 years less, showing no similarity.[7] All the SP ages thus fall within the same range as the MT ages for Adam-Mahalalel and Enoch. The lifespans match the MT, except those of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech. The lifespans of all three of these patriarchs end in the year of the Flood, and are therefore significantly shorter than

[4] Nahum M Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary Genesis* (Philadelphia, 1989), 44, John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (2nd edn, Edinburgh, 1930), p 134 If Noah's numbers had been invented at the same time as those of the pre-Flood patriarchs, his age at fatherhood (and therefore his Flood age also) would probably have been consistent with the rest

[5] Many commentators consider Enoch's 365 years (the number of days in a non-leap year) a symbolic number See S R Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (12th edn, London, 1926), pp 78-9 However, W Gunther Plaut, "Genesis", *The Torah A Modern Commentary* (New York, 1981), p 52n, considers it a schematic number, the product of $10^2 + 11^2 + 12^2$

[6] Lamech's 777 years seem to be related to Cainite Lamech's vengeance 77 times (Gen iv 24), but since this specific MT value agrees with neither the SP nor the LXX, it may be an editor's alteration The best manuscripts of Josephus, *Antiquities*, have 707 years (I 82-8) See Thomas W Franxman, *Genesis and the "Jewish Antiquities" of Flavius Josephus* (Rome, 1979), pp 14-15, and the translation of H St J Thackeray, *Josephus* IV (Cambridge, Mass , 1930), pp 38-43

[7] The ages at fatherhood in the book of Jubilees, the only ages given, are virtually the same as those in the SP See James C VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Louvain, 1989) II, pp 23-30, R H Charles, "The Book of Jubilees", *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* II (Oxford, 1913), pp 18-19 If Jubilees is, as generally assumed, the work of a pious, even Pharisaic, Jew of the 2nd century BCE, these numbers were apparently not confined to the manuscripts used by the Samaritans

those of the rest. Hence, there is reason to believe these three
lifespans were arbitrarily shortened to end with the Flood. (See
Davis [n. 2], loc. cit.) (Lamech's age at fatherhood may have
been reduced at the same time, to simplify calculation of his
remainder.)

The LXX

In the LXX, the ages at fatherhood are all 100 years greater than
the corresponding MT and SP numbers, except for Jared,
Methuselah, and Lamech. For Jared, the LXX is the same as the
MT, 100 greater than the SP. For Methuselah, LXX^A is the same
as the MT, but the earlier LXX^L is 20 years less, 100 greater than
the SP.[8] Lamech's age is close to the MT, but has no similarity with
the SP. According to the LXX^L numbers, Methuselah outlived the
Flood. According to LXX^A, which reduced his age at fatherhood
by 20 years, he died before the Flood. This suggests that the change
in LXX^A was made to adapt it to the Flood chronology. The
lifespans match the MT, except for Lamech's (753), which is close
to the MT (777) but in form resembles the SP (653).

There is reason to believe that, for the LXX, the ages at
fatherhood of the nine patriarchs Adam-Lamech were increased by
100 years over the MT numbers, keeping the lifespans unchanged.[9]
The result was the LXX^L set of numbers. Later, an alteration was
made to prevent Methuselah from outliving the Flood. The result
was the set of numbers in LXX^A. Lamech's LXX lifespan is inex-
plicable, unless perhaps it is the result of an editor's comparing the
MT and SP texts, and somehow conflating them.

The Source

In summary, the MT ages at fatherhood for Jared, Methuselah,
and Lamech deviate from the pattern of the rest (apart from Noah).
Lamech's lifespan also deviates from the rest. These differences are

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[8] Skinner (n 4), p 134n See also Ferdinand Bork, *ZAW* 47 (1929), p 211

[9] See for example Gerhard Larsson, "The Chronology of the Pentateuch",
JBL 102 (1983), pp 401-9 The intent may have been to increase the interval from
Adam to Noah, unrelated to the Flood chronology In the SP, Adam is still alive
when Noah is born, a situation that an early editor may have considered unac-
ceptable

accountable as adjustments for the date of the Flood. The SP lifespans for the same three patriarchs deviate from the MT and LXX numbers. These deviations are also accountable as adjustments for the Flood date. The LXX^A age at fatherhood for Methuselah deviates from the LXX^L age, again accountable as a Flood adjustment. The numbers of the common source were probably the SP ages at fatherhood and the MT lifespans, with Lamech's numbers uncertain.

The form of Lamech's age at fatherhood in the MT fits the pattern of nearly all the other numbers, in all three forms of the text. 74 of the 81 numbers are values divisible by 5, or divisible by 5 with 2 added.[10] The exceptions are Methuselah's lifespan in the MT and LXX (969) and his remainder in the SP (653), and Lamech's age at fatherhood and lifespan in the SP (53 and 653) and in the LXX (188 and 753). Methuselah's lifespan and the SP numbers may be adjustments to fit the Flood chronology.

However, in the MT, Lamech's age, as noted, is exceptionally large, and his lifespan exceptionally small. Both seem to be Flood adjustments, perhaps achieved by adding 100 years to his age at fatherhood, as with Jared, and subtracting 100 years from his lifespan.

The numbers as originally assigned by the author may therefore have been:

	Fatherhood	Years After	Lifespan
Adam	130	800	930
Seth	105	807	912
Enosh	90	815	905
Kenan	70	840	910
Mahalalel	65	830	895
Jared	62	900	962
Enoch	65	300	365
Methuselah	67	902	969
Lamech	82?	795?	877?

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[10] U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis I* (translated by Israel Abrahams, Jerusalem, 1961), pp. 256-64, acknowledging the symbolic importance of 7, considers the numbers to be multiples of 5 with 7 instead of 2 added to some.

Since the source numbers did not allow for the Flood date, the list and its numbers apparently were developed independently of, and later joined to, the Flood account. This made adjustments necessary to reconcile them, although the need may not have been immediately obvious.

Apparently, three different editors took three different approaches. One increased the ages at fatherhood of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech, and the lifespan of Lamech to make an adjustment for the Flood. This became the MT. Another decreased the lifespans of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech to make an adjustment for the Flood. This became the SP. The third increased all ages at fatherhood, keeping lifespans constant. This may not have been intended to make an adjustment for the Flood, although it did have this effect for Jared and Lamech, but to increase the interval between the Creation and the Flood. This became LXX^L. A later editor of the LXX increased the age at fatherhood of Methuselah to adjust for the Flood. This became LXX^A.

The Origin of the Numbers

The general objective of the author was apparently to provide "larger than life" numbers that would emphasize the superiority of the revered ancestors of the Hebrew people by demonstrating their superior longevity.[11] The author may have had to observe certain constraints. First, the lifespans could approach, but not reach, 1000 years.[12] Second, if Noah's lifespan was already defined, the

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[11] There seems to be no real parallel between Gen v and the pre-Flood kings in the Sumerian king list See Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1974), pp 472-6, E tr , *Genesis 1-11* (Minneapolis and London, 1984), pp 348-51, Thomas C Hartman, "Some Thoughts on the Sumerian King List and Genesis 5 and 11B", *JEL* 91 (1972), p 25 In the king list, these kings do not belong to one dynasty or city, the number of them varies in different versions, and the numbers associated with them are lengths of reign, not lifespans The numbers are usually multiples of 60^2 (the Babylonian *sar*) See Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List* (Chicago, 1939), pp 69-77 Noah's lifespan in the Flood narrative (950 years) may have been influenced by the lengths of reign of the kings of Kish, the first dynasty after the Flood (See Jacobsen [n 11], pp 76-85) Both Noah and the first king of Kish are survivors of the Flood Of the 23 reigns, five are 900 years, three are 840 years, and two are 960 years All but four are divisible by 60 Noah's lifespan is divisible by 50 His age at the Flood (600) is divisible by both 50 and 60, and equals the reign of Atab, the tenth king of Kish

[12] Bruce Vawter, *On Genesis* (New York, 1977), p 106 This idea appears first in Jubilees See VanderKam (n 7), p 30

lifespans had to cluster around this number. Third, Enoch's lifespan, according to tradition, had to be significantly shorter than the rest. Fourth, perhaps Methuselah's lifespan, according to tradition, had to be the longest. Fifth, Adam's age at fatherhood had to be one of the highest, since Seth represented his second family.

Questions about the Numbers

Within these constraints, are the numbers random, or are they related according to some arithmetic scheme? For example, are they all mutiples of a symbolic number, such as 60? Many arithmetic schemes have been proposed, but none has been generally accepted.[13] They often involve complex calculations that seem unrelated to the objective, and no single scheme accounts for all the numbers. It seems reasonable to conclude that the numbers are a random set.

But there is another question, often confused with the first. Were the numbers invented in essentially the form we have today, or were they derived by arithmetical operations from another set of random numbers, perhaps numbers with more reasonable values? (If I take a set of random numbers and multiply each number by x, I have a new set of random numbers).

The numbers cannot all be multiples of a single factor. No single factor yields both a plausible lifespan and a plausible lifespan age at fatherhood.[14] For example, dividing the lifespans by 12 yields

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[13] See, for example, Cassuto (n. 10), loc. cit., who notes that the numbers are divisible by 5, with the addition of 7 to some. He equates 5 years with 60 months, and notes that 60 was a base number (*ner*) in Babylonian mathematics. It is an open question whether the author had the 5 years = 60 months relationship in mind, or whether he simply used multiples of 5 and 10 for convenience. In the patriarchal narratives, 7 was added to three lifespans that were divisible by 10 (Sarah, 127; Ishmael, 137; Jacob, 147). The principle by which these three were selected is unknown. As noted by Lloyd R. Bailey, *Noah* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1989), p. 124, the attempt to derive the numbers from the base 60 "leaves the vast majority of the numbers unexplained", and equating 60 months with 5 years does not "solve the mystery of the specific ages". For an example of more complex calculations, see Gottfried Kuhn, "Die Lebenzahl Lemechs Gen. 5.31", *ZAW* 54 (1936), pp. 309-10. A detailed exposition of a complicated mathematical scheme for developing usable numbers is given by Dwight Wayne Young, "On the Application of Numbers to Biblical Lifespans and Epochs", *ZAW* 100 (1988), pp. 331-61, and "The Influence of Babylonian Algebra on Longevity among the Antediluvians", *ZAW* 102 (1990), pp. 321-35.

[14] This eliminates the possibility that the numbers represent some interval shorter than a year, such as a month. Nor can it be argued that the years in those

values more like historical spans (365-969 convert to 30-81), but this does not work well for the ages at fatherhood (65-130 convert to only 5-11).[15] However, it is possible that the numbers were derived from others by a more complex sequence of arithmetical operations.

Is the total interval, from the "birth" of Adam to the birth of Noah, or from Adam to the Flood, significant? Many commentators have attempted to find meaning here, with no satisfactory results.[16]

A Peculiarity of the Numbers

Any explanation, to be satisfactory, must account for a peculiarity of the numbers: of 27 numbers given in Gen. v (3 for each of 9 patriarchs, excluding the single number given for Noah, which is anomalous), all but one end in one of the four digits 0, 2, 5, and 7. The exception is the lifespan of Methuselah (969 years). If one were inventing a set of numbers, without restricting it to multiples of 5 or 10, normally the units digits would be a random selection from the ten values 0-9. The probability that four of ten random numbers will end in 0, 2, 5, or 7 is about 0.25. But the probability that 26 of 27 random numbers will end in 0, 2, 5, or 7 is only 0.00073×10^{-6}. This strongly suggests that these numbers are not random, or that they have been derived from another set of numbers by one or more arithmetical operations.

Rounded Numbers?

The set of digits 0, 2, 5, and 7 is almost evenly spaced. If they were 0, 2.5, 5, and 7.5, they would be so, the common interval

ancient times were much shorter, because the earth's revolution around the sun was much faster No scientific evidence has yet been found to show that this was so Analysis of growth rings on fossil organisms indicates that in the Middle Devonian geological period the year had 400-410 days, presumably because the earth rotated faster on its axis, but there is no evidence that the earth has revolved more rapidly around the sun See *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology* 5 (6th edn, New York, 1987), pp 470-1

[15] The ages at fatherhood in the LXX would work better, converting to 13 5-19 2 years However, as noted, the LXX numbers are probably not the original set

[16] See Skinner (n 4), pp 135-6 Cassuto (n 10), pp 252-6 The SP interval from Adam to Noah, 707 years, is also the lifespan of Lamech according to Josephus, but this is almost certainly coincidence

being 2.5. Let us assume that one or more arithmetical operations were performed on the set of numbers originally associated with the patriarchs. The result of these operations was a set of numbers ending in 0, 2.5, 5, and 7.5. The numbers ending in 2.5 and 7.5 were then rounded down to end in 2 and 7. Before rounding, the numbers resulting from the arithmetic operations were:

Adam	130	(+)	800	(=)	930
Seth	105		807.5		912.5
Enosh	90		815		905
Kenan	70		840		910
Methuselah	65		830		895
Jared	62.5		900		962.5
Enoch	65		300		365
Methuselah	67.5		902.5		970
Lamech	82.5		795		877.5

This assumption may account for the fact that Methuselah's lifespan (969) does not end in one of these four digits. If the fractions had been retained, it would have (67.5 + 902,5 = 970). Rounding the two factors reduced the sum by one (67 + 902 = 969). This is the only lifespan that would be the sum of two fractional numbers.[17]

Multiples of 2.5?

Since 2.5 is a common factor of the numbers before rounding, one of the arithmetical operations postulated may have effectively multiplied the numbers by 2.5. For example, it may have multiplied tham by 2.5, or multiplied by 10 and divided by 4. If this is so, the numbers before this operation were:

Adam	52	(+)	320	(=)	372	(300 + 72)
Seth	42		323		365	(300 + 72)

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[17] The lifespans may have been added after the arithmetical process was done. Otherwise, the author or editor would have had to decide whether to round down Methuselah's lifespan or to round up one of its component numbers. On the other hand, Methuselah's lifespan may have been trimmed by an editor to prevent him from outliving the Flood. See Bailey (n. 13), p. 122.

Enosh	36	326	362	(300 + 62)
Kenan	28	336	364	(300 + 64)
Mahalalel	26	332	358	(300 + 58)
Jared	25	360	385	(300 + 85)
Enoch	26	120	146	(100 + 46)
Methuselah	27	361	388	(300 + 88)
Lamech	33	318	351	(300 + 51)

In this version of the list, the ages at the birth of the named sons are all reasonable.[18] The fairly high age of Adam is not surprising, if Seth was presumed to be part of his second family, born after the death of Abel and the departure of Cain. The lifespans are all 300 plus a plausible span greater than the age at fatherhood (for example, Adam = 300 + 72), except that of Enoch (146). Enoch's lifespan is only 100 plus a plausible span.

Lifespan plus 300 Years?

This suggests that, before the numbers were effectively multiplied by 2.5, 300 years were added to the lifespans of all patriarchs except Enoch. Presumably, the intent was to give them superhuman lifespans. Perhaps only 100 years were added to Enoch's lifespan because the tradition that he departed comparatively early in life was already well established.

The Base Numbers?

If so, the numbers before adding 300 or 100 would have been a set of plausible ages at fatherhood and lifespans, as follows:[19]

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[18] Using the lower ages at fatherhood for Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech yields a reasonable conversion The MT ages convert to 65 (Jared), 75 (Methuselah), and 73 (Lamech)—possible, but very high

[19] By coincidence, the lengths of reign of the pre-Flood Sumerian kings, according to W-B 444, were 60^2 (a *sar*) times one of five values (5-1/6, 5-5/6, 8 20, 12) See Jacobsen (n 11), loc cit The ranges of values in the other known versions of the list, W-B 62 (6-20) and Berossus (3-18), are somewhat greater, but not widely disparate These values would be short for lengths of reign, particularly for a hereditary father-to-son succession However, these were rulers from four different cities, and none is called the son of his predecessor The values could represent, not length of reign in a city, but term of office as president or commander-in-chief of a league or confederation of cities Low numbers would be normal, especially if these officers were elected annually or biennially The Achaean and Aetolian leages of ancient Greece, with their elective *strategoi*, come to mind

Adam	52	(+)	20	(=)	72
Seth	42		23		65
Enosh	36		26		62
Kenan	28		36		64
Mahalalel	26		32		58
Jared	25		60		85
Enoch	26		20		46
Methuselah	27		61		88
Lamech[20]	33?		18?		51?

Summary

In summary, the development of the numbers for these nine patriarchs may have proceeded as follows:

1. A set of plausible numbers was invented.
2. Each lifespan except Enoch's was increased by 300 years. Enoch's lifespan was increased by only 100 years.
3. All the numbers were multiplied by 2.5 (or multiplied by 10 and divided by 4), and rounded down to whole numbers if necessary.

It is not likely that one person performed all three steps with the final set of numbers in mind. If someone had begun with the requirement to invent 27 numbers within the desired range, he would probably have invented them in the final form. They might for convenience have all been multiples of 5 or 10, but it is highly improbable that they would have been reducible by fairly simple arithmetical operations to a set of plausible numbers. It is more likely that the final author or editor used an existing list that included numbers at stage 2, and multiplied them by 2.5 because this gave lifespans in the desired range. It remains an open question at what point the explicit lifespans became part of the set.

The Author and His Purpose

This list was apparently part of a plan to identify all the generations from Adam to Aaron, and to give them all numbers. The

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[20] According to this derivation, Lamech's lifespan is not much greater than Enoch's. Since there is no agreement among different forms of the text on Lamech's numbers, they remain an open question. It is also possible that Enoch's numbers were altered to arrive at a lifespan of 365 years, a symbolic number. (See n. 5.)

most important function of the numbers was apparently to show the overall decline of lifespans from the pre-Flood patriarchs to Aaron and Moses. Final authorship of this list has been assigned either to the Priestly author (P) or to a later Redactor (R).[21]

It seems unlikely that the person who specified Noah's age at the Flood, and perhaps his lifespan, could have been the same as the person who finalized Gen. v. If they had been the same, that person would propably have used simpler numbers in Gen. v as in the Flood narrative, and would have made the ages at fatherhood in the list consistent with Noah's.

Perhaps Noah's Flood age and lifespan were the work of P, part of his version of the Flood narrative, and R added Gen. v, converting the list's numbers so that the lifespans would match Noah's, and ignoring the discrepancy in the ages at fatherhood. The beginning of the Flood narrative introduces Noah as a righteous man, but says nothing about his ancestors' names or character. The discrepancy in ages implies carelessness on the part of R, but such carelessness seems characteristic of the genealogical passages assigned to him. The author of Gen. v apparently did not check the Flood chronology, to see if any patriarchs outlived the Flood, as noted. And the other genealogical list with numbers, Gen. xi 10-26, reveals similar flaws.

The Other List (Genesis vi 10-26)

For the other list, from Shem to Terah (Gen. xi 10-26), the author apparently constructed a linear genealogy resembling that of Gen. v, and invented numbers for it. The Shem-Peleg sequence presumably was derived from data in the Table of Nations (Gen x 22-5). The Reu-Terah sequence may have been a separately-existing linear genealogy.[22] There are nine names in this list. Presumably the author considered Abraham the tenth man. The numbers differ considerably in the three forms of the text, except for those of Shem and Terah.

In the MT, there are only two numbers for each individual. The ages at fatherhood for Arpachshad-Nahor alternate between 30 and

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[21] The theory that it is the work of a Redactor has been publicized in Richard Elliot Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (New York, 1987), p 246

[22] There were apparently variants of this genealogy, since Terah is described here as the son, but in the next passage (Gen xi 27) as the father, of Nahor

other values, within a very narrow range (29-35). These values are lower than both the ages in the Gen. v list and the ages given in the following patriarchal narratives: Terah (70), Abraham (100), Isaac (60), and Jacob (47 +). The remaining years (and by implication the lifespans) show a decline in stages: Shem (500) Arpachshad-Eber (400s), Peleg-Serug (200s), Nahor (119). As a consequence, Shem, Shelah, and Eber outlive Abraham (as does Noah),[23] and Shem and Eber are still alive when Jacob is raising a family.

In the SP, there are three numbers for each individual—lifespans are also given. For Arpachshad-Serug, the ages at fatherhood are 100 years greater than in the MT. For Nahor, the age is 50 years greater. These increases are balanced, except for Eber, by an equal decrease in the remainder, leaving the lifespan unchanged. For Eber, the SP remainder and lifespan are 60 years less than the MT numbers. In the SP, none of the nine outlives Abraham; in fact, only Terah is alive when Abraham is born.

In the LXX, there are only two numbers for each individual. However, the LXX adds a tenth generation, Cainan, after Arpachshad, perhaps to improve the parallel with the 10 names of Gen. v.[24] Ages at fatherhood are the same as in the SP (omitting Cainan), except that LXX[L] gives 134 for Peleg instead of 130. Remainders are the same as in the MT for Peleg, Reu, and Serug, but otherwise differ from both the MT and SP. The remainder for Nahor is 10 greater than the MT gives. The remainder for Eber is exactly 100 years greater than the SP gives, suggesting that 270 or 370 was the original number, and the MT's 430 is a copyist's error, imitating the previous two 403s. The remainders for Arpachshad (430) and Shelah (330), compared with the MT's 403 and the SP's 303 for both, suggests that in copying a 3 was misread as a 30, or vice versa. In the LXX, none of the 10 patriarchs outlives Abraham.

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[23] Nahor's implied lifespan (148 years) is anomalous. It is well below not only the preceding spans but also those of the next three generations (Terah, Abraham, Isaac) given in the narrative of the Hebrew patriarchs. However, Terah's lifespan in the SP is 145 (70 + 75) years. These two spans are like Jacob's (147 years). But one would have to ignore Abraham and Isaac to make another trio of them like the Arpachshad-Eber and Peleg-Serug trios.

[24] Both lists of ten generations end with a man who has three sons (Noah and Terah).

The MT ages at fatherhood are probably the original numbers. It is more likely that a later editor increased these numbers, to prevent the earlier patriarchs outliving Abraham, than that one decreased them, thereby creating this problem. The MT remainders for Peleg-Serug are probably also the original numbers, but for the rest uncertainty prevails. The lifespans in SP are probably an editor's addition.[25] It is not clear why the author did not give the lifespans, to match Gen. v Perhaps he simply thought that the extra work was not necessary, since the ages at fatherhood are not large enough to make much difference between the remainders given and the lifespans implied.

Its Relation to Genesis v

These numbers were apparently invented in essentially their present form. There is no evidence that they were derived from others by any arithmetical transformation. In this respect, the second list differs from the first. However, the total interval may be intentional. The MT interval from the birth of Arpachshad to the birth of Abraham and his brothers is 290 years. It is matched by an equal interval from the birth of Abram to Jacob's entry into Egypt (100 + 60 + 130) (Skinner [n. 4], p. 135).This may have been a constraint on the invention of the ages at fatherhood for this list. If the required total was 290 years, and Terah's age (70) was already given in the patriarchal narratives, this left 220 years to divide among seven generations, Arpachshad-Nahor, averaging about 31 ½ years.[26] This is another difference between the two lists.

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[25] Westermann (n 11), pp 744-5, E tr , pp 560-1 Terah's age at fatherhood (70) is a sharp departure from the pattern of his seven ancestors Perhaps this number was part of the following patriarchal narrative, and the author borrowed it for his list, as the author of Gen v apparently borrowed or derived Noah's from the Flood account

[26] Adding Abraham's age when he departed from Haran (75) gives a total of 365 years This number, the same as Enoch's lifespan, may be a symbolic number Subtracting 75 from 290 gives 215 years, the interval from Abram's departure from Haran to Jacob's entry into Egypt (25 years to Issac's birth + 60 years to Jacob's birth + 130 years to Jacob's entry into Egypt) It can hardly be coincidence that the 430 years the Priestly author gives for the Sojourn, or for the time in both Canaan and Egypt, is exactly twice 215 years 430 years is also the interval from the beginning of Solomon's work on the temple in his fourth year (1 Kings vi 1) to the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar, according to the lengths of reign given in the books of Kings and Chronicles for the kings of Judah See Nahum M Sarna, *Exploring Exodus* (New York, 1986), p 9 Were any of these

The total interval in Gen. v is not a round number and is not repeated.

The author of the second list apparently made no attempt to introduce a reasonable variety into the remainders: by comparison with the first list, this set of numbers is crudely done. These characteristics strongly support the contention that the inventor of the second list did not invent, but borrowed and modified, the first list.[27]

Levi, Kohath, and Amram

The Redactor may have introduced his numbers into another passage not usually associated with him. Exod. vi 16-25 uses part of the segmented genealogy of the Israelite clans (Gen. xlvi 8-27), adds the genealogy of the Levite clans (Num. iii-17-20), supplemented with the descendants of Kohath to the generation of Aaron and Moses, and shows the origin of the Aaronid priesthood. This genealogy is normally assigned to P. Into this genealogy someone has inserted lifespans for Levi, Kohath, and Amram. These lifespans, all between 130 and 137 years, fit logically between Jacob's 147 years (Gen. xlvii 28) and Moses' 120 years (Deut. xxxiv 7).

Unfortunately, these numbers contradict the total (430 years) given later, also presumably by P, for the Sojourn (Exod. xii 40). According to these numbers, the maximum interval from the birth of Kohath to that of Moses (if we assume posthumous births) is 272 years. If Levi and Kohath both came with Jacob to Egypt (Gen. xlvi 11), and Moses was 80 years old at the Exodus (Exod. vii 7),

reigns adjusted to bring the total to 430 years? Use of such round numbers seems to have been a common device of the Priestly author, we have also the 480 years from the Exodus to the beginning of Solomon's temple He played other number games also Abraham was 75 when he left Haran, and lived 75 years after the birth of Isaac Jacob had Joseph in his household for 17 years, and came to live with Joseph in Egypt for the last 17 years of his life

[27] This presents a problem for the theory that the author obtained his genealogical data from an older Book of Generations, which traced the line from Adam to Abraham See Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge, Mass , 1973), p 301 If a Book of Generations was the source, at least the first part of it (Gen v) apparently passed through other hands before the final author used it And the numbers for the second part (Gen xi 10-26) seem to depend upon the present context of that list

the maximum duration of the Sojourn was 352 years.[28] It seems unlikely that the author who specified 430 years for the Sojourn would insert into a genealogy lifespans that contradict this number. The three lifespans may therefore be the work of R.

Conclusions

In summary, the following sequence of development is proposed for Gen. v:

1. The list of Gen. v originated as a linear genealogy, Adam-to-Noah, without reference to Noah's sons. It may have been assembled from the Adam-Seth-Enosh sequence and a variant of the Cainite genealogy.
2. Plausible ages at fatherhood, remaining years of life, and perhaps lifespans were either included or added later.
3. The lifespans were increased—Enoch's by 100 years, the rest by 300 years—to emphasize the superior longevity of these remote ancestors.
4. The numbers were multiplied by 2.5 to obtain lifespans comparable with Noah's in the Flood account.
5. Verse 32 was added to relate the list to the Flood account.

Steps 4 and 5 were probably the work of the Redactor (R). Steps 1-3 were the work of earlier writers. The Priestly author (P) was probably not involved. The Redactor's objective was to establish a complete genealogy from Adam to Aaron, giving numbers to show how lifespans declined from the time of the pre-Flood narrative patriarchs to that of Aaron and Moses. This involved not only adapting the Gen. v list but also creating the Gen. xi list and adding lifespans for Levi, Kohath, and Amram to Exod. vi 16-25. The Redactor was not careful about chronology, nor particularly concerned with providing reasonable variety in his numbers

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[28] On the other hand, if the Sojourn in Egypt was only 215 years, the numbers fit, but the implied ages as fatherhood are greater than those given for Isaac (60) and Jacob (47 +) in the patriarchal narratives, and much greater than those given in the Gen xi list Moses was born in the 135th year of the Sojourn, leaving a minimum of 135 years for the sum of Kohath's and Amram's ages at fatherhood (The minimum assumes that Kohath was newborn at the time of the entry into Egypt, but Gen xlvi 11 says his younger brother Merari was also present)

Later editors modified the Gen. v numbers in different ways, either to increase the interval from Adam to Noah or to prevent Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech from outliving the Flood. These modifications appear in the three oldest forms of the text (MT, SP, LXX).

Following is a table of numbers of Gen. v from all three principal forms of the text (MT, Samaritan, and LXX), plus the years of birth and death of the nine patriarchs, counting from the "birth" of Adam, the year of birth of Noah, and the year of the Flood.

	MT					SP					LXX				
	b	*r*	*l*	*B*	*D*	*b*	*r*	*l*	*B*	*D*	*b*	*r*	*l*	*B*	*D*
Adam	130	800	930	0	930	130	800	930	0	930	230	700	930	0	930
Seth	105	807	912	130	1042	105	807	912	130	1042	205	707	912	230	1142
Enosh	90	815	905	235	1140	90	815	905	235	1140	190	715	905	435	1340
Kenan	70	840	910	325	1235	70	840	910	325	1235	170	740	910	625	1535
Mahalalel	65	830	895	395	1290	65	830	895	395	1290	165	730	895	795	1690
Jared	162	800	962	460	1422	62	785	847	460	1307	162	800	962	960	1922
Enoch	65	300	365	622	987	65	300	365	522	887	165	200	365	1122	1487
Methuselah	187	782	969	687	1656	67	653	720	587	1307	167/ 187	802/ 782	969	1287	2256
Lamech	182	595	777	874	1651	53	600	653	654	1307	188	565	753	1454/ 1474	2207/ 2227
Noah	500			1056		500			707		500			1642/ 1662	
(Flood)			(1656)					(1307)					(2242/ 2262)		

Legend b = age at birth of named son
        r = remainder until death
        l = lifespan
        B = year of birth, counting from Adam (year of Flood narrative in parentheses)
        D = year of death, counting from Adam

Note The first number of each pair in the LXX, beginning with Methuselah, is that of LXX[L]
      The second number of each pair is that of LXX[A]

Appendix II

Following is a table of the numbers of Gen. xi 10-26 from all three principal forms of the text, plus the years of birth and death of the patriarchs, counting from the year of the Flood. Also included for chronological comparison are the numbers for Noah, and for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Numbers implied, but not given in the OT, are given here in parentheses.

	MT					SP					LXX				
	b	*r*	*l*	*B*	*D*	*b*	*r*	*l*	*B*	*D*	*b*	*r*	*l*	*B*	*D*
Noah	500?	(450?)	950	-600	350	500?	(450?)	950	-600	350	500?	(450?)	350	-600	350
Shem	100	500	(600)	-98	502	100	500	600	-98	502	100	500	600	-98	502
Arphaxad	35	403	(438)	2	440	135	303	438	2	440	135	430	(565)	2	567
Cainan											130	330	(460)	137	597
Shelah	30	403	(433)	37	470	130	303	433	137	570	130	330	(460)	267	727
Eber	34	430	(464)	67	531	134	270	404	257	671	134	370	(504)	397	901
Peleg	30	209	(239)	101	340	130	109	239	401	640	130*	209	(339)	531	870
Reu	32	207	(239)	131	370	132	107	239	531	770	132	207	(339)	661	1000
Serug	30	200	(230)	163	393	130	100	230	663	893	130	200	(330)	793	1123
Nahor	29	119	(148)	193	341	79	69	148	793	941	79	129*	(208)	923	1131
Terah	70	(135)	205	222	427	70	75	145	872	1017	70	(135)	205	1002	1207
Abraham	100	(75)	175	292	467	100	(75)	175	942	1117	100	(75)	175	1072	1247
Isaac	60	(120)	180	392	572	60	(120)	180	1042	1222	60	(120)	180	1172	1352
Jacob			147	452	599			147	1102	1249			147	1232	1379

* LXX[a] numbers LXX[L] gives 134 for Peleg's age at fatherhood and 125 for Nahor's remainder. See Skinner (n.4), p. 233.