CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BIPARTITE NOMINAL CLAUSES

17.1 BASIC PATTERNS

According to the nature of the subject (Noun or Pronoun) and the relative order of the clause constituents we can distinguish four types of bipartite NCs.¹

A. Type 1: Pr–Su

This pattern is attested about 130 times. In 50% of the examples the Pr is participial:

6:20 ᵃˢ introductory ᵃˢ introductory ‘How difficult is Wisdom for a fool’.²
13:22 ᵃˢ introductory ‘And his helpers are many’.

In about 25% of the cases the Pr is a noun:

1:14, 16, 18 ᵃˢ introductory ᵃˢ introductory ‘The beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord’.³

In about 14% of the cases the Pr is the adverbial ᵃˢ introductory, which resumes a fronted element introduced by ᵃˢ introductory:

2:18 (= 6:17) ᵃˢ introductory ‘and like His name so are His works’.

In other cases the Pr is a prepositional phrase, a numeral or an interrogative:

10:4 ᵃˢ introductory ᵃˢ introductory ‘In the hands of the Lord is the authority over the world’.
21:3 ᵃˢ introductory ‘(a) two-edged (sword)’.

² Heb (A) has a NC of the type Pr–Su but the Syriac translator has replaced the pronoun by a noun; cf. § 3.2 (h).
³ For our identification of Su and Pr see § 16.3.
18:8 "וַאֲשֶׁר תֵּאָסֵנה בְּנֹּי—'And what is their loss?"

B. Type 2: Su_{pron}-Pr

This type is the most frequent bipartite pattern. It occurs about 220 times. In 65% of the cases the Pr is a participial:

1:12 יִרְאוּ תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'Fear of the Lord gladdens the heart'.

In more than 20% of the cases the Pr is a prepositional phrase:

5:6 יְרֵא תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'Mercy and anger are with Him'.
20:16 יִרְאוּ תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'Those who eat my bread are like a rock of stone'.

And in more than 10% of the cases the Pr is a noun:

4:14 יִרְאוּ תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'Her servants are servants of holiness'.
44:19 יִרְאוּ תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'Abraham was the father of the communities of the peoples'.

In five cases the Pr is an infinitive:

25:12 יִרְאוּ תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'The beginning of fear of the Lord is to love Him'.

C. Type 3: Pr-Su_{pron}

This pattern is attested about 50 times. In half of the cases the subject is a pronoun of the third person. In about 70% of the cases the Pr is a participial:

18:17 מָשָׁפֶל יִרְאוּ תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ '(A good word) that is better than a gift'.
29:28 וִמָּשָׁפֶל יִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'And if he is naked'.

The participial predicate occurs more often with the subject pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person (65%) than with the participial of the third person (35%).4 In eight cases the Pr is a noun:

29:25, 26 וַיַּחְיֵה יִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'You are a foreigner'.

Six times it is a prepositional phrase:

1:15 יִרְאוּ תֵּאָסֵנה וְיִרְאוּ שֵׁם יִרְאוּ 'She is with the people of truth'.

And once it is the adverbial יִרְאוּ (in a relative clause):

---

4 This is related to the fact that the third person subject pronoun was more easily omitted; cf. §§ 17.3 (end), 20.2.