

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Bible Study Notes

7-24-19

Genesis 10

The Table of Nations

¹This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's sons, who themselves had sons after the flood.

The Japhethites - Verses 2-5

² The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshek and Tiras. ³ The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah. ⁴ The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites and the Rodanites. ⁵ (From these the maritime peoples spread out into their territories by their clans within their nations, each with its own language.)

10:1 - This chapter summarizes the descendants of Noah through his three sons. It is not just a genealogy, but also an inspired account of the nations that descended from each. It is unique and unprecedented in ancient literature. There is nothing else in history to compare to it. Yet its accuracy has been attested by famous scholars and often confirmed by archeology.

10:2-5 - The descendants of Japheth...Japheth's sons were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. It is generally thought that these were the European people and perhaps the people of India and Persia. These people generally settled the furthest away from the people involved in subsequent Bible records, so the Bible gives little information about these people. Bible Commentaries give some information about the descendants of two of Japheth's sons. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. It is thought that the descendants of Togarmah were the Armenians. Other sons of Gomer are thought to have settled from the Caspian and Black Sea areas to Germany. The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. Descendants of Tarshish are believed to have settled in southern Spain. Kittim is a name that often refers to the island of Cyprus. Other descendants of Javan are believed to have settled Greece. Other passages elsewhere give information that may be helpful regarding other sons of Japheth. Magog, Meshech, and Tubal are mentioned in Ezekiel 38:1-3; 39:1. Madai was most likely the ancestor of the Medes, who much later joined to form the empire of the Medes and Persians.

The Hamites - Verses 6-20

⁶ The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan. ⁷ The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and Sabteka. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. ⁸ Cush was the father of Nimrod, who became a mighty warrior on the earth. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD." ¹⁰ The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Uruk, Akkad and Kalneh, in Shinar. ¹¹ From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah ¹² and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah—which is the great

city. ¹³ Egypt was the father of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, ¹⁴ Pathrusites, Kasluhites (from whom the Philistines came) and Caphtorites. ¹⁵ Canaan was the father of Sidon his first born, and of the Hittites, ¹⁶ Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, ¹⁷ Hivites, Arkites, Sinites ¹⁸ Arvadites, Zemarites and Hamathites. Later the Canaanite clans scattered ¹⁹ and the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and then toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim, as far as Lasha. ²⁰ These are the sons of Ham by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations.

The descendants of Ham...Ham's sons were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. Little is known of the descendants of Put.

Ham's son Cush

Cush's sons were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. Cush had prominence because of his son Nimrod (verses 8ff). But Ethiopia is often called Cush in the Bible. So the descendants of Cush moved, some to Africa, but some to Arabia and Mesopotamia.

Cush's famous descendant Nimrod

We are told a surprising amount about Cush's son Nimrod. He was said to be a mighty hunter before the Lord. And he began several important cities and even nations. He began Babel and other cities in the area of Shinar or Sumer. This area had prominence in chapter 11. And many great events in history and in the Bible involved this area of Babel, Shinar, etc. He also built Nineveh (and other cities) the capitol of another great empire Assyria. He had great gifts but people with great gifts can become proud, and that is probably what happened to Nimrod. Some consider him the founder of the great, godless Babylonian Empire.

Ham's son Mizraim

Mizraim's sons were Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, and Casluhim. Ham's son Mizraim is known as the founder of Egypt. The account specifically states that the Philistines are descendants of Mizraim through his son Casluhim. The Philistines later played a major role in their relationships with Israel during the days of Saul and David.

Ham's son Canaan

Next, the account describes the descendants of Ham's Son Canaan. He had been expressly mentioned in the curse in chapter 9. His descendants lived in the area of Palestine and so had many contacts in later Bible stories involving the Israelites. Canaan's son Sidon was probably the ancestor of the Phoenicians, that city of Sidon being named after their ancestor. Heth was the ancestor of the Hittites. The other descendants named lived in what became known as the land of Canaan. The nations that descended from Canaan and lived in this area are named: The Jebusite, Amorite, Girgashite, Hivite, Arkite, Sinite, Arvadite, Zemarite, and Hamathite. Their general territory is described and basically refers to the area of Palestine. These nations are later listed as those the Israelites displaced from the land. Since this is true, there is no basis whatever for believing, as some do, that black people are the descendants of Canaan on whom the curse of Noah fell in the form of a black skin. This idea has no Biblical merit, especially since the descendants of Canaan lived in the area of Canaan, not in Africa where black people lived.

The Semites - Verses 21-32

²¹ Sons were also born to Shem, whose older brother was Japheth; Shem was the ancestor of all the sons of Eber. ²² The sons of Shem: Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram. ²³ The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshek. ²⁴ Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah the father of Eber. ²⁵ Two sons were born to Eber: One was named Peleg, because in his time the earth was divided; his brother was named Joktan. ²⁶ Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹ Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan. ³⁰ The region where they lived stretched from Mesha toward Sephar, in the eastern hill country. ³¹ These are the sons of Shem by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations. ³² These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood.

10:21-32 - The descendants of Shem

These people become the most prominent in the Bible record in that they are the ones through whom Abraham was eventually born and the Israelites descended. The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

The sons of Aram

(Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash) became the ancestors of the Arameans or Syrians who settled northeast of Palestine.

Descendants of **Elam** settled northeast of the Persian Gulf.

Asshur would be the father of the Assyrians.

The line through **Arphaxad** became the most prominent line in Bible history since it was the line through Abraham. This line goes as follows: Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, and Joktan.

Eber's name became the origin of the term Hebrew to refer to his descendants. He had two sons. The son through whom Abraham was born was Peleg. Eber's other son was Joktan, who had many sons who are also listed here. One of his sons was Sheba, who may be an ancestor of the Queen of Sheba who later met Solomon. Also, his son Ophir may have given his name to a place later known for the presence of gold. Joktan's sons are said to have lived from Mesha to Sephar (in the east).

The reference to the division of the earth in Peleg's day has been variously applied. The most likely explanation is that this refers to the division of the earth into languages at the tower of Babel as described in the next chapter. Others think it refers to the continents that had been together but drifted apart. The evidence for this is not in the Bible, however, and even science is unsure about it.

The passage clearly demonstrates that the descendants of Noah repopulated the earth after the flood. This is confirmed by the fact that despite racial and national differences, all people share common blood types. This once again confirms the flood was worldwide.