

The Beginnings of the Nations

by John F. Walvoord

John F. Walvoord's sermon explores the biblical beginnings of creation, humanity, and the establishment of nations through Noah's lineage and prophecies.

Scripture: Genesis 10:2-21

Topics: "Biblical Genealogy", "Divine Purpose"

Description

John F. Walvoord preaches about the genealogies of the nations from the descendants of Noah's sons - Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The sermon explores the beginnings of creation, the creation of man, the introduction of sin through Adam to Noah, the story of the flood, the introduction of human government, and the prophecy concerning Noah's sons. It delves into the importance of surrendering to God's divine purpose in human history and the role of human government in fulfilling God's ultimate plan.

Transcript

The Beginning Of Creation

The Bible is a book of beginnings. The reader of the Scriptures is introduced in the very first verse of the Bible to the sweeping statement "In the beginning God." The eternal God who knew no beginning is the source of all the beginnings which follow. In the original creation, the material universe was brought into being with all its complexity and natural law seen today in the organic and inorganic world. In this universe of mass and motion were introduced the first moral creatures, the holy angels. Each angel was the object of immediate creation. They were moral agents with moral will and intelligence capable of serving God. Some of these left their first estate in rebellion and headed by Satan became fallen angels (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-15).

Creation Of Man

The holy angels and the fallen angels, those who left their first estate, were not created in the image and likeness of God. Adam and Eve were created to fulfill this lofty purpose here on earth, and were designed to be morally like God. There is some evidence that the world of Adam and Eve was a re-creation and not the original creation of the heavens and the earth. The introduction of man, however, was something new and was the beginning of the divine purpose in which ultimately God would become man in Christ.

From Adam To Noah

The early history of man from Adam to Noah is summarized in a few short chapters which graphically picture the introduction of sin into the human race through Satanic temptation and man's choice to disobey God. The downward course of humanity was rapid. Genesis 6:5-7 depicts God observing the great wickedness of man, "that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," and God declared His purpose, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air" (Genesis 6:7). The only bright spot in the unrelieved depravity of man was that "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). Of the many thousands which populated the earth at that time only Noah and his wife and three sons and their wives were worth saving from the flood which God declared would compass the earth.

The Flood

The story of the flood must have been important in the eyes of God for more space is given to it in Genesis than the whole story of creation and more than the whole history from Adam to Noah. This was another new beginning, a wiping out of that which was spoiled and impossible of restoration, and a beginning with a godly family which, in the midst of universal corruption, had found faith and grace and manifested a determination to do the will of God. Noah lived to the ripe old age of 950 years, one of the oldest men in the Bible, exceeded only by Methuselah who lived 969 years. Most important, however, is the historic fact that Noah became the father of the entire human race. His three sons born before the flood, Japheth, Ham, and Shem were to be the progenitors of mankind subsequently born on the earth. There is no record of any other sons of Noah, and his three sons who shared with him the task of building the ark and who survived the flood were to be the means by which God repopulated the earth.

Introduction Of Human Government

The new beginning with Noah and his sons also marked the progression and the unfolding of the divine purpose in human history. In Noah and his family for the first time were exercised the prerogatives of human government, the right of man to rule his fellow men. Adam had been given the charge to "subdue" the earth (Genesis 1:28), but he did not properly execute his responsibility. The commission, therefore, was renewed with enlargement to Noah in Genesis 9:1-6 embodied in the dictum, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Genesis 9:6).

The sword of divine retribution was placed in the hand of man in an attempt to control the natural lawlessness of the human heart. The principle of government thus introduced is reinforced throughout the Scriptures and is reiterated in Romans 13:1-7. In Romans the political ruler is declared to be "ordained of God" (Romans 13:1) and "the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Romans 13:4). The human conscience proved unreliable when operating individually and thus the corporate responsibility of human government was introduced.

The place of human government in the world looms large in much of the history of the race as well as in prophecy of the end time. God has declared His concern for governments which God has recognized and with whom He is going to deal. The ultimate human government will be that of Christ Himself as He rules in the millennium and in its eternal form in the new heaven and the new earth. Earthly governments though ordained of God have largely been in rebellion against Him. As the psalmist said, "Why do the heathen rage?" and, "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the ruler take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed" (Psalm 2:1, 2). God's answer is, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psalm 2:6).

Prophecy Concerning Noah's Sons

Early in the history of the race prophecy begins to cast its guiding light upon the course of future human events. God promised that never again would the waters of the flood destroy all flesh (Genesis 9:15). The rainbow was made a symbol of this covenant (Genesis 9:13-17).

The most important prophecy relating to the nations which has laid the guidelines for all subsequent human history was the aftermath of a dark chapter in the life of godly Noah when he drank wine from his newly planted vineyards and became drunk (Genesis 9:20, 21). The irreverence of Ham in comparison to the respect of Shem and Japheth as they dealt with their father in his weakness led to Noah's solemn words recorded in Genesis 9:25-27, "And he said, Cursed be Canaan: a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."

This prophetic utterance reveals that the human race would be divided according to the natural divisions stemming from the three sons of Noah. Canaan or the descendants of Canaan, the youngest son of Ham, were to be cursed, a servile people. By contrast Shem is to be the master of Canaan and "blessed of the Lord God." It was through Shem that God's divine revelation was to come, the Scriptures were to be written, Israel to be chosen, and ultimately the Saviour and Redeemer was to appear. The contrast between Canaan and Shem is a prophetic one, not an exhortation or justification to mistreat the descendants of Ham. These broad prophecies were to characterize the people as a whole. It was not to prevent those who sought the Lord among the descendants of Ham from enjoying His blessing nor was it to assure those who were descendants of Shem that they would avoid the righteous judgment of God so largely written in God's dealings with Israel in the captivities and similar chastisements.

The immediate history that followed Noah's prophetic utterances does not constitute evidence that the curse or the blessing was necessarily immediately administered to any particular generation or individual, for many hundreds of years after Noah the descendants of Ham seemed to have flourished, and by contrast the children of Israel, the descendants of Shem, became slaves in Egypt. But, the principle laid down has subsequently been justified and constitutes God's ultimate purpose in dealing with these broad divisions of humanity.

By contrast Japheth is promised enlargement. Enlargement was not immediately evident in subsequent history of the race, but eventually the promise was fulfilled. In the history of the world since the time of Christ, the descendants of Japheth have become the principal custodians of Gentile power and have spread over the world in their power and wealth. The original prophecy indicated that Japheth would somehow inherit the blessings stemming from Shem. It has been fulfilled in that many among the Gentiles have participated in the redemption provided by Christ of the line of Shem. These original prophecies, broad in their scope and extensive in their fulfillment, will provide the framework of the history of the nations as well as the prophetic picture of that which will constitute the nations in the end of the age.

The Descendants Of Noah

One of the great chapters in the Bible often neglected in casual Bible study is Genesis 10, with its chronicle of the descendants of Noah. It is obvious from the study of this chapter that here we have the background of nations which ultimately emerged and what is recorded here as history is the framework for prophecy. The compilation of the descendants of Noah is not simply a genealogy, but is designed to account for the great nations which later covered the inhabited earth.

The record of Genesis 10 is more than an ethnography, that is, a description of origin of races, but it is a profound introduction to ethnology, having to do also with the distribution, relationship, and significance of the descendants of Noah in history. Genesis 10 is one of the most remarkable historical records of this kind to be found anywhere in ancient literature, and all studies of anthropology and related sciences must begin with the facts given here. It is possible that Moses had before him documentary evidence which he used in writing the chapter, but in any case the Spirit of God guided him in selection, correction, and accurate expression of that which was far more important to subsequent history than even Moses imagined.

Broadly speaking, humanity is divided into three great divisions, that of Shem, the most important from the Biblical point of view, issuing into the Semitic family; that of Ham, sometimes referred to as the Turanian; and that of Japheth, the Aryan. That these peoples intermarried and often lived side by side in early history is evident, but the broad streams of their posterity nevertheless are still distinguishable today.

The relationship and probable identification and geographic location of the sons of Noah and their descendants are indicated in the tables provided for quick reference. The discussion which follows each table provides further detail.

Table Of The Sons Of Japheth

Genesis 10:2-5

Gomer - Ancient Cimmerians, the Gimirray of the Assyrians, Western Russia (Gen. 10:2, 3; I Chron. 1:5, 6; Ezek. 38:6).

Ashkenaz - Originally north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea (Gen. 10:3; I Chron. 1:6; Jer. 51:27). The name is evidently connected with cuneiform Ashguza, "Scythians."

Riphath - Location unknown, but probably included in modern Russia (Gen. 10:3; I Chron. 1:6).

Togarmah - Originally in Southwest Armenia, immigrating north and west (Gen. 10:3; I Chron. 1:6; cp. Ezek. 27:14; 38:6). This is Tegarama in cuneiform texts near Carchemish.

Magog - Probably the ancient Scythians, probably now in modern Russia (Gen. 10:2; I Chron. 1:5; Ezek. 38:2, 6; Rev. 20:8).

Madai - More commonly known as the Medes, originally south of the Caspian Sea (Gen. 10:2; I Chron. 1:5; cp. II Kings 17:6; 18:11; Ezra 6:2; Esth. 1:3,14,18, 19; Isa. 13:17; 21:2; Jer. 25:25; 51:11, 28; Dan. 5:28,31; 6:8, 12, 15; 8:20; 9:1; 11:1; Acts 2:9).

Javan - Hellenists, Ionians, generally the Greek people, modern Greece (Gen. 10:2, 4; I Chron. 1:5, 7; Isa. 66:19; Ezek. 27:13, 19; Dan. 8:21; 10:20; 11:2; Zech. 9:13).

Elishah - Inhabitants of Cyprus (Gen. 10:4; I Chron. 1:7; Ezek. 27:7). Corresponds to cuneiform Alashiya, Cyprus.

Tarshish - Location uncertain, but possibly inhabited Spain (from Tartessus in Spain) and Western Mediterranean (Gen. 10:4; I Chron. 1:7; cp. I Kings 10:22; 22:48; II Chron. 9:21; 20:36, 37; Pss. 48:7; 72:10; Isa. 2:16; 23:1, 6, 10, 14; 60:9; 66:19; Jer. 10:9; Ezek. 27:12, 25; 38:13; Jonah 1:3; 4:2).

Kittim or Chittim - The Ionians, Greeks, and inhabited islands and coasts of Mediterranean Sea (Gen. 10:4; I Chron. 1:7; cp. Num. 24:24; Isa. 23:1, 12; Jer. 2:10; 25:22; 47:4; Ezek. 27:6; Dan. 11:30).

Dodanim - Lived in Illyricum and Troy, the entire region known as Dalmatia in modern times, i.e., Southeastern Europe (Gen. 10:4; I Chron. 1:7). Some prefer reading of Rodanim, hence Island of Rhodes.

Tubal - Identified with ancient Scythians originally in Eastern Asia Minor, and later probably immigrating further north to modern Russia (Gen. 10:2; I Chron. 1:5; Isa. 66:19; Ezek. 27:13; 32:26; 38:2, 3; 39:1).

Meshech - Originally in Eastern Asia Minor, later farther north in modern Russia (Gen. 10:2; I Chron. 1:5; Ezek. 27:13; 32:26; 38:2, 3; 39:1).

Tiras - Originally in Eastern Asia Minor, later in modern Russia (Gen. 10:2; I Chron. 1:5).

The sons of Japheth were more prolific in number than any of the other sons of Noah, and world history since the birth of Christ has largely featured those who were descendants of the seven sons of Japheth.

Japheth's son Gomer (Genesis 10:3) first mentioned in the list, according to Herodotus was the forefather of the Cimmerians. As a family in their early history, they conquered Urartu (Armenia) coming from their original Ukrainian home where they lived before 800 b.c. They first appear in historical records as among the early enemies of Assyria and are mentioned prophetically in Ezekiel 38:6. There seems to be some evidence that they emigrated north ultimately out of Armenia into what today is known as Russia.

The three sons of Gomer are mentioned in Genesis 10:3 and also in I Chronicles 1:6, namely, Ashkenaz (cp. I Chronicles 1:6; Jeremiah 51:27), usually identified with the Scythians who lived north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea and spread over inner Asia. Others believe, however, that the Scythians are better identified as related to Magog. Riphath was another son of Gomer (cp. I Chronicles 1:6), but little is known about his descendants. Togarmah (cp. I Chronicles 1:6; Ezekiel 27:14; 38:6) appears occasionally in both history and prophecy. Descendants of Togarmah can be located in the fourteenth century b.c. as inhabiting Southwest Armenia. They are mentioned as furnishing horses, horsemen, and mules to Tyre (Ezekiel 27:14). Prophetically they are included in the invading host of Ezekiel 38:5, 6. Speaking generally, the descendants of Gomer inhabit the area north of the Holy Land and eventually emigrated north and east.

The second son of Japheth, Magog (cp. I Chronicles 1:5), is probably to be identified with the ancient Scythians (cp. discussion of Ashkenaz, above). Little mention is made of them historically except in these genealogies. Prophetically they are included in the invading horde of Ezekiel 38:2, 6 and again in Revelation 20:8. Speaking in general, they seem to have inhabited the area north of the Holy Land and could be one of the major elements in the population of Russia.

The third son of Japheth called Madai (cp. I Chronicles 1:5) is known more familiarly by the title given his descendants, the name Medes, who lived in Media south of the Caspian Sea bordered on the east by Hyrcania and Parthia, on the west by Assyria and Armenia and by Persia and Susiana on the south. The Medes are mentioned frequently in the Bible (II Kings 17:6; 18:11; Ezra 6:2; Esther 1:3, 14, 18, 19; Isaiah 13:17; 21:2; Jeremiah 25:25; 51:11, 28; Daniel 5:28, 31; 6:8, 12, 15; 8:20; 9:1; 11:1; Acts 2:9).

The Medes formed an important division of the times of the Gentiles as prophesied by Daniel. They occupy a large share in the prophetic program of the Old Testament leading up to Christ. The height of the power of the Medes, after several centuries of struggle, was reached in the sixth century b.c. when the

kingdom of the Medes was merged with that of Persia under Cyrus. Their notable triumph was the conquering of Babylon in 539 b.c. as recorded in Daniel 5. The Medes flourished for two centuries thereafter until the time of Alexander the Great.

The fourth son of Japheth known as Javan (cp. I Chronicles 1:5, 7) was the forefather of the Ionians or the Greeks. Descendants of Javan are mentioned in inscriptions of Assyria and Achaemenia. They were the Hellenists and the word Javan is so translated in the Septuagint. The descendants of Javan are mentioned frequently in the Bible (Isaiah 66:19; Ezekiel 27:13, 19; Daniel 8:21; 10:20; 11:2; Zechariah 9:13). The descendants of Javan inhabited Libya, and Caria, the Aegean Islands and the area known in modern history as Greece. As early as the eighth century b.c. Assyrian records mention a naval battle with the Greeks.

The four sons of Javan, Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim do not appear as major elements in subsequent history. The descendants of Elishah seem to have inhabited Cyprus, referred to as the "isles of Elishah" (Ezekiel 27:7). They exported purple and scarlet fabrics to the market at Tyre, the purple dye being derived from shells rich in this color on the Aegean coasts.

The name Tarshish is found in the Phoenician language, meaning smelting plant and is closely associated with the smelting and transportation of smelted ores from distant places such as Spain in the Western Mediterranean and Solomon's copper smelting works in Southern Arabia. As ships were used to carry the smelted ore, frequent mention is made to ships of Tarshish (cp. I Kings 22:49, 50; II Chronicles 20:36, 37). Some believe the term also applies to any large ship regardless of geography (Psalm 48:7; Isaiah 23:1; 60:9; Ezekiel 27:25). It is therefore not clear whether the name Tarshish as the description of a descendant of Javan is the proper meaning in these many references and there may be no racial connection.

Kittim (sometimes spelled Chittim), another son of Javan, seems also to refer to the Ionian or Greeks. Although the name with various significations is found in a loose way to refer to the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean without specifying any particular geographic location, the name Kittim occurs with varied spellings elsewhere in the Old Testament (cp. Numbers 24:24; Isaiah 23:1, 12; Jeremiah 2:10; 25:22; 47:4; Ezekiel 27:6; Daniel 11:30). It is not clear to what extent Kittim is related to these references.

Dodanim (Genesis 10:4; I Chronicles 1:7), the fourth son of Javan, is regarded as the progenitor of those who lived in Illyricum and Troy and were closely associated with Kittim. They are relatively unimportant in subsequent Scriptures.

The three remaining sons of Japheth are named without posterity, signifying that their descendants did not form an important segment of the human race. Tubal (Genesis 10:2; I Chronicles 1:5) seems to be related to the Scythians. Their normal home seems to be near the Black Sea in Eastern Asia Minor. They are subsequently mentioned in the prophets (Isaiah 66:19; Ezekiel 27:13; 32:26; 38:2, 3; 39:1). Prophetically they will join with the invading army of the land of Israel in the last days recorded in Ezekiel 38-39. It is probable that their modern descendants now live in Russia.

Meshech appears in history as early as the twelfth century b.c. when his descendants lived to the north of Assyria in the Black Sea area. In Ezekiel 27:13, the descendants of Meshech had commercial dealings with Tyre, selling slaves and vessels of bronze. Prophetically, Meshech has a place in the last days as recorded in Ezekiel 32:26; 38:2, 3; 39:1 and is included in the invading army.

Tiras the last son of Japheth is mentioned only in the genealogies (I Chronicles 1:5) and it is generally believed that his descendants became the Thracians who inhabited the Aegean coast.

The descendants of Japheth spread out to the north, east, and west, and are probably the progenitors of most of the Northern Europe lands and, hence, of all countries derived from Europe such as the United States and Canada. They formed the major part of the Gentiles or the nations and will have their important role in the chapters of world history which will bring the times of the Gentiles to conclusion.

Table Of The Sons Of Ham

Genesis 10:6-20

In general the sons of Ham inhabited all of Asia except the north, and lived in Southern Europe and Northern Africa.

Cush - Southern Egypt, Abyssinia, Nubia, and Ethiopia (Gen. 10:6-12).

Seba - Ancient Sabeans (Gen. 10:7; I Chron. 1:9; Ps. 72:10; Isa. 43:3; cp. "Sabeans," Job 1:15; Isa. 45:14; Ezek. 23:42; Joel 3:8; also "Sheba," I Kings 10; II Chron. 9; Job 6:19; Ps. 72:10, 15; Isa. 60:6; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 27:22, 23; 38:13).

Havilah - Modern Yemen (Gen. 10:7; I Chron. 1:9; cp. Gen. 2:11; 10:29; 25:18; I Sam. 15:7; I Chron. 1:23).

Sabtah - Located East of Yemen (Gen. 10:7; I Chron. 1:9).

Raamah - His sons, Sheba and Dedan, and their descendants, inhabited Southwest Arabia (Gen. 10:7; I Chron. 1:9; Ezek. 27:22).

Sabtechah - Inhabited the eastern side of the Persian Gulf (Gen. 10:7; I Chron. 1:9).

Nimrod - Famous progenitor of inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Asshur, Nineveh, and Babylon. Also related to Erech, Ac-cad, Calneh, Rehoboth, Calah, and Resen (Gen. 10:9-12; I Chron. 1:10; Micah 5:6). Some of these may be descriptive nouns rather than names of cities.

Mizraim - Egypt and East of Egypt (Gen. 10:13, 14; I Chron. 1:11, 12; cp. all references to Egypt). All these names are plural emphasizing their ethnic character.

Ludim - Not yet identified but may be Libyans, North Africa (Gen. 10:13; I Chron. 1:11).

Anamim - Northern and Middle Egypt (Gen. 10:13; I Chron. 1:11).

Lehabim - Related to Libyans (Gen. 10:13; I Chron. 1:11).

Naphtuhim - Northern Egypt, Thebes, and Memphis (Gen. 10:13; I Chron. 1:11).

Pathrusim - Same location as Naphtuhim or may be Upper Egypt (Gen. 10:14; I Chron. 1:12).

Casluhim - Originally in Nile delta in Egypt, possibly inhabited Philistia later (Gen. 10:14; I Chron. 1:12). Some identify them as from Crete (cp. Deut. 2:23; Jer. 47:4; Amos 9:7).

Caphtorim - Origin same as Casluhim, possibly inhabited Philistia (Gen. 10:14; I Chron. 1:12).

Phut or Put - Generally Egypt, and Libya (Gen. 10:6; I Chron. 1:8; Isa. 66:19; Jer. 46:9; Ezek. 27:10; 30:5; 38:5; Nah. 3:9).

Canaan - At the time of the conquest all the land designated as Palestine, west of the Jordan (Gen. 10:15-18; I Chron. 1:8, 13-16; etc., over 150 Old Testament references).

Sidon - Ancient Phoenicia, city of Sidon (Gen. 10:15; I Chron. 1:13; etc., about 40 Old Testament references and 12 New Testament references).

Heth - The ancient Hittites, a major civilization in Asia Minor (Gen. 10:15; I Chron. 1:13; etc., about 60 Old Testament references).

Jebusite - Original inhabitants of Jerusalem (Gen. 10:16; Josh. 15:63; Judg. 1:21; II Sam. 5:6, 8; 24:16, 18; I Chron. 1:14; 11:6; 21:18; Ezra 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Zech. 9:7; etc., about 35 Old Testament references).

Amorite - Located originally west of the Dead Sea (Gen. 10:16; I Chron. 1:14; etc., about 100 Old Testament references).

Girgashite - Located in Southern Palestine West of Jordan (Gen. 10:16; 15:21; Deut. 7:1; Josh. 3:10; 24:11; I Chron. 1:14; Neh. 9:8).

Hivite - Northern Palestine, Shechem (Gen. 10:17; I Chron. 1:15; etc., about 25 Old Testament references).

Arkite - North of Sidon (Gen. 10:17; I Chron. 1:15).

Sinite - North of Lebanon (Gen. 10:17; I Chron. 1:15).

Arvadite - Located on an island off the coast of Phoenicia, familiar in Assyrian records (Gen. 10:18; I Chron. 1:16; Ezek. 27:8, 11).

Zemarite - West of Galilee (Gen. 10:18; I Chron. 1:16; cp. Josh. 18:22; II Chron. 13:4).

Hamathite - Upper Syria, at the foot of Lebanon (Gen. 10:18; I Chron. 1:16; etc., over 35 Old Testament references).

The sons of Ham occupy a large portion of the Genesis 10 record (10:6-20; cp. I Chronicles 1:8-16). Four sons of Ham are mentioned in Genesis 10:6: Gush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. Unquestionably the large space given to the sons of Ham was due to their ultimate relationship to the subsequent history of Israel and the purposes of God in the Middle East.

First mentioned of the sons of Ham is Cush whose descendants are enumerated as Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah. Special mention is made of the sons of Raamah, namely, Sheba and Dedan. The most prominent son of Gush, however, is Nimrod mentioned in Genesis 10:8-12.

In general the descendants of Ham occupy all of Asia except the northern part, and settled in Southern Europe, and Northern Africa. They may be the forefathers of the American Indians who are believed to have originally entered the American continent through Alaska, having come up the east coast of Asia. The descendants of Cush seem to have inhabited Southern Egypt and the land to the south and east of Egypt, including ancient Abyssinia, Nubia, and Ethiopia. Because of the close proximity of the Semitic

race, the Ethiopian language eventually became Semitic even though the racial origin was otherwise.

The five sons of Cush seem to refer to various peoples in the general geographic area of Egypt. Some of them reached all the way to the Persian Gulf and some mention is made of most of them in various Scriptures: Seba (cp. I Chronicles 1:9; Psalm 72:10; Isaiah 43:3; cp. references to Sabeans, Job 1:15; Isaiah 45:14; Ezekiel 23:42; Joel 3:8; and references to Sheba, I Kings 10; II Chronicles 9; Job 6:19; Psalm 72:10, 15; Isaiah 60:6; Jeremiah 6:20; Ezekiel 27:22, 23; 38:13). Havilah seems to refer to Southwestern Arabia known in modern times as Yemen (Genesis 10:7; I Chronicles 1:9; cp. Genesis 2:11; 10:29; 25:18; I Samuel 15:7; I Chronicles 1:23). Little is known of Sabtah except that probably it is to the east of Yemen (Genesis 10:7; I Chronicles 1:9). The descendants of Sabtah lived east of Yemen. The descendants of Raamah (Genesis 10:7; I Chronicles 1:9) are mentioned in Ezekiel 27:22 as famous traders and according to inscriptions were located geographically in Southwest Arabia adjacent to the Persian Gulf. Sabtechah (Genesis 10:7; I Chronicles 1:9) may have lived on the eastern side of the Persian Gulf.

The two sons of Raamah, namely, Sheba and Dedan are usually mentioned together and there is some confusion between Sheba and Seba (cp. Seba, above). Both lived in the general area of Arabia.

The special mention of Nimrod (Genesis 10:9-12; I Chronicles 1:10; cp. Micah 5:6) as a descendant of Cush is occasioned by the fact that he is the originator of Babel later known as Babylon and apparently was an energetic man who with his posterity built the Mesopotamian area and such famous spots as Asshur and Nineveh (Genesis 10:11). Nimrod was unquestionably the Napoleon of his day and the head of one of the earliest empires subsequent to Noah recorded in Scripture. His government seems to have occupied most of Western Asia and has left many monuments. The political might symbolized in Nimrod and his empire was ended subsequent to the divine judgment at the tower of Babel when their one language was confounded.

The second son of Ham, Mizraim, was the progenitor of the major population of Egypt and usually the term is translated Egypt (about 87 times) in its many instances in the Bible. It is generally agreed, however, that the descendants of Mizraim, of which seven are named (Genesis 10:13, 14), migrated to the east and this accounts for the similarity between those who inhabited the area adjacent to the Indian Ocean to the Egyptians. Ludim apparently refers to the Libyans of Northern Africa. Anamim is mentioned only in the genealogies (Genesis 10:13; I Chronicles 1:11) but probably lived in Northern or Middle Egypt. Lehabim is also mentioned only in the genealogies (Genesis 10:13; I Chronicles 1:11) and they also have been related to the Libyans. Naphtuhim and Pathrusim (Genesis 10:13, 14; I Chronicles 1:12) seem to be related to Northern Egypt and especially the area around Thebes and Memphis. Casluhim and Caphtorim (Genesis 10:14; I Chronicles 1:12) were in the Nile Delta area of Egypt. In general Mizraim is therefore to be identified with Egypt, but its people migrated extensively to the east. As one of the important nations related to Israel, they figure largely in subsequent prophecy and form one of the great prophetic themes of the Old Testament which will be the subject of later discussion.

The third son of Ham, Phut or Put, is mentioned a number of times in the Bible (Genesis 10:6; I Chronicles 1:8; Isaiah 66:19; Jeremiah 46:9; Ezekiel 27:10; 30:5; 38:5; Nahum 3:9). From these references it is clear that the people who descended from Phut were Africans closely associated with the descendants of Mizraim. Their exact geographic location, however, is not clear and it may be that they were scattered. Most probable identifications are that they lived in Libya and other considerations have led some to think that they lived south of Egypt or east of Egypt around the Red Sea. Phut is mentioned in Isaiah 66:19

(spelled "Pul") along with other nations to whom God will send a sign at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. In Jeremiah 46:9 where the Hebrew Put is translated "Libyans," they are the objects of God's judgment along with Egypt. Mercenary soldiers from Phut were used by Tyre (Ezekiel 27:10) and by Egypt (Jeremiah 46:9). They are again associated with the fall of Egypt in Ezekiel 30:5 where they are described as from "Libya." Prophetically they are included in the host which invade Israel in Ezekiel 38:5 where they are again described as coming from Libya. According to Nahum 3:9 their mercenary soldiers also helped Nineveh. The fact that the descendants of Phut are not described would indicate that they do not occupy a major role among the Gentiles.

The last son of Ham, Canaan, is obviously important to Biblical history and to the nation Israel. Eleven branches of descendants are mentioned in Genesis 10:15-18, "And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite."

The firstborn of Canaan, Sidon, is prominent in Scripture and descendants of Sidon probably formed the inhabitants of the ancient Phoenician city of Sidon or Zidon located some twenty miles north of Tyre. His descendants are first mentioned in the Amarna letters about 1400 b.c. and are prominent in Biblical history from the time of the conquest (Joshua 19:28). It became a city located in the territory of Asher and later was given the modern name of Saida. The city and its inhabitants are mentioned about forty times in the Old Testament and a dozen times in the New Testament. Its history is bound up with that of the Phoenicians from the eleventh and the eighth centuries b.c. and there is constant mention of them throughout the history of the Old Testament. On at least one occasion Christ preached in this area (Mark 7:24, 31) and condemned the sins of its inhabitants (Matthew 11:21-24). Paul also visited the city on his way to Rome (Acts 27:3). The prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, all pronounced solemn judgments upon Sidon (Isaiah 23:2-12; Jeremiah 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Ezekiel 27:8; 28:20-24; cp. Joel 3:4; Zechariah 9:2). Their prominence in Biblical history and prophecy is undoubtedly due to their geographic location and their close proximity to Tyre which was the special object of divine wrath.

Heth, the second son of Canaan, was the progenitor of the Hittites who figure prominently in Old Testament history. The Hittites are mentioned forty-seven times by this name in the Old Testament and fourteen times as the sons of Heth. Abraham's dealings with them are mentioned in Genesis 23 and the desire of Rebekah to avoid intermarriage with them is indicated in Genesis 27:46. The Hittites are included among the heathen nations with whom the Israelites had to deal in the conquest of the land. Even in David's time Uriah the Hittite is mentioned as the husband of Bathsheba, indicating the intermarriage of the Hittites with Israelites.

The center of the Hittite civilization, now uncovered by archaeologists, was in Asia Minor, and there is evidence that they had an important civilization and extensive literature and times of unusual political power especially during the period 1400-1200 b.c. Some have classified the Hittites as third in importance in the Middle East, with the Egyptians and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia surpassing them. The Hittites do not seem to be vitally connected with the prophetic program of Scripture.

The remaining descendants of Canaan each had their important influence on Biblical history. The Jebusites originally inhabited Jerusalem itself (Joshua 15:63) and their military might was indicated in the fact that the tribes were not able to dislodge them completely, and for many years they continued to live on the border between Judah and Benjamin (Joshua 15:63; Judges 1:21). They do not seem to have loomed large in the history of Israel although there is occasional mention throughout the Old Testament (cp. II

Samuel 5:6, 8; 24:16, 18; I Chronicles 11:6; 21:18; Ezra 9:1; Nehemiah 9:8; Zechariah 9:7; and a number of other references).

The Amorites are prominent in Biblical history, being mentioned almost a hundred times in the Old Testament. They were one of the principal nations conquered by Israel in the conquest of the land and lived originally west of the Dead Sea. Their history is recorded, not only in the Scriptures, but in the inscriptions in which they were known as the Ammurru, with a history that extends from before Abraham. Their importance is mostly historical and they do not figure in prophecy except in predictions which were fulfilled in the conquest.

The Girgashites, living west of Jordan, also were one of the nations dispossessed by Israel in the time of the conquest. They are mentioned only seven times in the Old Testament (Genesis 10:16; 15:21; Deuteronomy 7:1; Joshua 3:10; 24:11; I Chronicles 1:14; Nehemiah 9:8). They have no role in the prophetic future.

The Hivites were also significant as a nation dispossessed by Israel in the conquest. They seem to have lived in the northern part of the Holy Land, and they are mentioned about twenty-five times in the Old Testament usually in connection with other heathen countries whom Israel conquered. At one time they inhabited Shechem (Genesis 34).

The descendants of Canaan described as Arkites can be located some eighty miles north of Sidon and their name has been perpetuated in modern times by the city Tell Arka. This locality had a long history recorded outside the Bible as early as 1400 b.c., but is mentioned in the Bible only in Genesis 10:7 and I Chronicles 1:15 in the genealogies.

The Sinites are referred to only in Genesis 10:17 and I Chronicles 1:15. No definite identification is possible, but it is probable that they are located in the northern part of Lebanon where Strabo refers to "Sinna" as a fort in the mountains. Several other obscure references are found to it in ancient literature.

The Arvadites, mentioned only four times in Scripture (Genesis 10:18; I Chronicles 1:16; Ezekiel 27:8-11), were inhabitants of the island Arvad located two miles from the shore off the coast of Phoenicia. Its modern name is Ruwad.

The Zemarites are cited in Genesis 10:18 and I Chronicles 1:16 and lived in the area west of Galilee between Arvad and Hamath. Other locations have been mentioned, such as Emessa, modern Hums, with others finding them at Sumra, or in the area of Mount Zemaraim (cp. Joshua 18:22; II Chronicles 13:4).

The Hamathites inhabited the city-state of Hamath in upper Syria, referred to about thirty-five times in the Old Testament. At one time an important Canaanite colony (Genesis 10:18), it was captured by the Assyrians in the time of Hezekiah (II Kings 18:34). Located at the foot of Lebanon, it had a long history and came under the control of Assyria, then a province of Syria, and eventually came under the government of Persia in Nehemiah's time. Undoubtedly the descendants of Canaan spread over considerable territory--from Sidon to Gaza and eastward as far as the area east of the Dead Sea as indicated in the mention of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Lasha in Genesis 10:19.

Taken as a whole, the sons of Ham lived in an extensive geographic area and were the original inhabitants of the land given by God to Israel.

Table Of The Sons Of Shem

Genesis 10:21-31

Elam - Eastern neighbor and traditional rival of Mesopotamian states, settled in a portion of Persia (Gen. 10:22; I Chron. 1:17; cp. Gen. 14:1, 9; Isa. 11:11; 21:2, 6; Jer. 25:25; 49:34-39; Ezek. 32:24; Dan. 8:2).

Asshur - To be identified with Assyria (Gen. 10:22; I Chron. 1:17; cp. Num. 24:22, 24; Ezra 4:2; Ps. 83:8; Ezek. 27:23; 32:22; Hos. 14:3; and about 140 Old Testament references to Assyria).

Arphaxad - Located originally north and east of Nineveh (Gen. 10:22, 24, 25; 11:11-27; I Chron. 1:17-24; cp. Luke 3:36).

Salah - Also spelled Shelah (Gen. 10:24; 11:12-15; I Chron. 1:18; Luke 3:35).

Eber - Father of Hebrew race (Gen. 10:21, 24, 25; 11:14-17; I Chron. 1:18, 19, 25).

Peleg - Progenitor of Abraham (Gen. 10:25; 11:16-19; I Chron. 1:19, 25).

Joktan - His thirteen sons were progenitors of the Arabs (Gen. 10:25, 26, 29; I Chron. 1:19, 20, 23).

Lud - Associated with both Asiatic and African people, possible reference to Lydians of Anatolia, location uncertain (Gen. 10:22; I Chron. 1:17; Isa. 66:19; Ezek. 27:10).

Aram - Inhabited wide area in Syria and Mesopotamia (Gen. 10:22, 23; I Chron. 1:17; cp. also about 65 Old Testament references to Syrians, another name for descendants of Aram).

Uz - Occupied Arabian desert west of Babylon (Gen. 10:23; I Chron. 1:17; cp. Job 1:1; Jer. 25:20; Lam. 4:21).

Hul - Probably located near Lake Merom, north of Sea of Galilee (Gen. 10:23; I Chron. 1:17).

Gether - Location unknown (Gen. 10:23; I Chron. 1:17).

Mash - Also known as Meshech, location unknown (Gen. 10:23; I Chron. 1:17).

The third major division of the children of Noah were descendants of Shem, mentioned in Genesis 10:21-31. These were also known as "all the children of Eber" (Genesis 10:21). By this is meant that the children of Eber, who were descendants of Shem through Arphaxad and Salah, were descendants of Shem, but the term is not properly applied to all of the descendants of Shem. They were the more important descendants of Shem. It was from this line that Abraham and the children of Israel came (cp. Genesis 11:10-27).

Five sons of Shem are mentioned in Genesis 10:22. The descendants of Elam (Genesis 10:22; I Chronicles 1:17), seemed to have settled in that portion of Persia which bears their name (cp. Genesis 14:1, 9; Isaiah 11:11; 21:2, 6; Jeremiah 25:25; 49:34-39; Ezekiel 32:24; Daniel 8:2).

Asshur is mentioned second (Genesis 10:22; I Chronicles 1:17; cp. Numbers 24:22, 24; Ezra 4:2; Psalm 83:8; Ezekiel 27:23; 32:22; Hosea 14:3; and about 140 Old Testament references to Assyria). The descendants of Asshur lived in Assyria. They were the forerunners of the later mighty Assyrian Empire, having come originally from Babylon and having a close connection with the Babylonians throughout their subsequent history. As Assyria held a prominent place in the history of the ancient world from the ninth to the seventh century b.c., they had an important place in prophecy which has already been fulfilled.

Arphaxad (Genesis 10:22, 24, 25; 11:11-27; I Chronicles 1:17-24; cp. Luke 3:36) is important as progenitor of the line which led to Abraham and to Christ in the genealogies introduced in Genesis 10:24, 25 and amplified in Genesis 11:13-27. One of the important descendants of Arphaxad was Eber (Genesis 10:21, 24, 25; 11:14-17; I Chronicles 1:18, 19, 25), son of Salah, or Shelah (Genesis 11:12-15; I Chronicles 1:18, 24), who had two prominent sons, Peleg and Joktan. From Peleg (Genesis 10:25; 11:16-19; I Chronicles 1:19, 25) descended the line to Abraham. Joktan (Genesis 10:25, 26, 29; I Chronicles 1:19, 20, 23) had thirteen sons (Genesis 10:26-29). Almodad was the founder of one of the Arab tribes. Sheleph had descendants who probably settled in Sulaf. Hazarmaveth settled in a portion of Arabia; Jerah was another Arabian tribe. Hadoram was another Arabian tribe impossible to identify. Uzal is often connected with Sanaa, a city in Yemen. Diklah was the progenitor of a people who settled in Yemen; Obal fathered another Arabian tribe called Ebal in I Chronicles 1:22, whose location is unknown. The founder of an Arab tribe known as Mael was Abimael. Sheba was the forerunner of an important kingdom in Southern Arabia known as the kingdom of Sheba. Nothing seems to be known about Ophir. Havilah probably populated a portion of Southern Arabia. Jobab is the name of another Arabian tribe concerning whom little is known. The descendants of Joktan according to Genesis 10:30 lived in the area from Mesha unto Sephar, the area to the west and south of Babylon corresponding with Arabia Petraea.

Lud, the fourth son of Shem (Genesis 10:22; I Chronicles 1:17; Isaiah 66:19; Ezekiel 27:10), seems to have become associated with Ludim, descendants of Mizraim. Both Lud and Ludim are associated with peoples of Africa and Asia, but their precise location is not clear. One explanation is that the term may have referred to mercenary soldiers who because of the character of their work were scattered. They were employed by Egypt.

Aram (Genesis 10:22, 23; I Chronicles 1:17), the last named of the children of Shem, was the progenitor of a large offspring which inhabited a wide area of Syria and Mesopotamia. The word Aram is translated Syrian more than 65 times in the Old Testament. Uz (Genesis 10:23; I Chronicles 1:17; cp. Job 1:1; Jeremiah 25:20; Lamentations 4:21), a son of Aram, seems to have settled in Arabia west of Babylon, the scene of the Book of Job. Hul (Genesis 10:23; I Chronicles 1:17) and his descendants probably lived near Lake Merom on the Jordan north of Galilee. The location of Gether and Mash (Genesis 10:23; I Chronicles 1:17), who is also known as Meshech in I Chronicles 1:17, is unknown.

Important to the history of Israel is the fact that the wives of Jacob were Aramaic or Syrian (Deuteronomy 26:5). By the time of King Saul the Aramaeans had occupied several districts adjacent to Israel including the land between the Tigris and Euphrates; Damascus (I Kings 11:23, 24); Zobah (II Samuel 8), north of Hamath; Maachah (Joshua 12:5; 13:11), east of Jordan near Mount Hermon; Geshur (Deuteronomy 3:14; II Samuel 15:8; 13:37), east of the Sea of Galilee; Beth-Rehob (cp. Numbers 13:21; Judges 18:28), near Geshur; and Ish-tob (II Samuel 10:6), also east of Jordan.

From a Biblical standpoint, the descendants of Shem were most important because through them is traced the line of the Messiah, Abraham, and Israel. It is probably for this reason that they are mentioned last in the genealogy in contrast to the fact that they are mentioned first in Genesis 10:1.

The genealogies of the nations provide a framework of Biblical prophecy. While many of the nations do not figure largely or prominently, the outworking of the divine purpose inevitably stems from these early progenitors of the human race. The fact that they are itemized in Scripture indicates that from the divine viewpoint these constitute the outline of the divine purpose in human history.

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