

Genesis Chapter 10

Verses 10:1 – 11:9: The genealogy of Shem, Ham and Japheth (verse 1).

Genesis 10:1 "Now these [are] the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood."

“Sons of Noah”: All the people of the world since the Flood have descended from the three sons of Noah (Acts 17:26).

This Scripture, above, was telling us about the descendants of Noah and his sons, who were born after the flood. There is no record of a birth while they were on the ark.

Genesis 10:2 "The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras."

The historian has not arranged this catalogue according to seniority of birth; for the account begins with the descendants of Japheth, and the line of Ham is given before that of Shem though he is expressly said to be the youngest or younger son of Noah.

“The sons of Japheth”: Who though mentioned last, the genealogy begins with him, by a figure which experts in formal rhetoric call a "chiasm". The posterity of Japheth are those whom Hesiod often calls "Iapetionides", and him "Iapetus".

According to Josephus, the sons of Japheth inhabited the earth, beginning from the mountains Taurus and Amanas, and then went on in Asia unto the river Tanis, and in Europe unto Amanas.

Seven of his sons are mentioned, and the first is Gomer; from whom, according to the same writer, came the Gomareans or Gomerites, in his time called by the Greeks Galatians, that is, the Gauls of Asia minor, who inhabited Phrygia.

It is plain from (Ezekiel 38:6), that Gomer and his people lay to the north of Judea, and the posterity of Japheth went first into the northern parts of Asia, and then spread themselves into Europe: six more of his sons follow, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

The first of these, Magog, was the father of a northern people which bore his name (see Ezekiel 38:2), and according to Josephus, who is generally followed, are the same that were called Scythians; from Madai came the Medes, often spoken of in Scripture, along with the Persians.

So Josephus says, from him came the nation of Mandaeans, whom the Greeks call Medes; and very frequently in Scripture the Medes go by the name of Madai, their original ancestor.

The word "Japheth" means expansion, which is a very good example of just what happened. These sons, like Gomer, became the name of a tribe of people. Each son started a tribe with the

family name as the name of the tribe. Magog is a name we see throughout the Bible as a tribe of people.

Some believe this to be Libya, others believe that Gog in the land of Magog is referring to Russia. Besides this reference in Genesis, Magog was mentioned strongly in Ezekiel as an enemy of Israel (Ezekiel 38:2 and 39:6).

The Medes sprang from Madai, the third son of Japheth. These sons spread and populated different countries, as God had instructed them to do.

Javan, many believe, was the descendant of Greeks. In (Isaiah 66:19), where this name was mentioned, it is associated with Tarshish, Pul. Lud and "the isles afar off" are probably, the Gentiles of many nations.

For our study here, I believe all of these sons populated a different area and started tribes of people by that name. Tubal, many believe, founded Tibernia near the Black Sea. Meshech was often mentioned together with Tubal, and probably, populated the area of Northern Assyria.

Genesis 10:3 "And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah."

"And the sons of Gomer": Who was the first of the sons of Japheth, three who are mentioned: the first of these seated himself in the lesser Asia, in Pontus and Bithynia; there were some traces of his name in the river Ascanius, and in the Ascanian lake or bay.

And also in the lesser Phrygia or Troas, where was a city called Ascania, and where were the Ascanian isles, and the Euxine Pontus, or Axeine, as it was first called, which is the sea that separates Asia and Europe, and is no other than a corruption of the sea of Ashkenaz.

Ashkenaz, probably, was Assyrian. They were, also, known as the Scythians. The name was associated with barbarians. Riphath was an obscure tribe that seemed to not be mentioned again. The descendants of Togarmah were mentioned (in 1 Chronicles 1:6).

They are mentioned as being traders who trafficked with Tyre in horses, horsemen, and mules (in Ezekiel 27:14).

In (Ezekiel 38), they were named along with Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya as followers of Gog.

Genesis 10:4 "And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim."

As Javan peopled a considerable part of Greece, it is in that region that we must seek for the settlements of his descendants; Elishah probably was the first who settled at Elis, in Peloponnesus.

We know very little about Elishah, except that his descendants were island people who sold purple and scarlet fabric to Tyre. Many people believe these were Cyprus, or Kittim. The Aegean Coast was rich in purple shells. Whether this has a connection, I cannot say.

"Tarshish" is a Phoenician word meaning smelting plant, or refinery. Nearly every time the word Tarshish was mentioned in the Old Testament, it was associated with ships, merchants, and trade. Whatever the area, we do get an indication, here, that these people shipped metals to various places.

Tarshish first inhabited Cilicia, whose capital anciently was the city of Tarsus, where the Apostle Paul was born.

Kittim had no certain area that can be proved by the Bible. It could have been used loosely for the islands of the coast, maybe Cyprus.

Dodanim, the Bible does not explain. Some scholars believe this was Troy. Really, unless the Bible carries the name through the Scriptures, it probably means it is irrelevant to the spiritual teachings.

The Bible leaves no questions about these sons of Javan, because verse 5 told us exactly what happened to them.

Genesis 10:5 "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations."

"Divided ... after his tongue": This act describes the situation after the Tower of Babel account (in chapter 11).

In (verse 5), I do want us to take note that the descendants of Japheth did as God instructed, and scattered, and populated the area God has given them. Take note also, that these people spoke different languages. This will be very important to remember as we go on.

We also need to take note, at this point, that all of these people that we have studied in the first part of this lesson today were descendants of Noah through his son Japheth, probably Caucasians.

In verse 6 there was a break from the first five verses. We will now take up the descendants of Noah through Ham.

Verses 10:6-20: The sons of Ham": Many of whom were Israel's enemies.

Genesis 10:6 "And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan."

"And the sons of Ham": Next to the sons of Japheth, the sons of Ham are reckoned. Their territory generally embraced the southern portions of the globe. The most usual ancient name of the country was Kern, the black land.

Scripture speaks of Egypt as the land of Ham (Psalm 78:51; Psalm 105:23; Psalm 106:22), Cush, Ethiopia, including Arabia, and Abyssinia. The original settlement of Cush, however, is believed to have been on the Upper Nile, whence he afterwards spread to Arabia, Babylonia, and India.

We learned in a previous lesson that the name "Ham" means hot. Most people believe that Ham was the father of the Negroid nations. It is impossible to prove this either way, except to note that some of Ham's descendants settled Africa, and Ethiopia, and other black nations.

Cush probably settled Ethiopia too, (this is commonly accepted). Mizraim was commonly accepted as Egypt. "Mizraim" was translated Egypt eighty-seven times in the Bible. Phut was an African country or peoples, probably joining Egypt.

Canaan was, probably, ancient evil Palestine before Joshua, through the help of God, overthrew them and took the land for the children of Israel. We will see (in verse 15), of this chapter, that many races of people were started from Canaan. Jebusite, Amorite, Girgasite, Hivite, Arkite, Sinite, Arvadite, Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Ham's descendants worshipped false gods.

Genesis 10:7 "And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan."

Cush had five sons and two grandsons, who were reckoned among the founders of nations.

Seba, probably, means the Sabeans. Seba was mentioned in Isaiah and Psalms, as well as in Genesis. (The Sabeans, South west Arabia, and Yemen). The Queen of Sheba was, probably, from this area. Seba, Saba, and Sheba probably are the same word.

Havilah became the Ishmaelites, located somewhere in Arabia. These people were nomads (travelling people). Their name meant sand. They probably roamed the desert. Sabtah has no other mention that I can find.

Raamah's descendants were traders and probably lived in South West Arabia. Sabtechah seems to disappear with this son. Sheba (this particular Sheba), seems to have settled the shores of the Persian Gulf. Dedan seems to be just mentioned once more (in Chronicles), and I could not trace him.

Genesis 10:8 "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth."

"Nimrod": This powerful leader was evidently the force behind the building of Babel (see Genesis 11:1-4).

Nimrod was a great man in his day; he began to be mighty in the earth. Those before him were content to be upon the same level with their neighbors, and though every man bore rule in his own house, yet no man pretended any further. Nimrod was resolved to lord it over his neighbors.

The spirit of the giants before the flood, who became mighty men, and men of renown (Gen. 6:4), revived in him. Nimrod was a great hunter. Hunting then was the method of preventing the

hurtful increase of wild beasts. This required great courage and address, and thus gave an opportunity for Nimrod to command others, and gradually attached a number of men to one leader.

From such a beginning, it is likely, that Nimrod began to rule, and to force others to submit. He invaded his neighbor's rights and properties, and persecuted innocent men; endeavoring to make all his own by force and violence. He carried on his oppressions and violence in defiance of God himself.

Genesis 10:9 "He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD."

"Nimrod the mighty hunter" The name of this man means "Let Us Revolt." Arab traditions record ruins named after him at Birs-Nimrud, which is Borsippa, and at the Nimrud of Calah.

His activities centered first in "Shinar" (Babylonia) and included building the Tower of "Babel" (11:1-9).

Then he went to Assyria (Micah 5:6). Some believe that since the context deals with man and not animals, his prowess in hunting deals with man and that his exploits are of a moral and spiritual nature. "Mighty hunter" is from 6:4, and his name relates to the word "marad," meaning "rebel."

Thus, he established a thoroughly autocratic, imperialistic, despotic system of government (of a kind described in Isa. 13, 14), back of which stands Satan in all his rage against God.

He did all of this "before the Lord." What he did was very significant and was a matter of concern to God Himself. God certainly knows what everybody does; but this made a strong impression (just as the "sons of God" did in 6:2).

"Nimrod" means rebel. Nimrod was a powerful worldly man. If you will notice, it was of the earth, not heaven. Hitler was a powerful earthly man, as well. You can easily see that having power on the earth is not necessarily good. He was a direct contrast to Jesus (Shepherd).

A hunter is trying to satisfy his own flesh, and a shepherd is concerned about saving others. At any rate, we will see that Nimrod was of a very earthly nature, not a spiritual nature. There is no doubt about where he settled. Verse 10 tells us that.

Genesis 10:10 "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."

"Babel": The beginning of what later would prove to be Babylon, the destroyer of God's people and His city Jerusalem (605-539 B.C.).

Nimrod had a rebellious spirit. He did not want to heed God's instruction to scatter and populate the earth. He thought that by his own power and might, that he would be able to make his own

entrance to heaven without the help of God. He and his ancestors rebelled against God. Even now, we associate the name Babel with evil or evil city.

Babylon the great in Revelation was a very good example of this. Nimrod would take his glory right here on the earth; he would not have any glory in heaven. Erech was near the Euphrates River in southern Babylonia. Accad was thought to be the same area as modern Baghdad. There was very little known of Calneh, except the evil influence of Nimrod.

Shinar was probably southern Babylonia; Assyria as we know it today. (In Isaiah 1:11), we saw Shinar mentioned as one of the places the Jews will be gathered from and brought to the Holy Land in the end days.

In (Zechariah 5:11), the land Shinar was mentioned as a land of godless commercialism. Nebuchadnezzar carried away temple treasures from Jerusalem to Shinar (in Daniel 1:2).

Genesis 10:11 "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,"

"Out of that land ... builded Nineveh": This was Israel's primary enemy from the East. Nimrod was Israel's prototypical ancient enemy warrior, whose name in Hebrew means "rebel" (Micah 5:6).

This above Scripture was speaking of Assyria. Nineveh was a wicked city, even down to the time of Jonah. This was the city that Jonah thought was too evil for God to save. Jonah went the other way when God told him to warn Nineveh. Nineveh repented in sackcloth, and ashes, and called a fast. God let them live, but you can see that Nineveh was truly an evil city.

Rehoboth was, probably, a suburb of Nineveh to Calah, including Resen, all made up Nineveh proper.

Genesis 10:12 "And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same [is] a great city."

"And Resen, between Nineveh and Calah": This was another city built by Ashur, situated between those two cities mentioned: the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call it Talsar, or Telassar (see Isaiah 37:12).

The conjecture of Bochart (is more probable), that it is the Larissa of Xenophon, situated on the Tigris; though Junius thinks it is either Bassora, or Belcina, which Ptolemy places on the Tigris, near Nineveh.

As we can easily see, all the cities and areas that Ham's descendants inhabited were rebellious toward God. They worshipped the god of fertility, and worshipped in high places, which, as we will come to find, is an abomination to God.

Genesis Chapter 10 Questions

1. Did Shem, Ham, and Japheth have sons on the ark?
2. What does "Japheth" mean?
3. What two opinions are presently expressed about Magog?
4. Who did the Medes spring from?
5. Many believe Javan was the father of what country?
6. Why did God want them to scatter?
7. These various grandsons became leaders of what?
8. Why did God want them to scatter?
9. Name seven sons of Japheth.
10. The man often mentioned with Tubal was whom?
11. Togarmah trafficked with Tyre in what?
12. In Ezekiel 38, they were mentioned with what three countries following Gog?
13. Where did the sons of Javan populate?
14. What does "Tarshish" mean?
15. What area do scholars believe was Troy?
16. What did I ask that we take note of about Japheth and his descendants?
17. Were Japheth's descendants, Caucasians, Negroids, or Orientals?
18. List four sons of Ham.
19. What does "Ham" mean?
20. Most people believe Ham was which of the three types of people?
21. Cush settled where?
22. Mizraim was, probably, where?
23. Phut was where?
24. Canaan was where?
25. Name nine races of people started through Canaan.

26. Seba was, probably, whom?
27. Where was it located?
28. Havilah became whom?
29. What was another word for travelling people?
30. What did the word mean?
31. Where can we assume they wandered?
32. Who was the father of Nimrod?
33. What was Nimrod before the Lord?
34. How did this differ from Jesus?
35. Nimrod had what kind of nature?
36. Where was the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom?
37. What did Babel and Erech have in common?
38. What kind of spirit did Nimrod have?
39. Nimrod and his ancestors did what to God?
40. What is the modern city that Accad was thought to be?
41. In Isaiah 11:11 what was one place the Jews will be gathered from?
42. Nebuchadnezzar carried temple treasures where?
43. Who built Nineveh?
44. What did Nineveh, Rehoboth, and Calah have in common?
45. What three things did the people of Nineveh do to keep God from destroying them?
46. What two things did Ham's descendants do that displeased God?