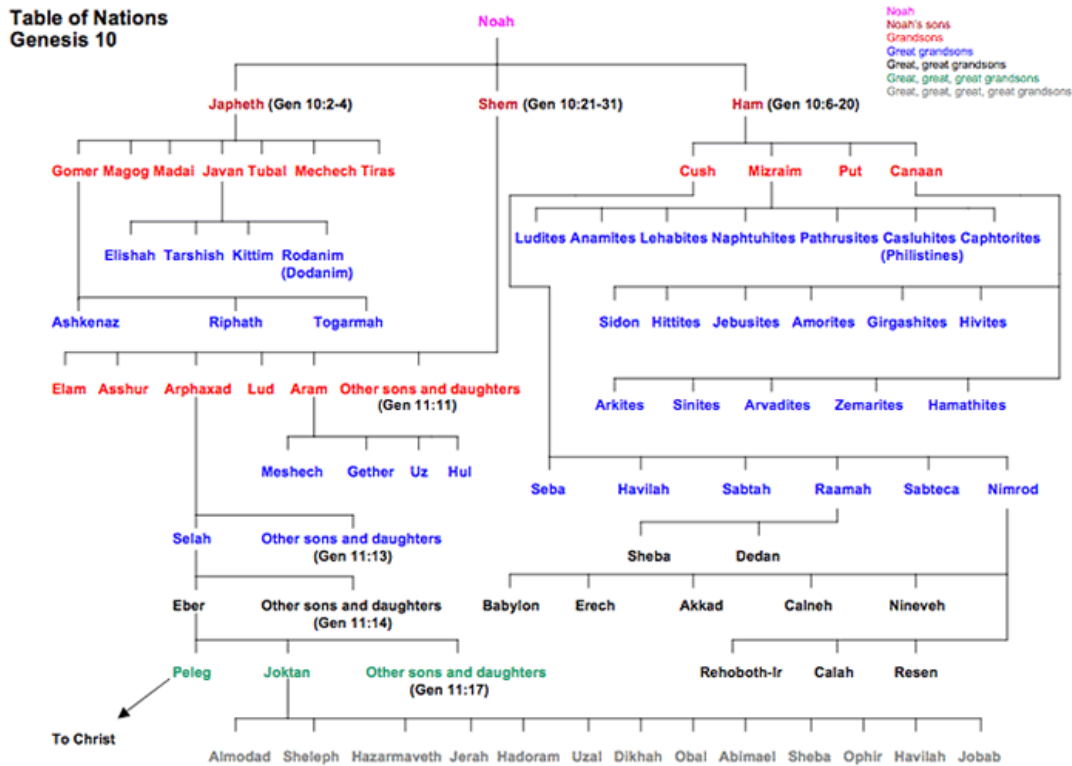


The Book of Genesis
Genesis 10:1-11:9: Nations and languages
 2/05/2019 Wednesday PM

Introduction

- Last time we discussed **Noah's Sons and Later Years**.
- We looked at the account of Ham's sin of seeing his father's nakedness and shame and how he worsened his father's shame by telling his brothers about it.
- We seen how Canaan was cursed and Shem and Japheth received blessings for the way they handled the situation.
- Our sin always has an effect, and Ham's sin affected the generations that came after him.
- That brings us to tonight as we look at **Nations and languages**.



- **Genesis 10** shows us the Table of Nations which is Noah's sons and their son's families as well.
- Overall there were 70 total nations. Japheth (14), Ham (30), and Shem (26). Noah had 16 grandsons, 7 from Japheth, 4 from Ham, and 5 from Shem.

The Japhethites (10:2-5)

- These nations were the "coastland peoples", originally around the Mediterranean, Black, and Caspian Seas.
- They eventually spread in their lands with many different languages and nations occupying most of Europe and Asia past Persia and India.
- This fulfilled the prophecy made by Noah that God would enlarge Japheth's territory in **9:27**.

The Hamites (10:6-20)

- Ham only had four sons: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. However, many of the Hamite nations are mentioned here. This is probably because they became opponents of the Messianic nation from the time of Moses.
- Nimrod is a notable descendant of Ham in **10:8-11**. His empire began with Babel and he was most likely the leader of the rebellion that took place there with the building of the Tower of Babel.
- Another notable ancestor of Ham's was Egypt (*Mizraim*) who was the ancestor of the Egyptian people.
- In **v.19** it says, "and the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and then toward **Sodom, Gomorrah**, Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.
- This dates the Table of Nations here as at least being during the time Sodom and Gomorrah were flourishing and known as landmarks.

The Shemites (10:21-31)

- Here we see the narrative more to the Seed son, Shem. However, not all of his descendants would be part of the Messianic Line. The descendants that are mentioned here, are not part of the Seed Line.
- We will pick up with Shem's descendants that are a part of the Seed Line in Chapter 11.
- The account closes in v.32 by tying everything back to Noah.

The Tower of Babel

- **Genesis 10** showed how the nations formed from Noah's descendants were already dispersed and it covers the period from the Flood to some time when Sodom and Gomorrah were built but before they were destroyed.
- In **Genesis 10:25**, it mentioned briefly about the dispersion of the people in Peleg's day, however, it does not say why the earth was divided and the people dispersed. That's what **Genesis 11:1-9** is about to do.

Genesis 11:1-9

¹Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. ²As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. ³They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. ⁴Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." ⁵But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. ⁶The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." ⁸So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. ⁹That is why it was called Babel - because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

- **V.1** – This verse is quite clear, that at this time, “the whole world had one language and a common speech.”
- This means that they had a common way of speaking and that they used the same words.
- **V.2** – Here we see that after the Flood, people moved eastward and settled in the plains of Shinar which would have been in Mesopotamia. The first cities there were Nimrod's (**10:10-12**).
- **Vv.3-4** – The people used bricks because there was not a lot of stone in the region they settled, however there was a lot of clay. They set out to build a city out of these bricks and a tower to go along with it.
- **What was the purpose of the tower they wanted to build?**
- They tower was most likely a ziggurat, which was a massive step pyramid built from bricks and part of a wider temple complex.
- The people wanted to build the tower that would be tall enough to “reach the heavens.” This may have been to escape another flood.
- They also wanted to “make a name” for themselves.
- Last but not least, they wanted to build it so that they would not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.
- This was in direct defiance to God's command that they be fruitful and multiply and to “fill the earth.”
- **Vv.5-9** – These verses talk about God in human terms, however, we know he did not have to actually come down.
- God evaluates the situation and notices determines that if man will rebel like this with one language, then there will be no limit to the type of rebellion that they will strive for.
- God decides to confuse the languages and scatters the people over all the earth to stop them from building the city.
- This resulted in what we see today in the diversity of the languages that are represented all over the world. Actually, there are relatively few language families, but many languages themselves.
- The spreading of the people all over the earth also caused what we see today as the different ‘races’ of people.
- Because of the different climates and exposures to the sun, the pigments in our skins changed over the years and caused what we see today as the differences in skin color.
- In actuality, we are all just a different shade of brown, but we are a part of the same race, the human race.

