The Table of Nations

Introduction: Genesis 10

The genealogy that appears in Genesis 10 is called by theologians, “the Table of nations.” It represents God’s concern for all people and all nations and not just Israel, which is understood by the omission of Israel from this “Table” and emphasizes that God, is the God of the Gentiles by omitting Israel. The Table of Nations was written for the benefit of Israel who according to the Word of God would be the medium to bring blessing to the world. It was necessary for Israel to understand the source from which the various nations that surrounded her originated in order that she might have an insight into their character by which to guide her attitude and conduct toward them. The Table of Nations presents a background of world history for the call of Abraham and in fact, out of concern for the salvation of the nations, God calls Abraham and his posterity.

The genealogy of Genesis 10 is “segmented” meaning it displays depth and breadth of the relations between the nations tracing their lineage back to a common ancestor, namely, Noah’s three sons. It expresses the kinship and distinctions between Israel and the nations where she emerges from them and is destined to bring blessing to them through the Messiah. It is “linear” meaning it establishes continuity over stretches of time without narrative to demonstrate the legitimacy of Noah’s son Shem as the one whom the promised “Seed” Jesus Christ will come.

Seventy nations are presented in the Table of Nations: Fourteen from Japheth, thirty from Ham, and twenty-six from Shem. It is “selective” and “not exhaustive” since it is arranged to give most attention to those nations with whom the nation of Israel would have most contact. Thus, the descendants of Japheth are listed in Genesis 10:2-5 followed by the descendants of Ham with special attention to the Canaanites in Genesis 10:6-20. Lastly, the descendants of Shem are given in Genesis 10:21-31, which includes the Israelites.

Each section concludes with a formula summarizing the preceding narrative in terms of “families” (genealogy), “languages” (linguistics), “lands” (territories), and “nations” (politics).

The Bible is very explicit and emphatic that men living in the world and all its various races are descended from Noah through his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth (see Genesis 10:32; Acts 17:26). All the physical characteristics of the different nations and races must therefore, have been present in the genetic constitutions of these six people who came through the Flood in the Ark.

Somehow, by the regular mechanisms of genetics-variation, recombination—all the various groups of nations and races must have developed from this beginning.
History records that the descendants of Japheth settled to the north and west whereas Ham went south after the Flood and Shem traveled east.

*Genesis 10:1-5*

**Genesis 10:1** Now these are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood. (NASB95)

“These are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah” refers to the genealogy that follows in Genesis 10 and this is indicated by the noun *toledhoth*, “the records of the generations” which is always used as an introduction to what follows.

Genesis 10:1 is the introduction or preamble to Genesis 10 and contains two parts: (1) Scope of the genealogy: Noah and the descendants of his three sons (2) Identifies chronological context: “After the Flood.”

**Genesis 10:2** The sons of Japheth (“enlarged”) were Gomer (go-mer-name means, “completion”) and Magog (ma-gog-“land of God”) and Madai (“middle land”) and Javan (ja-van) (“one in a state of bubbling heat”) and Tubal (tu-bal) (“You shall be led”) and Meshech (me-shek) (“led along”) and Tiras (ti-ras) (“expulsion, disinherit, impoverish”). (NASB95)

Herodotus and Plutarch identify “Gomer” with the district of Cimmeria, which is north of the Black Sea. The Cimmerians were nomadic herdsmen and were distinguished for their archery according to Babylonian texts of the 6th century B.C.

Late in the second millennium B.C. the Scythians drove them from their homeland north of the Caucasus into those mountains into the Crimea when their attempted expansion into China was thwarted. The Scythians pushed the Cimmerians across the Caucasus and into Armenia, Anatolia and Eastern Europe.

The descendants of “Gomer” include: Celts, Galatians, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Goths, Vandals, Scandinavians, Armenians, Germans, Belgians, Dutch, Austrians, Swiss, Angles, Saxons, Britons, English, Cornish, Irish, Welsh, and French.

“Magog” and his descendants inhabited exclusively the region of the Caucasus and of northern Armenia and Josephus says that Magog “founded those that from him were named Magogites but who by the Greeks were called Scythians.”

The Scythians themselves have a tradition that their ancestors originally came forth from Armenia and this agrees with the Scriptures, which places the immediate descendants of Noah in Armenia.

The Japhetic race comprised those whom the Greeks and Romans called Sarmatians, but who in modern times are called Slavs or Russians. The descendants of “Magog” include: (Russians, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Finns,
Siberians, Yugoslavians, Croatians, Bosnians, Serbians, Slovenians, Slovakians, Bulgarians, Poles, Czechs.

According to 2 Kings 17:6, 18:11; Isaiah 21:2, Jeremiah 51:11 and Daniel 5:28, “Madai” refers to the land of Media and its people who were called “Medes” who settled in ancient “Persia” or what is now called “Iran.” They settled in the mountainous region east of Assyria and south of the Caspian Sea. Both Herodotus and Strabo confirm the fact that they were of Indo-European (that is Japhetic) extract and we know that their language was of this group. It was through this group that the Aryans developed who later migrated into India to become the progenitors of the Indian peoples.

The Medes were absorbed by the Persian Empire during the reign of Cyrus and were a hostile power to Babylon according to Isaiah 13:17 and 21:2. The descendants of “Madai” include: Medes, Aryans, Persians, Iranians, Kurds, Turks, East Indians, the peoples of Afghanistan, Pakistan.

The Hebrew noun yavan is translated “Javan” in some Old Testament passages (Ezek. 27:13; Isa. 66:19), “Greece” in others (Dan. 8:21; Zech. 9:13) and thus, represents the Greeks. In particular, it represents the Asiatic Ionians of the coast of Caria and Lydia whose cities were important commercial emporiums two centuries before those of the Peloponnesus.

The descendants of “Javan” include: Greeks, Spartans, Dories, Britons, Aeolians, Achaean, Myceneans, Macedonians, Carthaginians, Cyprians, Cretans, Latins, Venetians, Romans, Sicilians, Italians, Spaniards, and Portuguese.

“Meshech” and “Tubal” migrated from Asia and later from Asia Minor to the north beyond the Black Sea, the Taurus Mountains (located directly north of Turkey and along the eastern border of Russia) and Caspian Seas (located directly north or Tehran, Iran and along southern border of Russia) and were known as wild barbarians.

Ezekiel identifies “Magog, Meshech” and “Tubal” as being located far north of Israel, which today is Russia and its republics and prophesied that during the midway point of the Tribulation period these three nations will invade Israel but will be totally destroyed supernaturally by God (Ezek. 38). The descendants of “Meshech” include: Muscovites, Lithuanians, Romanians whereas the descendants of “Tubal” include: Georgians and Albanians.

Josephus contended that “Tiras” was the founder of the Thracians and the Jerusalem Targum agrees and according to Herodotus (Greek historian 484-425 B.C.) the Etruscans migrated to Lydia in Asia Minor and then went west to Sicily and Italy, which had begun about 1000 B.C. was largely complete by the eighth century B.C. The descendants of “Tiras” include: Scandinavians, Vikings, Swedes, Norwegians, Danes and the people of Iceland.
Genesis 10:3 The sons of Gomer (“completion”) were Ashkenaz (ash-ke-nas’) (“a man as sprinkled”: fire as scattered”) and Riphath (ri-fath) (“slander, fault”) and Togarmah (to-gar’ma) (“you will break her”). (NASB95)

The descendants of “Ashkenaz” settled originally in what is now Armenia but in later Jewish traditions he was associated with his father Gomer with the Germanic races. Hence, Germanic Jews are still known as “Ashkenazi,” and which name as some ethnologists contend has also been preserved under the names “Scandia” and “Saxon,” as colonists from Germany made their way into Denmark and its northern islands and to the western shores of the continent. Therefore, the descendants of “Ashkenaz” formed a large component of the earliest settlers of Germany and Scandinavia.

The descendants of “Riphath” gave their name to the Riphaean Mountains, which early cosmographers thought of as constituting the then northern boundary of the world and settled in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Turkey.

The people named after “Togarmah,” another son of Gomer, are mentioned twice in Ezekiel (Ezek. 27:14; 38:6) and Josephus says that “Togarmah” is the father of the people known as Thrugrammeans, whom the Greeks identified with the Phrygians.

According to the Jewish Targums, “Togarmah” was the father of Germany and there are some who believe that the word “Germania” itself is formed out of the older name “Togarmah”, with the first syllable lost in the process.

Genesis 10:4 The sons of Javan (“one in a state of bubbling heat”) were Elishah (e-li’sha) (“my God is disregarded”) and Tarshish (tar’shish) (“she will cause poverty, she will scatter”), Kittim (kit’im) (“bruisers”) and Dodanim (dod’a-nim) (“leaders”). (NASB95)

As we noted in our study of “Javan” who was the fourth son of Japheth, “Javan” represented the Ionian Greeks and if so then “Elishah” is related to the Greeks. The name “Hellas” is a form of “Elishah,” which came to be applied to Greece as a whole (note Hellespont, Hellenists, etc.) and Homer in his work the “Iliad” mentions the Eilesian people.

“Elishah” was the father of the Aeolian Greeks and is associated with Cyprus since it is mentioned in a number of cuneiform records (ca. 1800 to 1300 B.C.).

“Tarshish” appears frequently in the Old Testament representing a Phoenician copper-smelting center either in “Sardinia” or in “Tartessus” in southern Spain near Gibraltar.

“Kittim” also appears frequently in the Old Testament referring to those who dwelt on the east coast of Cyprus.

“Dodanim” is the collective name of the people descended from Dodan, who were known to the Greeks as the Donlani, the Dardanians of Asia Minor and
settled initially around the area of Troy, whose coastal regions are known to this day as the Dardanelles.

A study of Genesis 10:1-4 reveals that Japheth descendants multiplied in the course of time and populated the northern shore of the Mediterranean, the whole of Europe, the British Isles and Scandinavia, and the larger part of Russia. One major branch of the Japhethites headed eastward into Persia and India. Therefore, the Japhetic people are, in general, the peoples of India and Europe or what demographers call, “Indo-European stock.”

**Genesis 10:5** From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations. (NASB95)

The term “Gentiles” meaning non-Jewish racially was especially designated to the descendants of Japheth since the Hebrew noun *goy* is applied to them in Genesis 10:5 but not to the descendants of “Ham” in Genesis 10:20 or “Shem” of course in Genesis 10:31 since the Jews originate from Shem.

Genesis 10:5 clearly refers to the aftermath of the Tower of Babel since it mentions the descendants of Japheth as being “separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations” whereas prior to the Tower of Babel the earth’s inhabitants had the same language, having a one world government headed up by Nimrod.

**Genesis 10:6-12**

In Genesis 10:6-12, we have the record of the descendants of Ham and in particular Ham’s most famous or should I say “infamous” son, namely, Nimrod. The earliest imperial world power originated from the Hamitic line, that being Babylon under Nimrod and later in such capitals of empire as Asshur and Nineveh on the Tigris River and Egypt on the Nile.

**Genesis 10:6** The sons of Ham (“hot, burnt, dark, warm, passionate”) were Cush (“black”) and Mizraim (miz’ra-im) (“double straits”) and Put (“a bow”) and Canaan (“belonging to the land of red purple”). (NASB95)

The descendants of “Cush” were originally connected to Babylonia since it was equated with ancient city-kingdom of Kish in lower Babylonia where emperors of the third millennium B.C. to their title as “kings of the world.” The descendants of “Cush” include: Ethiopians, Sudanese, Africans, Bushmen, Pygmies, Australian Aborigines and New Guineans.

“Mizraim” is the ancestor of the ancient Egyptians and is the customary name for Egypt in the Bible, which is also called “the land of Ham” in Psalm 104:23,

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1 W.F. Albright, “Recent Discoveries in Bible Lands,” in Young’s Analytical Concordance, page 32, cited by Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament, page 48
suggesting that Ham accompanied his son Mizraim in the original settlement of the Nile Valley (see Psalm 78:51).

The inscriptions of the Persian king Darius I the Great (522-486 B.C.) state that “Put” is located in Cyrenaica in North Africa, west of Egypt, which would put in modern day Libya and Josephus confirms this identification. The descendants of “Put” include: Libyans, Tunisians, Somalians and North Africans.

“Canaan” is the grandson of Noah who was cursed by his grandfather and his descendants were called the “Canaanites” who lived in the land west of the Jordan River before the conquest of Joshua (Gen. 13:12; Num. 33:51). The descendants of “Canaan” include: Mongols, Chinese, Japanese, Asians, Malaysians, American Indians, Eskimos, Polynesians, Pacific Islanders.

Genesis 10:7 The sons of Cush were Seba (“drink up”) and Havilah (“anguish, pain”) and Sabtah (sab’ta) (“he compassed the mark”) and Raamah (“thunder”) and Sabteca (sab’te-ka) (“striking”); and the sons of Raamah were Sheba (“seven or an oath”) and Dedan (de’dan) (“low country”). (NASB95)

“Seba” founded the nation that was known to later history as the Sabaeans who lived in Southern Arabia in the region of Yemen and across the Red Sea in Ethiopia.

“Havilah” is the progenitor of the Hamitic tribe of Havilah, his descendants settled on the east coast of Arabia overlooking the Persian Gulf.

The descendants of “Sabtah” settled on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula.

“Raamah” settled in southern Arabia and is specifically mentioned as the father of “Sheba” and “Dedan” and he is the only one of the sons of Cush whose own sons’ names are listed since they were famous in their day, which is reflected in the fact that two of Abraham’s grandsons through Keturah were apparently named after them.

“Sabteca” appeared to have settled in south Arabia, which is today called “Yemen” and this indicated by Josephus who called them the “Sabactens.”

“Sheba” was in southwest Arabia in what is now part of Yemen and was once famed as the Land of Spices whose land was extremely fertile, being watered by ingenious irrigation systems that were controlled by a vast dam that once spanned the river Adhanat.

“Dedan” were also located in Arabia near Edom according to Isaiah 21:13, Jeremiah 25:23, 49:8 and Ezekiel 25:13 and were associated with “Sheba” since they were trade partners with Tyre (Ezek. 27:15, 20; 38:13).

Genesis 10:8 Now Cush became the father of Nimrod (“rebel”); he became a mighty one on the earth. (NASB95)

“Nimrod” is the proper noun nimrodh, which means, “rebel” and comes from the verb maradh, which means, “to rebel.”
Nimrod was the youngest son of Cush who apparently resented the curse that Noah placed on his youngest son Canaan since he names his youngest son “rebel.” By designating this name to his youngest son, the inference is that Cush trained Nimrod from childhood to be a leader in a planned and organized rebellion against God’s purposes for mankind.

To the Hebrew mind, giving a name to something involves giving a designation that is expressive of its character and nature and thus the name “Nimrod” is expressive of the character and nature of the youngest son of Cush.

Nimrod is presented in Scripture as the founder of the kingdom of Babylon, which is presented in Scripture as an evil system originating from Satan in both type and prophecy (Isa. 21:9; Jer. 50:24; Rev. 16:19; 17:5; 18:2).

If you drop the first consonant of Nimrod's name and take the others, MRD, you will have the basic root of the god of Babylon, whose name was Marduk, and whom most scholars identify with Nimrod. In the Babylonian religion, Nimrod (or Marduk) held a unique place and his wife was Semiramis. Marduk and Semiramis were the ancient god and goddess of Babylon and had a son whom Semiramis claimed was virgin-born, and they founded the mother and child cult. This was the central character of the religion of ancient Babylon, the worship of a mother and child, supposedly virgin born.

As the ancient legend says, Nimrod died and became the sun god. His wife Semiramis was impregnated by a sunbeam and gives birth to her son Tammuz (a counterfeit miraculous birth) who was later killed by a wild boar. However, after Semiramis cries for 40 days, Tammuz comes back to life again, which is a counterfeit of the resurrection. In fact, this is the origin of a counterfeit religious system that revolves around the worship of a mother and child.

During the Babylonian captivity Jeremiah the prophet condemned Israel’s worship of Semiramis “Queen of Heaven” (Jeremiah 7:18-19; 44:15-30) and at Jerusalem, in the Temple, they were worshipping Tammuz, the son of Semiramis (Ezekiel 8:14-15).

This idolatrous worship spread around the globe where in Egypt Semiramis is called Isis and her son is Osiris, and in India, it was Isi and Iswara and in Assyria it was Ishtar and Bacchus and in Asia it was Cybele and Deoius and in ancient Greece it was Aphrodite and Eros and in ancient Rome it was Fortuna and Jupiter. The names and places of mother-child worship change from country to country down though the ages and today permeate Roman Catholicism. This idolatrous worship began in Babylon with Nimrod and his wife.

The mother-child cult worship is a clever attempt on the part of Satan to anticipate the genuine virgin birth and thus to cast doubt upon the story when the Son of God would later become a human being in the town of Bethlehem. This
Queen of Heaven is Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod, the original mother of the mother and child cult.

The cult has also crept into Christianity and forms the basis for the Mariolatry that has prevailed in the Roman Catholic Church, where the Mother and Child are worshipped as joint redeemers.

This idolatrous religion culminates at last in the Bible in the book of Revelation and is described as the “great harlot” whose name is “Mystery Babylon the Great,” the originator of all the harlotries and false religions of earth (Rev. 17).

The essence of Babylonianism, as we understand from Scripture, is the attempt to gain earthly honor by means of religious authority and this has permeated Christian churches, Hindu temples, Buddhist shrines, and Mohammedan mosques. Everywhere it is the element that marks falseness in religion, this attempt to gain earthly power and prestige by means of religious authority.

Nimrod is presented in Scripture as the founder of the kingdom of Babylon, which is presented in Scripture as an evil system originating from Satan in both type and prophecy ( Isa. 21:9; Jer. 50:24; Rev. 16:19; 17:5; 18:2).

Genesis 10:8 Now Cush became the father of Nimrod ("rebel"); he became a mighty one on the earth. (NASB95)

“A mighty one” is the noun gibbor, which is used in a negative sense describing Nimrod as a tyrant who was totally in opposition to God and who revolted against God and oppressed people and used them to further his own selfish interests.

Genesis 10:9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.” (NASB95)

“Hunter” is the noun tsayidh, which is used in the Bible of one who hunts animals for food and pleasure or of one who hunts men to enslave them. The context will determine which is in view and in Genesis 10:9, the word tsayidh means that Nimrod was a hunter of the souls of men rather than a hunter in the customary sense. This is indicated by the prepositional phrase “before the Lord” which means “against the Lord” since “before” is the preposition lм and the noun panim, which denote that Nimrod was “opposed to” or “against” God in the sense of competing with God for the souls of men. Also, further indicating that this phrase should be translated “against the Lord” is the name Nimrod, which means, “rebel.”

Genesis 10:10 The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. (NASB95)

“Babel” is located in modern Iraq, about twenty miles south of Baghdad, near the modern city of Hilla, on the Euphrates River, south of where the Tigris and Euphrates approach.
“Erech” is modern Warka, the site in southern Iraq, located one hundred miles southeast of Babylon, where the first temple tower (ziggurat) and earliest cylinder seals have been recovered.2 “Accad” was the ancient name of northern Babylonia, taken from the name of the city of Agade, which Sargon the Great brought to prominence as the capital of his empire, which dominated the Mesopotamian world (c. 2360-2180 B.C.). “Calneh” has not been identified but was located somewhere in Mesopotamia as indicated by the prepositional phrase “in the land of Shinar,” which refers to the southern region of Mesopotamia, south of Baghdad in Iraq.

Genesis 10:11 From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah. (NASB95)

“Assyria” was in the northern part of Mesopotamia and was called “the land of Nimrod” in Micah 5:6. “Nineveh” was the capital of the Assyrian Empire (ca. 800-612 B.C.), located on the eastern bank of the Tigris River in northern Mesopotamia, which is modern Iraq, in the area of the city of Mosul. “Rehoboth-Ir” means “plazas of the city,” designating either a suburb of Nineveh or a place situated near the city. “Calah” is modern Tell Nimrud, approximately twenty miles south of Nineveh.

Genesis 10:12 and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. (NASB95)

“Resen” is probably modern Selamiyeh, which is about two and a half miles northwest of Nimrud was is described in Genesis 10:12 as to be between Nineveh and Calah so that the entire complex of cities that Nimrod built was called “the great city” meaning it was a large metropolitan area.

Assyrian legends speak of “Ninus” as the founder of Nineveh, which is evidently a form of “Nimrod.” These kingdoms that Nimrod established were institutions that did not guaranteed law and order but rather were simply the achievements of a lawless man who taught men to revolt against authority delegated by God. His ambition was to build a world empire and a one-world government that opposes the Lord Jesus Christ, which foreshadows Antichrist who will be the ruler of a ten-nation confederacy constituting a Revived Roman Empire, during Daniel’s seventieth week, which is also called by theologians as the “Tribulation Period.”

Genesis 10:13-20

Genesis 10:13-20 records the genealogy of the sons of Egypt and the eleven sons of Canaan who were all descendants of Ham.

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2 Jack Finegan, Light from the Ancient East, pages 19-23 as cited by Unger’s Commentary of the Old Testament (page 49)
Genesis 10:13 Mizraim (miz’ra-im—“double straits”) became the father of Ludim (lu’dim—“to the firebrands: travailings”) and Anamim (an’a-mim—“affliction of the waters”) and Lehabim (le-ha’bim—“flames”) and Naphtuhim (naf’tu-him—“openings”). (NASB95)

“Mizraim” is the ancestor of the ancient Egyptians and is the customary name for Egypt in the Bible, which is also called “the land of Ham” in Psalm 104:23, suggesting that Ham accompanied his son Mizraim in the original settlement of the Nile Valley (see Psalm 78:51).

Ham is the Egyptian word for “the Hamite land” as evidenced in Psalm 78:51.

Psalm 78:51 And smote all the firstborn in Egypt, the first issue of their virility in the tents of Ham. (NASB95)

Ancient Egypt was divided into three geographical sections: (1) Upper Egypt in the south (2) Middle Egypt in the center (3) Lower Egypt or Delta in the north.

Most scholars divide into two sections: (1) Upper (2) Lower. Upper Egypt is very narrow and surrounded by mountains, which rarely take the form of peaks and the northern coast of Egypt is low and barren, and without good harbors.

The political history of Egypt traditionally begins with Menes, the Upper ruler who conquered Lower Egypt according to Egyptian tradition. The history of dynastic Egypt can be divided into the Old Kingdom (2700-2200 B.C.), the Middle Kingdom (2100-1800 B.C.) and the New Kingdom (1550-1069 B.C.).

The pyramids were built during the Old Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom coincides with the call of Abraham whereas the birth of Moses and Exodus of Israel took place during the New Kingdom. After the New Kingdom, Libya, Ethiopia, Persia, Hellenistic Rome and Islam dominated Egypt.

“Ludim” are the Libyans whose bowmen were hired by the armies of Egypt and Tyre according to Jeremiah 46:9 and Ezekiel 27:10 and 30:5.

“Anamim,” “Lehabim” and “Naphtuhim” were tribes that bordered Egypt.

Genesis 10:14 and Pathrusim (path-ru-sim—“a morsel moistening”) and Casluhim (kas’lu-him—“forgiven ones”) (from which came the Philistines (“immigrants”) and Caphtorim (kaf-tor-im—“knob or bud”). (NASB95)

“Pathrusim” were a people that migrated to Upper Egypt, and who gave their name to the district of Pathros.

The whereabouts of “Casluhim” is uncertain but Genesis 10:14 does record that the Philistines came from this people.

The “Philistines” descended from the Casluhites from Egypt and according to Jeremiah 47:4 and Amos 9:7 that like Israel they were enslaved in Crete, from which God delivered them like Israel.

The Table of Nations connects the Philistines with other descendants of Ham, such as the Canaanites. The Philistines however, were not a single ethnic group, but rather a conglomeration of several different peoples from different origins and
time periods. Therefore, the Philistines who originated from the Casluhites were different from the ones who descended from Caphtor.

“Caphtorim” settled on the island of Crete and its surrounding islands, as did the Philistines who came to Philistia from Crete (Amos 9:7; Jeremiah 47:4).

**Genesis 10:15 Canaan** (“belonging to the land of red purple”) became the father of Sidon (“hunting”), his firstborn, and Heth (“terror”). (NASB95)

“Canaan” is the grandson of Noah who was cursed by his grandfather and his descendants were called the “Canaanites” who lived in the land west of the Jordan River before the conquest of Joshua (Gen. 13:12; Num. 33:51). The descendants of “Canaan” include: Mongols, Chinese, Japanese, Asians, Malaysians, American Indians, Eskimos, Polynesians, Pacific Islanders.

“Sidon” was the progenitor of the Phoenicians and gave his name to oldest Canaanites city on the Mediterranean seacoast north of Israel, and which city was important long before Tyre came to prominence.

“Heth” was the ancestor of the Hittites who had a great empire in Asia Minor for over eight hundred years. For many years the critics have ridiculed the Bible because of the Hittites since for many years there was no archaeological evidence for their existence, thus they used this lack of evidence to attack the veracity and inerrancy of the Bible but over 10,000 clay tablets with Hittite laws and customs have been discovered by archaeologists.

The Hittites were present in the land of Canaan during the time of Abraham according to Genesis 15:19-21 and they reached the zenith of their power sometime later and still possessed great power at the time of Solomon a thousand years later according to 2 Chronicles 1:17. There is some evidence that when the Hittite empire finally crumbled that the remnant of these people fled eastward.

The Cuneiform monuments record the name of the Hittites as “Khittae” and this may well have been modified later to “Cathay” as they settled in the Far East. Also, another name in this list that appears in Genesis 10:17 that is linked with China are the Sinites whose name derives from a presumed son of Canaan whose name was Sin. The Sinites migrated eastward until they came into Western China, where they founded the ancient Empire of China and gave their name to the land.

There is a direct connection between the word China and the word “Sinim,” the biblical name for China. The Sinites pushed eastward and toward the north over the land bridge into Alaska and are the people who settled the Americas in prehistoric days and became the ancestors of the Eskimos and Indians who, to this very day, betray their Mongoloid ancestry.

Archaeologists have noted a number of similarities between the Hittites and the Mongoloids since both were known to have pioneered the art of smelting and casting iron and in the breeding and training of horses.
Genesis 10:16 and the Jebusite (“trodden down by armies”) and the Amorite (“a boaster”) and the Girgashite (“dwelling on a clayey soil”). (NASB95)

The “Jebusite” settled in “Jebus,” which is the name of Jerusalem when this tribe held it (Josh. 15:63; Judg. 19:10) and it wasn’t until David’s reign that they were finally driven out (2 Sam. 5:6-7; cf. 1 Kings 9:20).

According to Ezekiel 16:3, the “Amorite” along with the “Jebusite” founded the city of Jerusalem and according to Numbers 13:29, they were scattered throughout Israel’s hill country on either side of the Jordan River.

During the days of the Jebusite, they were in Shechem according to Genesis 48:22 and at the time of Moses they were in Transjordan from the Arnon to Mount Hermon according to Deuteronomy 3:8 as well as from the wilderness to the Jordan according to Judges 11:22.

During the days of Joshua the “Amorite” were in five towns of Judah according to Joshua 10:5 and then in the next generation, they were in three towns according to Judges 13:5 and then during the period of the Judges, they lived in Gilead according to Judges 10:8.

The Girgashites also lived in the land of Canaan and according to Genesis 15:21, the Lord promised Abram that his descendants would displace the “Girgashite” as well as the other Canaanite tribes and this promise was confirmed to Moses in Deuteronomy 7:1 and to Joshua in Joshua 3:10 and 24:11.

Genesis 10:17 and the Hivite (“villagers”) and the Arkite (“my annoyance”) and the Sinite (“thorn” or “clay”). (NASB95)

The Hivites settled in the land of Canaan and was displaced by Israel under Joshua (Ex. 3:8, 17; 13:5; 23:23; 33:2; 34:11; Deut. 7:1; Josh. 9:1).

Genesis 34:2 records that they were in the land of Shechem and according to Genesis 36:2, Esau took a Hivite for a wife and 1 Kings 9:20 records that Solomon used them as builders. Judges 3:3 records that they settled in the foothills of Lebanon.

The “Arkite” resided in the town of Irqata located along the Phoenician border approximately twelve miles northwest of Tripoli, Lebanon and which town is know today “Tell-Arqa.”

The name of Sinites still appears in the cities of Nahr as-Sinn and Sinn addarb, which are both in close proximity to Arqa. The Phoenicians knew the Sinites as the Usnu and the Assyrians called them the Usana and Siannu. From its position in the list it is inferred that the Sinites lived toward the north, perhaps in the northern part of the Lebanon district.

In the northern district of Lebanon, a mountain fortress named “Sinna” was located and in the time of Jerome (ca. A.D. 400), there were ruins there named “Sinum” or “Sini.”
Genesis 10:18 and the Arvadite (“restless wanderer”) and the Zemarite (“double woolens”) and the Hamathite (“fortress”); and afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad. (NASB95)

The Arvadites lived north of the Arkites on the seacoast and on the island of Aradus, which today is called “Ruad” and lies north of the bay of Tripoli, about two miles out to sea. The Arvadites were skillful seamen and worked as ship captains, helmsmen and mercenaries to the Tyrians.

Later, the island of Arvad was to play a crucial role in controlling certain areas of the mainland during the conquests of Alexander the Great. The Arvadites were also known in the Armarna tablets as the “Arwada.”

The Zemarites were known to the Assyrians as the Simirra, and to the Egyptians as the Sumur and the name is still preserved in the modern city of Sumra, just north of Tripoli, which is six miles south of Arvad.

The Hamathites are inhabitants of modern “Harma,” the ancient Syrian city on the Orontes River, which is 250 miles north of Jerusalem and north of Damascus in Syria.

Hamath marked the northernmost boundary of the Israelite kingdom reached by David, Solomon and the king of the Northern Kingdom, Jeroboam II (Num. 13:21; 34:8; Josh. 13:5; 2 Sam. 8:9-10; 1 Kings 8:65; 2 Kings 14:25-28; Ezek. 47:20).

The city was extremely important since it was located on the Orontes River, along the main highway, which connected Egypt to Asia Minor. Hamath was a part of the Hittite Empire, preserving Hittite culture after its fall in 1200 B.C. and was ultimately incorporated into Assyria becoming a province of that nation in 720 B.C. and a number of its citizens were deported according to 2 Kings 24.

Genesis 10:19 The territory of the Canaanite extended from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; as you go toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim (ze-boy’im), as far as Lasha. (NASB95)

In Genesis 10:19, Moses defines the borders of the Canaanites because it is this land that the Lord will dispossess for Israel and fulfill the prophecy of Noah in Genesis 9:24-25 regarding Canaan.

The northern border of the land of the Canaanites went as far as Sidon, which is 120 miles north of Jerusalem and the southern border extended to Gerar, which is about 8 miles south-southeast of Gaza, which was on the coast 50 miles southeast of Jerusalem. From Gaza, the border extends to Sodom and Gomorrah east or southeast of the Dead Sea.

“Gerar” is the modern Tell Abu Hureira, which is 11 miles southeast of Gaza and “Gaza” is the modern “Gaza.”

“Sodom” and “Gomorrah” are on the east at the south end of the Dead Sea and “Lasha” on the northern interior, which is identified with “Laish-Dan” (Judg. 18:29), the Israelite city the furthest north.
“Sodom” and “Gomorrah” helped to form a confederation of cities, which included Admah, Zeboiim and Zoar according to Genesis 14:2, 8 and are called by theologians “the cities of the plain.”

Abraham pleads to the Lord to spare these cities on account of Lot, which is recorded in Genesis 18:16-33 and the Lord fulfilled Abraham’s request but destroyed the rest of the inhabitants of the city, which is recorded in Genesis 19.

**Genesis 10:21-31**

Genesis 10:21-31 gives us the record of the sons of Shem and their descendants.

**Genesis 10:21 Also to Shem** (“renown”), the father of all the children of Eber (“emigrants” or “to vanish to the region beyond”), and the older brother of Japheth (“opened, enlarged, expanded”), children were born. (NASB95)

Genesis 10:21 emphasizes that Shem is the ancestor of all the children of Eber because Abraham and the Israelites are identified as descendants of Eber, which would be important to Moses’ readers since they were descendants of Abraham and Israelites. According to Genesis 10:24, Eber was the son of Shelah and his name means, “region beyond or over (the river)” indicating the land of Canaan that was beyond the Jordan River.

The term “Hebrew” is from “Eber” which anglicized Heber in Luke 3:35. Abraham was called a “Hebrew” according to Genesis 14:13 indicating that he was a descendant of Eber. Therefore, from this point forward in Genesis 10:21, Moses is concerned almost exclusively with the Shemites and in particular the most prominent branch of the Shemites, the “sons of Eber,” since he and his readers were descendants of Eber.

**Genesis 10:22 The sons of Shem were Elam** (“eternity”) and Asshur (“happy, successful”) and Arpachshad (“he cursed the breast bottle”) and Lud (“firebrand, travailing”) and Aram (“highland”). (NASB95)

The Elamites settled on the Persian Gulf east of Babylonia or Mesopotamia with Susa (Hebrew: Shushan) as their capital. Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, was the leader of the confederacy of nations, which invaded Canaan during the days of Abram according to Genesis 14:4-5. The Elamites later merged with the Medes who were descendants of Madai and thus of Japheth, to form the Persian Empire (Antiquities of the Jews, book 1, chapter 6, paragraph 4).

“Asshur” was the founder of the Assyrians but as we studied with the descendants of Ham, according to Genesis 10:11, Nimrod invaded the land of Asshur and founded Nineveh and a number of other cities. Therefore, as a result, the Assyrian people and culture were a mixture of Semitic racial stock and Hamitic (Babylonian) culture, language and religion but eventually, this mixture was entirely supplanted by Semitic culture that spread throughout Mesopotamia.
“Arpachshad” was in the direct line leading to Abraham and his linear lineage is expanded in Genesis 11:12-17 and Josephus claims that Arpachshad was the ancestor of the Chaldeans (Antiquities of the Jews, book 1, chapter 6, paragraph 4).

The fourth son of Shem was “Lud” who was the ancestor of the Lydians who later settled in western Asia Minor and were famed for the skill of their archers and spoke an Indo-European language and their land was conquered by Cyrus, king of Persian in the year 546 BC.

The fifth son of Shem was “Aram” who is the father of the Aramaeans who are so prominent in Old Testament history and became a great nation whose Aramaic language was adopted by Babylon and Assyria.

Genesis 10:23 The sons of Aram were Uz (“counsel”) and Hul (“circle”) and Gether (“fear”) and Mash (“drawn out”). (NASB95)

Uz” is the first son of Aram and grandson of Shem and we don’t know precisely where his descendants settled but we do know that Job’s home was Uz according to Job 1:1, which was also mentioned in Jeremiah 25:20.

Ptolemy claimed the inhabitants of Uz lived in the Arabian Desert west of Babylon, near Mount Seir or Edom, which is now Jordan.

The descendants of “Hul” settled north of the Sea of Galilee, where they gave their name to the lake and vale of Huleh, which in Joshua 11:5 and 7 are called the “Waters of Merom.”

The descendants of “Gether” settled to the south of Damascus and Josephus identifies them as the latter-day Bactrians who were famous for a breed of camel.

The fourth son of Aram was “Mash” and is associated with the Akkadian region “Mashu,” which appears in the Gilgamesh epic and is identified with the mountains of Lebanon since they are high mountains to the west of Mesopotamia.

Genesis 10:24 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah (“sprout”); and Shelah became the father of Eber. (NASB95)

Nothing appears in secular sources concerning “Shelah” and nothing much is said about him in the Bible except that he was the father Eber who was the ancestor of the Hebrews through Peleg and thirteen Arabian tribes through Joktan.

Genesis 10:25 Two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one was Peleg, (“division”) for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan (“smallness, insignificant”). (NASB95)

Peleg’s name means, “division” and was thus named because of the Tower of Babel where the Lord geographically “divided” the human race as a result of confusing the universal language and vocabulary they used into many different languages and dialects and this event is recorded in Genesis 11:1-9.

Genesis 10:25 contains the figure of speech called “metonymy of the subject” where the earth is put for its inhabitants; therefore, we could translate “the earth” as “the earth’s inhabitants.”
“Divided” is the niphal perfect form of the verb palagh, which refers to the dividing of the human race geographically as a result of the Lord confusing their universal language into many different languages and dialects.

The meaning of the name Peleg is confirmed by the Akkadian noun pulukku, which means a dividing up of territory by means of borders and boundaries and the Akkadian verb meaning to divide at the borders, is palaka. Thus, the phrase “in his (Peleg’s) days the earth was divided,” is a reference to the fact that Noah’s descendants were dispersed when God judged them following their attempt to build the tower of Babel.

The phrase “the earth was divided in his days” is “not” a reference to widespread geological landslips separating continents but rather a comparison of Genesis 10:25 with Genesis 11:1-9 indicate that it refers to the human race being divided geographically as a result of the Lord confusing their universal language into many different languages and dialects.

Genesis 11:1-9 records that the human race spoke one language and that they attempted to unite against God and as a result God confused their universal language into many different languages. The inability to understand one another caused the separation geographically of the human race.

Remember, Genesis 10 is a description of the human race after the Tower of Babel, which is recorded in Genesis 11. This is indicated by the common refrain that appears in Genesis 10:5, 20, 31, and 32, which records that the descendants of Japheth, Ham and Shem were divided by their ethnicity (“families”), geography (“lands”), language (“every one according to his language”) and politics (“nations”) indicating Genesis 10 was written after the Tower of Babel.

The continents came into existence as a result of the Flood during the days of Noah since according to Genesis 7:11, the subterranean waters underneath the earth erupted and broke apart flooding the earth causing great geological changes in the earth’s geography. Prior to the Flood, there was a super continent but after the Flood there were seven continents and instead of one ocean as there was prior to the Flood, now there were several oceans.

“Joktan” is the progenitor of the thirteen southern Arabian tribes and is remembered by modern Arabs as Yaqtan.

Modern tribes of South Arabia claim that pure Arabs are Semitic Arabs descended of Joktan whereas they refer to Hamitic Arabs disdainfully as Musta 'rabs, that is, pretended Arabs. Joktan’s name is preserved in the ancient town of Jectan, near present-day Mecca.

Genesis 10:26 Joktan became the father of Almodad (“not measured”) and Sheleph (“a drawing out”) and Hazarmaveth (ha’zar-ma’veth) (“settlement of death”) and Jerah (“new moon”). (NASB95)
Joktan had thirteen sons and the oldest of which was “Almodad,” which is a south Arabian name indicating a south Arabian tribe.

“Sheleph” is another southern Arabian tribe who were known to the pre-Islamic Arabs as the “Salif.”

The descendants of “Hazarmaveth” populated the two hundred mile long valley that runs parallel to the southern coast of Arabia, which is known to this day as the “Hadramaut,” which is a direct transposition into Arabic of the name Hazarmaveth. The ancient geographer Strabo tells us that the tribe of “Hazarmaveth” was one of the four main tribes of Arabs in his day. This area has long been associated with the frankincense trade and in the first and second centuries of the Christian era, was the center of a great civilization (Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopaedia of the Bible, page 3:49).

“Jerah” and his descendants settled in southern Arabia since the Arab city that bore Jerah's name, which was called by Ptolemy as “Jerakon Kome,” lay on the Mahra coast close to the Hadramaut, which is located in southern Arabia.

**Genesis 10:27 and Hadoram (”noble honor”) and Uzal (”I shall be flooded”) and Diklah (”palm grove”). (NASB95)**

“Hadoram” and his descendants settled in southern Arabia.

“Uzal” and his descendants settled in Yemen, which is indicated by the fact that Arab historians render the name of “Uzal” as “Azal,” the ancient pre-Islamic name of the city of “Sanaa,” which today is the capital of the modern People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen.

The Akkadians referred to “Diklah” as “Diklath,” and the Assyrians knew it as “Idiklat,” all of which transpose into Greek as “Tigris” indicating the area in which these people settled, appears to be north of the Persian Gulf or at least in the north-east extremity of the Arabian peninsula.

**Genesis 10:28 and Obal (”stripped bare”) and Abimael (a-bim’a-el) (“my father is God”) and Sheba (”seven” or “oath”). (NASB95)**

“Obal” settled in southwest Arabia and probably in the present-day Yemen according to inscriptions and Arab historians who called the descendants of “Obal,” “Ebal.”

The name “Abimael” is linguistically south Arabian and the tribe that bear the name is indicated as south Arabian and this is confirmed by ancient Sabean inscriptions.

“Sheba” is located some one hundred miles north of modern Aden in southwest Arabia and is well known in the Old Testament (1 Kings 10:1; Jer. 6:20).

**Genesis 10:29 and Ophir (”reducing to ashes”) and Havilah (”anguish”) and Jobab (”he will cause crying”); all these were the sons of Joktan. (NASB95)**
“Ophir” and his descendants settled in an area between Saba and in the Yemen as claimed by pre-Islamic Arabian inscriptions and their name appears to have been preserved in the coastal town of “Ma'afir” in southwest Arabia.

This region was famous for having gold in its streams according to Job 22:24, Psalm 45:19, Isaiah 13:12 and 1 Chronicles 29:4. “Havilah” is not the same one mentioned as one of Ham’s descendants and a son of Cush in Genesis 10:7 but rather was the son of Joktan who migrated to southwest Arabia near Kualan, in northwest Yemen, since a Sabaean inscription locates a place named Hualan with this broad region.

An Arabian tribe from the southwest corner of the peninsula, in modern Yemen, is named after their ancestor “Jobab” and it is attested in a number of inscriptions.

In Genesis 10:30, Moses defines the borders of the Shemites since it is important to both Moses and his readers who were descendants of Shem.

Genesis 10:30 Now their settlement extended from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the hill country of the east. (NASB95)

“Sephar” is traditionally identified with “Isfar” in the south of Hadramaut or Zafar harbor city in Yemen and “Mesha” is a territory in North Arabia, far south of Hadramaut.

Genesis 10:31 These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations. (NASB95)

Genesis 10:31 records that the descendants of Shem were divided by their ethnicity (“families”), geography (“lands”), language (“every one according to his language”) and politics (“nations”) indicating Genesis 10 was written after the Tower of Babel.

Genesis 10:32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood. (NASB95)

Seventy nations are presented in the Table of Nations: Fourteen from Japheth, thirty from Ham, and twenty-six from Shem.

Table of Nations and the Sovereignty of God

Bruce Waltke writes, “The numbers seven and seventy in the Table of Nations represents the nations as dependent upon their Creator and under His sovereignty whether they acknowledge Him as such or not.”

Although the Table does not mention it, the nations receive their time and place as the outworking of God’s sovereignty.
Deuteronomy 32:1 “Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. 2 Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the droplets on the fresh grass and as the showers on the herb. 3 For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God! 4 The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He. 5 They have acted corruptly toward Him, they are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation. 6 Do you thus repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. 7 Remember the days of old, consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you. 8 When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel.” (NASB95)

The term “sovereignty” connotes a situation in which a person, from his innate dignity, exercises supreme power, with no areas of his province outside his jurisdiction. As applied to God, the term “sovereignty” indicates His complete power over all of creation, so that He exercises His will absolutely, without any necessary conditioning by a finite will or wills.

Daniel 2:19 Next in a vision during the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel. Then Daniel showered the God of the heavens with adoring praise, honor, recognition and worshipful thanksgiving. 20 Daniel responded and said: “God has had His name showered with adoring praise, honor, recognition and worshipful thanksgiving from eternity past and in addition this will continue throughout eternity future because He inherently is wisdom as well as power. 21 Namely, He determines the appointed times as well as the durations of time. He deposes kings as well as elevates kings. He gives wisdom to wise men as well as knowledge to those who possess the capacity to receive understanding. 22 God reveals unfathomable events, yes events which are hidden. He alone knows what is in the darkness. Specifically, the light resides in Him. 23 For the benefit of You, O God of my fathers, I myself give thanks, yes and praise too because You gave to me wisdom, yes and power too. Indeed, now You have made known to me what we requested from You because You made known to us the king’s secret.” (Author’s translation)

Isaiah 40:15 “Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust.” (NASB95)

Isaiah 40:17 “All the nations are as nothing before Him, they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.” (NASB95)
The apostle Paul also taught that the nations receive their time and place as a result of the sovereignty of God.

Acts 17:22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. 23 For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, “TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.” Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things 26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation 27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us 28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, “For we also are His children.” 29 Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. 30 Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead. 32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, “We shall hear you again concerning this.” 33 So Paul went out of their midst. 34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

(NASB95)

Psalm 66:7 He rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations; Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah. (NASB95)

The Lord Jesus Christ in His glorified resurrected human nature has been promoted by the Father as the supreme ruler of history as a result of His victory over Satan at the Cross, thus giving Him sovereign authority over all creation and every creature.

Colossians 2:9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority. (NASB95)

Philippians 2:5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in
appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 6:13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate 14 that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ 15 which He will bring about at the proper time -- He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords 16 who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen. (NASB95)