

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 10: November 15-22

Genesis 10

Genesis chapter 10 is called “the Table of Nations.” It records some of the descendants of Noah’s three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. These genealogies, show how the three sons of Noah developed into 70 different nations in about 500 years. The genealogies in Genesis look back and tell people some things about their identity based on their history. However, these genealogies also look forward as God’s people were watching for the fulfillment of God’s promise in Genesis 3:15, the “Seed of the woman” who would “crush the head” of the Serpent.

Read Genesis 10:1-5

1. What does verse 1 tell us about the son’s of Noah?
2. Who were the sons of Japheth? (10:2)
3. How many of Gomer’s sons are named in verse 3?
4. How many of Javan’s sons are named in verse 4?

Many of the names in this chapter have the plural ending “-im.” This indicates that they may not be the names of the individual sons but the names of the nations who came from those sons.

5. What does verse 5 tell us about the descendants of Javan?

Verse 5 describes divisions that developed among people based on land, language, family, and nation. However, the initial cause of different languages is not explained until chapter 11. Paul Kissling writes,

The list of descendants of Noah's sons in this chapter anticipates the aftermath of the Babel episode. It is only because of God's judgment at Babel that humanity does spread out and fill the earth, speaking a multitude of diverse languages. Chapter 10 is thus out of narrative sequence.¹

¹ Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 1* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2004), 355.

Read Genesis 10:6-20

7. Who were the sons of Ham? (10:6)
8. How many sons and grandsons of Cush named in verse 7?
9. What does verse 8 tell us about Nimrod?

James Smith notes,

Nimrod began to be (i.e., set out to be) a mighty one (*gibbor*) in the land (10:8). The term tyrant captures the intention of the original. Nimrod’s very name is an encapsulation of his lifestyle. His name means, “Let us revolt.”²

10. What popular saying developed from Nimrod’s reputation? (10:9)

Documents from the Ancient Near East indicate that some kings would protect their people from wild animals by hunting and killing dangerous predators in the area. However, the context implies that Nimrod’s “hunting” was referring to people rather than animals. Smith writes,

The documents, however, also speak of ancient kings hunting the men of a city, capturing them, and carrying them off into slavery. Perhaps Nimrod hunted men. He did this “before (liphne) Yahweh,” i.e., in opposition to Yahweh. The Septuagint rendered, “a mighty hunter against the Lord.”³

11. What does the Bible tell us about the accomplishments of Nimrod? (10:10-12)
12. How many sons of Mizraim are named in verses 13-14?
13. How many sons of Canaan are named in verses 15-18?
14. Why do you think verse 19 describes the territory of Canaan more precisely than that of anyone else in this chapter?
15. How is verse 20 similar to verse 5?

² James Smith, *The Pentateuch* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 103.

³ Smith, 103-104.

Read Genesis 10:21-32

16. What was the birth order of Shem, Ham, and Japheth? (see Gen. 9:24 and 10:21)

17. Why do you think the introduction to Shem's genealogy includes a comment about all the sons of Eber? (10:21)

18. Who were the sons of Shem named in verse 22?

19. Who was the son of Arphaxad in verse 24? (check your Bible for a footnote on verse 24 and also check Luke 3:36)

20. What does verse 25 tell us about the world in the time of Peleg?

The name "Peleg" means "division." James Smith observes,

Four views of this cryptic note have found supporters. The dividing of the earth may have been (1) a dispersion prior to the dispersion at the tower of Babel; (2) the mapping of the earth by an ancient cartographer; (3) the parting of the continents which once were one large land mass; and (4) the dispersion at Babel. The latter interpretation is decidedly the best.⁴

21. How is verse 31 similar to verses 5 and 20?

Kissling notes,

Shem is listed last (although first in interest for the author and audience) in order to tie together the theme of "name" (the meaning of the proper noun Shem) with the following narratives.⁵

22. How is verse 32 similar to verse 1? How are all the different kinds of people in the world related? (see also Gen. 9:18-19)

23. Why do you think God chose to include these genealogies of Noah's sons in the Bible?

24. How does remembering your family history help you to appreciate and praise God?

⁴ Smith, 107-108.

Sermon Notes 11/15/20

The Need of All Nations

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 10?

1. Trust _____ for rebuilding.

Genesis 10:1

Psalms 127:1

1 Corinthians 3:9-11

2. Make _____ our first priority.

Genesis 10:8-12

Matthew 6:31-33

3. Share _____ with all people.

Genesis 10:32

Acts 17:26-28

Matthew 28:19-20

All nations need Jesus. Here are some organizations we can pray for and support as they meet the needs of all nations in the name of Jesus.

New Hope Christian Ministries of Pakistan

<https://newhopeforpakistan.vpweb.com/>

Asia's Children

<https://asiaschildren.wordpress.com/>

Gates of Hope Mission International

<https://hopeintl.net/>

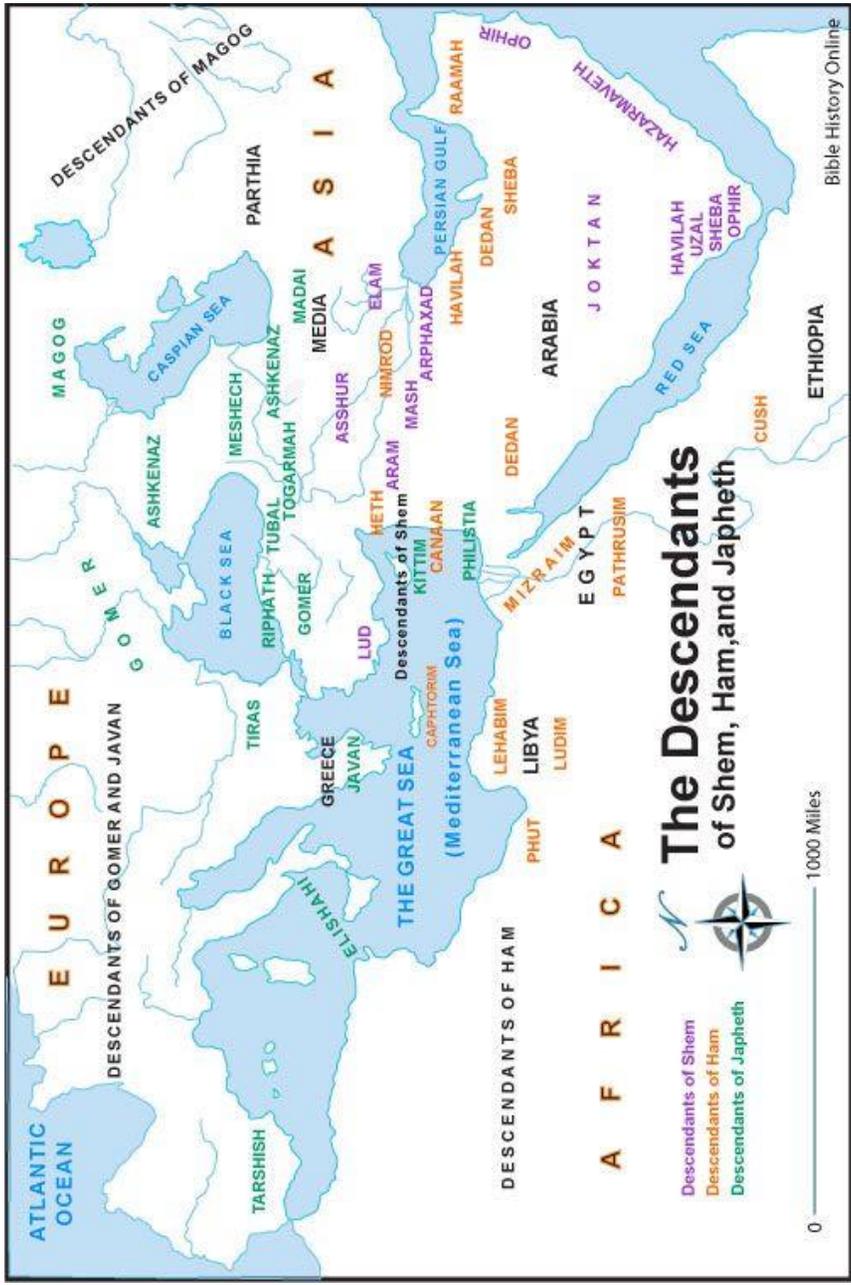
Onward Christian Academy

<http://www.onwardchristianacademy.com/>

Jamaica Christian Services

<http://www.jbseminary.com/>

⁵ Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 1*, 375.



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