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Genesis 9:8 - 10:32



Genesis - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg discusses Genesis 9:8 - 10:32, which describes God's covenant with Noah and his descendants not to destroy the earth with a flood again. The covenant involves certain obligations from humanity, such as not eating blood or killing others, in exchange for fulfilling God's promises. The passage also includes the Table of Nations, which lists the descendants of Noah's three sons by race and geographical region, further illustrating how all humanity descended from one family despite physical differences.

Transcript

Genesis 9, verse 22, and now we come to Genesis 9, verse 8. In Genesis 9, verse 8, it says, Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, And as for me, behold, I established my covenant with you, and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you. Of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. Thus I establish my covenant with you.

Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood. Never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." Now God has already said that earlier in chapter 8, but this is the first time He refers to it as a covenant. And the word covenant is going to be a very important word throughout the rest of the Old Testament, and for that matter the New Testament as well.

This is the first time that we have God making a covenant, and this is with all people and with all animals. And the promise He makes in this covenant is that He's not going to send another flood. There will be other covenants.

He will make an important covenant with Abraham. He will later make a covenant with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai when they come out of Egypt. Later He'll make a personal covenant with David.

And of course we will find Jesus making a new covenant with His disciples. So we have this phenomenon of covenants, and a covenant is like a contract. Really, covenants always involve both parties having some kind of obligation.

Now, some scholars say there are unconditional covenants, but I'm not aware of any in the Bible. Sometimes they say that the covenant God made with Abraham was unconditional. That certainly doesn't appear to be true when you read of it in Genesis 12.

He says in verse 1, "...get out of your country, from your kindred, from your father's house, to the land that I will show you, and I will make you a great nation, etc." Well, it sounds like there was a condition there. Get out of your father's house. That was a condition.

God said, Do this, and I'll do that. And that's how covenants are. Covenants were not always made between God and men.

Covenants were a common practice between men and men. They were like contracts today, or like treaties today between nations. Mutual non-aggression pacts.

Abraham had a covenant like that with Abimelech and so forth. David made such a covenant with Jonathan. That they would never harass each other, or each other's countries, or each other's families, or whatever.

A covenant is simply agreement like that. But when God enters into covenant with people, that means that God is making a promise to do a certain thing, and requiring that people do a certain thing. And God has already said what it is He expects man to do.

Don't eat the blood. Don't kill each other. These are the things that God has said that man shall do.

And He says, Now what I will do is I will not wipe you all out again. That's our promise. This is not a very elaborate covenant.

The later covenants have more elaborate details. But this is, when God makes the covenant, He cannot break it. Now, if man breaks the covenant, then God is free.

And that's why, for example, the covenant made at Mount Sinai no longer exists. Because God, that was conditional too. At Mount Sinai, God said, If you will obey my words and keep my covenant, then this will be so.

Well, that was conditional. They didn't, and that covenant is no longer in force. Not because God is a covenant breaker, but because when a covenant is broken from the other, it frees the innocent party.

Now, the only covenants we have horizontally among human beings in our modern world pretty much are the marriage covenant. We do have contracts, business contracts, and like I say, nations have treaties. And these function pretty much the same way covenants did in biblical times between men.

But we still speak of the marriage as a covenant. And it is so because it is a picture of a

covenantal relationship between God and people. So the marriage is a covenantal relationship between a man and a woman that are intended to reflect some aspects of the new covenant relationship between Christ and the church.

But here we have the first covenant made, and it's with Noah and with his children and with the animals. And it is a simple one, simply that God will not do what he has just done again. And in verse 12, he says, God said, this is the sign of the covenant, which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you for a perpetual generations.

I set my rainbow in the cloud and it shall be for a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. It shall be when I bring a cloud over the earth, because it is going to rain some more in the future, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh.

The waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. And God said to Noah, this is the sign of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.

Now, notice God said he would never send another flood like the one he sent before. This is another one of the many things that confirms that the flood of Noah was a universal flood, not a local flood. There have been many local floods since this time, many areas have been flooded by tsunamis or by rainfall or by rising rivers and things like that.

There's been a lot of local floods where people died. And if Noah's flood was a local flood like that, then God has not kept his promise. He has sent other floods that were local floods like that.

This shows that the flood of Noah was a different kind of flood that was universal. Now there's a sign of this covenant that he gives, and that's the rainbow. The question arises, were there rainbows before this? He begins to speak of it almost like it's a new phenomenon, but could it have been? It seems like rainbows must have existed previously.

On one view, they might not have, because some say, well, maybe there was never rain before. Maybe there were never even clouds before. Maybe this canopy around the earth's atmosphere was all there was in terms of atmospheric waters.

And that came down after the flood, and now we're going to have regular precipitation, evaporation, rain, evaporation, rain, and along with that comes a rainbow. So some feel that it had never rained before the flood, and therefore there had never been a rainbow. But Frank and I were talking to James, and he said, you know, well, you wouldn't even

need to have rain to have a rainbow.

Just mist, or even at a waterfall, you can see a rainbow. A rainbow is a natural phenomenon. The laws of physics make it happen, you know, light, light refracting through the droplets of water like small prisms casts a spectrum.

You can do the same thing with a piece of crystal or something like that, have light going one side and a spectrum comes out like the rainbow on the other side, and water plays on light that way. And as long as there was any atmospheric water, there would be at least the potential for rainbows. And there had been people, and Earth's history for hundreds of years before this, so it's hard to say.

It's possible that rainbows had been around forever, that God was now just saying, from now on, when you see the rainbow, remember. From now on, I'm adopting this phenomenon, which you're already familiar with, but I'm adopting it now as a sign to you of this covenant. And that way, you know, if you had lived through the flood, and you came out on dry land on a sunny day, you might feel good until the clouds gathered again.

You start seeing dark clouds and start feeling water come down again, you might begin to think, well, this bodes ill, you know. I mean, last time this happened, everyone was wiped out. And God says, well, when that happens in the future, you'll also see the rainbow, and that will remind you.

And actually, God says, will remind me. God says, I will remember my covenant that I've made. So the rainbow becomes, whether as a new phenomenon or as an old one taking on new meaning, it becomes the sign.

Now, covenants in the Bible often do have signs. For example, in Genesis 17, when God made a covenant with Abraham, He gave him a sign to keep. And you'll see it in Genesis 17, 9 and 10.

God said to Abram, as for you, you shall keep my covenant, and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep between me and you and your descendants after you. Every male child among you shall be circumcised.

He says in verse 11, and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. So as God had a sign of the covenant He made with Noah, which was the rainbow, when He made a covenant with Abraham, there was a sign also of that covenant, and that was circumcision. That was born in the flesh of Abraham and his descendants.

Likewise, when He made the covenant not Sinai, there was a sign that He gave of the covenant thereto. And that is found in Exodus 31. Exodus 31, 13, God said, speak also to

the children of Israel, saying, surely my Sabbath you shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations.

And then further down in verse 16, therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever. So the sign of the covenant He made at Mount Sinai was Sabbath keeping, and so on.

So God has His sign. Now, the marriage covenant today is, there is a sign of that too. Generally speaking in modern society, it is a wedding ring.

I don't know if there was such in ancient times always, but that is like a sign of the covenant. And the rainbow was a sign of God's covenant, just like a wedding ring on a woman's finger is a sign of the covenant. It is a visible reminder of the covenant.

Now, why the rainbow? It is interesting that although our Bible says rainbow, in the Hebrew it doesn't say rainbow, it just says bow. I will put my bow in the clouds. It is the same word that is used for a battle bow, like a bow and arrow.

God says, when I bring a cloud, I will put my bow in the clouds. I will hang my bow up there. And what does that signify? It is like His battle bow is hanging up.

Have you ever seen the old westerns that feature some gunfighter? Near the beginning of the movie, he is sick of the gunfight, so he hangs up his guns over the door. That is an emblem that he is done with gunfighting. And then later in the movie, of course, he has to take them down one more time, obviously.

You are not going to have a movie unless he is going to take them down again. Why make a movie if his guns are going to hang there the whole time? But his very hanging of the guns over the door means he is done. That gun, he is not getting rid of it, but it is there as a reminder of what he used to do, but he is not using it anymore.

He is not going to be killing anymore. In those days, in Biblical days, they did not have guns, they had bows and arrows. And it is possible that God says, I am going to hang my bow up there in the clouds as an emblem that I have stopped this business of wiping out all living things.

Every time it rains, which is the time you are going to want to be reminded of this, when you see rain coming, then you will want this reminder. And you will look and see, yep, he still has his bow hung up there. And in Revelation chapter 4, and also I believe in Ezekiel, if I am not mistaken, in chapter 1, but certainly in Revelation chapter 4, when the throne of God is seen, it is seen to be overarched with a rainbow.

It says in Revelation 4, 3, it says, He who sat there on the throne, meaning God, was like a jasper and sardius stone in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne, in

appearance like an emerald. No doubt the rainbow around the throne of God takes its significance from this story here. God hanging up his bow means he is not going to be punishing men as in the same way he did before, even though they still deserve it.

In other words, it is an emblem of grace. We know that it is in spite of the fact that men deserve it still, because in chapter 8, verse 21, when God first stated his intentions not to do this again, he connected it with the evil of man. He said, Then the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, nor will I again destroy every living thing that is done.

Now, he says, even though man is still an evil creature, I am never going to do that again, no matter how evil man may be. Therefore, the rainbow is an emblem of God's grace, and no doubt that is why it is seen as associated with his throne. It is, after all, a throne of grace, according to Hebrews.

Now, moving along here in Genesis 9, verse 18, it says, Now the sons of Noah, who went out of the ark, were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They seem to normally be mentioned in that order, but that is not their birth order. Actually, it is quite a confused order, because Shem, who is mentioned first most of the time, is actually the middle son.

We will find later in this chapter that Ham is the younger son, according to verse 24. Ham is referred to as Noah's younger son. And later on, Japheth is referred to as the elder, that is, the elder to Shem.

It says that in chapter 10, verse 21. Children were born to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth, the elder. So Japheth was the elder brother, Ham was the younger brother, Shem was the middle brother.

But in the way that they are listed, none of them are in the proper order chronologically. They are perhaps mentioned in order of their significance to the later story. Shem is mentioned first because, of course, Abraham is going to come from Shem.

The Semites, the Shemites from Shem, are going to be the focal point of the rest of the Old Testament history. Ham is also important because, for one thing, the Egyptians came from Ham, and of course the Jews spent a lot of time in Egypt as slaves, but also the Canaanites were from Ham. And so much of the rest of the Pentateuch, and later on Joshua also, and Judges, is going to focus on the conflicts between the Semites and the Canaanites, which are from Shem and Ham.

Therefore, Shem is the most important of these sons for the story's concerns. Ham and his descendants second most, and Japheth hardly at all. Japheth is important to us because most of us are from Japheth, and we're Japhetic people, most of us.

I mean, we've got more than one race here, and not all are Japhetic, but us Caucasian Indo-European types, we're from Japheth. But not so significant in the Old Testament

history because of the geographic location of the action of the Old Testament, it doesn't really deal so much with the northern European peoples, which Japheth gave rise to. But that's the order they're mentioned in, in order of importance to the story.

Shem, Ham, and Japheth. It says, and Ham was the father of Canaan, which is what makes Ham significant here. Canaan was the father of the Canaanites, and the Canaanites were the people that the Jews were going to have to drive out of the land of Canaan in order to obtain the so-called promised land.

So the Canaanites in Moses' day, and Moses was writing Genesis, in Moses' day the Canaanites, though of all the people that descended from Noah, perhaps a relatively insignificant set of races, tribes, they are singled out for mention because of their significance to the Jews of Moses' day. Because the Canaanites are their enemy, the ones who have to be defeated. So he inserts Ham was the father of Canaan.

Now these three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated. And Noah began to be a farmer. This is apparently a new trade for him.

What did he do for a living before the flood? I think he was a boat builder. But he began to be a farmer. He's got his land legs now, I don't think he wants to go to sea anymore.

So he gets close to the land, starts planting, among other things, apparently a vineyard. Now vineyards produce grapes, and grapes produce juice that produces wine, and that's what grapes and vineyards have always been seen for, and that's what they were here for. Now some people think that wine, or that grape juice didn't ferment as it does now before the flood.

I honestly can't imagine why it wouldn't, but I mean I don't know, I don't know all of the natural phenomena that make fermentation take place. And some people say, well before the flood, fermentation didn't take place because there were different atmospheric or natural conditions. I don't think this is a very strong suggestion.

But the reason they suggest it is, they say, well Noah therefore was unfamiliar with fermentation. And we find he's going to get drunk here, and we really don't want our hero to end up being a jerk. So they say, well we can, we can, you know, we can remedy this, we can rehabilitate his reputation by saying he drank wine enough to get drunk, but he didn't know that wine gets you drunk.

It's like a new thing. Well that may be true, but there's no reason to suggest it. The Bible doesn't suggest it.

It doesn't suggest that Noah was ignorant. He might have been, who knows. But you see, the Bible commonly records the flaws of the people who are the most central heroes, even if it's the apostles of Christ, or Abraham, or Moses, or David.

These guys never get their story completely told without the inclusion of some heinous mistake that they made in their lives. And some fatal flaw in them. This is one reason we know the Bible is true.

I mean, there's many reasons to know the Bible is true, but this is particularly so because, generally speaking, mythology tends to make the heroes superhumanly great. And even the histories of nations in the ancient world did not usually record the embarrassing things. For example, the animals of Egypt do not record the exodus of the Jews, although there's plenty of evidence that the exodus took place, the Egyptians did not record it in their histories.

Why? It's embarrassing to their nation. The histories of Babylon do not specifically describe the madness of Nebuchadnezzar, though the Bible tells of it. There are hints of it in the Babylonian literature, but there's no specific reference.

The embarrassing things about the heroes, about the kings, about the nation, about the good guys, are usually omitted from the records of pagan history or pagan mythology. The Bible, apparently, is not like pagan mythology in that it doesn't let any of its good guys get away clean. Except, perhaps, Joseph.

Joseph, there's no precise sin against him, and of course, Jesus. In fact, that very correlation is what makes some people think that Joseph, that's one of the things that makes people think Joseph is a type of Christ, because Joseph is one of the very few heroes, and Jesus another, who does not have anything recorded against him. But Noah doesn't get away with it.

It says, then Noah, verse 21, drank the wine and was drunk and became uncovered in his tent, apparently naked or at least not sufficiently clad. He was in an undignified condition, but he was too drunk to know it. At least he wasn't running around in the streets.

He was in his tent. I mean, if you're going to be naked, the tent is a good place to be, but apparently the tent was not totally private. It was a place where people could come in and go out, and therefore it was not a situation where you'd want to be laying around in an undignified manner.

And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. It's interesting that Ham, again, is said the father of Canaan. Now, he was, of course, the father of Canaan, obviously, and you see, for example, in chapter 10, verse 6, Ham had a lot of sons, of whom Canaan may have been the youngest and the least important in terms of birth order.

In verse 6 of chapter 10, Ham had Cush, Mizrim, Foot, and Canaan were his sons. And Canaan is mentioned last, probably the youngest, but why is he singled out here? He's

singled out because before the end of this story, Canaan is going to be the object of a curse. He's going to receive a curse.

And why is this story even included in the Pentateuch? No doubt because Moses, telling the story, saw significance in this because he was living in a generation that was called to go and conquer the Canaanites and to fulfill the terms of this curse. So, it's suitable for Moses to tell this story because of its relevance to Canaan. Now, Canaan himself may have had nothing to do with the action of the story.

We're not told anywhere that Canaan was even a player. He might not have even been born yet, or he probably was born because he was mentioned by name, but he might have been a child at this time. We don't know.

Canaan is the focal point here because of the Canaanites later and their significance to the Jews. But Moses tells this story because it tells us something about the early recognition on the part of Noah that Canaan was going to be a cursed race. And it starts out with Ham, the father of Canaan, going in and seeing his father in this condition.

Now, I don't suppose that Ham can be blamed for seeing his father in that condition. In all likelihood, he didn't know that's what he would see when he walked into the tent. But what he saw was undignified.

Now, in the ancient world, the dignity of the father is a very important thing. The father is the patriarch of the family. You preserve his dignity.

Ham, finding his father in that condition, should have been, first of all, embarrassed, and secondly, should have done something to cover his father up and just let it be, let the thing pass. Instead, he didn't cover his father up. He went out and talked about it to his brothers.

He went out and told his two brothers outside. Now, you might say, well, what's wrong with that? It was the wrong response to the situation. He was in a position where he could have covered his father's nakedness and no one else would have had to know.

It was obvious that his father was in a condition that his father himself was not aware of because he was out of his mind drunk. And it was a condition that Noah, when he would wish had not happened and would hope that no one would know about. It was, at this point, Ham's little secret, but he shared it with the rest of the world.

Now, everyone in the world knew because there weren't anyone else in the world except these guys. And so he exposed his father's sin publicly, which he could have covered up had he been more, you know, honoring of his father. Now, his brothers were more honorable and wanted to honor their father.

It says in verse 23, that Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their

shoulders, went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away and they did not see their father's nakedness. Now, I don't think there's any sin in Ham having seen his father's nakedness, but Shem and Ham, I mean Shem and Japheth, knew that if they were in that condition, they would not want someone to lay in honor of their father.

They did not look at him in that condition. And instead, they took steps to cover his nakedness in case anyone else would walk into the tent. And therefore, they shielded their father from further shame and indignity, and they showed respect to their father.

And that is, that's the difference between Ham and his two brothers. Ham did not honor his father, but exposed his father's sin publicly. Or if not sin, at least shame.

We don't know if drunkenness would have been called a sin back then since there was no law. I mean, as far as we know, it's never been forbidden at that time. So I don't know if it's proper to call it a sin, but certainly it led to an undignified exposure, which makes it shameful.

And Ham apparently just used his father's shame as a source of gossip. Whereas the brothers didn't find that very tasteful, and they decided they should cover their father up and respect him. And I consider, I've always considered, that there is a parallel of sorts to this in the behavior of many of the children of movie stars who write books exposing their parents' lives.

You hear them interviewed on talk shows from time to time. Of course, their parents, being movie stars, lived dissolute lives, and they had multiple failed marriages, and usually alcohol and drug problems, and abusive behavior toward their children, or neglect toward their children. I mean, usually these movie stars were not good parents, and their kids make a lot of money by writing books about how their parents were not good parents.

To me, that's like exposing their parents' nakedness. I mean, if your parents did things that were bad, you should do everything you can to conceal that out of honor to them. Honoring your father doesn't mean he's always honorable.

Noah in this condition was not in an honorable state, but that did not mean that Shem and Japheth felt justified in promoting that dishonorable information about their father. You know, when children are born into a family, the very act of bringing children into your home is a humbling thing on your part, because if you live alone, whatever faults you have can be hidden from the public. You can go inside your house, and your faults are your own little secret.

You bring children into your life, and you've got witnesses right there inside the home. They see you at your best, they see you at your worst, and everyone has a worst as well

as a best. But by bringing children into the home, you're bringing witnesses in who see everything about you.

And as people who are children brought into our parents' homes, where we have seen everything about our parents, we need to realize that our parents have become, their reputations have become vulnerable by our very existence. They make themselves vulnerable to exposure. Now, hopefully, most parents don't have an awful lot of shameful things that, if told, would destroy their reputations, but everyone has some things they'd rather the world didn't know, but their kids know.

Their kids were there. Their kids saw them all the time. And therefore, I think it's a very dishonoring thing to repay parents who, you know, who've made themselves vulnerable by bringing you as a witness into their home, to exploit that privileged knowledge, and to then, you know, gossip and so forth.

Now, I've heard many testimonies where people have talked about how their parents were abusers or alcoholics and so forth, and I think sometimes that's an important part of the story. I think sometimes things like that can be told without disrespect, and especially if the parent has since changed, become a Christian, has even given permission for that story to be told. But in general, I think that when we tell stories about our growing up and things like that, we ought to be very careful not to disrespect our parents, even if they were dishonorable.

Certainly everyone is dishonorable sometimes, and sometimes those times are the juicy things that you tell about your childhood. You don't spend an awful lot of time telling about the things your parents did that were right, necessarily. It's the things they did that were wrong that we consider reformatory of our childhood years, and therefore we, you know, we tend to tell those things.

Well, there may be times when those have to be told. There may be situations in which it's proper, but we should not just assume that it's public information that we can just spew around at the expense of our parents' reputations. This is the mistake that Ham made.

Japheth and Shem responded very differently, and they knew that their father had done something shameful, but they covered for him. Love covers a multitude of sins, the Bible says, and apparently respect for parents also covers a multitude of sins. And verse 24 says, So Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his younger son had done to him.

So the Ham is the younger son. Now, what his younger son had done to him, we don't read that he had done anything but walked in, seen him, and let him walk out and talk to him, but that's apparently what he had done to him. I've heard Bible teachers try to suggest that something more went on that is not on record and that Ham was a pervert or something like that, and, you know, I don't know if this suggestion comes from any

rabbinic traditions about the story or if it just comes out of the dirty minds of Bible teachers or whatever.

To me, I don't think there has to be anything speculated beyond what we're told. What Ham did to his father was expose him to the public. Remember, Shem and Japheth were the entire public of the whole world, except for maybe their children, and some of them were born at this time.

Canaan probably was born, but very possibly quite young. So Noah, knowing this, said, Cursed be Canaan. A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.

And he said, Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. Now, notice Canaan is the brunt of all this, and yet we don't read that Canaan had any involvement in the story.

Ham, who is the guilty party, is not mentioned in the curse. But that's... And people say, why is that? Why does Canaan get blamed for this? I don't think that Canaan is being blamed for what happened here. I think this incident becomes an occasion for a prophecy to be given about the future of Canaan, who, like his father, apparently was, you know, not the right stuff.

Now, we know that Canaan's descendants, the Canaanites, were exceedingly wicked people. The curse that came upon them was due them not because of what happened here in Genesis chapter 9. It was due them because of their much later behavior as a race of people who, you know, had extremely corrupt practices, idolatrous practices. They sacrificed their babies to Moloch and had sexual orgies in front of the idol as the babies burned alive.

I mean, this is what the Canaanites were doing in the days of Abraham and afterwards. But at this early stage, the Canaanites weren't doing this. But we can easily see why God cursed the Canaanites when he did.

But this occasion, which may not have involved the man Canaan at all directly, it nonetheless gave occasion for a prophecy to be given that would be true of Canaan at a later date. And perhaps the occasion was because, like father, like son, Canaan's a chip off the old block. At least his descendants will be.

They're not godly. They're not reverent. And the irreverence of Ham on this occasion simply gave occasion for the irreverence of his later generations for Canaan also to be mentioned.

But notice he says, cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants, the lowest of servants, he shall be to his brethren. And then both Shem and Japheth are mentioned favorably, but Shem especially, because the Lord God Yahweh is said to be the God of Shem. Now, we

have not been told this previously, but apparently Shem was a worshiper of Yahweh.

We know that Shem eventually would give rise to the family that would produce Abram, and Abram would become the man of Yahweh. Yahweh's man, the chosen man, and his descendants, the chosen people. These were the Shemites, the Semites, as we would say today.

And so in this prophecy, Yahweh God is associated with Shem, which in Noah's day, of course, Noah would have no idea that Abraham was going to come along ten generations later, and there would be this special relationship between Abram and God and his seed. This was strictly a prophecy that Noah gave by revelation. He knew that God, Yahweh, would be associated with Shem in the future, and Canaan would be his servant.

Now, the Canaanites, some of them did become servants of the Jews. God actually forbade the Jews to make servants out of them, because he told them to wipe them all out. But the Jews did not wipe them all out, and so Canaanites became water carriers and woodcutters and so forth for the Jews after the conquest of Canaan, especially the people of Gibeah, who fooled Joshua into thinking they were not Canaanites.

And he made a covenant with them, a mutual non-aggression pact, and so they became the servants. So Canaan did become, some Canaanites did become the servants of some Shemites, of the Jews. But then he says about Japheth, and Japheth, remember, is, we shall see in the next chapter, largely the progenitor of the northern European peoples and the western European peoples.

So most of us Gentiles who are of European extraction would be from Japheth. And he says, May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. Now, I don't know enough of the anecdotes of the history of the Canaanites to know in what sense they became servants of Japhethites.

But it's interesting that he says Japheth will dwell in the tents of Shem. Now God is mentioned, but not as Yahweh, just the generic Elohim, the God of humanity. Elohim is the name for God associated with all creation.

Yahweh is the name for God associated with his special relationship with his people. And Yahweh is mentioned in connection with Shem, but only Elohim in connection with Japheth. But it is said that Japheth will dwell in the tents of Shem, that they will come under the canopy, under the umbrella of Shem.

Now, there seems to be something about that very thing in Isaiah chapter 54, I would say. And Paul quotes Isaiah 54 with reference to really the Gentiles coming into the church. He quotes from the first verse, but I would read a few verses beyond what Paul quotes.

In Isaiah 54, 1, it says, Sing, O barren, you who have not born. Break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not prevailed with child. For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman, says the Lord.

Now, what does this mean? The married woman in this is Israel, married to God. The desolate who have never had children for God are the Gentiles who have never been in a relationship with God before. They've been desolate as far as God's fruit, God's producing fruit for God or children for God.

The Gentiles up to this point had never been fruitful. They'd always been barren. But the married wife, Israel, had had some children.

But the prophecy is that the one who's been barren, the Gentiles, will produce more children than the Jews, than Israel will. Eventually this is fulfilled in the Gentiles outnumbering the Jews in the body of Christ. And Paul quotes it to that effect in Galatians.

He quotes this verse referring to this very thing. But in verse two, it says, enlarge the place of your tent. And this is addressing Israel, at least the remnant of Israel.

Enlarge the place of your tent and let them stretch out the curtains of your habitations. Do not spare, lengthen the cords and strengthen your stakes for you shall expand to the right and to the left and your descendants will inherit the nations, that's the Gentiles, and shall make desolate cities inhabited. Now Isaiah is telling Israel or the remnant of Israel, your family tent is going to have to take in many more than you have anticipated.

You think of your family merely as Jewish people, but you're going to have to encompass the nations. The Gentiles are going to be under your tent too. Japheth is going to live under the tent of Shem too.

That is predicting that Gentiles in large numbers, and the Japhethites are mentioned specifically, will come into the tent of Shem who is the man of Yahweh. That is through Shem's intermediary role, the people of Japheth will come to Yahweh too. It's interesting that although every nation in the world has been evangelized now, and no matter where you go you'll find Christians of all races and all nations, in the book of Acts the Spirit led Paul into Europe and Galatia and places where the Japhethites were.

The first and second and third missionaries of Paul were to the Japhethites. Now that doesn't mean others were not evangelized. The Hammites were evangelized too, but they're not even mentioned in this prophecy.

The Hammites were the African nations, and for example Mark went down to Alexandria, Egypt and evangelized there. Apparently he established a church in Egypt. We know the Ethiopian eunuch got saved on the road home from Jerusalem, and he apparently helped to establish a church in Ethiopia, because there's been a church in Ethiopia from the

earliest known centuries of Christianity.

So the African church also has very ancient roots, and so do Asian churches. Thomas, the apostle Thomas, went to India, and a church in India started. So there really have been from the earliest times Japhethites and Hamites and the people of East Asia, which we'll have to figure out where they're from, which of these boys came, where did the Asians come from.

But the point is that although the gospel in all directions, the primary influence of the gospel in the earliest years was in Europe, and that's why Europe became a Christian continent. While there were Christians in all the other places, Europe became a Christian continent, and that's where the Japhethites were. As it were, Japheth came under the tent of Shem, and that's no doubt the meaning of this prediction.

And we read in verse 28, Noah lived after the flood 350 years, so all the days of Noah were 950 years, and he died. So the flood came when he was 600 years old, then he lived another 350 years, altogether 950 years. He lived almost as long as Methuselah, another 19 years he would have lived.

Now in chapter 10, which I hope to cover in the remaining time before our next break, and hopefully somewhat quickly, we have a chapter that's called the Table of Nations. It's called the Table of Nations because it tells where the ancient ethnic nations originated from the three sons of Noah. Remember we were already told back in chapter 9 and verse 19, these three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.

And so we're going to find out how the earliest, most ancient nations arose from these three men. And we will find that nations can be described ethnically or geographically. Generally speaking, if we think geographically, the people of Japheth went up to the north and the west of where Noah lived, which was apparently an Ararat region.

And the people of Ham went mostly south into the Middle East and into Africa. And the people of Shem largely were in the Middle East and in the Arabian and Mesopotamian regions. Now that's the geographical region that these people went to.

But racially, modern ethnologists would say that people belong to three different major racial groups, the Caucasian, the Negroid, and the Mongoloid. I don't know if any of these terms are really politically incorrect anymore, but they're just scientific terms that are used to describe the different major classes of people. I learned this in school when I was a kid, and it still seems to be the case that the races of men are considered to be the Caucasians, which of course are essentially mostly white, the Negroid, which are mostly black, and the Mongoloid, which are mainly what we use to describe the far east Asian people.

And then there are some people that are kind of in between because these groups intermarried and so forth. And so, for example, the Native Americans of North America are now considered to be distinct from Mongoloid, and it used to be they were considered to be from a different stock. But we will find as we read this table of nations, it tells us where these sons of Noah's children went and what their names were, because races and nations were named after the individual men, that the people of Japheth were mostly Caucasians and some Mongoloid nations.

And the people of Ham were mostly the Negroid and some Mongoloid nations too. The Canaanites, for example, were from Ham. They were not Negroid, as far as we know.

They were probably Mongoloid in their race. Again, the word Mongoloid today, unfortunately, also is a term used for people with Down's syndrome. I don't know if they still call people, maybe it's politically incorrect to call a person with Down's syndrome Mongoloid now.

But when we talk about Mongoloid races, we're not talking about people with Down's syndrome, we're talking about people from East Asia. We might say people with the more yellow skin as opposed to the white and the black. And then Shem, essentially the Indo-European peoples came from Shem.

Mesopotamians, Arabians, Jews. These also are considered technically Mongoloid. Now, when the nations here are mentioned, it doesn't mention any of the nations of the Far East.

It doesn't mention the Australian aborigines. It doesn't mention the peoples of the Americas. And probably it is because these people, having descended from the original groups that came from the Ark, came into being a bit later.

Maybe not very much later, maybe just a few generations later. But the very first descendants of Noah were in the region where Noah and the Ark were. And so it's that geographical area in general that's discussed.

And over the generations or maybe centuries, people moved farther and farther out until obviously some Negroid people moved down to Australia and became the aboriginals. And apparently some of the either the Shemites or the Japhethites moved further east. And there's actually controversy among biblical scholars whether the people of the Far East are Shemite or Japhethite.

But I think it's generally assumed that they are Shemite. We only have one Far Eastern person here. Christine, do you know, have you ever heard what the Korean or the Asian peoples are? I believe that Shemite is what is assumed.

Although they obviously migrated that far east a little later than the people we read here. And it doesn't tell us which people here migrated that way. But I think it's generally

understood they're Shemite.

Well, what we have in this chapter is a list of names, which would be entirely boring if we don't know how to associate them with anything modern. Some of them we can't, but some we can because with a fair measure of certainty, a lot of these names can be associated with known ethnic nations that are still around, or at least were around in much later recorded history that we know something about. Some of the names we don't know much about them, and some of them there's dispute as to who they became.

But the way it works out in the chapter is we have, first of all, the descendants of Japheth are mentioned, then the descendants of Ham, then of Shem. Now, this is the opposite order in which the names are usually listed. Remember, I said it's usually Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and that's not a birth order.

That is in order of their significance to the stories of the Bible. And now we have their descendants told in reverse order. And the reason for that is, no doubt, we'll take the least important first, and the next least important next, and then the most important save for last.

The idea is to dispense with the ones that are less important to the story. That's not to say that the people of Japheth are less important people than those of Shem or Ham, but rather in terms of the story, the people, there's different ethnic groups that are important in the story. And so the less important ones are dispensed with first in the consideration.

Now, this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and sons were born to them after the flood. Now, verses two through five give us the sons of Japheth. The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshach, and Tyrus.

The sons of Gomer, which was one of those sons in verse two, so now these are grandsons of Japheth, were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The sons of Javan, now he was another of Japheth's sons, so these are additional grandchildren of Japheth. The sons of Javan were Elisha, not the prophet Elisha, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

So we have names given of apparently seven sons of Japheth, and two of those sons we have some of their grandsons mentioned. Now, we don't have, there were certainly grandsons from the others, too, but the ones that are mentioned, no doubt, are the ones that would be recognizable in the ancient world as the progenitors of certain nations. For example, Gomer is believed by, well, Josephus, the historian, said that the people of Gomer were the people of Galatia later on.

And Magog is the Scythians who moved up north of the Black Sea, up in northern Europe. Magog. Medi, in verse two, is indisputably the Medes.

The Medes and the Persians conquered the Babylonian kingdom in the days of Daniel

much later than this, but the Medes descended from Medi. Javan is the Greeks. The Greeks descended from Javan.

This is, again, rather indisputable from the ancient known histories of these nations. Ashkenaz, which is in verse three, is the people of Germany, Scandinavia, and the Slavic peoples, some of whom are here. In fact, most of us are probably them.

Probably the majority of us are from Ashkenaz. Interestingly, Jews from these regions today are called Ashkenazi Jews. The Jews of the world today usually are divided into two broad geographical racial groups.

They're the Sephardic Jews and the Ashkenazi Jews. The Ashkenazi Jews are the ones whose ancestors lived in Europe, especially northern Europe. From Germany, Scandinavia, from the Slavic nations, those are the Ashkenazis.

Modern Jews would refer to themselves by that term if their ancestors come from that region. Now, the Jews whose ancestors come from North Africa, the Middle East, southern Europe, and Asia would be called Sephardic Jews. But I just point that out because Ashkenaz is the one from whom that comes.

The Ashkenazi Jews are the Jews from the regions that Ashkenaz was in. This man gave rise to the peoples that populated northern Europe, Germany, Scandinavia, and the Slavic peoples. In verse four, we read of Tarshish.

Tarshish is southern Turkey today, and Kittim is right after that in verse four. Kittim is the island of Cyprus, at least the southern population of Cyprus were the Kittim. So these Mediterranean and European peoples were from Japheth.

Verse five says, from these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated to their lands, everyone according to his own language, according to their families, into their nations. Now, it might seem strange that it says, everyone according to his language. And likewise, you find that in talking about the others.

In Ham, in verse 20, it says, these sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, and so forth. Also in verse 31, with the sons of Shem, these were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages. It mentions the languages of these people.

And yet, when you come to chapter 11, verse one, it says, now the whole earth had only one language and one speech. And we read of the Tower of Babel, meaning the origin of languages. This has confused some people, but only because they're not thinking very clearly.

You see, the Tower of Babel happened within a few generations after the flood, at a time when there was still only one language. But chapter 10 is looking generations off into the

future, where these nations divided in the following centuries. And it makes reference to their various languages.

Well, they didn't have various languages at the beginning, but they scattered after the Tower of Babel. The Tower of Babel, we go back in chapter 11 to talk about the time before these nations were scattered. At the Tower of Babel, everyone right after the time of the flood was still in one place and had one language.

But at the Tower of Babel, they had their languages changed and scattered, and they scattered out. And this chapter 10 tells us where they went and where they're, you know, after they were scattered, they had these different languages. So it mentions them.

Now, when it talks about the sons of Ham in verses six through 20, it's going to focus primarily on the Canaanites, because they're the most important people to the Jews in this story. But it mentions the sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. Now, there's actually no difficulty among scholars identifying what nations came from these.

Mizraim is the ancient name for Egypt. Phut, or put in the New King James, but it's also P-H-U-T in other translations. That is the ancient name for Libya, another African country.

Cush is the ancient name for Ethiopia and southern Sudan. That is the people of Cush were the people of Ethiopia and southern Sudan. So we're talking about the North African peoples here.

We've got Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia, and southern Sudan. And then Cush had descendants, one of whom is significant in his name Nimrod. If you look down at verse eight, Cush begot Nimrod, and he began to be a mighty one on the earth.

He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. Therefore, it is said, like Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord. So this man was famous for hunting, and so he became legendary.

People use him as a point of comparison with other great hunters. He's like that mighty hunter Nimrod. Now, Nimrod was not only a hunter, he also was a king, because it says in verse 10, the beginning of his kingdom.

So Nimrod became a king, very possibly the first earthly king ever. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, which in the Greek Bible is Babylon. Babel is Babylon.

And we know that also because it says, it gives some other places besides Babel, Erich, Akkad, and Caledon, and it says in the land of Shinar. The plains of Shinar is where the city of Babylon was later built also. In Nimrod's day, they built the tower of Babel, and that was the beginning of his kingdom.

But this same city, although the tower apparently was never completed, in later time became the location of Babylon. And Babylon, of course, becomes almost the code word for evil in the rest of the Bible, even all the way through the book of Revelation. Although in Revelation, it's not literal Babylon that's discussed, but the real literal Babylon conquered Israel, burned down the temple in Jeremiah's day and so forth, and they were the great enemies of God's people.

And this tells where Babylon started. It started with this guy, Nimrod. Now, what it says about Nimrod isn't technically very bad.

I mean, he was a mighty hunter before the Lord. Some people trying to make this more sinister say he hunted men. He was a tyrant.

He was a king, we know. And they try to make it sound like he was particularly a bad guy. And he might have been a bad guy.

His name means, let us revolt. So I think that just the meaning of his name might have something to do with his reputation as being a bad guy. But there's more than that.

Because according to ancient Mesopotamian history, Nimrod was married to a Semiramis, spelled S-E-M-I-R-A-M-U-S, Semiramis. Now, she is a very commonly referred to person in ancient mythology of the Babylonians and so forth. Many people think that Semiramis and the legends about her, the myths about her, gave rise to the whole cult of Diana and the cult of Ashtaroth and the cult of Astarte and the fertility goddesses' cult.

There's legends and myths about Semiramis that she and Nimrod had a child named Tammis. In fact, some people say that the myths teach that this happened after Nimrod had died. Nimrod had left his widow Semiramis, and after he'd been dead for a while, she got pregnant and claimed that she got pregnant by him, post-mortem, like he came back and made her pregnant, and then Tammis was born.

So it's kind of like a supernatural birth, almost like a counterfeit virgin birth. To Tammis are traced certain forms of worship of the ancient world, which have their echo in a lot of the traditions of Christmas, the Christmas trees and the yule logs and things like that. Many of these things that are practiced at Christmas today are traced back to the worship of Tammis by some authors.

Nimrod, although he's only mentioned not real negatively here, was very possibly a very bad guy. But he also, in verse 11, was involved in building Nineveh, which was later the capital city of Assyria. So he was involved in founding both Babylon and Assyria.

In later years, these were separate nations. In fact, the Assyrians threatened the world of their time, and later they were conquered by Babylon. But this was many, many centuries after the time of Nimrod.

He's credited with being the founder of those. Moving down a little bit, we have in verse 13, Nizrim, Begotludim, Anamim, Lehabim, and Naphtahim, as well as Patrasim and Kaslihim. Now, notice all these words end with "-im," which means these are races.

This is plural. Nizrim, which is Egypt, gave rise to the people of Lud, the people of Anamim, the people of Lehab, the people of Naphtahim. And so the "-im," at the end, means the descendants of the people of the plural of that.

So we can deduce what the names of these sons were by taking off the "-im," at the end. But it says in verse 14, "...of whom, or from whom, came the Philistines and the Capturim." Now, that's important. The Philistines are a very important pagan people later in Israel's history.

And they came from the same descendants as the Egyptians did. Although, by the way, the Capturim, the Philistines in the ancient times were on the Crete. They had the same descent as the Egyptians, but they were Cretan people.

And they sailed, they were seafaring people, and they sailed from Crete and established five cities on the eastern Mediterranean shore, which happened to be Israel later on, and became problems to the Israelites. Then we have, of course, Canaan in verse 15, and he's the main guy. And we are told that Canaan begot Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth.

Heth is the father of the Hittites, an important tribe we read a lot about in the Bible. They're also called the sons of Heth. The Jebusites, the Jebusites were the first inhabitants of Jerusalem.

In fact, Jerusalem was a Jebusite city before David conquered it and made it a Jewish capital. But the Jebusites were the Jerusalemites in the old days, before the Jews owned Jerusalem. The Amorite, the Girgizite, the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite.

The Arvidite, the Zimorite, and the Hamathite. It says afterward, the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. But the Canaanites included all these people.

Not all of them were in the land of Canaan at the time that Israel conquered Canaan. We have here, I think, a list of, it looks to me like 11 different names under Canaan's descendants. But in different places, the Bible lists these nations that the Jews conquered differently.

For example, in Deuteronomy 7.1, it says that God drove seven Canaanite nations out of Canaan, which were stronger than Israel. That God drove them out, seven nations. In Genesis 15.20, when God is naming the land of Canaan that He's going to give to Abram, He says, actually verse 18 through 21 more like, On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your descendants I have given you the land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates, the Canaanites, the Canazites, the Cabanites, the Hittites, Perizzites, and the Rephiam, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Gergizites,

and the Jebusites.

Now there we have, I believe, ten listed. Although Canaanites is among them, and Canaanites would be a cover term for all of them. And then in Exodus 3.8, there's also a list, and this one only includes six nations.

And this is not a contradiction, this is just a different collection of nations being listed. But in Exodus 3.8, it says that God says, So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. So we have a different number of Canaanites mentioned.

It's probable that at different times in history, different numbers of these tribes inhabited that land, because it does say in Genesis 10, afterward the Canaanites were dispersed. So eventually the Canaanites were further out, and perhaps at one point there were 10 nations there, another point there were 11, another point there were 6, another point there were 7, and so forth. In any case, we have the Canaanites there.

Interestingly, in Genesis 10.19, And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza, as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admon, and Zoboam, as far as Lashon. Now the mention of Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admon, and Zoboam are mentioned as if they are markers, geographical markers. Do you want to know what the ancient land of Canaan was? It went all the way down to Sodom, and Gomorrah.

Now these four cities that are mentioned are four of the five that were destroyed in Abraham's day. They were no longer there as markers. From Abraham's day on, when God destroyed Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admon, and Zoboam, and one of the cities, these cities were gone.

Which means that this information must have been recorded before Abraham's day. This must be a very ancient document, because it was written at a time where those cities, which ceased to exist in the time of Abraham, were still available to be used as markers, border markers of the land. Now, real quickly here, I know we've born to Shem.

It mentions that he was the father of all the children of Eber. The reason that's important is because Eber is the name from which the word Hebrew comes, and Abram is called a Hebrew later on. It says, the sons of Shem, verse 22, were Elam, Asher, Arphexad, Lud, and Aram.

The sons of Aram were Uz, Hol, Gether, and Mash. Arphexad, one of those sons, begot Selah, and Selah begot Eber. Now, Eber, of course, is important, because he gives rise eventually to Abraham.

But these names, just a few of them I could identify for you. Elam is a reference to the Persians of South Iran. Asher is Assyria.

And Aram was the Arameans, or the Syrians. So Syria, Assyria, Southern Iran, the Persians, these are the people of Shem. And then Arphexad, of course, his descendants became, some of them became the Jews.

But we read that in verse 24, Arphexad begot Selah, Selah begot Eber, and to Eber were born two sons. The name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided. Peleg means divided.

That's the meaning of the word. He was named that because the earth was divided in his day, and so his father named him to commemorate that. And his brother's name was Joktan.

Now, what does it mean the earth was divided? Some people believe that means that there was the division that took place at the Tower of Babel, that God divided the population of the earth into groups. Although it might be more accurate to say the people were divided rather than the earth. The word earth usually means the land.

And some feel that the land actually went through some division, something resembling the, what people call continental drift may have happened during his time. There are other options, but it's spoken of as if the author, probably of this very ancient document, much older than Moses' time, his readers apparently would remember when the land, earth was divided. They wouldn't have been told what that means.

This chapter only really goes very few generations beyond that time. And therefore it's possible that the people at the time this was written could still remember it might've been legendary when the earth was divided. We don't know what it means, but it could be a reference to the Tower of Babel.

And it could be a reference to something else, some geographical changes that took place. But Peleg had a brother whose name was Joktan. And we read some of his descendants in the next few verses only to dispense with him because it's Peleg we want to know about.

Joktan's descendants are mentioned. None of them are particularly important to us to talk about. But after it talks about them, it says in verse 31, these were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages in the lands, according to their nations.

These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations in their nations. And from these, the nations were divided on the earth after the flood. Now, not all of Genesis is this repetitious.

We can see a style of some writer who was loved repetition here. You know, one of the documents that Moses used, no doubt was very ancient. And there's a lot of repetition in the story of the flood and afterwards.

We're now done with that story and we'll go elsewhere after this. But we can see then in general how the people of Noah's family became the people of the whole world. Now, the question arises, what about the races? Why the physical changes? Why are there different skin colors and so forth, if it's all from one family? I'm going to put off talking about that until we talk about the Tower of Babel, partly because we don't have time now and we need to take a break.