

**Introduction** (Gen 10:1, 10:25, 10:32, Luke 3:23-38)

There is a tremendous interest today in finding out who your ancestors are. For a certain fee, they will look at your DNA and they can trace your roots back to the various nations and people groups. Even though I have not personally done that, I find it quite fascinating. One thing that I can tell you about our ancestral lines is that all of us can ultimately trace our roots back to one man: Noah. Noah and his three sons were the only ones that God saved when He destroyed all life with the flood. My family tree goes back to Noah. We all go back to Noah. All of us go back to one of the three sons of Noah. Our text today gives us some insight about which son of Noah our roots go back to. Today, we are covering Genesis 10 and it begins by telling us that *“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.”*

(Gen 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.”

Before we get into the text today, I want to make a few comments. We are covering a bunch of genealogies today, and it could be boring and irrelevant to some. So, I asked God for two things. First, I asked for some insight about the significance of this chapter. Second, I asked God for some practical applications. My goal is not head knowledge, even though it is important for us to grow in our knowledge. My goal is for us to be transformed. My goal is for us to become like Christ in our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. My goal is that we not be merely hearers of the word, but that we prove to be doers of the word. So, we need to know why this is important so that we will give our attention to it, and we need to be able to apply the word in our lives.

**Significance**

From a historical point, this is the only written record we have of the repopulation of the earth. It has tremendous historical significance. We learn about where all the various nations and people groups came from. Scholars call this chapter the Table of Nations or the Family of Nations.

Second, for linguists, this chapter has great significance. Linguistics is the science of studying languages and their origins. This week, I had a conversation with Mike Cooper about this chapter. Mike is an ordained pastor, but has worked for Murchison Drilling Schools for the past seven years. Mike has a Master’s degree in linguistics. He worked with Wycliffe in Southeast Asia for several years helping to translate the Bible for a certain people group. Mike and I discussed the significance of this chapter for linguists. Mike has tremendous knowledge about the various groups of languages and where they came from. So, for linguists, this chapter has great significance.

Third, for geologists and scientists who study the earth and its formation, the chapter has tremendous significance. After the tower of Babel, which we will cover in Genesis 11, God confused the languages and scattered the people. Everyone went their own ways. Then, there was a man in our chapter today called Peleg. His name means to split or divide. He was named Peleg because in his days the earth was divided. I believe that separated the earth and made various continents. I believe the platelets of the earth moved to their current positions during the life of Peleg. Today, the platelets move about ½ inch per year, so scientists use that to date the earth. What they don’t realize is that in Peleg’s life, they moved at a significantly faster rate.

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

Finally, for all of us, there is something else that is very significant. As I prayed, the Lord reminded me about Jesus' legal lineage. In Luke 3, Jesus' legal lineage is traced back to Adam, the son of God. Matthew's account goes back to Abraham, but Luke's account goes all the way back to Adam. If we did not have the genealogical records, the fulfillment of the lineage of Christ could not have been verified. The Messiah's lineage had been prophesied, and Christ needed to fulfill all of those requirements. That is significant for all of us.

(Luke 3:23-38) “When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli...{34} the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, {35} the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Heber, the son of Shelah, {36} the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, {37} the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, {38} the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.”

I want to make a couple other comments about the chapter before we dig into it. The order of the genealogies is significant. As a general rule, we would normally begin with the oldest son and work our way down to the youngest son. That is not how Moses records this. He begins with Japheth, the youngest son of Noah, and gives all of his sons. Then, Moses spends a lot of time on Ham's descendants. Finally, we are given the records of Shem's descendants. Why did Moses give these records in this order? It was given in this order because the only lineages that we will be tracked from this point on are Shem's. The lineage of Christ came through Shem. God had a predetermined plan (Acts 2:23) to redeem all of us, and that plan went through Shem. Everything in the Bible points to Jesus Christ, and this chapter leads us to the lineage of Christ.

Another thing that I want to bring up is the use of pictures and charts. As I waded through these lineages, I could not see clearly. I felt led to put the lineages in a chart in Excel. Once I could see the chapter from a pictorial viewpoint, several things stood out very clearly. Noah's three sons had sixteen sons. Shem had five sons, Ham had four sons, and Japheth had seven sons. But lineages are only given for seven of the sixteen grandsons. That is a significant omission when you are looking at the records of the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Why are nine of the lineages not mentioned at all? This is my opinion of what happened. After the tower of Babel, God confused the languages and the various sons went different directions. I believe that Noah went with Shem, his oldest son and lived his remaining and that the other sons did not have children at the time they went their separate ways. So, there were no records for the other nine grandsons to be recorded at that time. The flood took place in the year 1656, if we consider the creation of Adam year one. Peleg was born in 1755, and the earth was split and separated in his life. The tower of Babel in Genesis 11 took place sometime between 1656 and 1755. So, it is my belief that nine of the grandsons had not had any children at the time that everyone was separated. The timeline and dates support this.

Our chapter concludes in Genesis 10:32 by saying, “*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.*” We will cover this separation next week in Genesis 11. I believe that Noah and Moses did not have the other genealogies to record when they were separated.

## 1. Sons of Japheth (Gen 10:2-5)

Japheth is the youngest son of Noah, and his lineage is covered first. Japheth's name means simple, naïve, or deceived. The youngest is often thought of as naïve. Let me share something that came to me this week as I was studying. It is found in Genesis 5:32. It says that Noah was five hundred years old and became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. I had always looked at that as he started having his sons at the age of five hundred. What stood out to me is that Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth when he was five hundred years old. Noah only had one wife, so that makes these three sons triplets. I had never realized that Shem, Ham, and Japheth were triplets until this week. Japheth is the youngest son of Noah, but probably by only minutes from his other two brothers. Let's read the records of the sons of Japheth.

(Gen 5:32) "Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth."

(Gen 10:2-5) "The sons of Japheth were Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras. {3} The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz and Riphath and Togarmah. {4} The sons of Javan were Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim. {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."

Japheth had seven sons. Of those seven sons, only Gomer's and Javan's sons are mentioned. We find that Japheth's sons dwelt by the coasts and were separated into their lands. Scholars tell us that Japheth is the father of what we call Indo-European nations. This would include all the nations across Europe to India. Webster's Dictionary states that "*the Indo-European languages are the most important linguistic family of the globe. Comprising the chief languages of Europe, together with the Indo-Iranian and other Asiatic tongues. In the 19th century comparative and historical study of these languages, called also Indo-Germanic or Arian languages.*" It also gives a table of the family of languages and it says, "*the eastern languages involving the languages of India, Afghanistan, Iran, Armenia, the Balkans, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, parts of Germany, East Prussia, Lithuania and Latvia, and the western division of the languages, languages of Greece, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Romania, Cornwall, Wales, Britney, Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia, parts of Germany, the Netherlands, Belgian, and England.*"

My descendants are primarily from Scotland, England, and Germany. That tells me that my ancestral lines go back to Japheth, and I did not even have to pay to find that out. At one time I was pretty fluent in three languages, English, Farsi, and French, and all three of those languages came out of the descendants of Japheth.

Scholars have traced each of Japheth's seven sons to different geographical areas. I would be glad to give any of you more in-depth information about each of the sons if you are interested. One final point before moving on. At the scattering of Babel, I believe that it was not just three sons and three language groups. I believe that there were sixteen grandsons and at least sixteen different language groups created by God at that time. From a relational standpoint, this is difficult. Noah did not get to see his sons and grandchildren any longer. Even if he saw them, they could not communicate any longer.

## 2. Sons of Ham (Gen 10:6-20)

Ham had four sons, fourteen grandsons, and two great grandsons mentioned in the account. More attention is given to the sons of Ham than the other two sons. Let's read about Ham's sons.

(Gen 10:6-20) "The sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. {7} The sons of Cush were Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. {8} Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. {9} He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." {10} The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. {11} From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah, {12} and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. {13} Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim {14} and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim. {15} Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth {16} and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite {17} and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite {18} and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite; and afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad. {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, as far as Lasha. {20} These are the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, by their nations."

Cush is Ham's oldest son and is mentioned first. Cush is the same as Ethiopia. So, the African nations were descendants of Cush. Moses gives a lot of attention to one of Cush's sons, Nimrod. He mentions a number of significant things about Nimrod. First, it says he was a mighty one on the earth. We gather that he was powerful, influential, and probably wealthy. Second, it says that he was a mighty hunter before the Lord. It says this twice which makes it even stronger, and it says before the Lord. Even the Lord took notice of his hunting abilities. Third, it said that the beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh. This is the first kingdom mentioned in the Bible. We will study Babel next week and we discover this week that Nimrod was the one who built and led that work. Since Nimrod built a kingdom, he is the first king that we have in the Bible. He built other cities as well. He also built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen. Nineveh is probably best known as the city that Jonah came and prophesied against. The city repented and fasted, and God had mercy on Nineveh.

I took time to interview a great hunter in New Mexico. Jeff Young is not only a good hunter with firearms, but he is a great hunter with a bow. I called Jeff and asked him to give me the characteristics of a mighty hunter. We discussed in detail his answers and some additional things that I had thought of. Here are some characteristics of mighty hunters:

- Physically Strong
- Mentally prepared and alert. (They are strategic. They know the best time of day, when and where the animals feed. They scout in advance and plan their hunts.
- Calm
- Practice (archery, or whatever means to hunt)
- Patient

Then, because Nimrod was such a great builder, I also wrote down some characteristics of great builders. Finally, I looked at some characteristics of the work that was done at Babel and how it reflected on the leader. He said, “Come, let us build...” He was resourceful and used the bricks and mortar that was available at Babel. Here are some of the characteristics of good builders:

- Team leaders
- Organized
- Visionary
- Good Communicators
- Detailed
- Good Planners
- Good Coordinator
- Practical Wisdom

Finally, I put all of this into the computer and came up with a composite. I put it into a personality and leadership style tool. Nimrod’s Profile shows him to be an Expressive Driver., These are the characteristics of his style of leadership:

- Assertive
- Strong goal/results orientation
- Decisive
- Quick decisions
- Very assertive and persuasive
- High energy and enthusiasm
- High emotion
- Emphasizes vision, has big ideas
- Loves to interact with others.

Nimrod was a great one on the earth. If you want to study great leaders and learn from them, Nimrod would be a great case study. He was a great leader. He was a great community builder. He was a great nation and kingdom builder. It is no wonder that Moses wrote about this mighty one on earth.

Cush established the Tigris Euphrates area and Babelon. He established the Middle East and northern Africa, including Ethiopia. The Hittites settled in Turkey. The Canaanites were in the Promised Land. Mizraim was in Egypt. Phut is in Libya. So, Ham’s descendants settled in Egypt, Arabia, Libya, Turkey, Iraq, and the Promised Land.

We find a lot of the people that Israel will contend with in this passage, including the Canaanites. Last week, when we looked at the sin of Ham and Canaan, Noah cursed Canaan and prophesied of the struggles that his descendants would have with his brothers.

### **3. Sons of Shem (Gen 10:21-31)**

Finally, we get to the sons of Shem. We will learn more about the descendants of Shem in Genesis 11:10-32. Shem had five sons and only lineages of two of his sons are given, Arpachshad and Aram. Again, I believe that in the scattering after Babel, these other sons went different ways and there were no grandsons by the other sons at the time of the scattering.

(Gen 10:21-31) “Also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, and the older brother of Japheth, children were born. {22} The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram. {23} The sons of Aram were Uz and Hul and Gether and Mash. {24} Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. {25} Two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. {26} Joktan became the father of Almodad and Sheleph and Hazarmaveth and Jerah {27} and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah {28} and Obal and Abimael and Sheba {29} and Ophir and Havilah and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. {30} Now their settlement extended from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the hill country of the east. {31} These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations.”

The name Shem simply means name. I could see a knock knock joke being used against shem. “What’s your name?” “Name.” “No, what’s your name?” “Name.” It was Shem’s name that would carry on the lineage of Adam, Noah, Abraham, and down to Christ.

In introducing Shem, Moses says that he is the older brother of Japheth. It would be more normal to say the older brother of Japheth and Ham, or Ham, since Ham was the middle son. Because of Noah’s curse on Ham, his name is not associated with Shem or Japheth.

The descendants of Shem settled throughout the Middle East. The first son of Shem was Elam. The Elamites became the Persians. They had their capital at Susa, which was only a couple of hours from Masjed-I-Sulaiman, one of the cities that I grew up in.

We took a couple of field trips to Susa. Lud is mentioned, and they settled up by the Black Sea. He was the father of the Lydians in Asia Minor. In Acts 16:14, we read about a lady name Lydia, a seller of purple fabrics and a worshiper of God. She would have been a descendant of Lud.

Havilah, Ophir and Sheba settled by the Gulf of Aiden by the Red Sea, which is now part of Yemen.

Aram is the fifth son of Shem. There are two books of the Bible that are partially written in Aramaic, Daniel and Ezra. Both of these books take place in Susa, which is now part of Iran. Aramaic was the spoken language in that area at the time and so parts of both of those books are written in Aramaic. The rest of the Old Testament is written in Hebrew.

I mentioned Peleg earlier. He was one of two sons born to Eber. Some scholars have a different view about Peleg. They believe that he was named Peleg because of the scattering at Babel, not because of a geologic event where the earth was divided. I believe he came after Babel and after men and animals had already scattered to different places and would-be continents. Some things we will not really know until we are with the Father in heaven. Then, we will not know in part, but we will fully know all things. I look forward to seeing God’s video of everything He did.

## **Conclusion**

We are going to cover the building of Babel next week in Genesis 11, but I want to cover kingdoms for just a minute as we wrap up. I want to conclude today with something out of the life of Nimrod. He built the first kingdom on earth. He built Babel and the work there was

stopped by the Lord. This is the first earthly kingdom. I believe we have earthly kingdoms and we have a heavenly kingdom. In John 18:33-37 we read about Jesus being questioned by Pilate about whether He was the king of the Jews. Jesus responds by telling Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world. Jesus' kingdom is not of this realm.

(John 18:33-36) "Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" {34} Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?" {35} Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?" {36} Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."

Nimrod was busy building an earthly kingdom. Jesus was busy building a heavenly kingdom. In Psalm 127:1, we read "*unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain.*" Nimrod was building a kingdom on earth and it was in vain. The Lord was not in the building of Babel, so He put a stop to their work.

Nimrod was seeking first his own kingdom. In Matthew 6:33 we are taught to "*seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*" Nimrod was not seeking first God's kingdom and His righteousness. Nimrod was a powerful man. Nimrod was a great leader and builder. But, he was not building the kingdom of God. He was not seeking first the kingdom of God. He was not using all his strengths, abilities, talents, energy, and life to build the kingdom of God, and his work was in vain.

In Matthew 6 Jesus was teaching about prayer. In verse 10, He taught us to pray for God's kingdom to come and for His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(Matt 6:10) "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

This morning as we come to a close, I want to end with two questions. What kingdom are you seeking? Are you seeking to build your own kingdom here on earth, or are you seeking to build God's kingdom. The kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God. Are you seeking to increase the rule and reign of God in your family, neighborhood, workplace and city? Are you using your talents, strengths, abilities, wisdom, power, influence, and wealth to build the kingdom of God here in Albuquerque? This is a personal question for you to answer. Joshua asked the same question. He said, "choose you this day whom you will serve...as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord." Joshua was seeking the kingdom of God, not his own kingdom.

The second question is for those who may not know Jesus as their King. In a conversation with Nicodemus in John 3:3, Jesus told Nicodemus, who was a ruler of the Jews, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Even though Nicodemus was a religious man, he could not see the kingdom of God without being born again. Even though Nicodemus was a spiritual leader and ruler of the Jews, he was not going to enter the kingdom of God without being born again. Even though Nicodemus went to temple services, gave alms, fasted, prayed, and did all kinds of religious activities, he was not going to enter the kingdom of God without being born again. The second question is have you been born again. Have you received the King of Kings into your life? When you receive Christ, the Holy Spirit

comes into you and you are born of the Spirit. You have already been born of the flesh, but when you place your faith in Christ, you are born spiritually, or born again. Have you been born into the kingdom of God? If not, if you would like to be born into the kingdom of God, we would welcome the opportunity to pray with you this morning. If that is a desire of your heart this morning, I want you to come forward so that one of us can pray with you.

Let's pray.