

GENESIS 10: THE TABLE OF NATIONS

I. OVERVIEW

- A. The nations are dispersed
 - i. Descendants of Japheth
 - a. Spread across the coastlands
 - ii. Descendants of Ham
 - a. Babylon, Egypt, Canaanites
 - iii. Descendants of Shem
 - a. Hebrews
 - b. Arabs
 - iv. Total of 70 nations

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF NUMBER 70

- A. Completeness on large scale
 - i. As opposed to small scale of number 7
 - ii. 70 people went down to Egypt in Jacob's family
 - a. Genesis 46:27 **All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.**
 - iii. 70 elders in Israel at exodus from Egypt
 - a. Exodus 24:1 **Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel, and worship from afar.”**
 - iv. Forgive others 70 times
 - a. Matthew 18:21-22 **Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.” (NKJV)**

- B. Geographical accuracy is not the point of this chapter
 - i. But to show all nations came from three sons

III. NON-CHOSEN LINES LISTED FIRST BEFORE CHOSEN “SEED” LINE

- A. True for all genealogies

IV. SONS OF JAPHEH

- A. 7 sons, 7 grandsons
 - i. Totality of all “coastlands” peoples

- a. Often signifies most distant regions
- b. **Isaiah 60:9 For the coastlands shall hope for me, the ships of Tarshish first, to bring your children from afar, their silver and gold with them, for the name of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he has made you beautiful.**

B. Much debate about where specifically these people settled

- i. Generally, Mediterranean and Europeans
 - a. Turks, Greeks, Russians, Medes, Phoenicians
 - b. Even as far as Tarshish (Spain)¹

C. Gomer, Magog, Javan, Tubal, Meshech allied against Israel in Ezekiel 38-39

- i. They will come against Israel in the latter days and be completely destroyed
- ii. Israel will be burying the dead from the alliance for 7 months

V. SONS OF HAM

- A. 4 sons
 - i. 7 grandsons from Cush
 - ii. 7 grandsons from Egypt
 - iii. 12 grandsons from Canaan
- B. Populated Africa and Asia²
- C. Nimrod was a mighty man
 - i. **Gibbor** – like the Nephilim in Gen. 6³
 - a. **Genesis 6:4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.**
 - b. Hunter of men⁴
 - ii. Name means “we will rebel”⁵
 - a. Before the Lord – in opposition⁶

¹ Day, J. (2013). *The Table of Nations: The geography of the world in genesis 10*. TheTorah.com. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from <https://www.thetorah.com/article/the-table-of-nations-the-geography-of-the-world-in-genesis-10>

² Day

³ 1368. *gibbor*. Bible Hub. (2004). Retrieved May 3, 2023, from <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/1368.htm>

⁴ Guzik, D. (2018). *Study Guide For Genesis 10*. Blue Letter Bible. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-10.cfm

⁵ Guzik,

⁶ Armstrong, S. (2011, July 24). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 10*. Verse By Verse Ministry International. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from https://versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_10

- iii. Founded Babylon – antichrist type
- iv. Pre-flood narrative again – explored more in ch. 11

D. Canaanite boundaries established

- i. Foreshadows land given to Abraham

VI. SONS OF SETH

- A. 12 sons/grandsons until Peleg/Joktan are divided
 - i. Joktan's descendants followed
 - ii. Seed line always comes last
 - a. Peleg's line divided by story of Babel
- B. Likely Persians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Arab tribes⁷

VII. POINTS TO JESUS:

- A. Traces the seed line through Peleg
- B. Foreshadows opposition that will come against Christ

VIII. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

A. What does the number 70 tell us about God's design for the nations even now? (Acts 17:24-27)

B. Once again we see righteous people devolving through the generations into wickedness. Yet God always chooses a remnant out of the wickedness. What does this say about God?

C. Why does the author take the time to detail the boundaries of the territory of Canaan?

⁷ Day

D. What are the similarities between Nimrod and Lamech in Genesis 4? What warning does this provide to the reader?

IX. FURTHER STUDY

A. What does Tarshish seem to represent throughout the Bible? See 2 Chronicles 9:21; Psalm 72:8-11; Isaiah 2:12-18; Isaiah 23:1-2; Jonah 1:1-3.

B. What will the coastland peoples who spread out from the presence of the Lord do one day? See Psalm 86:9; Isaiah 56:6-7; Zechariah 8:22-23.

C. The same word, *gibbor*, is used to describe Nimrod in Genesis 10:8 and God in Deuteronomy 10:17. What does this comparison reveal to us about God?

D. Why do you think the sons of Japheth are featured so prominently in the prophecies in Ezekiel 38-39? What is the message that the prophet is trying to convey?
