

Scripture Reading: Genesis 10:

“1 Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood. 2 The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, & Tiras. 3 The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. 4 The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. 5 From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations. 6 The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 7 The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. 8 Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12 and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city). 13 Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, 14 Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim). 15 Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; 16 the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Gergashite; 17 the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; 18 the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. 19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. 20 These were the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands and in their nations. 21 And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder. 22 The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. 23 The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. 24 Arphaxad begot Salah, and Salah begot Eber. 25 To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. 26 Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 27 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 28 Obal, Abimael, Sheba, 29 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. 30 And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east. 31 These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations. 32 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.”

'The Nations of the Earth'

We come in chapter ten of the Book of Beginnings to what many refer to as the Table of Nations, which has traditionally been seen as the seventy nations of the earth... The importance of which we will see in a moment. *[mention the chart copied at the end of this sermon]*

This is the first reference to ‘nations’ in the Scriptures and should be seen as peoples or people groups rather than just the national borders we think of today. As we consider this important chapter this morning I want us to focus on two critical things we should understand:

We need to understand the proper context of Chapter ten and Lord willing we will come to better understand the importance of this table of nations as do a brief survey of the number seventy in the Scriptures.

Two weeks ago we concluded our study of Noah & the great flood: Before we came to the final event recorded in the life of Noah, this genealogy was begun with these words at verse 18 of chapter nine:

“18 Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.”

And our text this morning ended with this summary, **“32 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.”**

- So the context, or bookends if you will, make it very clear that all the peoples or nations of the earth are derived from the three sons of Noah!

Again in chapter nine we saw how the heirs of the three sons would relate and as we go on in the Scriptures we will see how the seventy nations given here are often referred to directly or indirectly. It is important that we do not get lost in the many details of this chapter, as many commentators have done, & miss the more obvious things that are given.

It can be a classic example of that old saying about missing the forest for the trees... We want see this grand forest!

As we look down the three groups we can see how in general the blessings and curses of Noah are carried out in history: Japheth's sons will control vast parts of the earth in Europe and Asia and will provide safety for Israel with four great Empires that lead to the coming of Jesus.

- After that, as Noah prophesized they would become the servants of Shem as they are brought under the rule of Jesus.

More details are given about the sons of Ham and Shem because they will be interacting a great deal in the rest of the Scriptures, with Ham serving Shem after the conquest of Canaan. We also see in the details, how this chapter is related to chapter eleven with the Tower of Babel coming from Nimrod and the reference to the earth being divided in the time of Peleg. Just as Cain was a man of violence, we see the fall of man continue in the violence of Nimrod which we will see as we study the Tower of Babel.

- But, when the descendants of Shem are given, the first mention is of Eber reminding us of the line of promise!

We will see more details of this line when we study the genealogy given in Chapter eleven, where as I noted on the chart, Abraham is born just 251 years after the birth of Peleg. This Godly line will dominate the rest of the Old Testament leading us down to the birth of Jesus, but for this morning I want to focus on these nations of the earth. The most quoted verse in the Bible declares rightly that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" and it is right here in Genesis chapter ten that we begin to understand all that this promise means.

- Reminders that God is going to love the whole world represented by these seventy nations begins right here in Genesis!

Soon we will begin studying at some length the various promises that God makes to Abraham: In Genesis 18 we will learn that Abraham "shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him."

At Genesis 22:18 we learn that through the seed of Abraham, who is Jesus, "all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." And at Genesis 26:4 we have Jehovah telling Abraham, "in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."

It should come as no surprise that we begin to see a hint of how all this is going to work in the life of Joseph, which takes up almost twelve chapters at the end of Genesis. Joseph is miraculously sent to Egypt and given complete control to save everyone from the coming famine.

When Jacob has to come seeking salvation he comes with 70 souls!

When Jacob dies, the Egyptians mourn over him for seventy days.

We see an even clearer example when we come to the Exodus. Those seventy souls have grown to perhaps a million people as God delivers them from the bondage of Egypt and then we read in Exodus 15:27 as they are being led to Mt. Sinai, "Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters."

Just numbers some might say...

But when they reach Mt. Sinai, God makes it very clear what He has in mind for His chosen people, the Twelve tribes that came from Jacob, the son of Isaac the Son of Abraham the tenth from Noah: Exodus 19:3 "And Moses went up to God, and Jehovah called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

- So children, just what is it that priests are supposed to do?
- Are they to be puffed up with pride and focus only on their being something special?

NO! They are to be priests, ones who minister God's blessings to others!

- And who are the others?

The nations of the earth, those seventy nations given here in Genesis ten, represented by the seventy palm trees they saw at Elim. The ones the TWELVE springs were watering!

Later in Exodus 24 God will tell Moses to bring up seventy elders! The important part of the priests' work in the Old Testament was sacrifices & yes we find this important number of seventy there as well...

In Numbers 28 & 29 Moses details various offerings and feasts and at 29:12 we come to the Feast of Tabernacles which is carried on for seven days and it is one of those places where the Bible seems a bit repetitive! The people are told, "you shall keep a feast to Jehovah seven days. 13 You shall present a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to Jehovah: thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year. They shall be without blemish. 14 Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for each of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each of the two rams, 15 & one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs; 16 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering."

All of this is repeated almost word for word for the 2nd day, the 3rd day, the 4th day, the 5th day, the 6th day and the 7th day... On and on, with one very important difference:

- Each day there is one less bull to sacrifice, but with the same two rams, fourteen male lambs and a male goat.

So with the bulls, the sacrifice goes from 13 down to 12, to 11, to 10, to 9, to 8 and to 7 on the seventh day.

- Add those all up and you see Israel sacrificing seventy bulls as they serve as the priests for the seventy nations!

And near the end of his life, Moses reminds the people where this all began in the Song of Moses:

"7 "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations. Ask your father, and he will show you; Your elders, and they will tell you: 8 When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, When He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the children of Israel. 9 For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance." Deuteronomy 32:7-9

The number 70 continues to appear: In Judges 1: we see Joshua defeating Adoni-Bezek who had brutalized seventy kings. Gideon has seventy sons! All killed for the price of seventy shekels.

In Judges 12:13 we read about an interesting Judge "Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. 14 He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy young donkeys. He judged Israel eight years."

- Perhaps this gives a bit more meaning to Jesus riding as the King of Kings on a young donkey!

When King Hezekiah restored the Temple their worship again included sacrificing seventy bulls once again!

In contrast to the 12 springs watering 70 palm trees or the sacrifices of 70 bulls being rightly made, in Ezekiel chapter eight the prophet is shown seventy elders of Israel committing abominations in the Temple.

- **And of course God's people are exiled for seventy years because they neglected seventy Sabbaths.**

I am pretty sure that the seventy weeks shown to Daniel are also very significant as well but that will have to be for another day!

Coming to the New Testament, we see Jesus sending out seventy disciples and Paul is escorted by seventy horsemen. God had been faithful in keeping His line of promise and Satan had been the great deceiver of these nations of the earth. Thus when Jesus is tempted by Satan he can offer up those nations to Jesus if He would bow down to him. They really were his to give, but not for long: When those seventy disciples return to Jesus with joy saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." Jesus tells them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

Revelation chapter twenty teaches us that after the ascension of Jesus and the destruction of the old order around AD 70, that Satan is BOUND with a great chain in a covered pit, so that he can no longer deceive the nations. Jesus is the hope of the 70 nations...

- **Jesus is their true high priest!**

The nation of Israel had failed to be the priestly people God had called them to be as we have been clearly taught by Mike from the Book of Jonah and we see in the prideful actions by the Scribes and Pharisees in the Gospel accounts!

- **Jesus and His Bride would now take up this priestly task which of course is the story of the Book of Acts and shown to us in graphic images in the Book of Revelation:**

Israel's failure is pictured as both Sodom and Gomorrah and Babylon the Great: She who was to be a priest to the nations had become a harlot and an instrument of their destruction & ruin.

At Revelation 14:8 we read, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she [Jerusalem] has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Israel is pictured as a harlot riding on the beast that was Rome and in at Revelation 16:19 we are told, "'The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. And at 18:3, "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her..."

And finally in 18:23, "The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, & the voice of bridegroom & bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. But God has been faithful to His promises to Abraham because at 15:4 we see the Saints in heaven declaring: "

Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested."

And of course we then see Jesus riding forth in victory as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in Chapter 19 to fulfill the prophecies of Psalms 2 & 110!

The Prophet Isaiah saw this early in his ministry when he writes in chapter 2: "2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of Jehovah's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.""

Before the great picture of the sacrifice of Jesus in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah we read at 52:10 "Jehovah has made bare His holy arm In the eyes of all the nations; And all the ends of the earth shall see The salvation of our God."

In the Great Commission Jesus clearly repeats the call for God's people to be a Kingdom of priests... "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." *Matthew 28:19* God's promise that the seventy nations would be ministered to by the Saints can be seen in the preaching of Paul to the Gentiles:

First in Acts 14 when the pagans were being, well pagans, wanting to make Paul & Barnabas into gods: "14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out 15 and saying, 'Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, 16 who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.'"

And in Acts 17:22 "Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, 'Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; 23 for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: 24 God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' 29 Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. 30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.'"

As Jesus revealed the New Jerusalem to John in Revelation 21:24 we read: "And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it."

And, bringing back to our minds the image of springs watering the seventy palm trees, we read at Revelation 22:2,

- "In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

So as we think about what all of this means for us today, let me take you back to where we started in that 19th chapter of Exodus where God told Israel that they were to be a "kingdom of priests and a Holy nation."

God said this to them just before giving them the Law of God which is summarized as Ten Commandments and which Jesus further summarized as the two great commandments:

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.

We have spoken often about how this type of living witnesses to the world through our lives: From our marriages to our vocations, from our young people learning what it means to be wise adults to our older Saints teaching us what it means to handle trials like widowhood or great sickness.

From parents teaching the youngest among us how to be obedient children to the leaders of God's Church teaching the Saints lessons like we are learning today.

From our work to our play, from our youngest days to our oldest, from our happiest times to our saddest it is those two great commandments that must guide all that we do and say.

- **We are called to love Jesus and keep His commandments!**
- **Jesus told His disciples that by demonstrating such love the world would know that He had been sent by the Father!**

Such faithfulness will not only bring the blessings in our own lives that Jesus promised, it will bring comfort to those around us...

- **Those seventy nations of the earth.**
- **As the Body of Christ we are called to be refreshing springs of water for some very thirsty palm trees!**

Communion Meditation: Revelation 19

“4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" 5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" 6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."”

The Sons of Noah Produce the Seventy Nations

“Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.” Exodus 15:27

The sons of Japheth were:

Gomer [1]
The sons of Gomer were
Ashkenaz [8]
Riphath [9]
Togarmah [10]
Magog [2]
Madai [3]
Javan [4]
The sons of Javan were
Elishah [11]
Tarshish [12]
Kittim [13]
Dodanim [14]
Tubal [5]
Meshech [6]
Tiras [7]

The sons of Ham were:

Cush [15]
The sons of Cush were
Nimrod [19]
Seba [20]
Havilah [21]
Sabtah [22]
Sabtechah [23]
Raamah [24]
the sons of Raamah were
Sheba [25]
Dedan [26]
Mizraim [or Egypt] [16]
Mizraim begot
Ludim [27]
Anamim [28]
Lehabim [29]
Naphtuhim [30]
Pathrusim [31]
Capthorim [32]
Casluhim [33]
Philistines [34]
Put [17]
Canaan [18]
Canaan begot
Sidon his firstborn [35]
Heth [36]
the Jebusite [37]
the Amorite [38]
the Girgashite [39]
the Hivite [40]
the Arkite [41]
the Sinite [42]
the Arvadite [43]
the Zemarite [44]
the Hamathite [45]

*And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder. **

The sons of Shem were

Elam [46]
Asshur [47]
Arphaxad [48]
Arphaxad begot
Selah [51]
and Salah begot
Eber [52]
To Eber two sons:
Peleg * [Israel]
Joktan [53]
Joktan begot
Almodad [54]
Sheleph [55]
Hazarmaveth [56]
Jerah [57]
Hadoram [58]
Uzal [59]
Diklah [60]
Obal [61]
Abimael [62]
Sheba [63]
Ophir [64]
Havilah [65]
Jobab [66]

Lud [49]
Aram [50]
The sons of Aram were
Uz [67]
Hul [68]
Gether [69]
Mash [70]

14 Nations

31 nations

25 nations : Plus Israel

“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.” Genesis 10:32

** Abraham was born just 251 after the birth of his great, great, great Grandfather Peleg who was the son of Eber the fifth from Noah.*