**God Made Every Nation From One Person**

What is the cure for inequalities and prejudice? Laws? Education? Fines and penalties? All of these things have been put to work and have helped but they each have imperfections that make them all only partial solutions. What we need to do is transform the way we see each other. We need to change our vision and the value that we attribute to others. We can and should do this by taking a look at our history so that we can see humanity as we truly are. Nothing accomplishes that goal better than by tracing mankind’s development. For, as Paul preached to the brainy Athenians on Mars Hill, our origin is rooted in the historical fact that: *“God Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one person every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth.”* (Acts 17:25f)

**I. Scientific Study Shows Common Ancestry**

A. Linguistic researchers repeatedly show that the diversity of languages we see today trace to a common root through basic language families dating around the time of ancient Babylon.

1. *“The ancestral form of the language family that includes Greek is called Prot- Indo-European. We do not know what the people who spoke this form called their language, since they left no records. They probably lived in southeastern Europe more than five thousand years ago. Eventually groups of Proto-Indo-European speakers broke off from the main community in repeated migrations, gradually spreading throughout Europe and western Asia from India to Britain. Separated from one another, they developed mutually unintelligible varieties of the original tongue. Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, and Russian are varieties of Indo- European, as are English, French, and German. Although these languages may be related, the changes that took place in them are quite different.”* David Alan Black, *Linguistics for Students of New Testament Greek: A Survey of Basic Concepts and Applications* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 144.

2. *“The Tower of Babel explains why everyone doesn’t speak the same language today. There are over 6,900 spoken languages in the world today. Yet the number of languages emerging from Babel at the time of the dispersion would have been much less than this—likely less than 100 different language families...Both* Vistawide World Languages and Cultures *and* Ethnologue *companies that provide statistics on language, agree that only 94 language families have been so far ascertained. With further study in years to come, this may change, but this figure is well within the range of families that dispersed from Babel (Genesis 10).”* (Bodie Hodge, “Was the Dispersion at Babel a Real Event?,” *The New Answers Book 2*)

3. Examples from the Indo-European Language Family:

a. Father (English); pater (Greek); pater (Latin); pitar (Sanskrit)

b. Is (English); esti (Greek); est (latin); asti (Sanskrit)

c. Three (English); treis (Greek); tres (Latin); trayas (Sanskrit)

B. Geneticists have traced our genetics to a common ancestry.

1. In a *Washington Post* article entitled “Among Many Peoples, Little Genomic Variety”, Dave Brown writes, *“There is simplicity and all inclusiveness to the number three – the triangle, the Holy Trinity, three peas in a pod. So it’s perhaps not surprising that the Family of Man is divided that way, too. All of Earth’s people, according to a new analysis of the genomes of 53 populations, fall into just three genetic groups . . . Population geneticists expected to find dramatic differences . . . [but] that’s not what scientists have found. Dramatic genome variation among populations turns out to be extremely rare.”*

2. One writer at *AIG*, a non-profit organization specializing in Christian Apologetics, explains how different worldviews explain this discovery (https://answersingenesis.org/genetics/human-genome/three- genetic-groupings):

a. *“According to evolutionists, this tripartite division originated when humans left Africa tens of thousands of years ago, splitting into African, Eurasian, and East Asian groups (the third of which includes Pacific Islander and Native American groups).”*

b. *“For creationists, that division makes plain sense as reflective of the people groups that split off after Babel, all descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.”*

C. Historians have discovered that genealogies all over the world trace back to Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth.

1. Early Irish genealogies trace through Japheth to Noah.

2. The 8th century Roman historian Nennius traced various lineages of European groups through Japheth to Noah, particularly the Gauls, Goths, Bavarians, Saxons, and Romans.

3. The Miautso people of China trace their people back to Nuah by three sons, Lo Han, Lo Shen, and Jahphu.

**II. The Bible Explains This Common Ancestry (cf. Genesis 1-11)**

A. The Pre-Flood & Flood Period

1. Adam and Eve (Gen. 1-2)

a. Commanded to *“be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it”* (Gen. 1:28). This was starting from Eden.

b. It was a command of our progenitors to be joined as one flesh and multiply (Gen. 2:24). They were designed to this end.

c. They do precisely this (Gen. 4:1f, 25f; 5:3-5).

2. Cain, Abel, And Seth (Gen. 4-5)

a. These are commonly assumed to be the first children of Adam and Eve although, to my knowledge, that is not stated as the case. They are merely those who were named and relevant to the intended narrative of Genesis. Seth’s birth took place when Adam was 130 (Gen. 5:3) and Eve connected this to Abel’s death, which would indicate it happened in close proximity. It is certainly likely that more children were born before these three. We do know they had other children, we just don’t know if some came earlier or only later.

b. Abel is dead. Cain multiplies in the land of Nod, east of Eden (Gen. 4:16-24). Seth multiplies seemingly just outside of Eden where Adam and Eve were banished (Gen. 4:25f; 5:6-32).

3. Noah (Gen. 6-9)

a. Noah, a direct descendant of Seth, leads us into the Flood with his three sons and their daughters (Gen. 5:32; 6:10, 18; 7:13).

b. After the Flood, they are given the same mandate of spreading and multiplying (Gen. 8:15-19; 9:1, 7).

c. Indeed they multiply and are key to our history (Gen. 9:18f; 10:1ff).

B. A Major Problem Arises In The Post-Flood Period (TOB – circa 2242 B.C.)

1. Refusal of one side of the creation mandate (i.e. “fill the earth”) leads to the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9). This section actually serves to explain the language of Genesis 10:31f and comes amidst the developments of Genesis 10, NOT after these developments. Do NOT read the account of the Tower of Babel as an event that happened after Genesis 10.

2. As a consequence, the descendants of Noah are forced to spread out so that their multiplication populated the entire earth (Gen. 10).

**III. The Three Patriarchs Of The World (The Table of Nations – Gen. 10)**

**A. Japheth (10:2-5) – Basically Becomes Europe (7 sons, 7 grandsons)**

1. Gomer – settled beyond the Caucasus Mountains near the Black Sea; Gaul (old name for Welsh language)

a. Ashkenaz – cf. Jer. 51:27; Scythians/Armenians, later Germany (still Hebrew for Germany) and the Scandinavians

b. Riphath – cf. 1Chron. 1:6 – “Diphath”; settled in central Europe hence the name

c. Tagarmah – cf. Ezek. 27:14; 38:6; settle Turkey, eventually Germany

2. Magog – cf. Ezek. 38-39; settled in southern Russia and Asia

3. Madai – cf. Is. 13:17; Jer. 51; Medes & Persians; settled northwestern Iran

4. Javan – cf. Ezek. 27:13; Ionians/Greeks; traffickers of slaves, bronze vessels (still the Hebrew name for Greece)

a. Elishah – cf. Ezek. 27:7; settled on the island of Cyprus in Enkomi

b. Tarshish – cf. Jon. 1:3; Ezek. 27:12; Sardinia/Iberia/Spain

c. The Kittim – settled the southeast coast of Cyprus

d. The Dodanim – cf. 1Chron. 1:7 – “Rodanim”; the Isle of Rhodes

5. Tubal – cf. Gen. 4:22; Ezek. 27:13; settled in Turkey; metallurgists

6. Meshech – cf. Gen. 4:22; Ezek. 27:13; settled in Turkey, later Russia (hence, Moscow); metallurgists

7. Tiras – the Etruscans; settled in Italy & fought with the Romans for control

**B. Ham (10:6-20) – Basically Becomes Africa & Parts Of Asia.**

1. Cush (vv. 7-12) – cf. Gen. 2:13; settled in Nubia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Arabia

a. Seba – cf. Is. 43:3; 45:14; Ps. 72:10; unknown settlements in Africa

b. Havilah – cf. Gen. 2:11f; settled Nubia/Sudan

c. Sabtah – possibly settled in Shemite territory in southern Arabia

d. Raamah – cf. Ezek. 27:22; probably Arabia, but no definite location

i. Sheba – Ezek. 38:13; not who Solomon traded with (v. 28)

ii. Dedan – cf. Is. 21:13; Ezek. 27:15, 20; settled northern Arabia

e. Sabteca – probably settled in Nubia

f. Nimrod – cf. Mic. 5:5; Mesopotamia; mighty man & hunter; origin of pagan god Marduk

i. Babylon – settled modern-day Iraq; important in ch. 11!

ii. Erech – settled modern Iraq on the E side of the Euphrates

iii. Accad – the Akkadians; est. by Sargon on the Euphrates

iv. Calneh – not Syrian city mentioned in Amos 6:2; Is. 10:9

v. Shinar – settled S Iraq, old Babylonia; i.e. Sumerians

vi. Asshur – cf. Gen. 2:14; settled Upper Mesopotamian plain

vii. Nineveh – 250 miles northwest of Babylon (cf. Jonah)

viii. Rehoboth-ir – suburb of Nineveh

ix. Calah – modern city Nimrud; prominent with Shalmaneser I

x. Resen – unknown site between Nineveh and Calah

2. Mizraim (vv. 13f) – cf. Is. 11:11; Jer. 44:1; settled Lower Egypt (still Hebrew name for Egypt)

a. Ludim – cf. Jer. 46:9; Ezek. 30:5; settled in Egypt

b. Anamim – possibly settled in Cyrenaica, west of the Libyan plateau

c. Lehabim – possibly the ancestors of the Libyans

d. Naphtuhim – settled in the area of the Nile Delta

e. Pathrusim – latter Pathros/Upper Egypt in the Bible (Is. 11:11)

f. Casluhim – otherwise unknown people and locale

g. Caphtorim – Crete; later Gaza (Deut. 2:23; Amos 9:7; Jer. 47:4)

3. Put – frequently discussed in the Bible; this was the ancient nation of Libya

4. Canaan (vv. 15-19) – in ancient times, an Egyptian province (Ancestors of the Sidonians and Hittites)

a. Sidon – cf. Deut. 3:9; Josh. 13:4, 6; etc.; famous Phoenician port city

b. Heth – the great personal ancestor of the Hittites; modern-day Syria

c. Jebusites – cf. Num. 13:29; Judg. 19:10; land later became Jerusalem

d. Amorites – cf. Gen. 15:16; Settled as far as Fertile Crescent

e. Girgashites – of all the Canaanite cities, they are the least mentioned

f. Hivites – often mentioned in the OT with no precise details known

g. Arkites…Hamathites – 5 Syrian cities near Tripoli, Lebanon

h. Gerar – cf. Gen. 20; 26; settled a city 15 miles NW of Beer-sheba

i. Gaza – originally regional capital for Egypt; later a Philistine city

j. Sodom…Zeboiim – cf. Gn. 14:2; 19; Dt. 29:22; Hos. 11:8

k. Lasha – settled the eastern shore of the Dead Sea

**C. Shem (10:21-31) – Basically Becomes Middle East/East (i.e. Semitic peoples)**

1. Elam – cf. Esth. 1:2-5 – capital was Susa; modern Khuzistan in SW Iran

2. Asshur – cf. 10:11; later became Assyria

3. Arpachshad – settled region b/w Arabia & the Persian Gulf; the Chaldeans

a. Shelah – cf. Gen. 5:25

i. Eber – “Hebrews”; ancestor of other relevant peoples to them

1. Peleg – cf. Ps. 55:10; sons listed in 11:18-28; TOB during his lifetime, 106 years post-Flood

2. Joktan – settled the SW corner of Arabian Peninsula mainly around Yemen. Thirteen descendants listed in 10:26-30. Jerah for some reason is omitted in 1Chron. 1:20-24. Ophir and Havilah referenced in Gen. 2:11f.

4. Lud – cf. Is. 66:19; Ezek. 27:10; probably Lydia of the New Testament

5. Aram – cf. Gen. 25:20; 28:5; 31:18, 20-24; Deut. 26:5; Is. 22:6; Amos 9:7

a. Uz – cf. Gen. 22:21; 1Chron. 1:17; Job 1:2

b. Hul – probably settled in Armenia (per Josephus)

c. Gether – otherwise unknown

d. Mash – settled the mountains of Lebanon and the Ante-Lebanon

D. Things To Keep In Mind:

1. Keep in mind that these families become some mixed over time, that establishing which is a “pure” descendant of each son of Noah is endless, totally speculative, & wholly futile (1Tim. 1:3f; Titus 3:9).

2. Also keep in mind that although one descendent of Ham is cursed, this does not mean all were or that everyone in Canaan’s bloodline was inherently cursed. Canaan’s descendants are condemned because of their choices, not because of inherited guilt. Each dies for his own sins.

**IV. What Does This Mean For Us Today?**

A. Through God’s oversight, mankind has multiplied and filled the Earth. All people today can trace their origins to common ancestry and understand that God has indeed made every nation from a common origin. So, whether we view this through Ham, Shem, Japheth, & their wives; by Noah and his wife; or by Adam and Eve, we ALL have the SAME origin.

B. No person is inherently more valuable or worthy, better or purer, than any other!

1. Gender, a God-determined and biologically encoded fact, is not a difference determining superiority or inferiority in spiritual quality or value (Gal. 3:28). Males and females complement each other in a perfect way.

2. Race is a sociological construction that inherently divides mankind. Sociological reconstruction of humanity into three base races in whatever terms are currently in vogue is not only unhelpful, but also untrue! As such, the concept of race should be put to rest. We are one. We are the human race. Our melanin levels, however determined by different levels of eumelanin (brown to black) and pheomelanin (red to yellow), do nothing to change that. And while these types of hierarchy of value have been around for a long time, modern evolutionary theory has done much to amplify the problem. Harvard professor Stephen Jay Gould said, *“Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859 [the year Darwin’s On the Origin of Species was published], but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory.”*

C. Common origin should be acknowledged as fact; however, cultural differences are also to be acknowledged, embraced, and celebrated.

1. In fact, God’s choice to drive mankind away from Babel in order to force them to spread out would imply that God sought out and approves of differing cultural developments. He has created us in such a way that cultural differences can complement one another and bring out the best in who we are if they are embraced.

a. The gospel grants access to Jews & Gentiles, Scythians & Barbarians (Rom. 1:21-30; Col. 3:5-11). Nobody has more access or less access. Cultural distinctions don’t prohibit or aid one’s access to the saving blood of Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch from Africa, Lydia of Thyatira in Europe, and the Israelites from Asia were all saved in the same way, with the same conditions (Acts 15:11).

b. In the body of Christ, we are even given instructions about submitting to one another and how to handle cultural differences (Phil. 2:1-4; Eph. 4:1-3; 1Cor. 8; 10; Rom. 14; 15).

c. At times, it may even be beneficial to engage in or expand one’s cultural affiliations (e.g. Acts 21:17-26; 1Cor. 9:19-23).

2. The caveat on this being that if a culturally unique element causes one to offend his brother or sister or is impure, it should be laid aside.

Moses recorded the early stages of human development, “Now the man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.” (Gen. 3:20) Moses later wrote, *“Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem and Ham and Japheth; and Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.”* (Gen. 9:18f) Fifteen hundred years later, Paul preached to the Athenians, *“He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one person every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth.”* (Acts 17:25f)

We are all here today descended from the same people. We are all here today of one family. We have one heavenly Father (Matt. 23:9; Eph. 4:6) and we have one beloved Brother, Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:11; Rom. 8:29), Who laid down His life to create harmony in our family. May we always honor, cherish, and celebrate that!