

# Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

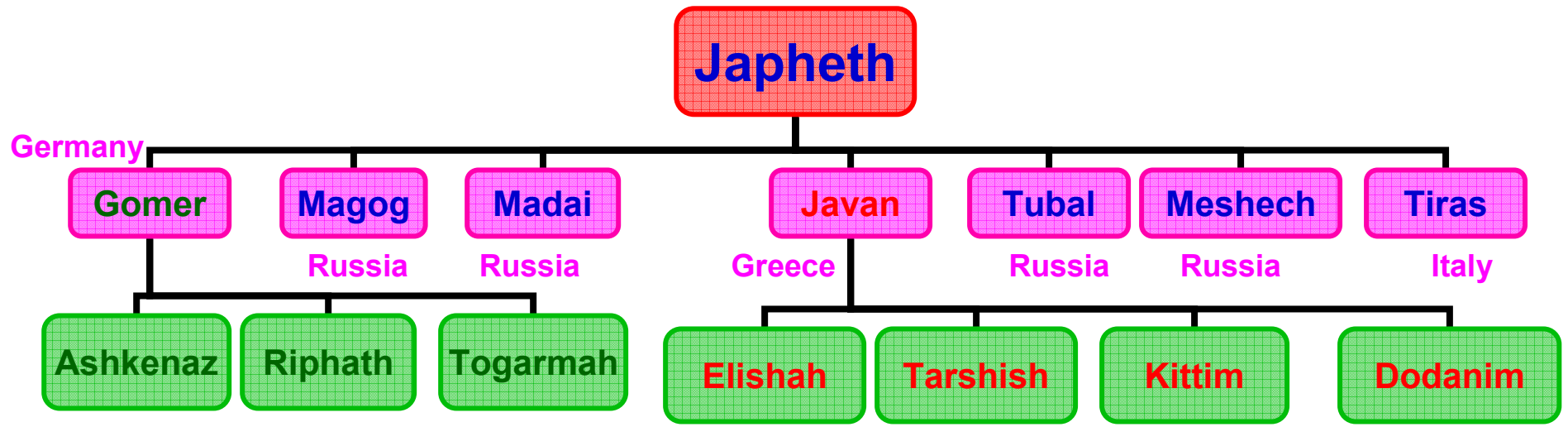
Focus	Four Great Events								Four Great Persons				
<b>Divisions</b>	1	2	3	4	5	9	10	11	12	25:19	27	37:2b	50
	<b>Creation</b>		<b>Fall</b>		<b>Flood</b>		<b>Nations (Babel)</b>		<b>Abraham</b>	<b>Isaac</b>	<b>Jacob</b>	<b>Joseph</b>	
<b>Topics</b>	<b>Primeval History of Humanity</b>								<b>Patriarchal History of Israel</b>				
	<b>Beginning of the Human Race</b>								<b>Beginning of the Hebrew Race</b>				
<b>Locations</b>	<b>East (Eden to Ur)</b>								<b>West (Canaan to Egypt)</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>2,000 + years (20% of Genesis)</b>								<b>About 286 years (80% of Genesis)</b>				

**Author:** Moses

**Date written:** after 1445 BC

**Theme:** Israel's Origin & Early Years

**Purposes:** 1) to present the beginning of everything but God  
 2) to record God's choice of Israel & His covenant plan for the nation  
 3) to show how the sin of man is met by the redemption of God

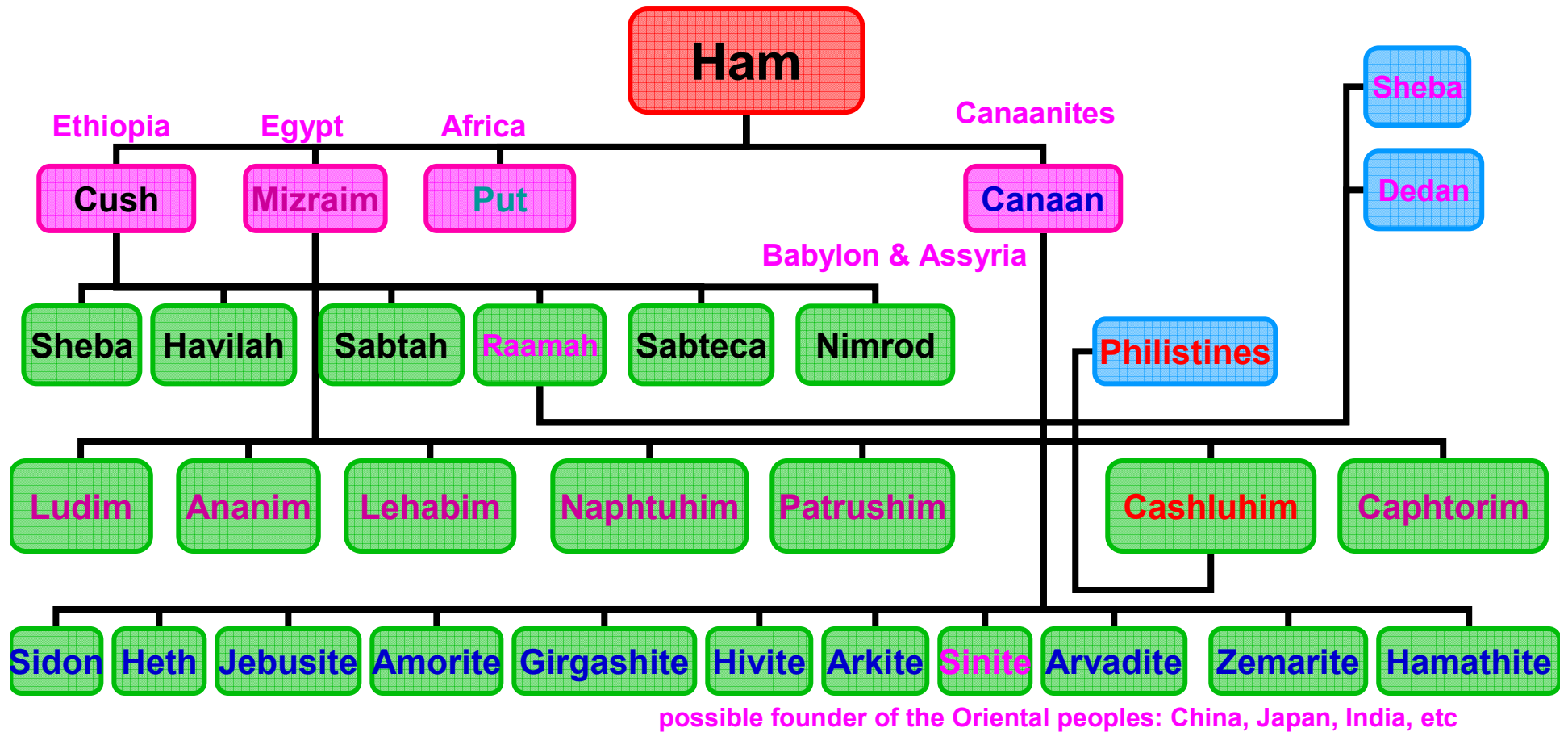


v5 From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.

9:25 “Cursed be Canaan;  
A servant of servants (i.e., the lowest of servants)  
He shall be to his brothers”

9:26 “Blessed be the LORD,  
The God of Shem;  
And let Canaan be his servant.

9:27 “May God enlarge Japheth,  
And let him dwell in the tents of Shem;  
And let Canaan be his servant.”

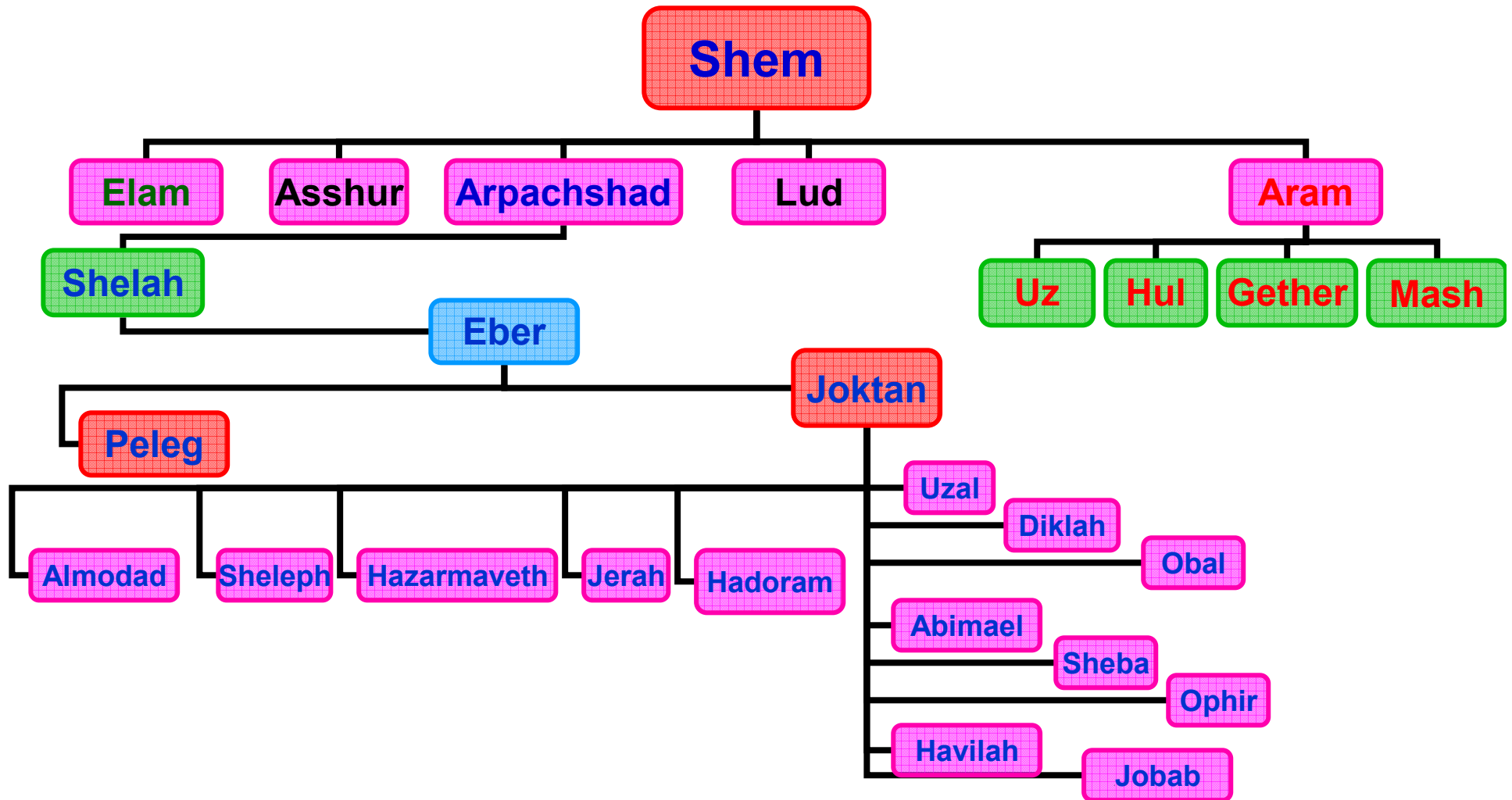


10:8-12 Nimrod...became a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." The beginning of his kingdom was Babel & Erech & Accad & Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went forth into Assyria, & built Nineveh & Rehooth-Ir & Calah, & Resen between Nineveh & Calah; that is the great city.

v18 and afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad.

v19 The territory of the Canaanite extended from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; as you go toward Sodom & Gomorrah & Admah & Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.

v20 These are the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, by their nations.

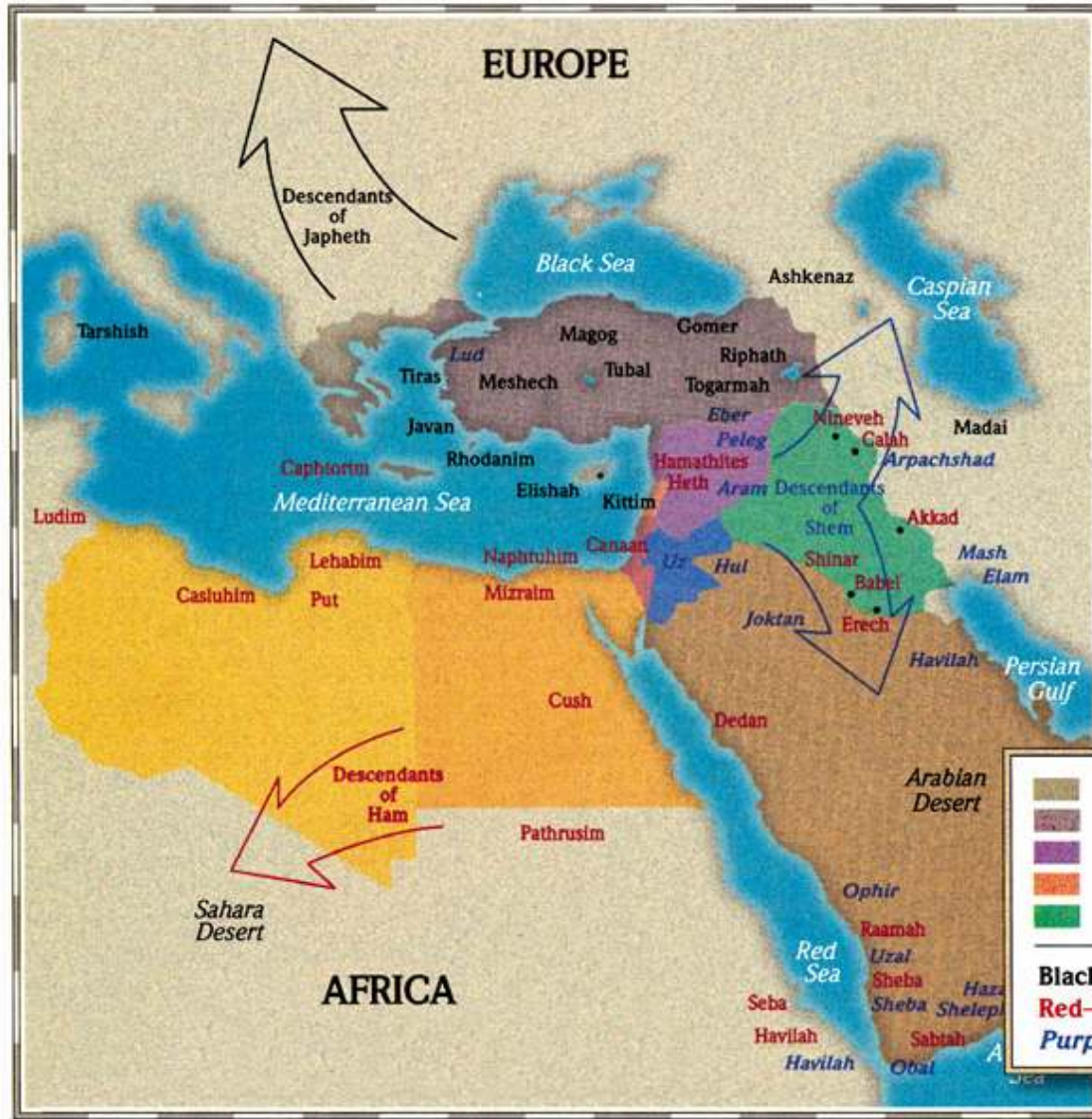


v30 Now their settlement extended from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the hill country of the east.

v31 These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations.

v32 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

# The Settlement of the Descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth



'By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.'

—Genesis 10:5

Black	Greece	Red	Israel
Black	Turkey	Red	Jordan
Purple	Syria	Red	Saudi Arabia
Red	Lebanon	Yellow	Egypt
Green	Iraq	Yellow	Libya

**Black**—Descendants of Japheth  
**Red**—Descendants of Ham  
**Purple**—Descendants of Shem

CANAAN	Arkites
	Amorites
	Arvadites
	Girgashites
	Hittites
	Hivites
	Jebusites
	Perizzites
	Sidonians
	Snites
	Zemarites

The Tower of Babel (11:1-9)	The Generations of Shem (11:10-26)	The Descendants of Terah (11:27-32)
<p><b>1 The Context:</b> Same language &amp; same words used</p> <p><b>2-4 The Disobedience of the People</b></p> <p><b>3-4 The Building of a City &amp; a Tower</b></p> <p><b>5-8 The Lord's Response:</b> He scattered them abroad (today we have thousands of languages but less than 20 language families)</p> <p><b>9 The Aftermath:</b> therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth</p>	<p><b>1) Shem</b> was 100 years old &amp; became the father of Arpachshad 2 years after the flood; he lived 500 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v10-11)</p> <p><b>2) Arpachshad</b> lived 35 years &amp; became the father of Shelah; he lived 403 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v12-13)</p> <p><b>3) Shelah</b> lived 30 years &amp; became the father of Eber; he lived 403 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v14-15)</p> <p><b>4) Eber</b> lived 34 years &amp; became the father of Peleg; he lived 430 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v16-17)</p> <p><b>5) Peleg</b> lived 30 years &amp; became the father of Reu; he lived 209 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v18-19)</p> <p><b>6) Reu</b> lived 32 years &amp; became the father of Serug; he lived 207 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v20-21)</p> <p><b>7) Serug</b> lived 30 years &amp; became the father of Nahor; he lived 200 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v22-23)</p> <p><b>8) Nahor</b> lived 29 years &amp; became the father of Terah; he lived 119 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v24-25)</p> <p><b>9) Terah</b> lived 70 years &amp; became the father of Abram, Nahor &amp; Haran (v26)</p>	<p><b>27 Haran</b> became the father of Lot</p> <p><b>28 Haran</b> died in Ur of the Chaldeans</p> <p><b>29 Abram</b> married Sarai &amp; Nahor married Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah &amp; Iscah</p> <p><b>30 Sarai</b> was barren &amp; had no child</p> <p><b>31 Terah</b> took Abram &amp; Lot &amp; Sarai &amp; they went from Ur in order to enter the land of Canaan; &amp; they went as far as Haran &amp; settled there</p> <p><b>32 the days of Terah</b> were 205 years &amp; Terah died in Haran</p>

# <http://www.custance.org/old/noah/ch3n.html> - Edited

As the application of Japheth's philosophy to the technology of Ham produced science, so the application of his philosophy to the religious insights of Shem produced theology. **The Hamitic people never developed science and the Semitic people did not develop theology, until the influence of Japhetic philosophy was brought to bear....**

## Conclusion

We may sum up what has been said thus far by setting forth the following propositions.

**First**, the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 is an historic document indicating how the present population of the world has been derived from Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

**Secondly**, this threefold division is more than merely a genetic variation of certain "racial" types: there is evidence that it is intended to indicate that each of the three branches of the race was divinely apportioned a characteristic capacity which has been reflected in the unique contribution each branch has rendered in the service of mankind as a whole.

**Thirdly**, the contribution of Shem has been a spiritual one, of Ham a technological one, and of Japheth an intellectual one. In the process of history, these contributions were made effective in that order.

# Genesis 11:1-9

**A Man Builds a Tower (v1-4)**

– “Come, let us” (v3,4)

**B God Sees (v5)**

**A' God Tears Down what Man Builds (v6-8)**

– “Come let Us” (v7)

**B' God Judges (v9)**


# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

- 11:1 **Now** the whole earth used the same language and the same words.
- 11:2 And it came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.
- 11:3 And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar.

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:4 And they said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

11:5 And the  LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.

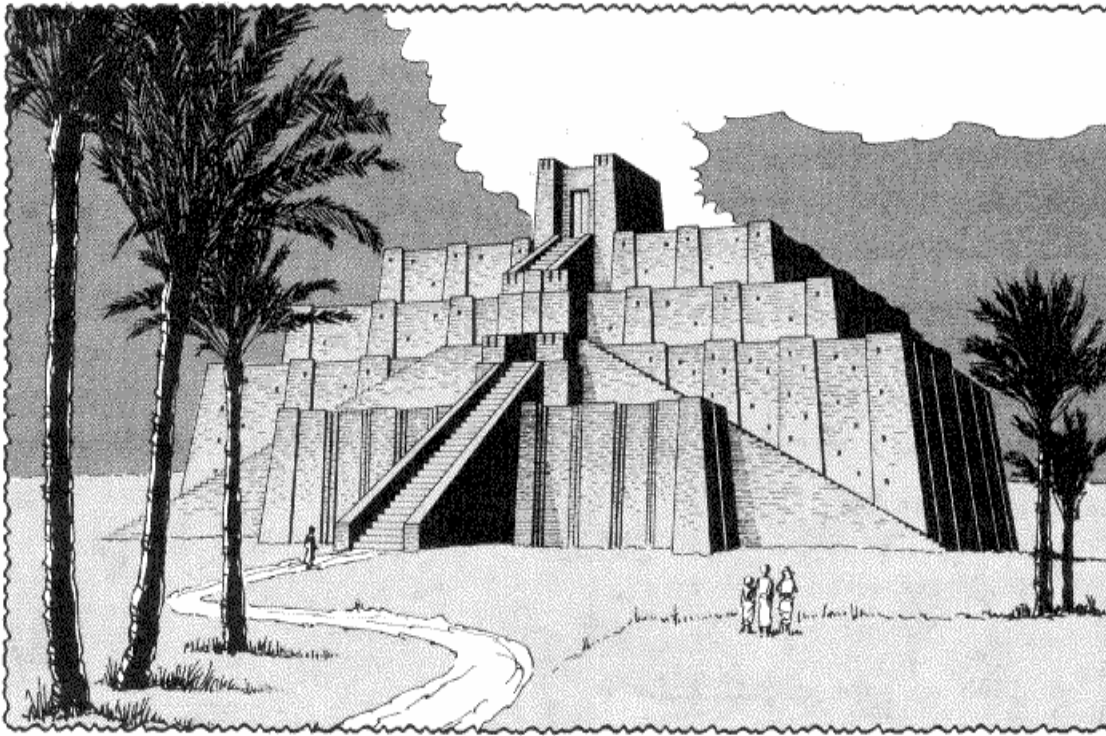
11:6 And the  LORD said, "**Behold**, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and **now** nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:7 "Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language,  
**that** they may not understand one another's speech."

11:8 **So** the **LORD** scattered them abroad from there over the  
face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the  
city.

11:9 **Therefore** its name was called Babel, **because** there the  
**LORD** confused the language of the whole earth; and  
from there the **LORD** scattered them abroad over the face  
of the whole earth.



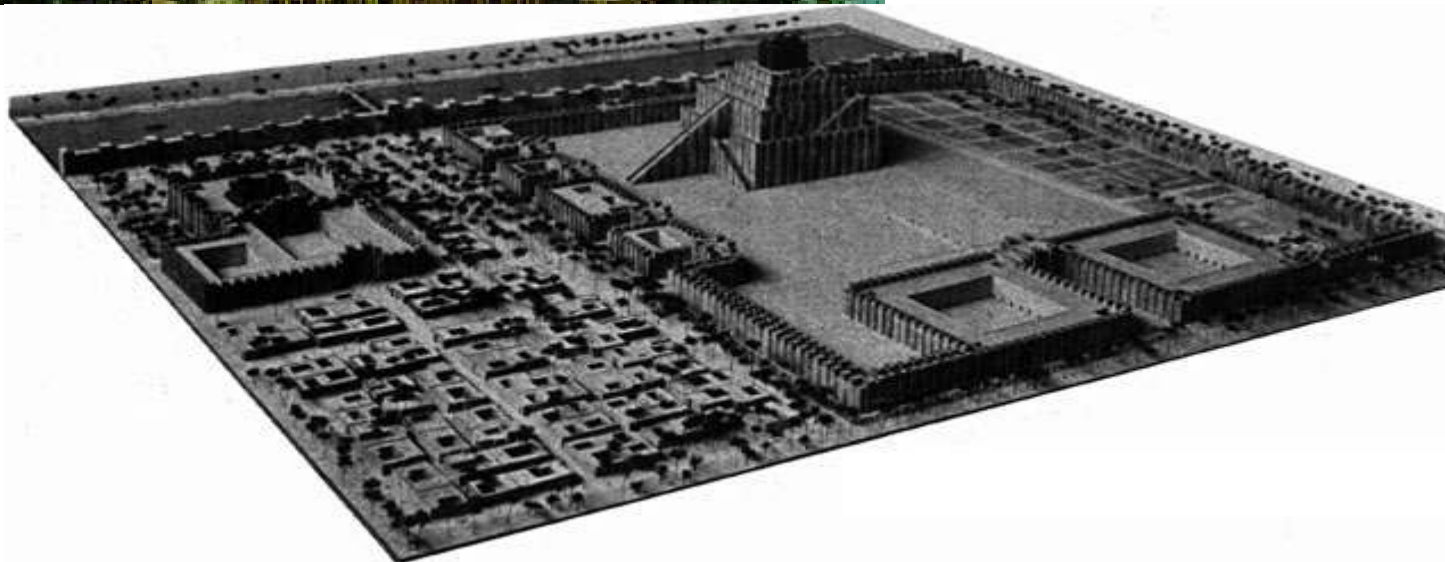
**Artist's reconstruction of the Tower of Babel. This view, modelled upon ancient ziggurats, is probably very similar to how it actually appeared. The Greek historian Herodotus (5<sup>th</sup> century BC), who saw it on his way through Babylon, described it as having eight levels, and standing a colossal 60 m (about 20 modern stories) high.**



Although the Tower of Babel now gone, a few lesser ziggurats still exist. The largest surviving, (although damaged) temple is now found in western Iran, in what was once the ancient land of Elam. It is located about 18 miles from the capital of Elam, a city named Susa. Built in 1250 BC by the King Untash-Napirisha it once had five levels and stood 170 feet in height.

What we know about the Tower of Babel today comes only from the little archaeological evidence found and a few ancient writings. Nebuchadnezzar described how "gold, silver and precious stones from the mountain and from the sea were liberally set into the foundations" and how to rebuild it he called on "various peoples of the Empire, from north and south, from mountains and the coasts" to help with the construction.

Even in 460 BC, after the tower had been crumbling for many years, the Greek historian Herodotus visited the tower and was very impressed. "It has a solid central tower, one furlong square, with a second erected on top of it and then a third, and so on up to eight. All eight towers can be climbed by a spiral way running around the outside, and about halfway up there are seats for those who make the journey to rest on."



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### Judgment of the Rebellion at Babel (Genesis 11:1-9)

Noah and his family come out of the ark in **Genesis 9** and they start to reproduce. **Genesis 10** chronicles the families of Japheth, Ham and Shem, sons of Noah. Now in **Genesis 11:1-9**, we have the origin of languages. God did it in one single act as a judgment on the rebellion of man. In a way, it is a profound tragedy as humanity is separated still more from each other as they were from God.

The world at the time of Babel was not much different from the world at the time of the flood and God had every reason to drown this entire civilization with the exception of whatever few were true to him, but he didn't do that. God promised that He would not destroy sinners in that fashion again, and that this was to be an age of grace and forbearance, so He dispersed them instead of destroying them. He scatters them over the whole earth and changes their language.

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**Now when they were scattered, the sons of Japheth became the Indo-European nations from western Europe across Russia, actually across the Bering Straits into North America and South America. They ultimately possessed most of the territory on the planet, but lost their souls.**

**The sons of Ham inhabited Africa, Asia into the Far East and some of them remained in the area around Canaan.**

**The sons of Shem settled north and east of Canaan included the Semitic people and it's from that group of people, the sons of Shem, that Abram came and from Abram came the Jews and the nation Israel. They were the people to whom God gave the Law, the prophets, the covenants, the promises, the adoptions, the scripture, and the Messiah.**

**God chose them to be His witness nation and to proclaim His truth to the rest of the world. Shem's great grandson, Eber, gave the name "Hebrew" to that chosen people.**

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The contrast in **verses 1-9** is between what man desires (self glory and self fulfillment) and what God does to show man's impotence and emptiness. It is man at his best and his noblest trying to achieve his greatest anti-God act and God steps in and undoes the whole thing.

Their attitude is one of rebellion. They wanted to live apart from God because they were driven by personal ambition and pride, much like Adam and Eve were. The locations are similar: Shinar, the plain in which they built Babel, was very near to the location of the Garden of Eden. Both of them were in the Mesopotamian valley, the lower Euphrates valley between the Tigris and the Euphrates River.

Once the flood was over, they left the mountains of Ararat, and went to the Euphrates valley where they wanted to settle and they found a plain in the land of Shinar and they settled there. They wanted to get away from the mountains for fear of more earthquakes and volcanic activity. It seemed safer on the plains.

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God had instructed the head of the family, Noah, to fill the **earth (Gen 9:1)**. God wanted them to search the planet and find all of the wonderful things that God had prepared for man and populate the planet. But man didn't want to do that, he thought he knew better than God and so they decided to stay together in defiance of God's clear command.

**Verse 1** says, **"The whole earth used the same language and the same words."** They not only had the same language, but they spoke with the same vocabulary and they obviously spoke the language of Noah and his family.

Since there was no barrier to communication, there was no barrier to unity as well. The literal Hebrew here is "they had one lip and one set of words." MacArthur believes that Babel occurred about 100 years after the flood, so the year would be about 1,756 years after creation, if Peleg was named for this event (**Gen 10:25**).

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But there was a dark side to this unity. Because they were sinful and rebellious against God and because they were proud and wicked, that unity allowed for a concentration of evil that was unacceptable to God. Power corrupts and ultimate power corrupts ultimately. One nation, all speaking the same language, all under the power of the same influence, essentially led by the same man, lacks the checks and balances against evil that help preserve man in sinful world. Sin had a united front and a united force. This is not helpful to people because it eliminates the constraints and restraints that nationalities bring to bear upon human life.

God recognizes this and says, **“This is what they began to do and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them” (v6).** Nobody is going to stop them. Hitler wanted to rule the world, but someone stopped him. But if it was one people, one world and one leader, nobody could stop him. The checks and balances system in the world or on a national scale is part of the common grace that God has given to restrain unilateral evil.

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**Adolph Hitler wanted to rule the world, which obviously would have been a great disaster. So people gave their lives to stop these efforts, the efforts of Stalin (slaughtered 50 million people), and other evil world rulers in order to create a measure of restraint and justice and freedom and peace on the earth.**

**It is true that even warring nations act as a restraint to an autocratic dominating power, and they restrain the free run of a singular evil. So, one world unity is a curse. The New Agers are really into “one world”. The World Council of Churches are making massive concerted efforts within Christianity and even evangelical Christianity, to create one world church which portends the need for one world leader over that entity, and if he’s as evil as the world he rules, then there is no checks and balance, there is no constraint or restraint.**

**World unity is a curse. A one world ruler would be a disaster. One people only escalates the unified intrepid force of evil and God knows that and so does Satan and Satan is moving this world back to a “one-world, one-religion with one-ruler” system, the one ruler who is the Antichrist.**

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Satan wants to produce his kingdom to bring the entire world under his unilateral, unlimited power and evil. The Abyss will belch forth demons (Rev 9:1-12), the dragon and his angels will descend upon the earth, cast down after they lost their fight with Michael and his angels (Rev 12:7-9) and all hell will break loose. This is what the New Agers are wanting to happen and they are simply his advanced publicity team. Then Satan would rule the entire world through his puppet, the Antichrist, and his side-kick, the false prophet. When that happens, the prophets and Revelation tell us that there will be mass slaughter and mass death everywhere. People will be killing each other, even their own families.

Most evolutionists believe that man is basically good. They accept the explanation of contemporary sociologists and anthropologists is that man is basically good and that when man does something really bad it's because he gets brainwashed, and the only explanation for the Holocaust in German when good German people massacred six million Jews is that they were under a relentless onslaught of Nazi propaganda that literally overpowered their thinking so that eventually they were so severely brainwashed that they just went out and massacred the Jews!

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**Now in 1939 when Hitler started his movement to take over the world for the Third Reich, he didn't want to have to fight a war on the eastern border so he made a truce with Russia and in order to kind of keep a buffer zone. So he split Poland down the middle and annexed the eastern part of Poland to Russia and took the western part to Germany so there would be a buffer there. So Jedwabne was in eastern Poland and was never occupied by any Nazis, only by Russians. The Russians weren't trying to conquer the world and they weren't interested in racial propaganda. 3,000 people lived in Jedwabne, 1,600 of them were Jews. The Jews had lived in the town for 300 years. They farmed together with the Gentile people who were there, they went to school with them, worked with them, occasionally married them; they bought their groceries in the same place, and went to the same social events for 300 years. There was essentially no racial attitudes there. Everybody got along fine.**

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**On June 22, 1941, Hitler wanted to defeat Russia so he swept through Poland and the truce was broken and he took that town Jedwabne along with Poland all the way to the Russian border. On July 10, a little over two weeks later, the Gentile townspeople massacred all 1,600 Jews in one day! The ones they couldn't stab with a pitchfork or behead with an axe because they were running out of time that day, they herded into a barn, poured gasoline all over the barn and incinerated them all.**

**This nagging event couldn't be explained by the sociologists because that town was never under any Nazi propaganda. The records indicate not one of those people was killed by a German or a Nazi soldier. Every single one of those Jews was killed by one of his neighbors. The question the sociologist asks in the book, "Neighbors" by Jan Tomasz Gross, one he couldn't answer, was "how in the world can people in a two week period massacre their neighbors in a blood bath? How can they do that?"**

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The answer? The Germans simply gave them permission. They said, “You could do that.” They didn’t do it because of race, they did it because they wanted their farms, farm implements, furniture, money, jewelry and everything the Jews possessed. That is the heart of man. No brainwashing necessary. **Romans 3:15, “Their feet are swift to shed blood.”**

All it would take to create a world in which people massacre each other is to have a government that says, “You can do that.” Just turn them loose. Jedwabne is a testimony to the wretchedness of the human heart.

That’s what’s will be repeated across the face of the earth during the reign of the Antichrist. All he has to say is, “You can do it.”

When sinners get concentrated under one power in one place, wickedness abounds. The greatest amount of crime and wickedness in the world occurs in the cities, and the bigger the city, the worse it is. We have mega-cities today, waiting to explode into wickedness once the restraint is removed.

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**God knew all this and to preserve mankind a little longer, He scattered them by confusing their language. They went from a common language and they began to develop the variations that God had assigned them because He confused their speech. The people who could communicate with each other would group together and they would separate from the people with whom they couldn't communicate. They didn't understand what was going on because there had always only been one language and one set of words.**

**By the way as we move toward Antichrist's kingdom, languages are disappearing. National Review online June 20th this year, said thousands of human languages head toward extinction. The 15 most common languages are now on the lips of over half the world's people. Half the world's people speak one or more of 15 languages. 90% of humanity speaks 100 languages. We're down to 6,800 languages today. "At the current rate," says the National Review, "linguists estimate that by the end of this century half the present languages will be completely gone... Only 600 are being taught to children, the rest can't survive because there's not another generation to speak them."**

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Everybody in the world is anxious to learn English, and it seems that English might be the language of choice in the kingdom of Antichrist.

**“It came about as they journeyed east they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there” (v2).** They said, “This is the place to build our one world civilization.” We’re not going to scatter as God said, we’re going to stay together and we’ll have more power here.

Beginning with eight people, in 100 years, you probably can have several thousands of people and they had decided they would stay together so as to not weaken their power by dividing the talent, the resources and the people.

The leader was Nimrod, son of Cush. His name means “rebel”. He was a mighty hunter, not just of animals but he was a killer of people. He leads the open rebellion against God by the sheer strength he exhibited. **Gen 10:9** says, **“Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord.”** Even God recognized this man as a great killer. He was a mass murderer like Hitler or Stalin.

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“And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech and Akkad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar” (Gen 10:10). Nimrod rises to lead these thousands of people by force and wickedness. He expands his kingdom into “Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city” (Gen 10:11-12).

He builds a kingdom of evil, a kingdom of rebellion, idolatry, and pride very much like Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon in Daniel’s days.

“And they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly.’ And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar” (Gen 11:3). They wanted to make a permanent settlement. There has been an abundant supply, through the centuries, of clay and asphalt in the Mesopotamian Valley. They used brick in the place of stone and they used tar for mortar.

“And they said, ‘Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *will reach* into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth” (Gen 11:4).

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**This is their three phased plan: a city, a tower, and a name. The city has to do with their social goal, the tower their religious goal, and the name had to do with their psychological goal. This is for the glory of man, not of God. This is the first city of man after the flood built by men, of man, for man without God.**

**Apparently they had highly developed architecture skills, building and construction skills, they wanted to build a city where they could live together for their own fulfillment and their own satisfaction.**

**Secondly they wanted to build a tower. The purpose was supposed to be a connection to the gods which indicates that they had already begun to worship false gods. Now this tower was probably a ziggurat. It was, in theory, a ladder by which the gods could descend and ascend and make connection with men, a step ladder. It could be made of bricks and mortar and was generally rectangular or square at the base and there was a temple there so you went there to worship the ascending and descending gods.**

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The Babylonian legends refer to these ziggurats that may well be copies of this original *migdal*, tower. Sumerian culture and Babylonian culture also speak of an ancient, united people with one language so the true account here has passed down through the tradition of these peoples. In fact, in later Babylonia, every important city had a ziggurat, and it was introduced right back here by Nimrod in Babel. He knew the people needed religion and he concocted this false religion obviously aided and abetted by Satan. In fact, the Bible traces all false religions back to Babylon.

They had rejected the true God and developed belief in false gods. The Babylonian mystery cults developed from this and spread over the whole world when the people scattered. Even the form of religion that characterizes Antichrist at the end of the age is called Babylon (**Rev 18**). The gods and goddesses of Rome, Greece, India, Egypt, the original Pantheon of the Babylonians, all sort of comes from Babel. One historian says Nimrod himself was apparently deified as the chief God, Marduk of later Babylon.

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Whenever man suppresses the knowledge of God's glory, the whole of life plummets into chaos. John Piper wrote, "The sun of God's glory was made to shine at the center of the solar system of our souls. And when it does, all the planets of our life are held in their proper orbit. Otherwise, everything flies apart."

God steps in and says, "Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech" (Gen 11:7). Just as God created a mature universe and mature earth, populated by a mature life, he created mature languages so that they weren't just grunting at each other until they could sort it all out.

As you think through what must have happened in Babel, when all of a sudden, nobody understood each other, there would be anger, fear and panic everywhere. The immediate cacophony of unintelligible speech erupting all over the place would drive people crazy, and they would just congeal into units of common language. God, in His grace, would have kept their families intact.

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So the power of the one world system was shattered like that. The city was fragmented, and the false religion was splintered to bits. **“So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city” (Gen 11:8).**

Japheth’s family moved into the Indo-European area, across Russia, over the Bering Sea, into North America and South America. Ham’s family went into Africa and Asia, the Far East and some parts of Canaan. Shem’s family went North and East, and included the Semitic people of the Middle East. Wherever they went, they took their sin and their idols with them, as well as their human ingenuity, and skills that they had been given as people created in the image of God.

As populations began to grow and expand, and people became industrious and clever, life began to flourish. Arts, crafts sprung up everywhere. The more industrious and intelligent people groups held the more favorable positions as time went on. They became more powerful. They became the greater nations and they conquered or absorbed the weaker nations, and eventually nations began to develop alongside tribes in isolated places.

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It just took a few hundred years for it to happen. In a few generations, the world was essentially inhabited. These people groups developed distinctive patterns of life, social customs and even biological features.

A nation or tribe with other nations or tribes on its border can't live anyway it wants to live, because as soon as it impinges upon the rights and freedoms of the next door people, there's going to be a problem, which is usually resolved by war or an attack. So God used the differences between nations as a restraint until He could set up His witness nation, Israel.

**“Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth” (Gen 11:9).** Babel is a term for confusion, even in English. Later on, the Akkadian name for Babylon was Babel-Babyloni, which means “Babylon, the gate of God.” Well, Babylon became the gate of the false gods, the home of all false religions that were spawned out of that.

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**Moses read this story to the Israelites before they entered Canaan. And this explained to the Jews how all these nations came to be, that they were all, from the very beginning, under the judgment of God, so that Israel need not feel they were acting in an unjust way by going in and conquering the Canaanites, because they were, in fact, already under divine judgment.**

**The world was filled with pride, ambition and false religion. Now it was Israel's turn to act in judgment on behalf of God, and establish itself as a witness nation to spread the message that the LORD is one God, and to tell the surviving nations about the true and living God.**

**They wanted a city, a religion, a relationship with their own god and they wanted a name. They didn't get it. Those of us who are believers, we receive all these and more through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have a new city, the New Jerusalem, a wonderful relationship with the Creator God through Jesus, and an eternal name. All that they wanted and tried to work for, we receive by grace!**

# BREAK TIME

The Tower of Babel (11:1-9)	The Generations of Shem (11:10-26)	The Descendants of Terah (11:27-32)
<p><b>1 The Context:</b> Same language &amp; same words used</p> <p><b>2-4 The Disobedience of the People</b></p> <p><b>3-4 The Building of a City &amp; a Tower</b></p> <p><b>5-8 The Lord's Response:</b> He scattered them abroad (today we have thousands of languages but less than 20 language families)</p> <p><b>9 The Aftermath:</b> therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth</p>	<p><b>1) Shem</b> was 100 years old &amp; became the father of Arpachshad 2 years after the flood; he lived 500 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v10-11)</p> <p><b>2) Arpachshad</b> lived 35 years &amp; became the father of Shelah; he lived 403 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v12-13)</p> <p><b>3) Shelah</b> lived 30 years &amp; became the father of Eber; he lived 403 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v14-15)</p> <p><b>4) Eber</b> lived 34 years &amp; became the father of Peleg; he lived 430 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v16-17)</p> <p><b>5) Peleg</b> lived 30 years &amp; became the father of Reu; he lived 209 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v18-19)</p> <p><b>6) Reu</b> lived 32 years &amp; became the father of Serug; he lived 207 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v20-21)</p> <p><b>7) Serug</b> lived 30 years &amp; became the father of Nahor; he lived 200 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v22-23)</p> <p><b>8) Nahor</b> lived 29 years &amp; became the father of Terah; he lived 119 years more &amp; had other sons &amp; daughters (v24-25)</p> <p><b>9) Terah</b> lived 70 years &amp; became the father of Abram, Nahor &amp; Haran (v26)</p>	<p><b>27 Haran</b> became the father of Lot</p> <p><b>28 Haran</b> died in Ur of the Chaldeans</p> <p><b>29 Abram</b> married Sarai &amp; Nahor married Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah &amp; Iscah</p> <p><b>30 Sarai</b> was barren &amp; had no child</p> <p><b>31 Terah</b> took Abram &amp; Lot &amp; Sarai &amp; they went from Ur in order to enter the land of Canaan; &amp; they went as far as Haran &amp; settled there</p> <p><b>32 the days of Terah</b> were 205 years &amp; Terah died in Haran</p>

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### Paganism and Promise (Genesis 11:10-32)

As we come to this genealogy, you'll see a contrast between paganism (Nimrod's religion and Babel) and promise (Abram). Once the people were scattered all over the world, they took their religion with them. Their religion was a hybrid of truth about the one true God and lies perverted by whatever form of paganism that had developed at Babel. But God had a plan to bring about a witness nation who would go to the world and tell them about the true and living God, whom they had forgotten.

Shem's genealogy is given in **Genesis 11:10-26**. Abram's family were idolaters who probably worshipped the gods of astrology that had been invented at Babel, especially the moon god. The worship of the moon god, was a cult that flourished in ancient Mesopotamia.

**“And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, “From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, *namely*, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods”” (Josh 24:2).** Abraham's father was an idolater who served other gods. He is simply an illustration of the sin nature of man.

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The world didn't develop a higher and higher kind of religion. It went from knowing the truth down, down from worshipping and loving the true God, down into idolatry. The path is outlined very clearly in **Romans 1:18-32**, from the heights of worshipping the true God to idolatry and demon worship.

By Abram's time, the whole world was idolatrous. So the Babel event was judgment, but it was followed again by hope. Shem's genealogy begins two years after the 40-day flood. Interestingly enough, you'll not going to find death mentioned in this genealogy. Compare that with the genealogy in **Genesis 5**, where this repeated phrase, "and he died" occurs. Genesis 5 is a genealogy of death because it's all moving inexorably toward this wholesale destruction of life in the flood.

But Genesis 11:10-26 is a genealogy of life. The repeated phrase is "he lived". Prior to the flood, everything was moving toward this disastrous death. After the flood, God said He would never do that again. Everything was marked out by life in a new world. What prevailed before the flood was death and judgment. What prevailed after the flood was life and promise.

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:10 These are *the records of* the generations of ~~Shem~~ ~~Shem~~ was **one hundred years old**, and became the father of Arpachshad **two years after** the flood;

11:11 and ~~Shem~~ lived **five hundred years after** he became the father of Arpachshad, **and he had other sons and daughters.**

11:12 And Arpachshad lived **thirty-five years**, and became the father of ~~Shelah~~;

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:13 and Arpachshad lived **four hundred and three years after** he became the father of Shelah, and he had other sons and daughters.

11:14 And Shelah lived **thirty years**, and became the father of Eber;

11:15 and Shelah lived **four hundred and three years after** he became the father of Eber, and he had other sons and daughters.

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:16 And Eber lived **thirty-four years**, and became the father of Peleg;

11:17 and Eber lived **four hundred and thirty years after** he became the father of Peleg, **and he had other sons and daughters.**

11:18 And Peleg lived **thirty years**, and became the father of Reu;

11:19 and Peleg lived **two hundred and nine years after** he became the father of Reu, **and he had other sons and daughters.**

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:20 And Reu lived **thirty-two years**, and became the father of Serug;

11:21 and Reu lived **two hundred and seven years after** he became the father of Serug, and he had *other sons and daughters.*

11:22 And Serug lived **thirty years**, and became the father of Nahor;

11:23 and Serug lived **two hundred years after** he became the father of Nahor, and he had *other sons and daughters.*

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

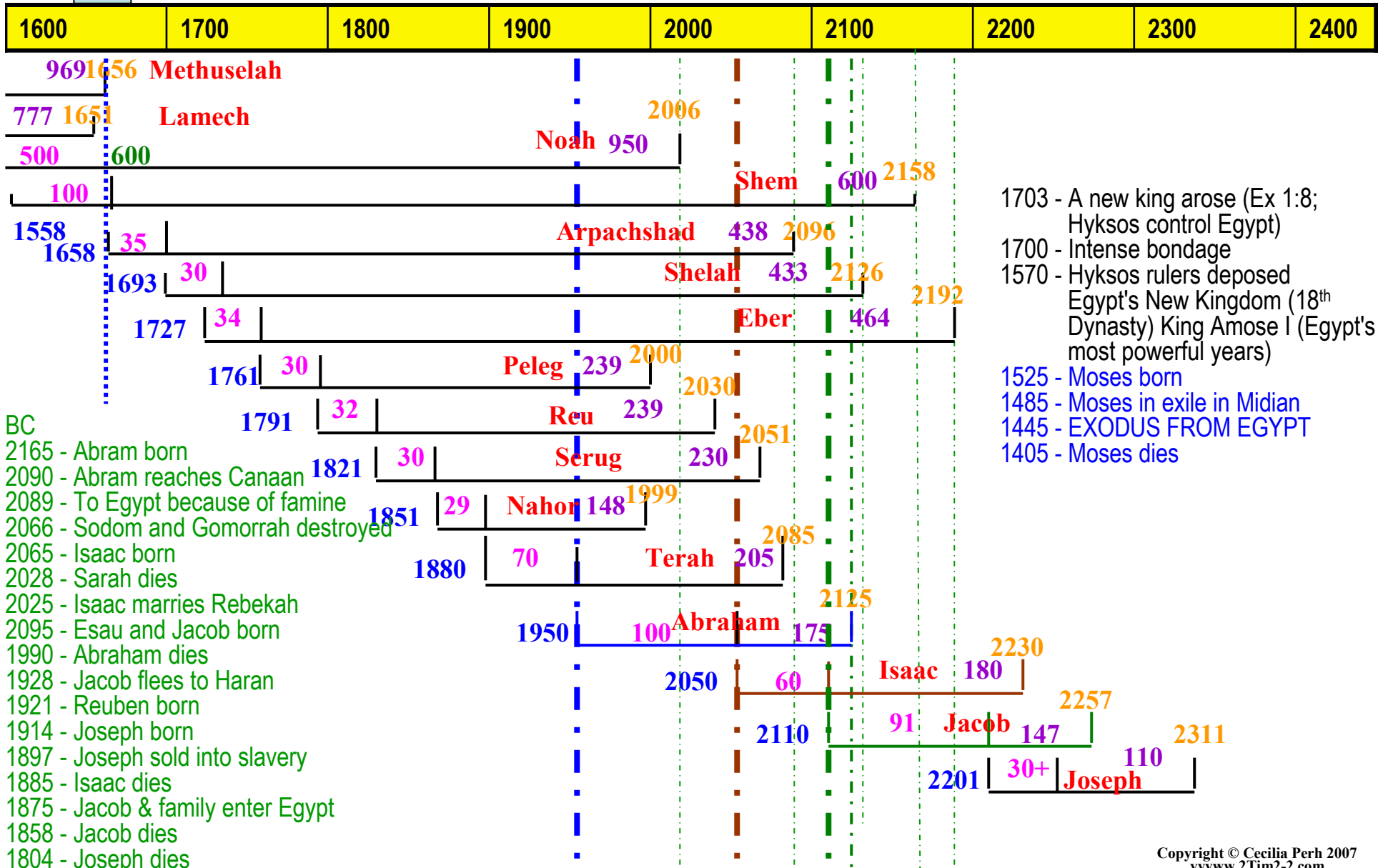
11:24 And Nahor lived **twenty-nine years**, and became the father of Terah;

11:25 and Nahor lived **one hundred and nineteen years** after he became the father of Terah, and he had *other sons and daughters.*

11:26 And Terah lived **seventy years**, and became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.

Flood

# The Generations of Shem and Terah (Genesis 11)



1703 - A new king arose (Ex 1:8; Hyksos control Egypt)  
 1700 - Intense bondage  
 1570 - Hyksos rulers deposed  
 Egypt's New Kingdom (18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) King Amose I (Egypt's most powerful years)  
 1525 - Moses born  
 1485 - Moses in exile in Midian  
 1445 - EXODUS FROM EGYPT  
 1405 - Moses dies

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Noah was 500 when his first son, Japheth, was born (**Gen 5:32**). Shem was likely born two years later, because in ancient times, mothers generally nursed their babies for up to 24 months, so they wouldn't be able to conceive during that time. So it would be maybe she nursed for a year, a year and a half, and sometime in that era she became pregnant again and Shem was born, two-plus years after Japheth.

So Shem would be 100 years old two years after the 40-day flood. **“Shem was one hundred years old, and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood” (v10)**. Shem lived a total of 600 years while Noah lived 950 years. We see life span shortening significantly. The effects of the flood on the world, the universe, the atmosphere, as well as the effect of sin passing down from generation to generation continues to affect man's life-span. By Abraham's days, Nahor only lives 148 years, while Abraham himself will live 175 years, Isaac 180 years, Jacob 147 years and Joseph 110 years. Today some of us may live up to 70 years only. So the impact of sin and the flood was the shortening of man's life span. Also note that they're having children earlier, by their 30s.

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:27 **Now** these are *the records* of the generations of Terah.

Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot.

11:28 And Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

11:29 And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah.

# Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel

11:30 And Sarai was barren; she had no child.

11:31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there.

11:32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

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So the impact of sin and the flood was the shortening of man's life span. Also note that they're having children earlier, by their 30s.

Now we arrive at Terah, who is the father of Abram. By the way, names were used both for towns and for people. Just as Haran was Abram's brother but also the name of the town in which they settled.

Now Terah lived 70 years and became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. That's unusual now, because people were having children earlier. But the text means is that he began to have these sons at the age of 70 and not that they were triplets (as in the case of Noah).

Also note that Abram was not the firstborn son. He was born 60 years later, when Terah was 130 years old. In **Genesis 11:32**, it says Terah died at 205 years old and **Genesis 12:4** tells us that Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran. He left only after his father died. That's what **Acts 7:4** says, "Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and settled in Haran. And from there, after his father died, God removed him into this country in which you are now living." 205 – 75 gives us 130 years.

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Abram was not the firstborn son but he is listed first because he's the main character. Similar to the listing of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. The birth order was Japheth, Shem and Ham. But Shem is mentioned first because of his priority.

Terah was not a believer in the true God. **Joshua 24:2** says he served other gods. He was an idolatrous pagan. So these three boys, Abram, Nahor and Haran were born into a pagan family. Influenced by the astrology of Babel, it appears that they worshipped the moon god.

Terah has been related by Hebrew scholars to the Hebrew word *yarah*, which is the word for "moon". It indicates that he was actually named, perhaps, for the moon god by his father Nahor, who was perhaps a worshipper of the moon god, as well. It is also interesting to note that the birthplace of Abram, the town of Ur, was known, and is known by archaeologists and historians, as the major center of the worship of the moon god in ancient Mesopotamia.

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Abram, which means “exalted father” will be renamed by God as Abraham, “father of many nations.” Nahor was named after his grandfather, and this is perhaps a clue that he may have been the first one born. His story will be told later in Genesis 22, which indicates that Nahor had 12 sons, all of whom would be Abraham’s nephews.

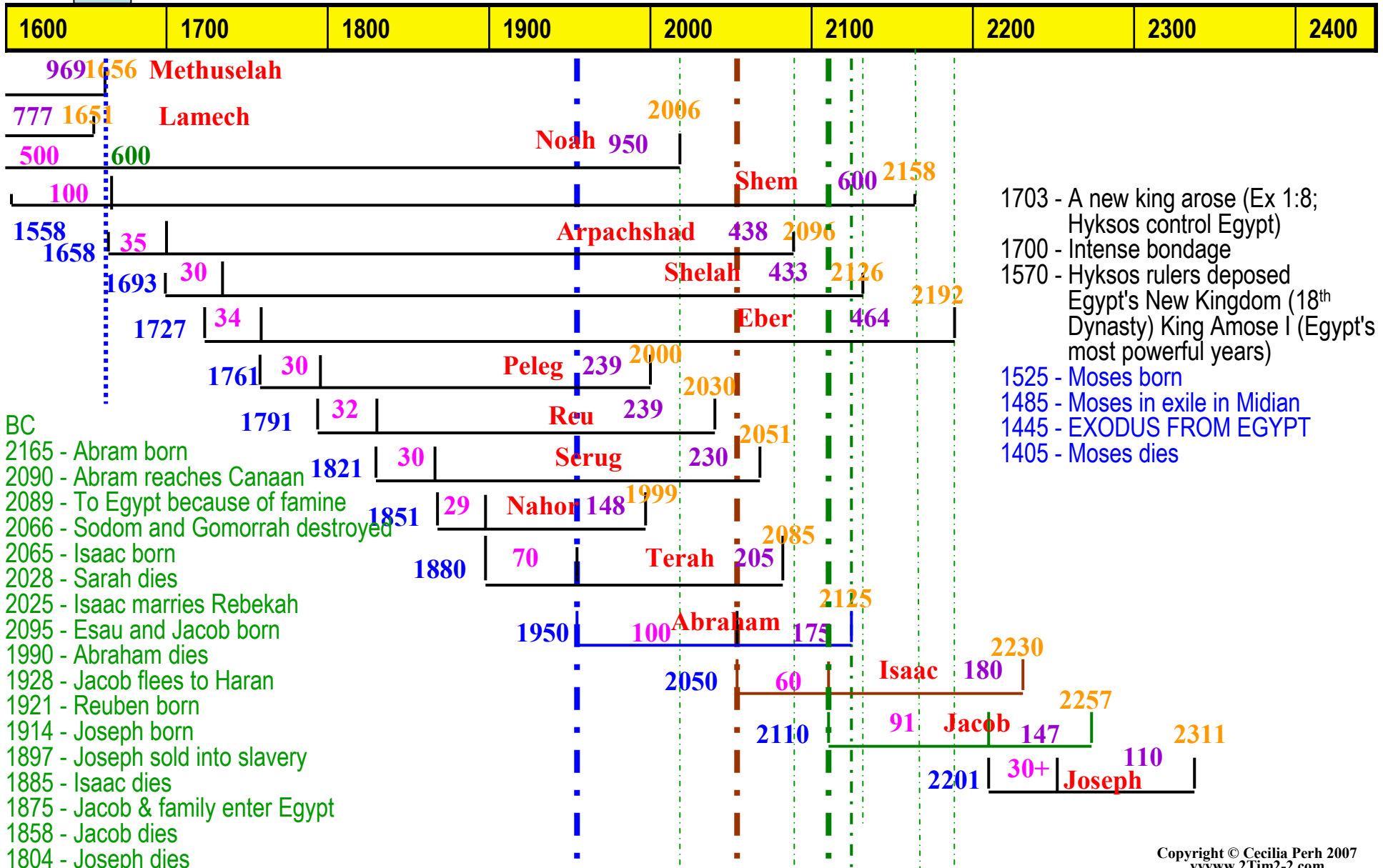
One of his brother’s sons was Bethuel, the father of Rebecca, who married Abraham’s son, Isaac, and became the mother of Jacob and Esau. It’s a small, small world in ancient times and it was still allowable to marry your own family members.

Haran is probably the second son of Terah and Haran is also the name of a town in Moab, Beth Haran ([Num 32:36](#); [Josh 13:27](#)). It may have been where he had an influence or settled or it may be coincidental.

Now, all three of these names are well known in Jewish history. They all appear in the Biblical record as you go through Genesis. So they are noted for us here. Abraham lived for 175 years and he died about 19 years after Noah. Shem, Shelah and Eber outlived him.

Flood

# The Generations of Shem and Terah (Genesis 11)



1703 - A new king arose (Ex 1:8; Hyksos control Egypt)  
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Now in **verse 27**, we are told that **“Haran became the father of Lot.”** Why is he the only son mentioned? The next verse says that **“Haran died in the presence of his father,”** literally died in his father’s face, i.e., while his father was alive in Ur of the Chaldees. And because this one of the three sons died, his son Lot had to take his father’s place in the line of primogeniture. He then is treated more like a son than a grandson. In fact, Abram himself, who is his uncle, takes him under his wing, and takes him into the land of Canaan with him. So since Haran died before his father, Terah, died, his son, Lot, took his place as if he were a son of Terah.

Ur of the Chaldees is usually identified with the Ur that is located on the northwest corner of the Persian Gulf, in the southern Mesopotamian Valley. It was one of the most important centers of Sumerian culture, ancient culture. Some archaeologists feel that at the time of Terah and the birth of his sons, it had reached its zenith and was starting to decline as a great city, and that may explain why Terah and his family wanted to leave.

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Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, which was later changed to Sarah (**Gen 17:15**). Sarai means "my princess" and Sarah means "Princess." Why did God do that? Because she was going to be the mother of nations!

Her name, in the ancient language, is *Sarat*, means "queen". Sarat was one of the gods in the ancient Babylonian pantheon. Sarat was one of the names for the goddess of the planet Venus, Ishtar. From their names, we can see that these people were all mingled in this Mesopotamian astrological cult.

Nahor had a wife named Milcah, the daughter of a different Haran, who had two daughters, Milcah and Iscah. Milcah means "queen". Her name is similar to Malcah, another Akkadian title for the goddess Ishtar. Ishtar was the queen of heaven. So they named their daughters after astrological, Babylonian goddesses.

Iscah may mean "perfumed oil", or "the one who looks forth".

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We are then told that **“Sarai was barren; she had no child.”** That’s the worst possible situation a woman could face, but that was also crucial to Abraham’s faith as we learn later. Through this Abraham, would become the example of faith for all who will ever believe as he trusted solely in God to do the impossible.

**“And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there” (Gen 11:32).**

Why did they move? They were living in a comfortable civilized place in Ur of the Chaldees. The reason is in **Acts 7:2-4**: **“The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Depart from your country and your relatives, and come into the land that I will show you.' Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and settled in Haran.”**

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They went only as far as Haran because, archaeologists tell us that Haran was the second chief center of worship for the moon god. By the way, the moon god's name was Sin. Terah got up there, and he got a sniff of familiar worship and decided, "Let's settle right here. Let's not go down into Canaan. This is our place. Here is the second great center of worship for the moon god." So they settled there.

**"The days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran" (v32).** He died a pagan. It was his death that released Abram to obey God when God spoke to him the second time in Genesis 12. We'll pick the story up in Genesis Part 2.

Genesis 1-11 is for everybody to learn from.

Man, idolatrous and pagan, follows the path of unbelief, false religion, and rebellion and disobedience against God and sinks into hell. Or, man, believing in the Word of the Living God, escapes paganism and is delivered to eternal realms of divine promise and salvation.

The choice is yours!

