

Genesis 10 Don't Be a Nimrod 11/19/17

These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

² The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³ The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴ The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. ⁵ From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations.

⁶ The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. ⁷ The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. ⁸ Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." ¹⁰ The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. ¹¹ From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and ¹² Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. ¹³ Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, ¹⁴ Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and Caphtorim.

¹⁵ Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, ¹⁶ and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁷ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁸ the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites dispersed. ¹⁹ And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. ²⁰ These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

²¹ To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born. ²² The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. ²³ The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. ²⁴ Arpachshad fathered Shelah; and Shelah fathered Eber. ²⁵ To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. ²⁶ Joktan fathered 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 The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east. ³¹ These are the sons of Shem, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

32 These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

(Pastor prays)

There are parts of the country that have been called fly-over counties because most of the movers and shakers in our society live on either the East Coast or the West Coast and they just “fly over” the middle.

In Chapter 10 of Genesis, we have stumbled upon a fly-over passage. It’s one of those chapters you skim because of all the hard-to-pronounce names and lists of long-forgotten people. John MacArthur, the greatest expositor of all time, said this is one of the hardest chapters to preach. The famed H.C. Leopold, a great expositor of another age, when he came to Genesis 10, said, “It may very well be questioned if a man should ever preach on a passage like this.” On the other hand, James Montgomery Boice said this is one of the most interesting and important chapters in the Bible. While I probably wouldn’t go that far, I do believe that, even here in this obscure dry paragraph, we can learn something about who we are as humans and, more important, we learn something about the goodness of God and His grace found in Jesus Christ. Chapter 10 is commonly called “The Table of Nations,” as it sets us up for the Tower of Babel in Chapter 11. The flourishing of mankind, the spread of humanity across the globe, put a fine point on our constant need for God’s grace.

We Need Grace More Than We Think

We Have More in Common Than We Think

More in common with one another, I mean: black, white and brown; male and female; married, single, young, old and those holding on. Some have English as a first language, and there are some here for whom something else is your mother tongue. And although we seem different, the Bible seems to indicate that we have more in common than we think.

Think about Chapter 10. After the flood, Noah and his three sons come out of the ark and humanity starts over with the three sons and their families. Let me show you. You have to read the first verse and the last verse of the chapter to get the punch of what this chapter is telling us. Let’s read verse 1 and then verse 32. *These are the generations of*

the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.
32 These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

These two verses combined give us a Biblical foundation for the doctrine of humanity and how we are related one to another. I don't mean by some weird mystical connection. I mean by God's good purpose and creation. This speaks to a few common issues of the day that Christians must work hard at.

Racism. Chapter 10 tells us that we have the same origin and we possess the same dignity. We belong to the same world. We share the same nature and we breathe the same air. We live on the same earth and we answer to the same God. It's what the Apostle Paul believed. Remember what he said while he was preaching in Athens. In Acts 17:26 Paul said, *And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,* We are 10 chapters into Genesis and racial prejudice is eradicated. So that whatever your skin color or origin, you can trace your ancestry back to one of the three sons of Noah.

Because of our selfish tendencies even among Christians, we are quick to forget the oneness of the human race. The Gospel of Jesus crucifies our racism and classism and every other "ism" we come up with. But keep pressing on the commonalities in this chapter a little bit more and you will find we have something else in common.

Although each of us bears the image of God, we are also the descendants of Noah. We are sinners. Our common origin means we have a common problem. If you were to trace these genealogies in Chapter 10, you would find a line of sinners. We can do that in our own bloodlines. And what we find in the faded black and white photos of our ancestors are sinners. Isn't that what the Bible says? When Paul is making this point about Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:10-12, *as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."*

That's the human race. And if that is the case, we are not born into this world neutral and our environment made up into bad people. We, all of us, come into this world as sinners. We are equal-opportunity sinners and God in His grace saves sinners through the cross of Christ. And once the cross is etched onto your soul, then racism must be cut out of your heart. This passage reminds us that we have more in common than we think. This passage also reminds us

We Hero Worship More Than We Think

Hero worship. It's an excessive and unhealthy admiration for someone. And if you've never had hero worship, maybe you were your own hero. There's a hero tucked into this passage. His name is Nimrod. It's really a cool name now, but evidently it wasn't at the time. You find this story in Genesis 10:8. Let's read it.

⁸ Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man.

Three times Nimrod is called "mighty." In verse 9, his legend was such that to describe someone as being impressive, you would say, "He's awesome, like Nimrod." Verse 9 says, *He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD."*

Hero worship is nothing new, but it is often reserved for children. Mine were Evel Knievel, Elvis, Clint Eastwood and the Steelers. The Steelers were full of greats like Franco Harris, Mean Joe Green, L.C. Greenwood, Bradshaw and Swann. The only time I went to the principal's office (Mr. Thomas) was at Hickory Grove Elementary because I hit a kid who was a Miami Dolphin fan with my metal Steelers lunchbox.

Nimrod was held up in the text as the ideal man at the time. His name Nimrod means "rebel, strong, and hunter." He founded Babylon, a culture of idolatry and sexuality. The brief story of Nimrod is the horrible story of a desperate sex-soaked rebellion against God and really a representative of the best man could be at the time, a real picture of the kind of heroes we fall prey to worship even now.

Nimrod symbolizes power, prowess and politics. Nimrod, according to verse 10, built Babel (or Babylon) and Babylon would be driven by sex, wealth and power. All those things that, even today, the world considers great. But we are reminded that all that glitters is not gold. Babylon shows up again.

You know the story of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4. Many generations removed, he's the king of Babylon in the line of Nimrod. He's standing on his roof saying how great he is and how great his majesty is, and while the words were still in his mouth, the Lord struck him. In Revelation 18, Babylon, the great kingdom, falls. The long history of broken kingdoms and fallen heroes should drive us to seek a kingdom that has no end and a hero King who will never fail. A King who doesn't oppress people. A King who

purchased his people with his own blood at the cross where the great exchange happened.

Do you know the great exchange? Mike Powers preached it in the Hickory Grove Elementary chapel. It's Jesus taking our sin and, in exchange, giving us His righteousness. You need a new hero.

The Gospel Is More Needed Than You Think

When you read all 32 verses of this chapter, you get the feeling that God put it here to say to us, "Don't forget the nations." In fact, from a structured standpoint, if you look how Moses has broken the list up, he has the world's populations put into lists of 7. And to press that a little further, there are 70 names in the list of 7 and that number 70 intrigues me a little bit: 70 names represent where all the nations of the world come from. That immediately made me think of Jesus sending: sending out the 70 in Luke 10, or the resurrected Lord giving the command in Matthew 28 to "Go and make disciples of all nations."

People are quick to forget the one true God as evidenced by this chapter. The rest of Genesis is about God sovereignly choosing a people through Abraham and Abraham being the one man God blesses the world through. Now, one greater than Abraham has come, and this text should remind us of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

(Pastor shares the Gospel, extends the invitation and prays)