

UNDERSTANDING THE “ONE STORY” OF SCRIPTURE

Week 10 – Who is Peleg? Does He Matter?

November 11, 2025

We are continuing within the REDEMPTION plot of the “one story”

...AND, we are going to be leaving...

- God Deals with Mankind: Genesis 1 – 11 – covers approximately 2,000 years and encompasses God’s dealings with mankind. There were no Jews or Gentiles; there was just mankind.

...and entering...

- God Deals with the Gentiles Through Israel: Genesis 12 – Malachi 4 – covers approximately 2,000 years in the Hebrew Scriptures but continues into the Millennial Kingdom (Eze. 40-48; Zech. 8:23) and into the New Jerusalem (Isa. 66:22)

But, we’re not leaving mankind just yet....

In Genesis 10 we read of how many nations through Noah’s three sons? 70 nations! From Japheth – 14

From Ham – through Cush (11), Mizraim (6), and Canaan (11) = 28

From Shem – 28

TOTAL - 14 + 28 + 28 = 70 nations

In Gen. 1-11 an entire world of people is presented! This is significant! God LOVES THE NATIONS! Biblical principle!

WHY 70 nations?

Deut. 32:1ff

Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. ... Moses is addressing the heavens and the earth! Moses called all creation...as an audience...to hear the message from God to Israel. Moses called upon all creation as witnesses re: Israel...for creation to grasp the importance...the gravity...the significance of God’s message concerning Israel!!

Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth....For I proclaim the name of the Lord:Ascribe greatness to our God. ⁴ He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He. ⁵ They (Israel!!) have corrupted themselves; they are not His children, because of their blemish: a perverse and crooked generation. (These charges are against Israel as they had become so disobedient that they no longer acted like his children. Many going through the wilderness w/ Moses exhibited doubt, unbelief, rebelliousness!) ⁶ Do you thus deal with the Lord (do you repay the Lord in this way?), O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, Who bought you (Who delivered you...Who rescued you?) Has He not made you (created you [Isa. 43:1 – READ]) and established you (made unconditional covenants with you)?

⁷ “Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations. (Moses, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit – is reminding Israel of God’s love). 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 (inheritance/possession) is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance.

God set the boundaries of the 70 nations according to the number of the children of Israel to reveal Israel's central role in God's plan of redemption/restoration for mankind. Biblical principle!

God expresses His direct claim over Israel. Israel is...

- God's portion: pointing to Israel's unique identity as God's treasured possession (Deut. 7:6 - *For you are a holy (set apart) people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth*). Israel's unique identity was NOT because of their merit, but by His sovereign choice.

- God's inheritance – based on the land God promised to Abraham and his physical descendants:

- Gen. 12:7 - *Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your descendants I will give this land.' And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.*

- Gen. 15:18-21 - *On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: 'To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—¹⁹ the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.'*

- God's possession – emphasizing God's ownership of Israel, i.e. attacks on Israel are met with God's judgment as offenses against God's own possession [Joel 3:1-2]).

Re: the theme of land, we need to know that God created a physical, material, literal universe – with a physical planet called earth... where God met with man...and God gave Adam and Eve dominion, to rule over the land, to serve and nurture the land (Genesis 1:26, 28). God speaks of dwelling with the redeemed. Jesus will rule and reign from King David's throne in Jerusalem in the Millennial Kingdom (Eze. 43:1-12). Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, we read of future restoration...we read of the new heavens and the new earth, the new Jerusalem, where the redeemed live in peace and fullness (Revelation 21:1-4).

At the time of the recording of Deut. 32, the 70 nations represented the full scope of the Gentile world.

Gen. 46:26-27 – observe that 70 descendants of Jacob (Israel) went down to Egypt. The children of Israel in Egypt began with 70 members of Jacob's family - *All the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body, besides Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons** in all. ²⁷ And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt were two persons. All the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy.* (**66 – went with Jacob; Joseph [who was in Egypt] & Joseph's two sons born in Egypt – Ephraim & Manasseh). We are reading a divinely orchestrated connection between Israel and the nations. 66 + 4 = 70!

During the Feast of Tabernacles (the last Feast which points toward God tabernacling with man in the Millennial Kingdom), 70 bulls were sacrificed on behalf of the 70 nations (Num. 29:12-40). The offering of 70 bulls sacrificed during the Feast of Tabernacles reinforced Israel's role as (intercessor and representative) on behalf of all

people. We see God's intention to bring redemption and restoration to the world through Israel. Israel was chosen NOT because of their numbers or merit. Israel was chosen to be the people

through whom God would bring blessing and the Messiah to all nations – according to God’s sovereign choice!

In Deut. 32:8-9 – we read of God setting the boundaries of the 70 nations according to the number of the children of Israel (70). God ordained a plan whereby the nations (70) and Israel would be connected!

Gen. 12:3 – all the families of the earth will be blessed through the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Gen. 18:18 – God chose Israel as an instrument of blessing for the world.

Isa. 43:10 – God chose Israel to serve as a witness of the one true God to the Gentiles.

Gen. 10:25 – within the descendants of Shem (God dwelled in the tents of Shem [Gen. 9:26-27] we read of *Eber* (“region from beyond;” Abram is called a Hebrew – Gen. 14:13; [Eber] having come from “a region from beyond” – from Ur of the Chaldeas).

Gen. 10:25-30 - *To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg (division), for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother’s name was Joktan (smallness; to be small).*

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. HOW was the earth divided?

Peleg and Joktan, brothers, are both from the line of Shem – Shemite/Semites! Who are the Semitic people? We readily say, the Jewish people. BUT, the Arab people are included within the Semitic people group.

Gen. 11:18ff – from Peleg’s lineage - *Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.* In Lk. 3:35, Peleg is mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus. From Peleg came Abram and his physical descendants – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Joktan’s lineage is noted in Gen. 10:26-30. His sons became heads of various tribes and people in the Arabian Peninsula. WHY is this even mentioned? What’s the significance?

Peleg's line...toward Mesopotamia and the Israelite lineage. Joktan's line...toward the Arabian Peninsula/Arab lineage. This division is foundational for understanding the spread and differentiation of Semitic peoples in Scripture and history...and God’s impact on one another.

Comparing Genesis 10 and Genesis 11. We need to OBSERVE in Gen. 10:1-31 – *that the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth took up residence in their lands and nations according to their languages and families - everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.*

BUT, when we turn to Gen. 11, and read of the Tower of Babel, we read...

Gen. 11:1-4 - *Now the whole earth had one language and one speech (!?!?!). ² And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. ³ Then they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. ⁴ And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”*

Genesis 10 provides an overview of the scattering and spreading outward and the genealogies of the nations following the flood...speaking different languages.

Genesis 11:5-9 - focuses on the specific event that caused the division of the peoples. What caused the division? In Gen. 11:1-9, the whole earth had one language – and they wanted to hunker down – they didn’t want to be scattered – they wanted to make a name for themselves – they seemed to be rebelling against God’s directive to *fill the earth and subdue it!* *But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.* ⁶ *And the LORD said, “Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.* ⁷ *Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.”* ⁸ *So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.* ⁹ *Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.* And so we read Gen. 10....

Chronologically speaking, Gen. 11:1-9, the Tower of Babel, during which time man had one language, occurred before Gen. 10. In Gen. 10 we read a general summary, the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth were separated into lands – everyone according to his language. Many languages are noted. ...followed by a focused narrative in Gen. 11, providing the cause, the details. Gen. 10 gives the big picture of how the nations spread while Gen. 11 explains why and how humanity was scattered.

Somewhat curiously, in Gen. 11:10-26 we read of the descendants of Shem – again – but only recording Peleg’s lineage!! THEN we read of a specific family...Terah and his descendants – Gen. 11:27-32. Does Terah sound familiar?

QUESTIONS

What was new to you? Have you avoided these chapters in the past? Why?
Is it impacting you now? In what way?
Do you see a continuing “one story”? In what way?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 10’s handout with the Bible references. Be Bereans (Acts 17:11)
Continue journaling....
Read Genesis 12!
Pray about with whom you may share the “one story” (thus far)
Share!
ENJOY THE BREAK!!!