HARVEST INSPIRATION DISCOVERIES
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DESCENDANTS OF NOAH

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HAM - (cham; Cham)

1. The Youngest Son of Noah:

The youngest son of Noah, from whom sprang the western and southwestern nations known to the Hebrews. His name first occurs in Genesis 5:32, where, as in 6:10 and elsewhere, it occupies the second place. In Genesis 9:18 Ham is described as "the father of Canaan," to prepare the reader for 9:25-27, where Noah, cursing Ham for having told Shem and Japheth of his nakedness, refers to him as Canaan.

On account of this, it has been suggested that "Canaan" stood originally in all the passages where the three brothers are spoken of, and that this was later changed to "Ham," except in the verses containing the curse. It

seems more likely, however, that the name "Canaan" is inserted prophetically, as Noah would not desire to curse his son, but only one branch of that son's descendants, who were later the principal adversaries of the Hebrews.

2. Ham as a Nationality (30 Nations came out of Ham):

The name given, in Psalms 105:23,17; 106:22 (compare 78:51), to Egypt as a descendant of Ham, son of Noah. As Shem means "dusky," or the like, and Japheth "fair," it has been supposed that Ham meant, as is not improbable, "black." This is supported by the evidence of Hebrew and Arabic, in which the word chamam means "to be hot" and "to be black," the latter signification being derived from the former.

It is interesting to note that the Biblical record defines Egypt as the Land of Ham.
-- Psalm 105: 23 "*Israel also came into Egypt...the land of Ham.*"

3. Meaning of the Word:

That Ham is connected with the native name of Egypt, Kem, or, in full pa ta' en Kem, "the land of Egypt," in Bashmurian Coptic Kheme, is unlikely, as this form is probably of a much later date than the composition of Gen, and, moreover, as the Arabic shows, the guttural is not a true kh, but the hard breathing h, which are both represented by the Hebrew cheth.

4. The Nation Descending from Ham:

First on the list, as being the darkest, is Cush or Ethiopia (Genesis 10:6), after which comes Mitsrayim, or Egypt, then PuT or Libyia, and Canaan last. The sons or descendants of each of these are then taken in turn, and it is noteworthy that some of them, like the Ethiopians and the Canaanites, spoke Semitic, and not Hamitic, languages--Seba (if connected with the Sabeans), Havilah (Yemen), and Sheba, whose queen visited Solomon. Professor Sayce, moreover, has pointed out that Caphtor is the original home of the Phoenicians, who spoke a Semitic language.

The explanation of this probably is that other tongues were forced upon these nationalities in consequence of their migrations, or because they fell under the dominion of nationalities alien to them. The non-Sem Babylonians, described as descendants of Nimrod (Merodach), as is well known, spoke Sumerian, and adopted Semitic Babylonian only on account of mingling with the Semites whom they found there.

Another explanation is that the nationalities described as Hamitic--a parallel to those of the Semitic section-- were so called because they fell under Egyptian dominion. This would make the original Hamitic race to have been Egyptian and account for Ham as a (poetical) designation of that nationality. Professor F. L. Griffith has pointed out that the Egyptian Priapic god of Panopolis (Akhmim), sometimes called Menu, but also apparently known as Khem, may have been identified with the ancestor of the Hamitic race--he was worshipped from the coast of the Red Sea to Coptos, and must have been well known to Egypt's eastern neighbors. He regards the characteristics of Menu as being in accord with the shamelessness of Ham as recorded in Genesis 9:20.

5. Four Sons of Ham:
  1. Mizraim (Egypt)
  2. Cush (Sudan, Ethiopia)
  3. Put (Lybia)
  4. Canaan (Hivites, Jebusites, Arvadites, Girgashites, Amorites, Arkites, Sinites, Hittites, Sidonians, Perizzites, Zemarites)

6. CURSE OF CANAAN
  1. Canaan was cursed, not Ham.
  2. Genesis 9:25-27 "...servitude to his brothers..."

3. Exodus 20:5 --" A curse lasts three to four generations..."
4. Canaan does not exist as a nation today. Other three nations exist -- Egypt, Ethiopia and Lybia.

SHEM - shem (shem; Sem)

1. Position in Noah's Family:
His Name:
The eldest son of Noah, from whom the Jews, as well as the Semitic ("Shemitic") nations in general have descended. When giving the names of Noah's three sons, Shem is always mentioned first (Genesis 9:18; 10:1, etc.); and though "the elder" in "Shem the brother of Japheth the elder" (Genesis 10:21 margin) is explained as referring to Shem, this is not the rendering of Onkelos.

His five sons peopled the greater part of West Asia's finest tracts, from Elam on the East to the Mediterranean on the West. Though generally regarded as meaning "dusky" (compare the Assyr-Babylonian samu--also Ham--possibly = "black," Japheth, "fair"), it is considered possible that Shem may be the usual Hebrew word for "name" (shem), given him because he was the firstborn--a parallel to the Assyr-Babylonian usage, in which "son," "name" (sumu) are synonyms (W. A. Inscriptions, V, plural 23, 11,29-32abc).

2. History and the Nations Descended from Shem (26 Nations came out of Shem):

Shem, who is called "the father of all the children of Eber," was born when Noah had attained the age of 500 years (Genesis 5:32). Though married at the time of the Flood, Shem was then childless. Aided by Japheth, he covered the nakedness of their father, which Ham, the youngest brother, had revealed to them; but unlike the last, Shem and Japheth, in their filial piety, approached their father walking backward, in order not to look upon him. Two years after the Flood, Shem being then 100 years old, his son Arpachshad was born (Genesis 11:10), and was followed by further sons and daughters during the remaining 500 years which preceded Shem's death.

Noah's prophetic blessing, on awakening from his wine, may be regarded as having been fulfilled in his descendants, who occupied Syria (Aramaic), Palestine (Canaan), Chaldea (Arpachshad), Assyria (Asshur), part of Persia (Elam), and Arabia (Joktan). In the first three of these, as well as in Elam, Canaanites had settled (if not in the other districts mentioned), but Shemites ruled, at some time or other, over the Canaanites, and Canaan thus became "his servant" (Genesis 9:25,26). The tablets found in Cappadocia seem to show that Shemites (Assyrians) had settled in that district also, but this was apparently an unimportant colony. Though designated sons of Shem, some of his descendants (e.g. the Elamites) did not speak a Semitic language, while other nationalities, not his descendants (e.g. the Canaanites), did.

3. Five Sons of Shem:
1. Elam (Arabia)
2. Asshur (Assyria)
3. Lud (Lydians)
4. Aram (Aramaic, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria)
5. Arphaxad (From which Abraham descended)

JAPHETH - ja'-feth (yepheth; yapheth; Iapheth)

1. Etymologies of Japheth:
This name, in Genesis 9:27, seems to be explained by the phrase "may God make wide (yapht, the American

Standard Revised Version "enlarge") for Japheth," where yapht and Japheth are represented by the same consonants, but with different vowel-points. The root of yapht is pathach, "to make wide."

This etymology, however, is not universally accepted, as the word-play is so obvious, and the association of Japheth with Shem ("dark") and Ham ("black") suggests a name on similar lines--either gentilic, or descriptive of race. Japheth has therefore been explained as meaning "fair," from yaphah, the non-Sem and non-Hamitic races known to the Jews being all more or less whiteskinned. The Targum of Onkelos agrees with the English Versions of the Bible, but that of Jonathan has "God shall beautify Japheth," as though from yaphah.

2. His Descendants (14 Nations came out of Japheth):
The immediate descendants of Japheth were seven in number, and are represented by the nations designated Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Mesech, and Tiras; or, roughly, the Armenians, Lydians, Medes, Greeks, Tibarenians, and Moschians, the last, Tiras, remaining still obscure. The sons of Gomer (Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah) were all settled in the West Asian tract; while the sons of Javan (Elisah, Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim or Rodanim) occupied the Mediterranean coast and the adjacent islands.

3. His Place among the Sons of Noah:
In Genesis 9:27, as in other passages, Japheth occupies the 3rd place in the enumeration of the sons of Noah, but he is really regarded as the 2nd son, Ham being the youngest. In the genealogical table, however (Genesis 10:1), the descendants of Japheth are given first, and those of Shem last, in order to set forth Semitic affinities at greater length. Though this would seem to indicate that the fair races were the least known to the Jews, it implies that the latter were well disposed toward them, for Japheth was (ultimately) to dwell in the tents of Shem, and therefore to take part in Shem's spiritual privileges.

4. Seven Sons of Japheth (see map below):
  1. Javan (Greece, Romans, Romance -- French, Italians, Spanish, Portuguese)
  2. Magog (Scythians, Slavs, Russians, Bulgarians, Bohemians, Poles, Slovaks, Croatians)
  3. Madai (Indians & Iranic: Medes, Persians, Afghans, Kurds)
  4. Tubal (South of Black Sea)
  5. Tiras (Thracians, Teutons, Germans, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, Jutes)
  6. Meshech (Russia)
  7. Gomer (Celtic)