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The Line of Japheth

10: 2-5

The line of Japheth DIG: Why is Japheth mentioned first of the three brothers? How many nations resulted from the line of Japheth? What was the occupation of a majority of Japheth's descendants? How did ADONAI show His love by keeping His covenant with Noah? In what sense did Japheth dwell in the tents of Shem?



We begin with the eldest of Noah's three sons, **Japheth**. **He is mentioned first, because he was the eldest, and then Ham, so that the genealogy of Shem, the youngest, can lead to Abraham without a break.** **Japheth's** descendants became the Indo-European people who settled east into parts of Asia, north into Europe, and westward into Spain. The line of **Japheth** produced the Caucasian and Oriental races. **He** had seven sons (10:2) seven grandsons (10:3-4), and fathered fourteen nations (to see link click [Ae](#) - **The Number Seven**).

Gomer fathered the Cimmerians who located southwest of the Black Sea. After being defeated by the Assyrians **they** settled in the area between Armenia and Cappadocia

(Ezeki'el 38:2 and 39:6). They ultimately settled in places like Germany, France and Wales.

Magog was the second **son**. He located between the Black and Caspian Seas in what is now southern Russia. He is associated with both **Meshech and Tubal** in **Ezeki'el 38:2** and **Gomer and Togarmah** in **Ezeki'el 38:6**. The Scythians, the Slavs, Russians, Bulgarians, Bohemians, Poles, Slovaks, and the Croatians came from **Magog**.

Madai was the third **son**. His descendants are mentioned in **Second Kings 17:6, 18:11: Isaiah 13:17, 21:2; Jeremiah 25:25, 51:11** and **28**. The Indians and the Iranic races such as the Medes, Persians, Afghans, and the Kurds all came from **Madai**, who located southwest of the Caspian Sea.

Javan was the fourth **son** and is pronounced *Yavan* in Hebrew. It is the source of the name *Ionia* from Homer's *Iliad* and refers to the Hellenic race. These **people** settled along the coast of Asia Minor, which is **Greece**. They are mentioned in **Isaiah 66:19** where **they** are connected with **Tarshish and Tubal**, and **Ezeki'el 27:13** where **they** are connected with **Meshech and Tubal**. There is a Greek legend that says that *Eipetos* is the father of the Greeks and *Eipetos* is the Greek form of **Japheth**. So the Greeks, Romans, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italians all came from **Javan**.

Tubal was the fifth **son** and his descendants are the *Tabali* of the Assyrian inscriptions. They lived in east Asia Minor and included areas of Russia and as far north as Tobolsk on the Tobol River.

Meshech was the sixth **son** and are the *Mushki* of the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions. They are also mentioned in Egyptian literature. They located between the Black and Caspian Seas. The territory they settled was Russia, and they are always mentioned in conjunction with **Tubal** as seen in **Ezeki'el 27:13, 32:26, 38:2-3** and **39:1**.

Tiras was the last **son (10:2)**. The Thracians, the Teutons, and the Anglo-Saxon race, the English people, came from **Tiras**. Seven more came from these seven.

Three northern tribes came from **the sons of Gomer** and the grandsons of **Japheth**: **Ashkenaz** was the first **son of Gomer**. The Jews identified Ashkenaz with Germany and, to this day, German Jews are called the *Ashkenazi*.¹⁸⁵ Their territories included Germany, Skandia, Sexon, Denmark and Armenia. They are mentioned in **Jeremiah 51:27** in conjunction with **Ararat** and **Minni**.

Riphath was the second **son of Gomer**. In **First Chronicles 1:6** his name is spelled **Diphath** because the **r** and the **d** are very much alike in Hebrew. **They** located on the southern edge of the Black Sea.

Togarmah was the third **son** and the ancestor of the Armenians, as they themselves claim (**10:3**). Other references to them are in **Ezeki'el 27:14**, where they were noted for exporting horses to Tyre, and in **Ezeki'el 38:6**, where **they** are part of **the LORD's** army.

Then, **the sons of Javan** or *Yavan*, the grandsons of **Japheth**, were related to the Greeks: **Elishah** was the first **son of Javan**. **They** located in Cyrus and Crete.

Tarshish was the second **son of Javan** and means *refinery*. **His** descendants were located in southwestern Spain. Other references to them are found in **First Kings 10:22**, which says **they** were exporters of **gold, silver, ivory, apes and baboons**; in **Isaiah 23:1**, where **Tyre** are connected with ships; in **Jeremiah 10:9** where **they** were exporters of **silver**; **Ezeki'el 27:12** where **they** were connected with Tyre and the export of **silver, iron, tin and lead**. This was the destination of **Jonah (Jonah 1:3)** and was also the place of Solomon's **trading ships (Second Chronicles 9:21)**.

Kittim was the third **son** mentioned, which is the Phoenician part of Cypress. Other references are in **Numbers 24:24** which are associated with ships; **Isaiah 23:1**, where **Tyre is destroyed**, and **Ezeki'el 27:6**, where it is described as an island.

And Rodanim, or as sometimes pronounced **Dodanim** because the **r** and the **d** sound so much alike in Hebrew (**First Chronicles 1:7**), was the fourth **son**. **They** located in Greece and Macedonia (**10:4**).

From these the maritime peoples spread out into their territories. This is stated to tell how it came about that the people were scattered so soon after the Flood, and it links up with the story of the Tower of Babel, which explains how the different languages arose. Moreover, it shows how ADONAI in His love kept His covenant with Noah and did not destroy his descendants. A majority of **Japheth's** descendants made their living on the sea, in one way or another. **They** spread out both east and west, going as far as Europe in the west and Persia, India and most of Asia in the east. **They** spread out over so much territory, that they fulfilled the prophecy of **9:27** where **Noah** said: **May God extend the territory of Japheth**. Then **they** were divided **by their clans within their nations** and fourteen **nations** came from **Japheth (10:5a)**. This shows **they** had some kind of social structure. The time span given here is three generations within fourteen **nations**. **Each** of these **clans** had **its own language (10:5b)**. This proves that

this was written after the dispersion of **Chapter 11**. These northern tribes did not figure predominantly in Israel's history, but occur frequently in prophetic writings (**Ezeki'el 27, 37-39**).¹⁸⁶

As for **Japheth** and **his descendants**, the complete understanding of this prophecy can be seen in the translation of **his** name, which is *beauty*. In other words, the prophecy could be summarized, "Let **Isra'el** absorb all the *beauty* and *cultural richness* that the nations have to offer." Since the descendants of **Jatheth** constitute the majority of the nations of the world, then out of those nations, **ADONAI** would gather a spiritual remnant who would believe in **the God of Isra'el** through **the Messiah**. **Romans** describes these **non-Jewish believers** as **those** who are **grafted into Isra'el** (see the commentary on **Romans Cz - The Illustration of Isra'el's Future**). Furthermore, **Ephesians 2:12** describes **them** as being part of **the commonwealth of Isra'el**. In this sense, then, we could say that **Japheth** would **dwell in the tents of Shem (9;27)**.