



7

One Blood, One Race

Key Themes

- God created man in His image.
- God sees all men as sinners in need of salvation.

Key Passages

- Genesis 10:1–32; 1 Samuel 16:7; Acts 17:26–27

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognize that all people are descendants of Adam and are of one blood.
- Explain, in general, how the different people groups came to be.
- Describe the connection between cavemen and the Tower of Babel.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Write on the board, “Who in this room is your relative?”



Studying God’s Word

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After Babel, men spread throughout the world. These people may have moved into caves to survive. Different characteristics arose in different people groups, but all people are one race—from one blood—descendants of Adam and Eve.

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Study the Prepare to Share section. | <input type="checkbox"/> Print one Grandsons of Noah worksheet for each student. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go Before the Throne. | <input type="checkbox"/> Audio track The Term “Races”—Get Rid of It from the Resource DVD-ROM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Print one Skin Color image from the Online Resource Page. | <input type="checkbox"/> TV and DVD player or computer |



Activity: Mapping the Nations

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Students will identify a few of the areas settled as people spread from Babel and identify supporting Scripture passages.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Table of Nations image from the Resource DVD-ROM | <input type="checkbox"/> Print one Mapping the Nations worksheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. |
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Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare for this lesson, read 1 Samuel 16:7; Genesis 10–11; Acts 17:26–27.

Where did the races come from? The Bible refers to all of us as being from one blood (Acts 17:26). God makes it abundantly clear that all humans are related, descendants of the first man, Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45), who was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27). After the judgment of the Flood about 4,300 years ago, only Noah and his family remained, and from Noah's three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—the world was repopulated (Genesis 9:18–19). But due to man's disobedience, God's judgment came once again at the Tower of Babel where He confused their language and caused them to spread out (Genesis 11:7–8).

According to God's Word, we are all related (Acts 17:26), we are all created in God's image (Genesis 1:26), and we are all sinners in need of salvation (Romans 3:23). This should convince us that God's plan was to promote unity among the human race—not an attitude of prejudice or racism.

Jesus instructed us to “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39) and God tells us that “the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

This is indeed God's intention. We, too, should avoid judging people because of their outward appearance, their ethnic features, or their disabilities. This is a biblical principle we must model and teach our children from an early age. We are all one race—the human race. Our recognition of this fact will help to

eliminate the prejudice and racism that permeates much of our culture today.

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

It is because of what happened at Babel that the world doesn't have a common language. We know of over 6,900 spoken languages in the world today. Yet it is likely that less than 100 languages emerged from the Tower of Babel when God instantaneously confused the language. The languages that resulted from Babel are what we call “root” languages or language families. These root languages would have changed rapidly as they borrowed from other languages, developed new terms and phrases, and lost words. The biblical account of Babel occurred just as it is recorded. People of one common language have developed into people of thousands of languages—because of their disobedience and pride.

The most controversy surrounding the Tower of Babel arises around the idea that we are all one race—the human race. Many people refuse to believe this biblical truth because of the major differences in appearance among the different people groups, such as skin color, hair, and eye shape.

Since skin color is such an obvious difference, let's look at that. The truth is, we all have the same skin pigment, melanin, just more or less of it. Lots of pigment is called black, and a little pigment is called white. We are all merely a combination of these two pigments—black and white—creating differing shades of one basic color, brown.

The study of DNA and genetic makeup conducted by the Human Genome Project supports the biblical teaching that there is only *one* biological race of

humans. The study determined that the differences in us that we perceive as so dramatic are a result of only a small fraction of our genes. In other words, we are all extremely similar in our genetic makeup. And what about those things that make us look different? They are very insignificant when taken into perspective.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Let's take a look at some of the historical significance of the Tower of Babel. First of all, we know, according to Scripture, that the Flood was about 4,300 years ago—in about 2300 BC—and everything on the face of the earth was destroyed. The dispersion of the people at the Tower of Babel marked the beginning of the spreading of civilization over the entire world, beginning around 2242 BC (when Babel was scattered). Consequently, when we study ancient history, we need to remember that evidences of civilization that we find have to be dated after 2242 BC.

Another historical consideration in our discussion of God's judgment and dispersion of the people at Babel centers on what we hear about "primitive cavemen." These cavemen are often presented as animal-like by evolutionists to legitimize the ape-to-man development theory. They are often described as having lived thousands of years before civilizations like Egypt or Babylon. However, we know according to Scripture that they were the people God dispersed from Babel. They were not primitive but extremely skilled—enough so to be building cities (Genesis 4:17), raising and caring for livestock (Genesis 4:20), playing musical instruments (Genesis 4:21), and

working in various metals (Genesis 4:22), even before the Flood.

Although as a community they were accomplished at many things, once they were scattered, their survival depended on their individual skills alone. This may have resulted in some of the groups resorting to more primitive ways of surviving—they just didn't have all the skills they needed. And the fact that they made their homes in caves proves their intelligence, as caves would provide protection and shelter from the weather, animals, or enemies. These so-called "primitive cavemen" were no such thing. They were intelligent people making up intelligent families. They were not sub-human, but descendants of Adam and Eve just as we are.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Lord, all of your Word is truth. But the world does all it can to distort that truth. As I prepare this lesson, please help me to understand the significance of the fact that we are all one blood—we are all one race—the human race. We are all descendants of Adam and Eve—and made in your precious image. Lord, keep me from any prejudice that may infect my heart against others. And enable me to impress on these students the importance of seeing all people as one race in need of one thing—the Savior, Jesus Christ.

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.



Review

In our last lesson, we took our first look at the events described in the Bible's account of the Tower of Babel.

- ? **Who can remember what some of the key ideas from the lesson were?** *God judged the people's sin by confusing their language. As the people scattered, they built ziggurats across the globe. God demonstrated His power and His justice over His creatures, and the different people groups that we see around the world today are the result of God's judgment.*

Today, we are going to expand on some of the ideas we touched on last week. We are

going to go back to Genesis 10 and look at the origin of all of the groups of people we see today. We will reaffirm the truth that all humans are created in the image of God and descended from Adam. This allows us to explain the different physical characteristics we see across the globe from a biblical perspective. And, we'll even take a look at cavemen and how to understand them in light of Scripture.



- Write on the board, "Who in this room is your relative?"

- Have students bookmark 1 Samuel 16:7, Genesis 10:1, and Acts 17:26 in their Bibles.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Let's read Genesis 10:1–5 together. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

As we work through these genealogies, we are going to note the first two generations after Noah on this worksheet, so fill them in to help keep track of things. We will be hearing many more names than we will record. *Give each student a Grandsons of Noah worksheet.*

Observe the Text

Refer to the Bible Study poster to remind your students how to dig deeper into God's Word by asking the right questions.

- ? **Who are the three sons of Noah?** *Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*
- ? **What switch happens in verse 2?** *The focus moves to the sons of Japheth—Noah's grandsons.*
- ? **Who are the sons of Japheth?** *Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.*
- ? **Are there any names that you recognize in the list of descendants?** *Some may recognize Ashkenaz, namesake of the Ashkenazi Jews; Tarshish is where Jonah was headed (probably in Spain).*
- ? **To where were these various groups scattered?** *The coastlands is the general description given.*

Genesis 10:1–5

- If your time is limited, consider reading over the first few verses that describe the three sons and their children and then jump to the last verse to see the division of the languages.

- ? **What was the division based on?** *They were divided into their nations according to families and languages.*

Discover the Truth

Now that we have asked questions about the text, let's talk about the main idea.

- ? **Genesis 10:5 says that the people were divided by their language and their families. How does Genesis 10:32–11:1 help us understand the details of 10:5?** *Verse 5 cannot mean that the groups originally had different languages, but the languages were part of their division into nations. Without reading on to chapter 11, someone might mistakenly think that the languages were present among the different families before the division rather than as part of the division.*
- ? **Does this passage explain why or how there was a division?** *No.*
- ? **What was the reason for the division of the nations?** *Refer to last week's lesson. They had sinned against God by exalting themselves (Genesis 11:1–9) and refusing to spread across the earth.*



READ THE WORD

Let's read Genesis 10:6–20 together. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

Genesis 10:6–20

EXAMINE THE WORD

Remember to fill in the sons and grandsons of Noah on your worksheet.

Observe the Text

- ? **Who are the four sons of Ham?** *Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.*
- ? **Where did Cush's son Nimrod settle?** *In Shinar and Assyria.*
- ? **What cities did he found?** *Babel, Erech, Accad, Calneh, Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen.*
- ? **From which grandson of Noah did the Philistines come from?** *Mizraim.*
- ? **What areas did the descendants of Canaan settle in?** *From Sidon to Gaza along the Mediterranean coast and westward to Sodom.*
- ? **What names do you recognize from the long list of Ham's descendants?** *Many of the names that appear are found in the list of the Canaanite clans later in Scripture.*

Discover the Truth

As we think about modern geography, modern Egypt is where the descendants of Mizraim settled, Put's descendants settled in Libya, the Cushites in Ethiopia, and Canaan along the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

In some languages, the Ethiopians are still referred to as Cushites and Egypt as Mizraim. In Hebrew, Cush means black or dark.

- ? How does verse 20 compare to verse 6? *The same basic formula is given as the people are divided into their lands by languages.*
- ? In what general direction from the Tower of Babel did the descendants of Ham spread? *If they went toward the Mediterranean Sea and Egypt, they headed west and south.*



READ THE WORD

Genesis 10:21–32

Let's read Genesis 10:21–32 together. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Remember to fill in the sons and grandsons of Noah on your worksheet.

Observe the Text

- ? Who are the sons of Shem? *Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.*
- ? What name appears in middle of verse 21? *Eber.*
- ? How are Eber and Shem related to each other? *Eber is Shem's great-grandson.*
- ? What additional information are we given about Eber? *His son Peleg was born when "the earth was divided."*
- ? What areas did the descendants of Joktan settle? *From Mesha (on the Gulf of Aqaba) to Sephar (in the Arabian Peninsula).*
- ? What is the birth order of Japheth? *He is the eldest son.*
- ? What phrasing do we see that is common to the first two sons? *They were divided into their nations according to families and languages.*
- ? According to verse 32, what happened to all of the families listed in verses 1–31? *They were divided into various nations after the Flood.*

Discover the Truth

I bet you are starting to see a pattern in the text. Here we have basically the same format that was given for the other two sons.

- ? Based on the information about Shem's descendants, how many generations passed between the Flood and the events at Babel? *Shem to Eber includes five generations.*

Let's look down the page to Genesis 11:10–17. This is another genealogy of Shem that includes dates (sometimes called a chronogenealogy). If we look at the dates, we can add them up and find out how long after the Flood Peleg lived. We only need to look at the ages when the son was born and add those together.

Arphaxad was born two years after the Flood (v. 10), Salah was born when Arphaxad was 35 (v. 12), Eber was born when Salah was 30 (v. 14), and Peleg was born when Eber was 34 (v. 16). Adding those ages up, we come to 101. We also know that Peleg lived to 239, so we have a range for the date of Babel. Bishop Ussher placed the date at 2242 BC, when Peleg was 5, though we cannot be exact based on the limited details in Scripture. *Point out the Flood and the Tower of Babel on the Seven C's Timeline.*

- ? Based on this list of names and knowing that the people were scattered by their families, about how many different language groups were formed at Babel? *Somewhere around 70 different nations would have been formed and scattered across the globe.*

Next, let's think about where some of these groups went and map it.





Mapping the Nations

MATERIALS

- Mapping the Nations worksheet for each student
- Table of Nations image from the Resource DVD-ROM to display to the class

INSTRUCTIONS

Pass out a Mapping the Nations worksheet to each student. Have them work in small groups to look up the passages and identify the three grandsons of Noah and their fathers from the clues and passages. Once they have found the answers, show the images that give the answers to the questions.

Now that you have answered the questions, let's examine this idea a little closer and make a few more connections.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Let's compare your conclusions to this map. Show the image and where each grandson settled.

At least a portion of Cush's descendants settled in here, in modern Ethiopia. This is part of the line of Ham.

Elam's descendants headed east and some settled in an area of what is southern Iran today, part of the line of Shem. They became known as the Persians.

Madai gave rise to the Medes, a variation of his name. These sons of Japheth settled near the Zagros Mountains of Iran. Later,

the Medes and Persians were united, as you read in Esther.

Overall, this is a general representation of where the descendants of the 16 grandsons settled, though there is a bit of debate over the exact details.

- ? Based on the passages that you looked up and the clues from the worksheet, is it very difficult to identify the general regions that Noah's grandsons settled? *It is fairly easy.*
 - ? How do you think the task would change if we tried to identify exactly where each of the families from Genesis 10 settled? *The task would become more difficult.*
 - ? What factors make this task more challenging than identifying some general areas? *The amount of time that has passed, lost records, wars and conquests would have mixed the people groups, making their history hard to discern.*
- As the people were spreading from Babel, they would have been traveling into new territory that had never been settled by people before them.
- ? What challenges might they have faced as they were migrating to these new territories? *They would have had to find food along the way, find shelter or take their shelter as they go (tents would be ideal), they could only take with them what they could carry or haul using animals, etc.*
 - ? Would each family have had all of the knowledge and skills that were present in

the larger community at Babel? *No, the division of labor that is common in large communities would not have been as extensive.*

The families might not have had many specific skills that were present in the community. For example, we know that some families before the Flood were working with metals. As the families were divided, it is likely that the knowledge of metal working was not available to many of them. They had to make do with what was available to them as they were traveling or use what they could bring with them.

? If you were forced to travel to another unsettled area, would you have the ability to survive by using materials available in the environment? *Certain people would be more able than others.*

? What would you use if you needed to hammer on something? *You would probably find a rock that could be held in your hand or a solid stick.*

? Does this mean you are stupid or unsophisticated? *No, it just means you are making use of what is available at the time.*

This is often the stereotype of people who use stone tools. Scientists often describe people from the Stone Age as unsophisticated, without culture, and relatively unintelligent. From a biblical perspective, we might better understand these people as those who were spreading

out after Babel and making use of what was available. The artifacts that we find must have been left after the Flood, or we wouldn't be able to find them in layers so close to the surface of the earth.

? What kind of shelter do you think these people might have used? *They likely used tents or sought shelter in caves. Unless they were intending to stay in a particular area, they probably didn't build elaborate structures.*

? In light of that thought, how might we explain "cavemen" from a biblical perspective? *These were simply people who were living in caves for shelter; eventually they established cities and began building structures. If they were concerned about survival, they wouldn't have wasted their time building structures if a cave offered adequate shelter for them.*

So when you hear people describing cavemen as unsophisticated and ancient people who evolved into modern humans, we can now give a basic explanation for the existence of cavemen. In fact, there are people all over the world today who still live in caves and structures carved into rock. Now, technology certainly advances as people share information and cooperate, but that takes time. After the dispersion, we see cultures gaining technology and accumulating new information, but this doesn't mean they were stupid brutes before that.



READ THE WORD

We are going to look at one more passage as we wrap up the lesson today. Let's read Acts 17:26. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Who was speaking in this passage? *Paul (v. 16).*
- ? Where did this take place? *Looking back to verse 22, Paul was talking to the philosophers at the Areopagus in Athens (v. 15).*
- ? Who is the "He" referenced in the verse? *God (v. 24).*
- ? From what has God made all of the nations? *From one blood.*
- ? How many nations are made from one blood? *Every nation on all the face of the earth.*
- ? What has God determined for the nations? *Their preappointed times and boundaries.*
- ? Are there any figures of speech in the text? *"One blood" is a figure of speech that will need to be examined.*

Discover the Truth

Now that we have asked questions about the text, let's talk about the main idea and identify some cross references.

- ? What does the word "sovereign" mean? *Having supreme, permanent authority.*
- ? How does this verse affirm that God is sovereign? *He has not only made all people from one blood, but He has also appointed the times and areas where they would exist throughout history.*
- ? What does the phrase "one blood" refer to? *Blood is a symbol for life throughout the Bible, and this phrase is intended to show the common relationship, being of one blood, of all humans making up all nations on the face of the earth. We use the phrase "blood relative" to refer to those we are directly related to within our families rather than by marriage or adoption.*

Looking at the passage, in the Greek, the word translated "nation" is *ethnos*, which is where we get our word *ethnic* from. Rather than thinking about different races, it would be more biblical to refer to these as different people groups.

- ? How does Genesis 3:20 affirm this idea? *Eve is referred to as the mother of all living, so all nations have come from her. Also, we can look back to the eight on the Ark as more confirmation (1 Peter 3:20).*

Now we are going to listen to a short audio program about the term "races." Answer the questions in your Student Guide as you listen, and then we'll discuss them. *Play the audio track The Term "Races"—Get Rid of It! Then ask the following questions:*

SOVEREIGN

- ? In the time of Thomas Jefferson, what did the term “races” refer to? *The term referred to different cultural groups or nationalities.*
- ? How did Darwin’s teaching change the meaning of the word “races”? *The term came to mean groups of people who are more or less evolved than others—either primitive or advanced “races.”*
- ? What has been the consequence of evolutionary thinking about “races”? *Increased racism and prejudice.*
- ? Why is there only one race? *All humans are descendants of Noah and his family, and ultimately of Adam and Eve.*
- ? What phrase should we use in place of the term “races”? *We should use the phrase “people groups.”*

As we think about all of the different people groups that we see around the world today, they are really all part of one race—the human race. The differences that we see in facial features, hair type, skin color, and eye shape can all be explained as families carried their traits with them to different regions of the globe.

These traits became concentrated in certain areas and different people groups or ethnicities were established. Over time there has been a mixing of those traits, but all can trace their origin back to Babel, then to the Ark, and ultimately to Adam and Eve.

Contrary to our popular terms, no one has white or black skin. *Hold a sheet of paper (black if you have a dark complexion or white if your complexion is lighter) to make this point obvious.*

The main color of our skin comes from a pigment called melanin. The difference between my skin and (pick someone in the room with a different complexion) is the amount of melanin stored in our skin.

We could describe the shades of skin as a continuum from very dark to very light. *Show the Skin Colors picture (link available at the Online Resource Page).*

The more melanin you have the darker skin you have. Thinking back to Adam and Eve, they were probably of a middle-brown skin tone. Some basic genetics can help us understand why this is a reasonable conclusion.

We know that skin color is based on the genes we inherit from our parents. If your parents have light skin, you are likely to have light skin, and vice versa. If you have a parent with dark skin and the other light, you will likely have a middle brown color—you would have genes for dark skin and light skin.

If Adam and Eve were a middle brown color, they could have passed the dark genes on to one child and the light genes on to another child. This allows for a variety of skin colors. If the dark-skinned descendants have

Eumelanin: the main pigment that gives skin a dark or light shade. Individuals with darker skin have higher concentrations.

► The explanation given here is a simplification of the inheritance of melanin tone, but it gives a starting point for thinking about how these traits are distributed in populations.

children, they will be dark; and light-skinned parents would have light-skinned children.

- ? Knowing that the families spread out from Babel, how would dark-skinned people become more common in Africa and lighter-skinned people in Europe? *The families that settled these areas would have carried those genes to the areas they settled. Without mixing with other populations, the skin color would become fixed in those areas.*

This gives us a very elementary start at understanding how the different people groups came to be.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

In the last two lessons we have looked at how the events surrounding the Tower of Babel can help us explain the world we live in today. We have seen how the nations were established as the various families traveled to different regions with their new languages.

Along with them they took their genes—which are a little hard to leave behind. This helps us understand the ethnic characteristics of skin color, eye shape, and other features that we see in people groups across the globe.

We can also understand how the evidence they left behind as they settled new areas could be interpreted by some as proof that these people were unsophisticated cavemen. However, from the biblical perspective, we can see how they simply made use of the things they found in their environment—caves to take shelter in and stone tools to work and hunt with. Babel really helps us understand that cavemen were real descendants of Adam and Eve facing some real challenges in their new homes. Despite the evolutionary view, these were real people made in the image of God, just like we are.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

1 Samuel 16:7

Turn in your Bible to 1 Samuel 16. In 1 Samuel 16:7, the prophet Samuel was at the house of Jesse in order to anoint the next king of Israel.

- ? When Eliab, the eldest son, came before Samuel, Samuel said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him!" How did God respond? *But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

- ? **How was Samuel evaluating who would make a good king?** *He was looking at the outward appearance rather than the heart of the man.*
- ? **How does this idea of judging based on appearances relate to our topic today?** *People often judge others because they look different from themselves. Skin color and other features often cause us to prejudge people we see or meet.*
- ? **Why is this type of prejudice unbiblical?** *All people have been made in the image of God and are worthy of respect despite which people group they belong to.*
- ? **Does God see any group of people differently with respect to their sin?** *No.*
- ? **How does this fact influence the way you think about sharing the hope of Christ with others?** *It should help us realize that all people are in need of hearing the gospel—people who look like us and people who look different. We should not let any of these differences hinder sharing the gospel.*
- ? **In Revelation 5:9, where have the people worshipping Christ been redeemed from?** *From every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.*
- ? **What attitudes concerning people who are different from you do you need to repent of?** *Remind everyone of the truth of God's forgiveness in Christ found in 1 John 2:8–10.*
- ? **How has your thinking about cavemen changed after the teaching today, and how do you think this might be useful as you share your faith?** *As people share their views, this is likely to come up in the discussions. Showing people that there is a reasonable explanation from a biblical perspective can help to make people more willing to hear the message of the gospel—the most important part of any conversation.*



MEMORY VERSE

Acts 17:26–27 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Pray that the Lord would use each person to share the hope of Christ with others without prejudice.
- Thank God for the truths in His Word and how it allows us to understand the world we live in.
- Ask God to continue to teach the students as they study His Word this coming week.

