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THE INDO-EUROPEAN PEOPLES OF GENESIS X.

THE tables of nations to be found in the tenth chapter of Genesis divide the world into three main groups, the sons of Japheth, of Ham and of Shem. They consist of little more than names, a fact in accordance with the scheme of the Bible which hurries over side issues and collateral branches of the human family with which it is concerned, in order to concentrate upon the history of God's dealings with that family and their consummation in the advent of Christ. Yet this table is there for our learning, a part of revelation, an insight into the Divine division of the peoples of the world. It does not claim to be ethnological only, but to deal with the four great modes in which it is possible scientifically to divide mankind: "in their lands"—geographical; "after his tongue"—linguistic; "after their families"—ethnological; "in their nations"—political. It does not define for us the inter-relationship of these four modes of division. It nowhere states that the boundaries of each exactly coincide, far less that they would continue during the whole of history to coincide. It gives us to understand that generally speaking the three main sections of the human race will be distinguishable from each other along these four main lines of division. In each case the political comes last (v. 5, 20, 31). This will prove the least stable mode of division, and such has been the event during the whole of history. While in the main the three races may have stood apart politically, each of the great world empires has incorporated numerous members of all three and this to an increasing extent as time has advanced. The linguistic division in each case comes second. We are to expect it then to be a fairly clear, though not exact, criterion of division. This also has been true. Language does not coincide with race, but in the case of the three main sections into which this table divides mankind it has throughout history been generally speaking a clear enough guide. Linguistic change follows closely the social life of a people and this is so affected by political change, conquest or absorption that language is apt to some extent to follow the political divisions of mankind. But it follows them slowly and

always far from adequately. All the great world empires have comprised peoples persistently speaking different languages. In spite therefore of political confusion language continues to be a clear standard of division between peoples who by political criteria might be entitled to be regarded as one. The ethnological and geographical factors are placed in a different order in the case of the Japhetic peoples on the one hand and of the Hamitic and Semitic on the other. In the case of the latter the geographical factor comes third (v. 20, 31). It is to be considered of low value as a means of distinguishing Hamite from Semite. And such has always been the case, but it was perhaps especially so in the ancient world. Both stocks were represented in Mesopotamia, in Palestine and in Arabia, possibly also in Persia and Armenia. If one desired to distinguish between the sons of Ham and those of Shem one must look not at their geographical position, in which they were intermingled, but at their physical characteristics. With Japheth it was different. His descendants were not to be distinguished chiefly by physical appearance, but by the isolation—in fact the outlying position—of their dwelling. That they marched with other peoples and at times mingled with them cannot be denied, but taken as a whole one might be assured that any people that dwelt round the shores of the Black Sea, the northern coasts and islands of the Mediterranean or further afield in the interior of Europe would be of this stock. Distinction by physical appearance is less needed or less possible here. There is for instance apparently a “Mediterranean race” which seems to overlap the three main sections. Indo-European peoples have always embraced mixtures of “race,” Nordic, Alpine, Dinaric, etc. seeming to have been inextricably mingled, and there does not appear to have been any period known to history, or from satisfactory evidence surmised to pre-history, when such “races” were absolutely isolated.

Thus in the order and value of the scientific criteria of human divisions this chapter shows accurate insight. It is dealing with peoples, with world divisions. Naturally the word “sons” means descendants. It *may* include in its meaning political descendants, just as we might be justified in referring to Italy, France or Spain as sons of Rome. We *need* not believe from this chapter that Japheth the son of Noah had actually seven sons, or that Ham had four, although there is nothing intrinsically improbable in such an event, and it may very well have been true.

However many sons Japheth, Ham and Shem may have had, we know that "of them was the whole earth overspread", and that the peoples named under the head of each son of Noah were actually descended from those sons, although as we have seen it is *possible* that incorporation in a political union of some sort may have entitled one or two of the peoples named to appear under the head they do. To believe this is not necessary, but the language of the chapter seems to leave open the possibility for such a view.

The first five verses of the chapter deal with the Indo-European peoples. The term "Indo-European" is a linguistic term. It refers to a group of peoples speaking languages which are related to each other and which have been supposed to descend from a single parent-language. The following are the branches of the Indo-European linguistic family :

1. Germanic. This includes the language of the Goths who invaded the Roman Empire, the modern High and Low German languages and dialects (including our own), and the Scandinavian languages.

2. Balto-Slavonic, comprising the Baltic languages (Lithuanian, etc.), Russian and the related dialects, Polish, Bohemian, and the southern Slav languages.

3. Indo-Iranian or Aryan. In this group are comprised the ancient languages of Persia with their collaterals (probably extending to South Russia) and descendants (e.g. modern Persian), and the Aryan languages of India (Sanskrit and the modern descendants of Prakrit, Bengali, Hindustani, etc.).

4. Greek, ancient and modern.

5. Armenian, a difficult language with only the remnant of Indo-European vocabulary, much overlaid by extraneous material. Regarded as the remains of ancient Phrygian.

6. Albanian, also much overlaid by outside elements. The remains of ancient Illyrian or of ancient Thracian.

7. The Italic group, comprising the non-Latin dialects of ancient Italy and Latin with its widespread modern descendants.

8. Celtic, once widely spoken throughout Western Europe in two groups, of one of which there now remain only Gaelic, Irish and Manx, of the other Welsh and Breton.

In addition to these eight groups the last twenty years have seen the discovery and investigation of a language which has been named Tocharish, spoken in Chinese Turkestan, whose

remains date from about the close of the first thousand years of the Christian era. The place of this language in the Indo-European family has not yet been determined, but several scholars are inclined to regard it as closely connected with the Celtic group, surprising as the fact may seem from the point of view of distance. At any rate Tocharish is a member of the *western* half of the Indo-European languages. There is nothing impossible in its being regarded as a Celtic dialect gone early astray. Another recent discovery of importance is the language—or languages—of the Hittite empire whose capital was at the modern Boghaz-Keui in Cappadocia. Several languages appear to have been in use, but the main one shows strong Indo-European affinities. It has not, however, been yet possible to decide whether this language constitutes a separate branch of the Indo-European family, whether it belongs to a group collateral with Indo-European, or whether its Indo-European peculiarities may not be due to borrowing from, or close contact with, neighbouring Indo-European languages. We must not then, in the present state of knowledge, assign any certain place to Hittite.

One modification may be necessary in our grouping of the eight members above. The Italic and Celtic groups show such close affinities that they have often been regarded as forming together a single original branch. Possibly, therefore, our group of eight may in this way be reduced to seven. We may sum it up as follows:—1. Germanic. 2. Balto-Slavonic. 3. Indo-Iranian. 4. Greek. 5. Armenian. 6. Albanian. 7 and 8. Italic and Celtic (probably with Tocharish).

Now let us turn to the list of the sons of Japheth in Gen. x. 1-5. Here we have seven groups:—1. Gomer. 2. Magog. 3. Madai. 4. Javan. 5. Tubal. 6. Meshech. 7. Tiras. The similarity in numbers is suggestive. Further correspondences leap to the eye. No. 1 in either list corresponds. Gomer was known to the Assyrians as Gimirrai, to the Greeks as Cimmerii, to the Romans as Cimbri, a fierce Germanic people who with the Teutons made a descent upon Italy at the close of the second century B.C. No. 3 in either list closely corresponds. Madai was known in the ancient world as the Medes, whose language was of course Iranian. The identification of No. 4 in either list will not be disputed. Javan, or Ionians, was the name by which the Greeks were known to the peoples of the East. There

is also reason to suppose that it was the name by which the Greeks knew themselves as a whole in early times. The Athenians, who were Ionians, regarded themselves as autochthonous, that is indigenous, as opposed to Dorians and probably also to Achaeans; moreover that Ionians once extended to the west of Greece is made probable by the name of the Ionian Sea, which is ancient. No Ionians lived on its shores in historic times. We may therefore identify Gomer with the Germanic group of languages, Madai with the Indo-Iranian, Javan with the Greek. If we need further confirmation it is to be found in the fact that the generations of both Gomer and Javan are carried one step further. Gomer has three sons, Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah. Now the Germanic branch has three sub-divisions, West Germanic, Gothic and Nordic or Skandinavian. Ashkenaz we may probably identify with the West Germanic group. The Jews of Germany have long been called by their compatriots Ashkenazim, though I do not know upon what foundation the tradition rests. Togarmah is clearly the northern group, as seems plain from the reference in Ezek. xxxviii. 6 to "Togarmah of the north quarters." Forms of the name in the Septuagint are Thergama, Thorgama or Thorgoma, and I should not rule out an identification with the name of the god Thor. If Ashkenaz and Togarmah are thus identified, Riphath comes by elimination to correspond to the now extinct Gothic sub-branch of the Germanic group. The name Riphath is elsewhere, so far as I am aware, unknown. In connection with these names, A. Jeremias (*Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*, 2nd edition [1906] p. 260, note 1) makes an interesting remark: "Die Stellung des kleinen Togarma neben den mächtigen Kimmerien und Aſkuza bleibt auffällig." "Remarkable" it may well have been if the list were composed in the eighth century B.C. and represented an Israelite chronicler's knowledge of the peoples of Asia Minor at that date. But if the name is found to represent a group of people to whom the modern science of comparative philology has assigned a place corresponding with that in which they are placed in this table, the fact remains remarkable indeed, but in a totally different sense. The Divine mind that planned the dispersion of the nations has sketched the description of their dispersion. Ashkenaz left his name (doubtless in the course of migration) in the north-west of Asia Minor, where Ascanias is a place name of some frequency,

reflected in the Trojan name Ascanius familiar as that of the son of Aeneas the Trojan, hero of Virgil's epic.

Again in Gen. x Javan has four sons, Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim (to be read *Rodanim* [see 1 Chron. i. 7, margin]). Now it is a well-known fact that the ancient Greek language was divided into four well-defined dialects, Aeolic, Ionic, Arcado-Cypriote and Dorian. Although doubt is now thrown in some quarters upon the long-established identification of Kittim with Cyprus, we need not discard it till further evidence is forthcoming. *Rodanim* refers to the Dorian island of Rhodes, and if one is to conjecture a variant reading *Jeremias* may not be wrong in suggesting *Doranim* (*ibid.* p. 261). One cannot identify readily either Elishah or Tarshish *geographically* with the places in which the Aeolic and Ionic dialects were spoken in historic times, but one dare not dogmatise negatively on the extent to which the Greeks may have been spread along the whole of the Mediterranean coast in prehistoric days. The Homeric poems contain clear references to the western and northern coasts of Europe. At any rate this much is clear. The Greek language had four sub-divisions, and the Javan of Gen. x had four sons. And if we are wrong in our identification of the second generation, there can be no doubt whatever about the identity of Javan himself in the first.

Thus we have three of our group of seven identified and forming a foundation from which we may explore the remaining four. No. 2, Magog, is easily settled. He comes between Gomer and Madai in the table, and this is exactly the place where in the list of branch-languages one is to be inserted. This is the Balto-Slavonic group. The name Magog is unknown outside the Old Testament, but in Ezekiel xxxviii. we shall find it associated with a ruler called Gog, prince of Ross. The passage is a prophecy of events still in the future, and no student of prophecy will find difficulty in identifying Ross with Russia. Moreover, the name Gog is found as early as the Tel-el-Amarna letters in a context which points to its being situated in the remote north. The Slavonic languages do not enter history until the fifth or sixth centuries of the Christian era, but that they existed as a separate entity for nearly three thousand years previously is certain. This is the group referred to as Magog.

The first four numbers on either list are now seen mutually to correspond. What of the remaining three? It is a significant

fact that in the cases where our demarcation of the language group or our knowledge of its history is certain, we obtain a clear correspondence with the table in Gen. x. Where we are not so certain the correspondence also is not clear. It is our knowledge that is insufficient. However we may travel considerably further. Tubal is known to the Assyrian inscriptions as Tabal, and this people seem to have been situated in the time of King Sargon on the Halys. Later they were driven eastward, and in Herodotus' time we find them, as Tibareni, dwelling on or near the Black Sea Coast to the east of the Lycus. Another variant of their name is Tibari without the suffix, and a river Tigris flowed through their territory. This name immediately directs us to another river, Tiberis, the main river of Central Italy on the banks of which stands the city of Rome. The similarity may be fortuitous, but it is not likely to be so, especially as the suffix, as well as the stem, is identical in the two names. Is the connection intrinsically impossible? By no means. We do not know who named the Tiber, and there is no reason why Italic-speaking peoples should not have done so. These entered Italy from the Save valley over the Carnian Alps by what is now Trieste, and there is an open way from the Black Sea up the Danube valley to the head waters of the Save. It is a long journey but it is not without parallel. At the head of the Adriatic lived the Veneti, regarded by the ancients as Illyrian, and in Asia Minor close to the Tibareni there also lived Veneti known to the Greeks as early as the time of Homer. A few other similar parallels exist. Admittedly we have here no certainty, but may we not claim that we have certain indications which permit us to connect the name of Tubal with the Italic-speaking group of Indo-European peoples?

Meshech also appears in Herodotus as the Moschi, a small tribe adjoining the Tibareni in Asia Minor. But far earlier than this the name occurs in the Assyrian inscriptions as Muški over whom reigns King Mita. This king Mita has been identified with Midas, well-known to us from Greek sources. Midas was king of Phrygia, and this brings us at once to a little-known but once large branch of Indo-European peoples, the Thraco-Phrygians. The Phrygian kingdom was established in Asia Minor probably from about 1500 B.C., but the people were probably immigrants from Europe. For some time at any rate they occupied both shores of the Bosphorus, the Propontis and the

Hellespont. They inhabited the whole of Thrace as far north as the Danube, and extended along the Thracian coast of the Ægean as far as Macedonia. As late as the time of Herodotus there were Bryges (a form of the name Phrygians) in Thrace and in Macedonia. They are definitely connected by him with the Phrygians, and the legendary traditions that arose around King Midas were localised around Mount Bermion in Macedonia, where Midas' gardens were supposed to have been situated. We thus have good reason for connecting Meshech with the Thracophrygian language branch. This covers modern Armenian, which in so far as it is Indo-European—and in essence it certainly is—is regarded as a descendant of ancient Phrygian. It may also cover Albanian. By some this language is thought to be descended from ancient Thracian as opposed to Illyrian. If this is so, it falls under the head of Thracophrygian at once. If it descends from Illyrian as opposed to Thracian, its past history is obscure. There is insufficient evidence for us to place the language of the group of wild peoples known to the ancients as Illyrians in any clear perspective. It is probable that no single language covered the whole area. The language spoken by the Liburnians and other tribes on the Adriatic sea-board seems not to have been Indo-European at all, while that spoken by the inland peoples appears, so far as the evidence goes, to have differed sufficiently little from Thracian as to be regarded as a dialect or branch of the Thracophrygian group.

The seventh and last name remains—Tiras. If we join the Illyrian languages with the Thracian and separate Celtic from Italic we still have a language group waiting to correspond, and the same is, of course, the case if we separate the former and join the latter. On the other hand we may join both, thus reducing the number of branches from eight to six. Tiras has been connected with the people known to the Egyptians as Tursha, and later to the Greeks as Tyrrhenians, to the Romans as Etruscans. Herodotus' account of their journey by sea from Lydia in Asia Minor to their settlements in Italy is now generally accepted, confirmed as it is by the discovery in the island of Lemnos of an inscription in a language apparently akin to theirs. Of their language practically nothing is at present known, although it is generally, if not universally accepted, that it is not Indo-European. If this is so, a difficulty arises in our identification of the Indo-European peoples with the descendants of Japheth,

but it is a difficulty that is far from being fatal, and it may well be only awaiting the discovery of further facts in order to solution. The fact remains that in the two lists the first four names correspond with reasonable certainty, the fifth and sixth show evidence in favour of correspondence, the seventh alone presents difficulty. This means that we have in the opening verses of Gen. x. a list of names that corresponds to permanent linguistic divisions, a list therefore that goes accurately to the root of those speech-tendencies formed at Babel which have been the means of developing the various language groups in ever-increasing isolation.

NOTE 1. It is interesting that in Ezek. xxxviii. 2, 3, Gog, prince of Ross (Slavonic) is called prince of Meshech, for Slavonic-speaking peoples have for the last 1300 years occupied almost the whole of the territory formerly inhabited by Thraco-Phrygians (Meshech). The descendants of the latter doubtless remain in large numbers, but they speak Slavonic languages. It is, however, difficult to explain the introduction of Tubal into this passage, unless indeed Tubal is regarded as spread along the whole Danube and Save valleys between Italy and the Black Sea.

NOTE 2. A possible arrangement would be Meshech=Thraco-Phrygians, Tubal=Illyrians, Tiras=Italo-Celtic. But this would indicate that the settlement of the Etruscans in Italy was prophetically anticipated, and their name used for the whole of the peoples of Italy and Western Europe, which would scarcely be justified by the fact of the strong Etruscan element in the populace and civilisation of Rome. Moreover, there is not a shred of evidence that connects Tubal with the Illyrians, while his connection with Italy rests upon at least one very striking identity of name.

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