

## Populating the Earth

### Genesis 9

#### Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

The really different thing about this book [the Bible] is the way it speaks about reality. The Bhagavad Gita or the Koran or the other scriptures of other religions speak primarily about the religion itself and call people to observe its ordinances, and to believe in its faith. They make some reference at times to reality, but usually it is poor, primitive, crude versions of the account of reality that is given in this book. For instance, if you look at the Babylonian account of creation and the flood, you find that it is really a deterioration of the real account that was given in this book. You can tell it's a deterioration because always when this book speaks about reality, about how we got into our present predicament in the world and how the world was created and how the nations have moved in the world it speaks about it in an ennobled way; in a very high and dignified way, an enlightened way that is far above the very primitive, crude presentation which you get in other religions.

So it is really, loved ones, a very different kind of scripture in this book. It presents not only the Christian religion plainly, but it shows us what reality is about and shows us how the world was created and how things came about as they are now; how we got into this predicament that we're in and what is the Creator's way out. And one of the things that we saw it told us was how the world was created and how there was a tremendous flood, a universal deluge. The evidence of that is still in the sedimentary rocks throughout our world, as any geologist will tell you. Then you remember it began to outline to us how the nations had begun to move as they move today.

Many of us have a tendency to think, "The nations move as they move by chance; they move because Russia is pressuring us or they move because America is pressuring Russia. That's what happens -- it's just the cycle of events -- it's a chance happening." But you find that God foresaw the whole thing, and he in very real ways has directed the whole thing and is in control of it. And that you will begin to see as we begin to discuss how God peopled the earth again after the flood from just eight people.

You remember there were Noah and his wife and his three sons and their wives. And God repopulated the whole earth from those eight people -- this is what we're going to look at today. So maybe you would look at it, loved ones, as you find it towards the end of Genesis Chapter 9, because in Genesis chapter 9 is the philosophy of history; it's really a clear explanation of why nations have moved as they have moved. It is a Christian philosophy of history and it takes us back to the incident of Noah getting drunk. You remember, his son came in and found him there and you find it in Genesis 9:22, "And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside." He told them in a kind of joking way and you gather from the subsequent account, he had kind of mocked his father; he'd seen him naked and in an undignified way. "Then Shem and Japheth" his two brothers, "took a garment, laid it upon both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness." Because they wanted not to look upon that, they wanted to retain their father's dignity for him. "When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said 'Cursed be Canaan' because Canaan, you see in verse 22, was Ham's son. 'Cursed be Canaan, a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers.' He also said, 'Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave. God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem;

and let Canaan be a slave.’” And loved ones, it's just incredible how that has come about, it really is; I think you'll be as surprised as I was when you get to the details of it. First of all, maybe it's good to look at verse 25. Noah said, “Cursed be Canaan, a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers.” And then he said in verse 26, “Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave.”

Now, broadly speaking, loved ones, to help you understand this it might be good to point out Shem and Japheth and Ham and to show you that their descendants, on the whole were spread out in this way [indicating on a map]. This is just an outline map of the world, pointing out Europe here and Asia and Africa. And loved ones, in actual fact, Shem comes to be Semitic and is the Jew; the Jewish nation. So Shem and all his descendents, you will find out as we follow through this genealogy, settled there in the East. And in northern Asia and Europe, Japheth and his descendants settled. And then in Africa, as a whole, Ham and his descendants settled. So it might be good to remember that, as we follow through this genealogy in Chapter 10 that we're going to study, you'll find that Japheth's descendants spread over Europe and northern Asia; Shem's descendants were confined primarily to what we call the Middle East; and Ham and his descendants settled in Africa.

Now, if you keep that in mind and look back at this verse 25, “he said ‘Cursed be Canaan; a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers.” Now the Canaanites early on became the slaves of the Jewish people; the Jews moved into Canaan and actually made the Canaanites their slaves. I think we looked at that in Joshua 9:21-27. “And the leaders said to them, ‘Let them live.’ So they became hewers of wood and drawers of water for the entire congregation, as the leaders had said of them. Joshua summoned them, and he said to them, ‘Why did you deceive us, saying, ‘We are very far from you,’ this was the Canaanites, ‘when you dwell among us? Now therefore you are cursed, and some of you shall always be slaves, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God. They answered Joshua, ‘Because it was told to your servants for a certainty that the Lord your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; so we feared greatly for our lives, because of you, and did this thing.’ These were the Canaanites speaking. ‘And now, behold, we are in your hand: do as it seems good and right in your sight to do to us.’ So he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the people of Israel; and they did not kill them. But Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, to continue to this day, in the place in which he should choose.”

So from the earliest days of the Jews moving into Canaan, the Canaanites did, in fact, become slaves. They actually continued to be slaves in Africa, they continued in Syria and North Africa as the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians came across there; they continued to be slaves to them there. And, of course, many of us know to our shame what happened in the States here in the early years in regard to people simply because the loved ones had a different color of skin; and how that has been such a battle for us all to live above and to forget.

Now it is false, loved ones, to use this as a justification for race hatred. It is important to see that when Joshua said there will be slaves, there'll be slaves; the Canaanites will be slaves to the Jews during that time. It does not mean at all that they will be slaves forever, nor is it God's will that just because your skin is black, you should be a slave. If that were the case, then you'll find in the genealogy that there are many others besides people with black skin who are actually sons and daughters of Ham. In fact, all of Egypt would have to be slaves and all of the Arabians would have to be slaves, but you will see that as we go on. But nevertheless, loved ones that did come true; in the early days when the Jews were in Canaan and in the latter days, under

the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians in North Africa and, as we have seen today, even as far as our own country was concerned.

Now you see what was said to the Semites in Genesis 9:26, "He also said, 'Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave.'" "Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem" and Shem was blessed by God. God gave to the Shemites or the Semites or the Jews, the revelation of themselves for the rest of the world, so right from the very beginning of the earth, they've been God's chosen people in order to be almost the priest to the rest of the world. And you find that culminated in Jesus' birth; because he was part of the descendants of Shem. You find it there in Luke 3:36; it's the genealogy of Jesus, and you see it starts at Luke 3:23, "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed)" because it was by the Holy Spirit, "of Joseph, the son of Hevi, the son of Matthat," right on down to verse 36, "the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem." So Jesus was a descendent of Shem. And, of course, the blessing was carried out right down through the line to Jesus. That's why that statement is made John 4:22. It's really the fulfillment of the blessing that was given to the Semites back there at the beginning of the world, and it is Jesus speaking; "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews." Actually salvation has come to the world through the Jewish people, and certainly through the greatest of all Jews, Jesus himself. So the prophecy over Canaan and Ham has come true, and the prophecy over Shem has come true.

Then Genesis 9:27, "God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his slave." The Hebrew means "God enlarge Japheth." Japheth actually means "wide" and it means "God make wide the wide one," or "God spread out the spreader out." And the "spreader out" are these people here. You will find as we go through the genealogy, the Germans, the Europeans, the French, Spanish, the Italians; all of the people we think of as being the inhabitants of Europe and Asia and, of course, it was the inhabitants of Europe and Asia, particularly Europe that peopled a new world. So it's us that God is talking about and he's saying, "Spread these people out; may God spread these people out and extend and expand their influence."

Now actually it was strange because at the beginning of the world, that didn't happen; because man was in rebellion and against God, the very opposite happened at the start. You find that in Genesis 10:9-10. The first great imperial kingdom was not, in fact, started at all by a Japhethite but was started by a Hamite, by a man called Nimrod. Genesis 10:8 "Cush became the father of Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man." He was a particular mighty man, because Nimrod comes from "marad" in Hebrew, which means "rebellion" or "to rebel" or "we will rebel". And Nimrod was actually a man who rebelled against God, but he was mighty and powerful and was a great general and a great ruler. "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord" is not really the best translation of the Hebrew, because the preposition is "against the Lord" – "he was a mighty hunter against the Lord." He opposed God, and yet he was permitted because of the rebellion that mankind was in, to extend his influence. Therefore it is said "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord." And you will see the kingdom he established in the next verse.

"The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar. From that land, he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city." So Nimrod, actually from very early days, established a great Babylonian kingdom in what are almost primeval days, and that rule of his was carried on. The Hamites continued to be uppermost and it looked as if God's promise to the Japhethites was not coming true because, even when you get into the later years in the Nile Valley, the Egyptians were also sons of Ham; they actually ruled, and in Mesopotamia, the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians

ruled. So in the earliest days there was no sign of the Japhethites coming out into the “spreading out” that God promised them. Actually I can show you very clearly if you look at one of the earliest kingdoms, the Egyptian kingdom; the Egyptian empire. Early on in the history of mankind, the Hamites were superior; the Egyptians ruled for years. Then after them, the great Assyrian empire, which was a carry over of Nimrod's rule, the great Assyrian empire spread over what was most of the then known world. And after the Assyrians, the Babylonian empire ruled. So at the very beginning, the world seemed to not be bringing about the promise that God had made to the Japhethites; but actually that all ended around 612 B.C. At that time, after the Assyrians and the Babylonians had ruled the world, there came a man called Cyrus, who was a Japhethite, Cyrus who was a Persian. And he defeated -- if you remember your history -- he defeated the rule of the Babylonians and the Assyrians and he began to spread his own rule and then from then on, from 538 B.C., the amazing thing is, it was first the Persians who were Japhethites, all these were descendants of Japheth, loved ones.

The Persians, then the Greeks, descendants of Japheth, then the Romans, then after the Barbarians eventually and it has never been anyone else but Japhethites that have ruled the world. It has either been we ourselves, or it has been the British Empire or there's been the German Empire or the Europeans; but always from that time on, it's been Japheth that has had the spreading out. So it is amazing to think of it, especially there was a time around 202 B.C. where the Carthaginians were lead by a man called Hannibal. Some of you may know it from classical history. The Carthaginians, of course, were of the descendants of Ham. And Hannibal was taking all before him and it looked as if he would take Rome itself and it looked, for a moment, as if the whole history would be turned back. And then, if you remember, he was defeated by a Roman general called Scipio, and that was the end of any hope of the Hamites ever establishing their rule in the world.

And so all the time it has been Japhethites, and you can see it as so plain and obvious when you see the Greek empire. You can see that the empires of the Japhethites in the early days bear no relationship, of course, to the might of Alexander's empire, and that was followed, then, by the Roman empire which was even larger; it took in part of Britain and Europe. From then on, loved ones, there's never been anybody but the descendants of Japheth in control of the world; they've been given the leadership in industry and education, the leadership in culture, the leadership in military power. Japheth and his descendants have had that control.

Now there is an interesting side to it if you look at Genesis 9:27, you can see another side to it, “God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem.” Now how would he ever come to dwell in the tents of Shem? It is interesting, isn't it that at the very time when Buddhism was spreading into China from India, at the same time there was a man who had a vision of somebody in Macedonia calling to him to come over and help us, and that man was Paul. And at that time he answered the call and went to Macedonia and Japheth began to dwell in the tents of Shem because the great Roman empire, and Europe itself, heard the gospel for the first time from the lips of Paul, and began to dwell in the same faith as had been given through Shem. And, in fact, today it's amazing, but when you think of Christianity, everybody, of course, thinks of us: they think of Americans. or they think of Britishers, or they think of Europeans, or they think of Australians. They think of the descendants of Japheth, because he stands for Christianity and that's what happened on that night when an apparently unimportant dream took place.

It's Acts Chapter 10:9-17, “The next day, as they were on their journey and coming near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. And he became hungry and desired something to eat; but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance and saw the heaven opened,

and something descending, like a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth. In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' But Peter said, 'No, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.' And the voice came to him again a second time, 'What God has cleansed, you must not call common.' This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men that were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood before the gate." Cornelius, of course, was the Roman centurion, and he was the unclean one in any Jew's eyes; he was a Gentile and it was a result of God speaking through the vision that Peter went and preached at Cornelius' house, and the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius, and his family, and the people gathered there. Then the apostle said, "We can't avoid baptizing them even though they aren't Jews. Even if they're Gentiles, we can't avoid baptizing them because the Holy Spirit has come upon them and cleansed their hearts even as he did ours." And that was the breaking down of that wall of partition; that was the Japhethites coming to dwell in the tents of Shem.

So it is amazing, loved ones, when you think how prophecies back there that seem so obscure have come into being exactly as God said they would. And we need to see that the things that have happened, therefore, in our world, are not chance events at all; that God has foreseen all of this. And yet he is so amazing that he allows us our free will, and he lets us work out our free wills. And yet you can see that it isn't at all a world runaway mad; it's a world very much on a leash, and that's why what we shared last Sunday is so important. Loved ones, there's no place for fear, in people like ourselves: there's no place for fear about the mushroom cloud [from a nuclear bomb] and all that. We need to see that God has told us that the world will not be destroyed again by flood, and it will only be destroyed by fire by him on the day of judgment; but it will not be destroyed by us men with all our bombs and all our nuclear warfare.

We need to see the same thing in regard to our own lives. If this dear God of ours can allow so many individuals and so many nations to do what they want, and yet can foresee what it going to happen and can work it all in accordance with his will, how much more readily our own lives? The truest thing probably, is it is never right to have anything but faith; it is never, never right to have anything but faith; even when you see things apparently going apart at the edges. Even when you see things certainly looking as if they were going to go the opposite direction that you had hoped, there's never any place for anything but faith. When you see God making that prophecy about Japheth, and then years and hundreds of years of the Hamites having the upper hand in the world, and yet God brings it round. Or you see the gospel being given through Shem, and then how would it get to the rest of the world when Shem does not rule the world -- in fact, Japheth rules the world -- how will he ever come to dwell in the tents of Shem? And yet the Father brings it about. So when you see what God can do with the nations there's no place for anything but absolute and total faith for each one of us in regard to our lives, and that applies to everybody here. Regarding the marriage thing, and the job thing, and the career, and how your money is working out, and how your future is looking, and how your house is going; there's no place for anything but faith; anything other than faith is just an insult to this God, who has proven himself so plainly over these years.

Now, I've tried to simplify the thing as much as I could, loved ones, and tried to outline it so that it would make sense and I'll just guide you a little at the beginning, so maybe you'd like to look at Genesis 10:1-2, "These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth; sons were born to them after the flood. "The sons of Japheth: Gomer" and what the scholars do is trace these names; sometimes in place names, sometimes in people names, sometimes in nation names, and that's how they track down where the descendants of Gomer were. Gomer is found in the people that

ended up in Wales and those that ended up in Britain.

Then the next son is Magog, and they were Scythians. Some of them were Tartars and some of them ended up in the Caucasus area. Nevertheless, I think you have to go gently and just say Magog is Russia; a lot of other things besides Russia, but certainly the descendants of Magog have something to do with that area. Madai is much easier because you can trace it right directly to the Medes. And Javan is not too difficult either, because the J often becomes an "I" in other languages and it ties up with Ionian which is the Greeks. And in fact the King of the Greeks, or leader of the Greeks at one time, was known as King Jabba. Tubal seemed to be the Iberians; Meshech, Cappadocians; an older race. Tiras, the Thracians. And then if you want to go on down -- you see in part of this genealogy, sometimes it gives just the first generation, sometimes it gives the first and second; sometimes it gives the first, second and third.

So if you look now at Verse 3, The sons of Gomer traces them. Ashkenas is found in the Germans; in fact, the Jewish race still applies that name to the German nation, Riphath is found in the Celts, who, you remember, were found in part of Europe and then in Britain. Then if you follow down; the sons of Javan: Elishah -- those of you who know a little Greek mythology know we talk about the Elysian fields as heaven, and you can see some form of the word there, but Elishah's descendants were Greeks. Togarmah were the Armenians and the Turks; Tarshish, Etruscans; Kittim; Cyprus and some of the Greeks. Alexander, I think, was traced back to that name Kittim, Dodanim, France. So that, loved ones, is some outline from two books; one is John Gill, one of the old theologians on Genesis and the other is Kiel Delitzsch, a German commentator on the Old Testament.

Loved ones, if you would like to look at Ham, you'll see the outline and I won't take you through it as slowly; you can check on it in your own Bible, I've simply gone down those verses so I've tried to include everybody, but you do see they are Ethiopians, Egyptians, Libyans, Canaanites, Ethiopians, Oman, the Persian Gulf area, Babylon, Moors, Northern Egypt, Libyans, Middle Egyptians, Upper Egypt, Cappadocians, Sidon and then the nations, of course, in Canaan itself ... Jebusites, Amorites, that are listed by their own names in that chapter. So, on the whole, that's why we say that Ham was found in the area of Africa and Egypt and Libya. I don't have much left because, in fact, I was not able to trace much on Shem, and probably we don't need much on it because it is, in fact, the Jewish race.

It would be good to make one more point, and that's why I mentioned that this isn't a bad diagram to remember when you think of the three sons: that on the whole Ham, including Egypt in the north and the Libyans, then the Ethiopians, Ham and his descendants were found in Africa. On the whole, Shem's were found there in that Middle Eastern region and then Japheth, the rest. Now one of the interesting things that one of the old commentators makes that there are many indications in the world itself that we all did stem from one family, and I thought there were interesting ones; the numbering in tens; the cycle of seven days -- it's really hard to find a nation that doesn't measure time by the cycle of seven days -- the setting apart of the seventh day as a sacred day and a holy day for the religion and a day of rest. It's interesting that even Russia thinks of the seventh day as something different. The use of sacrifices -- you can't find any nation, however primitive or however sophisticated, that has not at one time practiced sacrifices -- some kind of feeling that they have that God has to be placated, that their guilt has to be dealt with. Also the habit of consecrating temples and churches and regarding them as places of refuge; every nation does that.

You'd wonder how they all came to these practices from the very earliest times, because this is the outline of the nations of the tower of Babel after they were scattered, so these things occurred

after they were scattered and there was no communication. And yet it must have come from an earlier time when there were things passed down to them like giving a tenth of their produce to the altar or to the church. There's no nation that doesn't have that in its tradition somewhere; giving a tenth. Worshipping the deity barefooted; there isn't a nation that doesn't think that when you come close to God its holy ground, as if there is a family memory that runs through every nation in the world. There is the idea of having priesthood; an order of priesthood that you support and that you provide for, for the worship of your God. Then the idea of legal pollution and defilement runs through every nation on the earth and why should it, unless they all came from the same family originally and had the same revelation of God.

Then you know from the Babylonian accounts and from other accounts, the whole truth of a universal flood is found in every ancient literature. Many of them are primitive and crude compared with the account we have in the Old Testament, but there is some belief in the universal flood and always a belief in a rainbow and that the rainbow is a sign of God's favor. So in all kinds of ways, God has left his footprints throughout history and there are plenty of clues throughout the world's history that would encourage us to see that he is ordered and there is order in it, and there's order in this world, and that God does know what's going on now.

It seems to me there's no place for us to be fearful, and no place for us to be running to the hills or to be afraid that our God will not take care of us and especially no place for passing on to the little ones that fear and that neurotic apprehension. There's every place for saying, "Son, God is in control; he has looked after us so far, he has looked after the movements of nations and he will continue to look after us." The great privilege that we have is we've to go to these nations and tell them where they came from. I would pray Martha the mp3 stops here – I'm not sure where the rest of the words that follow came from. (Peg) that more and more of us in this room would do that.

Dear Father, we thank you for all the clues you've left us throughout history, so plain and so obvious. We thank you, Father, that you gave this genealogy in such detail to early man who passed it on to Moses and who wrote it for us here. Father, we thank you that you have shown us that you knew what was going to happen; you saw it coming, you foresaw it and you have all the time overruled it by your providence and gracious love. Father, you were able to see what would happen to the Carthaginians or what would happen to the Africans, what would happen to the Japhethites hundreds of years, thousands of years hence. Then Father, we are confident -- you know exactly where each one of us is today and you've foreseen the way our lives would go and you know what's going to happen tomorrow and Lord, if you're not worried, then we're not worried.

Father, if you're still smiling upon us and your heart is at peace and you love us as much as you do, then there's no reason for us to have any worry or any care. So, Lord, we thank you. We thank you that there is only one right thing to do and that's rejoice in the Lord always, and let our forbearance be known unto all men; not to be anxious about anything, and in everything by prayer and supplication let our requests be known to God. And the peace of God that passes all understanding will keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Lord, we would give ourselves to you for a carefree life knowing that you have foreseen it all and are providing for it; allowing us our free will and yet in a loving, wise way, bringing everything into accordance with your purposes for us. We thank you, Lord.

Now the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us, now and throughout this coming week. Amen.

