

Smoky Mountain Bible Institute

History 107 2343 to 2000BC

Break out your maps and histories as we travel in a time machine of sorts to examine History & Geography through a biblical world view. So let's look at some of the things that start to appear in the historical record of different civilizations between 2343BC and 2000BC. We start to see some of the earliest archeological and geopolitical evidence of literature, religion, arts, music, technology, and family life of many world civilizations during these few centuries. Some are; Aramean, Semitic and Canaanite tribes in Palestine, the Yao & Shun Dynasties in China, Babylonian, as well as early Indian and Scandinavian cultures found in Neolithic or primitive stages of development.

A special note on the Egyptian chronology: I will mention the commonly held dates for the Egyptian chronology as we go through these ancient events. However I would like to point out that there are some weaknesses in the commonly held Egyptian chronology. The main weakness in the current system is its heavy dependence on two faulty sources, Manetho's king list and Sothic dating. The ancient kings list, written by Manetho an Egyptian priest around 300 BC, has some significant holes. Its greatest weakness though is that it does not account for overlaps and co-regencies for which there is strong evidence. By the mid-second millennium BC it is off by a couple of hundred years. This will become important when we get to the Exodus. The Sothic cycle, which is a 1461 year cycle associated with the Dog Star Sirius, is also an important benchmark to the current chronology. The problem is where to drop the anchor. We can, with great accuracy, track the Dog Star but where we plug it into the chronology when it is mentioned in ancient Egyptian inscriptions is a whole different question. If this topic piques your interest I suggest you read three books; "Centuries of Darkness" by Peter James, "A test of Time" by David Rohl, and "The Riddle of the Exodus" by James D. Long (which also has a DVD). While these three resources do not answer all of the questions in the mismatch between the biblical chronology and the commonly held Egyptian chronology, they do clear up a lot of inconsistencies and give one greater scholastic confidence in the divine record over and above its conflicting counterparts.

Some of the other events occurring during this time period: the first Egyptian libraries starting to collect the new technology of writings on papyrus; potters wheels; maps; and the bow and arrow, are becoming a part of the human story in many regions. There is even a carving on a rock in Norway that depicts skiing.

Let's look a little at Chapter 10 & 11 of Genesis. Most of these two chapters are genealogy, commonly referred to as the 'begats' (so and so begat so and so, and so on and so forth). What we get here are the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They all seem to have settled in the Land of Shinar, that would be the plains south of the mountains of Arrant and just north of Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq). After God divides their languages, Ham's descendants migrated to the region southwest of the land of Shiner to the Sinai Peninsula and North Africa. Japheth's descendants went to the northwest, to modern day Turkey, Greece and Europe. And Shem's descendants took the region from modern day Israel and Palestine and all points east. Descendants of Shem are called Semites. All Jewish and Arabic peoples are his descendants. We can deduce a general time frame for the Tower of Babel event by looking at a few key notes in the genealogy. If we look at 10:25 we find *...Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided.* His name means 'divided' because the earth was divided in his lifetime. This could well be a reference to the Babel event. Peleg was probably born around 2247BC around 100 years after the flood giving 8 people ample time to heavily populate the plain at Shinar. Because each of the three sons of Noah's descendant list ends with the *phrase "these are the sons of ---, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations."* it is safe to assume that when God divided them by language He did so along family lines. Peleg lived for 239 years but the Tower event probably happened in His youth or even just before his birth since he was named 'division'. Over the next 100 years large tribes descending from Noah's three sons migrated to their respective regions and over the next 80 years some of the descendants of Peleg migrated to the land of Ur just northwest of modern day Kuwait on the Euphrates River. One of those descendants was Abram born around 2166BC, and that will be a good place for us to close this lesson. Enjoy the rest of your summer in Christ Pastor Portier