

II. FROM BABEL TO THE BEGINNING OF EGYPT

5000? 4000? B./C. to CA 3300 B.C.

Babylon is important for two reasons. First from there were scattered the c;ams pf *Shem*, Ham, and *Japheth* that became the *nations* of the earth. Second, from there spread a spiritual rebellion which led the nations into *polytheism* and tainted all the nations of earth with the spirit of antichrist.

One of Ham's sons was *Cush* (called *Chus* in *Josephus*). He is credited with actually founding Babylon and is thought by many to have instigated or at least encouraged and participated in the rebellion. A series of mounds called *Tell Oheimer* have been excavated uncovering the ancient city of *Kish*, which was once a part of Babylon. It dates to 4,000 B.C. (inhabited until 400 A.D.) Source: Thompson.

Cush's son *Nimrod* (calld *Ninus* by many historians) continued construction of Babylon, making it into a great city. He was a warlike ruler, the first to fight against his neighbors, and extended his kingdom to the "cities" of *Erech*, *Accad*, and *Calneh*. Erech and Calneh have since been excavated by archeologists. Calah is today called Nimrud and is located about 20 miles south of Nineveh. The ruins of Erech are located about 20 miles northwest of Ur. Excavations from the lower level have yielded cylinder seals and pictographs showing belief in one deity. Thompson.

Nimrod was a tyrant and a dictator who desired to wrest the people's loyalty from God so that all power would rest in him. The Bible describes Nimrod as a great hunter. He dressed up in trophies of the hunt. His emblem was a spotted leopard's skin, and this is the origin of *leopard skin* as the chiefly symbol of the Bantu tribes. He was known to the Greeks as *Nebro*, the spotted one, since he wore *spotted robes*. He also wore a *horned* headdress, and so was called "the horned one." It is believed that he subdued leopards and horses for use in hunting. Some feel his name comes from *Nimr-leopard* and *rad-to* subdue. (Sometimes leopards are still used for hunting in India. (Hislop p.31-7, 44-45, 32 *Babylon Mystery Rel.* p. 9.

Nimrod was most definitely a wizard, and some feel, Satan incarnate. The practice of divination before the hunt undoubtedly originated with him. Some have said that the preposition in Genesis 10:9 translated "before" in the King James Version can also sometimes mean "against." That is, he hunted against the Lord, not only animals, but also the souls of men by *witchcraft*. There is evidence that he warred on those who remained faithful to God, especially on the line of Shem.

The Jewish historian *Josephus* says Nimrod wanted to build a tower to escape in case God should send another great flood (showing unbelief, since God had promised never to send another worldwide flood – Gen. 9:15). He also says that by building the tower, Nimrod wanted to avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers. That is, instead of being thankful for God's deliverance and being more alert to the consequences of sin, he blamed God for the Flood and became angry and bitter against the Almighty.

Josephus p. 30. The Jewish Encyclopedia says that he made all people rebellious toward God.

Nimrod superintended the building of the tower “to the heavens.” Excavations confirm that it was an *astrological* tower dedicated to the stars of heaven. (Stars are often associated with angels and evil spirits – of Rev. 18:13.) Thompson.

Josephus says that after God confounded their tongues, Nimrod stayed on at Babel and continued to tyrannize the people. Other traditions say he died in the actual crumbling of the tower. This seems to be unlikely since there is evidence that the tower stood for several generations after the dispersion. Other traditions seem to indicate that he was ordered to be executed, probably by Shem, whose godly line he had been persecuting. If this is correct, the tribes must have at first moved not far from Babel. Shem’s edict must have been given within a year or two of the confusion of tongues. When Nimrod’s tyrannical rule of witchcraft was ended, the tribes scattered further, lacking their former leader and unable to cooperate amongst themselves.

Nimrod fell in love and married another man’s wife, some say his own mother, wife of Cush. Her name was *Semiramis*, and she was very beautiful – the perfection of female beauty. She was also one of the most wicked women ever to live, at least a demon-possessed witch. It is believed that both Nimrod and Semiramis wold their bodies and souls to Satan. Hislop p. 298/

Several ancient authors credit Semiramis with the tower of Babel, and undoubtedly she was a major force behind it. She claimed to be a virgin, but was instead a harlot, and mde Babylon into a center of *ritual prostitution* and idolatry. After Nimrod’s death, she could not give up her privileged position of power. She later gave birth to a son, whether by harlotry or by witchcraft is not clear. She claimed that she, being a virgin, had conceived by a sunbeam, that her son *Tammuz* was the savior, the promised christ, and the reincarnation of Nimrod, whom she said was the *sun god*. In life, Nimrod was honored as a hero; in death, Semiramis, of course, was deified too as the virgin mother of the son of God, and developed a cult in which she and her son were worshipped, with herself as *Queen of heaven*, the *virgin mother* of god, eclipsing the son.

Thus the religion Semiramis established in Babylon was a rebellion and more than a rebellion, a perversion and more than a perversion, a polytheistic cult and far more. The basis and goal of it was to establish the reign of the false christ, thus discrediting in advance the true Christ who was to come. This is the reason some feel that Nimrod may have been Satan incarnate. Certainly at least this scenario would have merited the personal interest and direct action of Satan himself, and probably came from his very mind. The spirit that possessed Semiramis and Nimrod could have been none other than the spirit of antichrist that has acted at key times in human history to oppose the Christ and will be active again in the end times as described in the books of Daniel and Revelation. In fact, the spirit of antichrist possessed both of them, and reincarnated itself in the son Tammuz. (This is the origin of the doctrine of reincarnation. *Reincarnation* is a fact, but it is the demons, the people themselves, who are reincarnated.) The *spirit* of

Semiramis was *sexual* in nature, possibly jealous that human beings can reproduce while it, as a spirit, cannot; maybe also jealous that sex is a source of joy for humankind. The spirit of Semiramis or antichrist is the woman described in Revelation 17, especially verses 3-6, that will be judged by God in the last days as being ultimately responsible for all the abominable heathen religions of the earth. She was also known among the ancients as the goddess of fertility, the great earth mother Rhea or Gaia.

Tammuz and Nimrod's deaths are often confused, and the legends are impossible to disentangle, perhaps because the demon spirit of Nimrod lived also in Tammuz, perhaps repeating history and bringing them to the same or a very similar end. Since the same spirit was incarnated in both of them, sometimes it is impossible to tell for sure whether the tradition refers to Nimrod or to Tammuz or both. Some legends say Tammuz was killed by a wild boar at 40 years of age, and the women of Babylon wept 40 days – one for each year of his life. Other traditions have Seth ordering the execution of Tammuz and his body being cut up and sent to various villages. ¹³ this execution driving Semiramis' religion underground where it was communicated as mysteries. In fact, due to the opposition of Seth, it was likely presented as mysteries from the beginning. The dismemberment of Tammuz was the origin of the heathen practice of cutting oneself, and possibly the origin of the African practice of decorative cicatrization and of tribal marks based on cutting the flesh. It also provided the motivation for the development of embalming in Egypt, for “a great imperative was defined by the reconstruction of the dismembered *Osiris*. The body of the god-king had to be preserved intact in order for him to attain mortality” ¹⁴,

When Tammuz died, Babylon *mourned* for him. One ancient writer wrote that Tammuz ordered “a certain king” (Shem?) to worship the 7 stars and 12 signs of the zodiac. That king refused and ordered him put to a terrible death. (Perhaps to be torn apart by wild beasts as other legends say.) On the even of the execution all the images of earth came to Babylon, prostrated themselves, and wept all night for Tammuz, then flew away in the morning (thus recognizing Tammuz' rulership over them.)

Semiramis claimed her son was mystically (not physically) raised. Annual weeping for Tammuz became a ritual in Babylon as a part of annual *fertility rites*. It was believed that Tammuz went into the underworld and was mystically revived in the spring through the weeping of his mother. (cf. Ez. 8:?) The Egyptian version of the *resurrection* legend says Osiris once ruled Egypt until he was killed and dismembered by his jealous brother Seth, but faithful Isis collected the pieces of his body and patched them back together, thus resurrecting him. ¹⁵

The *mother and child cult* was known in Egypt as the cult of Isis and Osiris, and evidence of it is abundant in Egyptian temples from earliest times. An inscription attributed to *Isis* in one Egyptian temple says:

“I am all that has been, or that is, or that shall be . . . the fruit I have brought forth is the sun.”

Nimrod was deified as Baal, the horned god, also called Molech. It was probably a wicked invention of Semiramis that *Molech* required the sacrifice of firstborn children (to avenge the death of Tammuz). Perhaps the offering of the firstborn was also hoped to eliminate the true Son, the Christ who was to come. Think of the wickedness of her plan – the true Son to be sacrificed in honor of the false! The idea of *cannibalism* also came from the practice of the priest of Baal of eating part of every sacrifice, including human. The word comes from *cahna* –priest of and *bal* -- Baal.

Tammuz also became known as *the fire god*, his name meaning to purify by fire. He is the source of customs of passing children through fire, of walking on fire, and also of the idea of fire in purgatory to atone for sin, and of cremation. The violent death of Tammuz was commemorated in an annual festival in Egypt and many Egyptian pictures show his sign -- the sacred tau – T.

Since Babylonian religion held at once *occult* and sexual overtones and since Isis was the goddess of fertility, Nimrod (Baal) was represented by *phallic symbols*, of which the *obelisk* is the most common, and Semiramis (Isis) was represented by eggs and by female figures with exaggerated female features. Since she was also associated with astrology, the Egyptian Isis is often represented standing on a *crescent moon* with *stars* around her head.

Nimrod is also identified in the Encyclopedia of Mythology as Chaldean *Heralces* and as Asstruab *Zeus*. Once the system of the deification of leaders began, many were possessed by many demon spirits, who reincarnated themselves in many different ways. This is the origin of *Dagon, the fish god* (dag-fish). It was a symbol of fertility, since fish produce millions of eggs at one time. Isis is sometimes pictured with a fish on her head, and was called by the Phoenicians “the lady of the sea.” Some pictures of Dagon show a fish head as a hat on a human head, which is the origin of the mitre headpiece. This manifestation of the spirit of Nimrod was called *Poseidon* by the Greeks, *Oannes*, the goat-horned fish god by the Babylonians, *Dagon* by the Philistines, *Mamiwata* by the Bantu. This god is said to have instructed the Babylonians.

Thus the false religion of antichrist gained ascendance and spread to all areas of the world. The ancient Babylonians had worshipped *Adad*, the one God, who was triune. This original religion, preserved by the family of Noah during the Flood, was counterfeited and replaced by the unholy trinity of triad of father-mother-son, Nimrod, Semiramis, and Tammuz. A few people at first remained faithful to God and opposed the mystical worship of Semiramis, especially in the tribe of Shem. There is evidence, for instance, that even in ancient *China*, the first inhabitants recognized one God, and in Bantu African there has always been this recognition. But once infected with the mystical antichrist religion of Babylon, the situation deteriorated rapidly as more and more of our ancestors were sucked into polytheism (based on the reincarnation of demon spirits), heathenism, idolatry and worship of Satanic spirits in the tradition of Nimrod.

This history of Africa is a post-Flood history. The Bible mentions a land called Cush in the pre-Flood Biblical record, but it is not known whether this has any relation to the

post-Flood Cush. No location on earth prior to the Flood is certain, because as violent a Flood as is recorded in Genesis, all the fountains of the great deep being broken up (Genesis 7:11), would surely have upset and destroyed the old civilizations. There were at least two great civilizations on earth before the Flood (Genesis 4:17-26), but we do not know where they were, nor even whether the continents existed as they do at present for that matter, so our history of Africa begins with the settlement of Africa after the Flood.

Africa was first inhabited, as was most of the world, as a result of the dispersion of nations from Babel, recorded in the Bible in Genesis 10-11. If Africa had been inhabited previous to the Flood, the land would have been changed so as to be irrecognizable, and the people would all have been destroyed. Only Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives escaped the Flood (Genesis 9:18-19), which was sent as a judgement from god and as a means of purifying an earth whose inhabitants had polluted themselves beyond hope. The judgment at Babel followed the Flood, and resulted in the scattering of clans throughout the earth so as to result in many nations. This division of nations was not accomplished on the basis of *skin color*, but rather on the basis of *language* and family groupings.

In modern times we have become accustomed to thinking in terms of races of people, but this is not a biblical category or concept, for the Bible admits only one *race* – human (Acts 17:26), Ethnologists, too, admit that “to talk about races at all is only a convenient inaccuracy.”³

Although skin and hair color seems to present a big difference in people, it is really not so. Skin pigment called *melanin* is formed in special cells called *melanocytes*, which are present in the skin, hair roots, and eyes of all people of all races in about the same number and kind. This difference in color is due to the abundance, presence or absence of an enzyme called tyrosinase. *Tyrosinase* is provided by protein in the diet, which explains why protein-deficiency results in lightening the color of the skin and hair. Genetic differences, too, cause the melanocytes of some families to have more tyrosinase than others. Tyrosine reacts with oxygen (carried to cells by the blood) to form melanin, the pigment of skin color. All melanin is the same color – brown – but varying amounts of it make the skin appear different colors or shades of brown – from very light tan to very black. Only albinos have no melanin (or very little), because a genetic defect prevents the formation of the enzyme tyrosinase. Melanin is a good thing, because it protects the skin from the harmful effects of the sun’s rays. Those who live in sunny climates need more melanin for protection than others, but all people have the same kind of melanin. There are not different kinds of skin color, then, but strictly speaking, only one color in various degrees or concentrations.¹³

Archaeology also gives witness to a rapid dispersion of cultures. For instance the culture

³ Curtin, Philip, Feierman, Steven, Thompson, Leonard, Vansina, Jan, *AFRICAN HISTORY* (Little, Brown & Co.” Boston 1978), p. 14

⁴ The term *achueulian* to the method of making tools. Complete from New Archaeology.

Archaeologists refer to as acheulian⁴ is found about 5,000 B.C. in such diverse and distant places as *Kenya, Morocco, England and India*. These people all produced identical instruments by ancient methods, then later gradually changed into distinct cultures.¹⁴ One very logical interpretation of this fact is that the cultures, though widely dispersed, had a common origin, having dispersed from a single parent group, but developing distinct cultures after that dispersion. This is in fact what the Bible affirms happened at Babel.

The first ancestors of Africa were people who knew about God and about judgement. They knew God was holy, punishing sin. They knew He was all-powerful, able to destroy the world and all its inhabitants. They also knew He was gracious, willing and able to save those who trusted in Him, as did Noah and his family. Twice within the collective memory of their clan, they had seen the judgment of God. Their ancestor Ham, son of Noah, had experienced God's gracious salvation in the Ark as they rode out the year-long Flood. He had known the right way to worship God, for he had been present when his father Noah had built an altar to the Lord and on it, offered lean animals from the Ark. Ham had not only experienced God's blessing in the protection of the Ark, but he had personally heard God's words of personal blessing to him and his descendants (Genesis 9:1). He knew that people were special, made in God's image, for he had personally heard God declare this (Genesis 9:65). He knew that the rainbow was a sign of God's personal promise to him and his descendants (Genesis 9:8). He had heard God's actual voice speaking directly to him. Ham was also well acquainted with evil supernaturalism, having personally seen *demonic*-human-animal creature before the Flood (Genesis 6: 1, 2, 4), and having seen the demonic sorceries of Nimrod and Semiramis after the Flood.

Even so, Ham's descendants, with virtually all others then living, joined in a collective attempt to denounce the God who had saved them. They did this by building a great tower in honor of the heavens at Babel. They knew who God was and what He was able to do for them, but they turned away from Him and sought to build a city, a religion, and a life of their own design, so they thought (Genesis 11:3-4).

The first ancestors of Africa were not alone in this rebellion. All the ancestors of all the nations of the earth, except possibly for a small faithful remnant of the family of Shem, joined together in the attempt. In order to thwart their rebellion and stop them from collectively thinking up more and more evil schemes, God confused their languages (Genesis 12:6-7). As they worked on the great tower to the heavens, suddenly the members of one clan could no longer understand the speech of the other clans. Cooperation was impossible, so the tower was left unbuilt and the various clans eventually moved away from one another (Genesis 11:8-9, 10:32).

The Bible implies that Ham's family had grown large and that at least four generations had passed after the Flood before the dispersion from Babel that resulted in the establishment of nations in scattered places (Genesis 10:18). Africa was mainly inhabited by the posterity of Ham, but not all the family of Ham went to Africa. Some clans of the Hamites went to nearby *Arabia*, others to *Canaan* and some remained in the

environs of *Babylon* (Genesis 10:6-20). Some of Ham's son Phut's descendants are known to have peopled *North Africa* in the area of *Libya* becoming the Berber tribes, while others settled in what is now the area of *Somalia*. In contrast to the other sons of Ham, no tribal development is specified for Phut, so it is possible that his clan included other groups. The *pygmy* population of the Central African rainforest and the *Khoisan* population of southern Africa seem to have descended from Ham, but in specifically what branch of Ham's family is unknown, since they moved to isolated places at very early dates.

Henry Morris has speculated that the *Mongoloid* peoples, including *Japanese, Chinese and American Indians*, are also of Hamitic descent, moving to the *Far East* and some across the Aleutian land bridge soon after the dispersion.¹⁶

On the other hand, the population of Africa included some Semitic peoples (descendants of Shem, another son of Noah) – Ophir, for example, and maybe *Sheba* and others. Semitic peoples mixed with Hamitic rather freely in Egypt and Cush, and there was extensive interaction between these peoples throughout history. Africa was not considered as “apart” of distinct from other Middle Eastern and Western Asian countries in ancient times. The term “*Ethiopia*,” for instance, could refer to part of Africa, to *Arabia*, and even to territory as far as India. Genesis speaks of *Sheba* and *Havilah* as descendants of both Shem and Ham, which may suggest an ancient intermingling of these peoples in the Arabian area proximity (Genesis 10:7, 28, 29).

A number of clans of Hamitic descent are spoken of as settling in Africa (Genesis 10:6-20). The Cushite clan (Genesis 10:6-7) settled along the southern part of the Nile around the region of the fourth cataract. For some time, they were cut off from steady contact with Egypt by these innavigable rapids. Mizraim settled in what became Egypt along the upper Nile. Two tribes of Mizraim, the Naphtuhites and Pathrusites (Genesis 10:13) eventually peopled the northern area west of Egypt, eventually pushing out over much of the north African desert; also along the eastern coastline of Egypt and Cush in the region of present day *Somalia*. Lehabites descended from Mizraim, (Genesis 10:13), probably Libyan desert tribes, possibly equivalent to the Lubim of Nahum 3:9. The Anamite tribe, also descended from Mizraim (Genesis 10:13) settled in northern Africa west of Egypt near Cyrene.

Two other Hamitic groups are mentioned later in the Bible – *Chub (Kub)*, a country near Egypt mentioned in Ezekiel 30:5, and the *Sukkims* “(*hut*) dwellers”) near Egypt, mentioned in 2 Chronicles 12:3, thought by some to be Libyan mercenary soldiers.

These all, as direct descendants of Noah through his son Ham, had known of the true God, of His power, His holiness, judgment and grace. They had known of the way to approach God through the *blood sacrifice* of an innocent animal to remind them of the Saviour who was to come.

The rapid development of nations from a closely-related group of people living in *isolation* from others is scientifically viable. Geneticists have discovered that rapid

speciation (variation as to physical characteristics) occurs when small groups are isolated, intensely breeding only amongst themselves. Many breeds of animals – dogs, cows, etc. – have been purposely developed by imposing such conditions over the course of about a hundred years. The smaller the original *breeding* group, the more pronounced and rapid were the results. The dispersion at Babel produced ideal conditions for the development of various clan characteristics which today we call races. Some characteristics may also have developed due to differences in *diet* -- for example, a sturdy people developing where fishing gave the population a protein-rich diet. *Climate* may also have been a factor. When the Sahara began to dry out, for example, the lighter skinned peoples migrated north and the darker skinned peoples south toward the equator, probably because they were better adapted to cope with the intensity of the sun there. 16

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE SAHARA

When the tribes descended from Ham (and a few from Shem) began to enter Africa after the dispersion from Babel, the Sahara was not a desert. It was a lush, green *temperate grassland* with *forests*, replete with many kinds of wild animals. It formed the home for the first population center of Africa because it was such a hospitable climate for life.

The old Sahara was no barrier to the spread of civilizations, as it is today, but was highly conducive to bringing various clans together. It was not the Sahara, but the rain forests to the south that for most Africans formed a barrier to entering the southern part of the continent in any large numbers.

There are several ways we know about the Golden Age of the Sahara. One author has said, “everywhere in this desert are signs of intense human activity far in the past.” 16

Archaeology

One of the ways we know about the green, temperate Sahara is through archaeological discoveries. In some areas of the Sahara, stone axes, arrowheads and fish harpoons are so thick you can pick up half a dozen in a few minutes just off the surface of the ground. This indicates that many people once lived there, and that they actively engaged in hunting and fishing, thus showing the abundance of game. Yet now, much of the Sahara does not receive a decent shower for over a year at a time, making it inhospitable for both animals and humans. Now one author says, “you can travel for a month on a camel without seeing a tree or more than a few tufts of grass.” 17 Yet as evidence of a more productive past, hand axes can now be found in abundance in abandoned areas of the Sahara, mixed with bones of white rhino, elephants, zebra and hippo.

Not all objects of archaeological interest are buried. Abandoned towns of stone are found in the Sahara, and even “castles” of by-gone ages, standing silent in territory today uninhabitable.

Also included in archaeology is the study of *graveyards*. This can also give important clues to the past. *Germa*, for example, contains at least 40,000 graves, showing that it was once a well-populated area. In fact, some have felt Germa was once capitol of a

kingdom larger than Europe. 18 Investigation of graves shows beyond doubt that the Sahara was once one of the well-populated areas of the prehistoric world.

Study of grains buried in graves or found in buried villages give many clues about the agriculture and eating habits of early peoples. Through this means it has been discovered that there were two ancient centers of *agriculture* in northern Africa – one in the Sahara region near the bend of the Niger River, from which agriculture probably spread to the south, in general following the east coast all the way down to the tip of South Africa.

Paleontology

Another way we know about the ancient Sahara is through fossil finds. Fossilized fish have been found in the middle of arid wastes where it now rains only once in ten years. Fossils of dinosaurs, trees, and *pollen grains* from wild olive, alder, lime, oak, and cypress trees have also been identified. Since fossil formation requires rapid burial and since most fossils are found in sedimentary strata, fossils primarily provide evidence for the Flood and clues about life before the Flood.

Linguistic analysis

A fourth way we can know something about the prehistoric Sahara is by linguistic comparison and analysis of languages of people known to have once lived in or near the area. Linguistic analyses show that by the time the Sahara had become a pastureland rather than a hunting land, it was dominated by *Berber* speaking peoples. They also suggest that the *Nilo-Saharan* language family originally began to develop in the Sahel area, and that its vocabulary has been strongly linked to cattle since the beginning. The Niger-Congo languages which dominate Africa south of the Sahara today originated west of Lake Chad and overtook the *Niger-Congo* languages, possibly because the speakers of the Niger-Congo languages more easily made the transition from food gathering to food production. Similarities between the Niger-Congo languages and *Sudanic* or Nilo-Saharan languages suggest that they were both derived from a common mother tongue at a very ancient date (some have suggested 10,000 years ago based on evolutionary assumptions). Joseph H. Greenberg, the leading specialist in classification of African languages, has identified five separate Afro-Asiatic language groups which he believes probably were spoken before the rise of Egypt and are known as Proto-languages because they are the earliest known prototypes of the given language groups, implying that the languages of that family probably developed from them. The five groups are: Semitic, *Ancient Egyptian*, Berber, *Cushitic*, and *Chadic*. 19 In fact, we might call the Sahara the Cradle of African languages, since with the exception of Khoisan, all major African language families have been traced to the narrow belt between 10 and 16 degrees north latitude between Lake Chad and Ethiopia (but they did not all develop at the same time).

Geography and Geology

A fourth way we can know about the Old Sahara is through geographical and geological studies. Such studies show, for example, that Lake Chad was once as large as the

Caspian Sea, extending 400 miles north of the present limits of Lake Chad. There is evidence that there were in fact sic huge lakes in the Sahara region, of which Mega-Chad was the largest. There was called *Lake Biskra*, in what is today *Tunisia* and northeast *Algeria*, Lakes Mekhrerane and Taoudini in central Algeria (of which only tiny lakes remain), *Lake of the Araouane* in present *Mali*, and *Lake Timbuktu*, just east of the present bend of the Niger River in present day Mali. (Some of these names taken from French works – Englilsh equivalent may be subject to differences in spelling.)²⁰ Likewise, there is evidence that the old Niger River flowed north into Lake Tiombuktu, later spilling over into another river so as to flow to the south into the Gulf of Guinea.²¹

Rock Painting

A fifth and extremely useful way of learning about the ancient Sahara is the study of rock paintings that are found extensively in caves in many parts of the Sahara. Indeed, the Sahara has been called "a "veritable art gallery of prehistoric painting."²² Almost every part of the Sahara has at least some of these paintings, and almost every year new ones are being found, even in what are today the most inaccessible corners of the desert.²²

Through studying these paintings, we can see that the earliest viewers of the Sahara were hunters who stalked their prey in animal masks and skins armed with stone-tipped lances and boomerangs. They show that the first Saharans were probably *Negroid*. They show a grassland Sahara replete with herds of gazelle, ostrich and antelope, with the more moist and mountainous areas giving home to giraffe, elephant and hippo.

The paintings actually graphically record major changes in Saharan history. The first paintings show a civilization based on hunting wild game and of gathering from the earth without any attempt at agriculture just as we would expect of the first tribes to settle the area after the dispersion. They show elephants and hippo, large animals requiring good access to food, those who would be first to leave in search of more hospitable territory. Herds of grassland animals are shown such as gazelle, ostrich and antelope, and also pictures of animals such as giraffe, *elephant* and hippo which tend toward the moister and more mountainous areas. Pictures show people actually in the process of hunting these animals. Many pictures are drawn superimposed upon one another, so that it is possible to determine which pictures were drawn first and which later, giving a relative time frame, although dates are much more difficult.

These paintings show the transition from *hunting and gathering* to *cattle herding* as a way of life. They suggest that a great pastoral civilization followed that of the hunter-gatherers. Some have theorized that this civilization may have lasted 2,000 years, based on evolutionary assumptions, of course. In fact, the Sahara probably dried out rather quickly after the Flood, perhaps hastened by overgrazing which destroyed the grass cover, exposing the sandy soil to the elements which quickly eroded away the top soil and undermined the basis of life.

Later pastoral paintings show herdsmen carefully guarding their cattle, which is believed to show concern for a diminishing food supply. It is believed that the cattle were used for

meat only, not for milk, since the pictures of the animals, otherwise detailed and proportionate, show no well-formed udders.

Some estimate from the paintings that the Sahara began to dry out about 3,000 B.C. Of course all such time frames are interpretive. If the date of 3100 for the unification of Egypt is close to correct, the Sahara must have been drying out before that, but of course it is entirely possible that the entire time frame should be considerably shortened. Those who suggest 3000 B.C. for the beginning of desertification speculate that cattle herding may have continued until about 1000 B.C., steadily declining in the intervening time.

After the cattle diminished, *horses* were introduced, hunting reappeared as a vital search for food, and the paintings become much stiffer, reflecting the harsher life of the painters. Paintings of this period show horses, dogs, wheels, and chariots. Some have called this the period of *Garmantians*.

It seems obvious that the earlier of these paintings antedate the rise of Egypt as a kingdom, since in the earliest days of Egypt the Sahara was already dry, making the people quite dependent on the Nile. It also seems obvious that the paintings must have been drawn by post-Flood peoples, since they are fragile in nature and would doubtless have been destroyed by a Flood of the proportions described in Genesis. Many of the paintings, for instance, those in the Tassili region, were painted on the walls of shallow caves cut into the rock, either by the Flood, the receding of the Flood waters over newly-lain sediment, or rivers that existed for a short time following the Flood.

It seems likely that the *Green Sahara* corresponds to the time when glaciers covered much of northern Europe (in evolutionary terms called the “*Ice Age*”). This time is thought by many scientists to have followed the Flood because of the severe climactic changes that overtook the earth. This would account for the temperate climate of the Sahara, which gradually warmed, eventually becoming torrid as the ice caps receded. This would explain also the drying out of the Sahara.

The motives of the prehistoric Saharan painters in making these cave drawings is a subject of much conjecture. Theories that have been advanced include the satisfaction of aesthetic urges, entertainment such as storytelling, or magical purposes such as ensuring a good hunt. Their value for us lies in the pictorial history they have drawn of life and change in the ancient Sahara during the earliest stages after the Flood until the dawn of written history and a more detailed Biblical record.

EARLY DWELLERS OF THE NILE

At the time immediately following the dispersion from Babel, many of Ham’s descendants who settled Africa probably passed by the then-marshy Nile region in favor of the more hospitable Sahara region. The overflow from the ancient Nile was uncontrolled, running in sheets over the whole region, making only the mountainous areas inhabitable. *Diodorus Siculus* wrote that in primitive times Egypt “was not a country but one universal sea”.²⁴ Likewise, *Herodotus* wrote that ancient Egypt was a

sea, all except for Thebes. A modern writer has described it as a broad plain over which sheets of water ran 25

The earliest inhabitants were probably a brown-skinned hunting people who took knives and hunting dogs into their graves with them. Remains have been found of *reed shelters* and circular mud huts made of reeds and palm branches, and of mud and *mud brick*. It has been suggested that communities developed along the Nile from an intermingling of Paleolithic hunters, nomadic Libyans, Nubians and southwest Asians. Since the Nile area formed a kind of natural eastern boundary for the Sahara, it is natural that there should have been some intermingling of groups there. The Biblical tribes of the Naphtuhites and Pathrusites, descended from Mizraim, son of Ham and brother of Cush, inhabited ancient Egypt, probably inhabiting the Nile area from earliest times.

PYGMIES AND KHOISANS

In early days, only two groups of people seemed to have penetrated the regions of Africa in and south of the great rain forests that cover the central portion of the continent. These groups were the pygmies and the group today known as the Khoisans. No one knows exactly when they arrived in central and southern Africa, but we do know that they were already well established when the earliest of the others arrived, and that they were isolated there until that time. It seems likely that these groups migrated rather directly to the ancient homelands soon following the dispersion at Babel. The pygmies have always lived in the *rain forests* of the *Congo River basin* and their way of life is totally adapted to the forest and seems to have changed little from the time it first began to be observed.

Archaeologists have unearthed supposedly ancient sites not only in northern Africa, but also around *Lake Victoris, in Rhodesia, and in South Africa*. 26 These sites, identified only by the type of tools found there, were likely Khoisan. The Khoisan were the ancestors of the present-day *Bushmen and Hottentots*. They are genetically related to the Negroes, having kinky hair, broad noses and other negroid features, but their skin and hair is yellowish. Their skin becomes deeply wrinkled at an early age. Like the pygmies, they tend to be short in stature, from 4 ft. 7 in. to 4 ft. 9 in., with small hands and feet and relatively short legs, bulbous foreheads, pointed chins and large buttocks.

Their languages are distinct from the Bantu and characterized by extensive use of *clicks* formed in the mouth and throat. It is thought that the Khoisan once lived extensively all over the temperate southern areas of Africa, as far north as the mouth of the Zaire River and central Tanzania. The pygmies at the southern edge of the Zaire rain forest appear to have mixed with the Bushmen. One Bushman site in *Zambia* has been excavated which is believed to date back to 2300 B.C. and shows a thriving Khoisan culture at that time.

Modern descendants of the Khoisan are divided by lifestyle. The Bushmen are hunter-gatherers using stone tools even today and call themselves Khoi-Khoi. The fact already

mentioned that modern bushmen easily recognize and explain stone tools believed by some to be ancient shows that Bushman culture has changed very little over time and is in fact essentially like what archaeologists call the *Wilton Stone Culture* of long ago. They make many intricate tools of bones, tan hides, use natural pigments, make baskets, and erect wind screens for houses. They paint and carve on rock. They hunt big mammals like zebra, buffalo, antelope and even rhino. They do not hunt grown elephant or small animals and eat few *fish*. They are loosely organized, having no clear leaders. Because they are hunters, they are nomadic and must remain in small bands in order to exist, always fewer than a thousand. All groups of Bushmen believe in a supreme, good God, the *Creator* of all things, the sender of rain, known to them as *Xu or Khi or Xuwa*, who is prayed to and sometimes offered the firstfruits of the hunt. They believe in a life after death in a land with abundant food. They also believe in *ghosts*, and some hold concepts of ghosts similar to reincarnation. They also worship the sun, moon, and stars. They believe that an *evil being* also exists, and people dying a “bad death” are said to go to him, but people don’t claim to know much about him.

The Hottentots are cattle herders who do some hunting as well. They call themselves *San*”. The name Khoisan is a blend of both names – *Khoi-Khoi* and San. They live in larger groups than the Bushmen, probably because the milk provided by their cattle provides a better diet than the uncertainties of the hunt. Hottentot groupings might reach several thousand in population, so they feel the need for more organization and selected chiefs. Today these groups live primarily in the *Kalahari* desert, having lost most of their former territory to the *Bantu tribes* from the north. They worship heroes”, one of whom was their original chief and a great warrior. They believe that the spirits of the dead go with them to the grave but can emerge from the tomb as ghosts, and people sometimes pray to them and offer sacrifices to them. They have also worshipped the moon, and have many *magicians* endowed with supernatural powers. They have always believed in a supreme God who is regarded as omnipresent, as benevolent and holy, as the sender of rain and yet as distant, having no connection with the moral life of the people.

Both Bushmen and Hottentots have little sense of personal property, but a clear sense of territory. Individuals “own” nothing, the tribe or group owns the land. Today only about 50,000 of the Bushmen survive. Trouble developed between the Bushmen and the Hottentots long ago, for the game on which the hunger Bushmen depended tended to move out quickly as the cattle of their Hottentot cousins moved in.

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