

Genesis 10:6-8

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Ham fathered four sons. Cush had six sons, including Nimrod. Raamah had two sons. Nimrod was a great leader.

Ham was the youngest of Noah's three sons ([Genesis 9:24](#)). The sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. The descendants of Ham (Hamites) went southward toward Africa and Asia. The Hamites were the peoples that impacted the Israelites the most. They were the traditional enemies of the Hebrews including Egypt, Canaan, Assyria, and Babylon. They settled near South and Central Arabia, Egypt, the east shore of the Mediterranean, Syria, Crete, and Lydia. Their descendants became the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Africans, Mongolians, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tibetan, Malayan, Polynesian, Eskimos, and American Indians.

Egypt was called the "land of Ham." Ham may have led the migration to Egypt. The name "Khen," an Egyptian god, was the Egyptian equivalent of the Hebrew word "Ham." It is worth noting with respect to Noah's prophecy about Ham ([Genesis 9:24-27](#)), the Egyptians were afflicted with the various plagues; the land of Canaan was delivered by God into the hands of the Israelites under Joshua, who destroyed great numbers of them and causing the rest to flee into Africa or other countries.

The four sons of *Ham* were:

Cush was a son of Ham. He was both a person and a nation of people ([Esther 1:1](#)). It is generally believed he settled south of the Nile river in central and southern Africa (SW. of Egypt, Ethiopia, ancient Nubia or northern Sudan). The sons of Cush were Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca. The Cushites were a major people group (now spelled Kushites) in the southern part of modern-day Sudan and have significant connections with Egypt. Moses' second wife was a Kushite ([Numbers 12:1](#)). Interestingly, Gihon is the name of a spring in a valley outside of Jerusalem. It means "to gush forth." Gihon flows around the whole land of Cush ([Genesis 2:13](#)). The Pishon and Gihon may be terms for the Blue Nile and the White Nile. These two rivers unite at Khartoum to form the mightiest river of Africa, which finally empties into the Mediterranean Sea. Egypt's primary sources of bullion and jewels

were the mines of Nubia, a region south of Egypt that corresponds roughly to present-day Nilotic Sudan. The term “good gold” (high-grade ore) was used in Egyptian commercial transactions. Alluvial gold reflects the ancient method of washing gold-bearing sands and gravel deposited by streams and rivers. Cush founded the royal city of Kish. The title “King of Kish” acquired such prestige that, even after that city was no longer a royal capital, later kings of Mesopotamia retained it in order to signify authority or dominance over Sumer and Akkad and also as a symbol of imperial rule.

Mizraim was a son of Ham. His descendants became the Egyptians ([Genesis 50:11](#); [1 Chronicles 1:8,11](#)). Mizraim is the Hebrew word for Egypt ([Genesis 50:11](#); [Isaiah 11:11](#); [Jeremiah 44:1](#)). See “tents of Ham” in [Psalm 78:51](#).

Put or Phut was a son of Ham. He settled by the Red Sea in modern-day Libya, just west of Egypt ([Ezekiel 38:5](#); [Nahum 3:9](#)).

Canaan was a son of Ham. Canaan can refer to both a person and a geographical location. Canaan’s descendants caused Israel problems and were frequently defeated by them. His ancestors were the Amorites and Hittites. Canaan was affiliated with Egypt and Pharaoh. The land of Canaan would later be conquered by the Israelites and become known as the Holy Land. In general, the land of Canaan refers to the strip of land that lies west of the Jordan River (modern Israel) and includes modern Lebanon and portions of Syria ([Numbers 34:2-12](#)). The term “Canaanite” was found in an eighteenth-century B.C. document found at Mari. Esau’s wives are said to be from the “women of Canaan,” which include a Hittite, Hivite, and Ishmaelite ([Genesis 36:2-3](#)).

Including Cush, his sons, and grandsons there were seven Cushite peoples descended from Ham. They are all to be found in Arabia or close to it. *Cush* had six sons (including Nimrod), they were:

Seba was the first son of Cush. His peoples became the Sabeans from northern Africa, southern Arabia ([Psalm 72:10](#); [Isaiah 43:3](#)). They lived in modern-day Yemen and had a reputation for being tall and fearsome. They became traders, even trading slaves ([Job 1:15](#); [Psalm 72:15](#); [Isaiah 43:3,45:14,60:6](#)). Herodotus and Josephus both state that Seba was believed to be the ancient capital of Ethiopia, which Cambyses had named Meroe.

Havilah was the second born to Cush. His descendants lived in southwest Arabia ([Genesis 25:18](#); [1 Samuel 15:7](#)). The Pishon is said to be a meandering

river associated with “the land of Havilah.” There are two biblical sites identified by the name Havilah, one in Egypt, the other in Arabia. The Arabian place is described as a source of gold and precious materials. The river Pishon flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there ([Genesis 2:11-12](#)). Bdellium isn’t mentioned again except in [Numbers 11:7](#).

Sabtah or Sabta was the third son of Cush (see alt. spelling [1 Chronicles 1:9](#)). His descendants settled along the Red Sea in southern Arabia near the Persian Gulf. He was identified with ancient Shabwat, the capital of Hadramaut in south Arabia. Josephus identified it with Astaboras, modern Abare, but other scholars suggest that it refers to Sabota, the capital of Hadramaut, nearly 270 miles north of Aden.

Raamah was the fourth son of Cush, *and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan*. His descendants were found in southwest Arabia or modern Yemen. They were traders of spices, precious stones, and gold. Raamah was possibly ancient Ragmatum, the capital of the oasis of Nagrah, located in north Yemen but southwest Saudi Arabia today.

Sabteca was the fifth son of Cush. He settled near the Persian Gulf. Possibly at Assabbak, near Medina, and Sembrachate, a trading center located in north Yemen near the coast.

Raamah had two sons:

Sheba was a son of Raamah. He settled in northern Arabia. Traded in spices, precious stones and gold ([Ezekiel 27:22, 38:13](#)). Do not confuse with Sheba in verse 28 in southern Arabia.

Dedan was a son of Raamah and settled in northern Arabia. They were traders in ivory tusks and ebony, as well as, clothing and blankets ([Isaiah 21:13](#); [Ezekiel 27:15,20](#); [1 Chronicles 1:9](#)). They traded spices by caravan along an international trade route in present-day Al-Alula seventy miles southwest of Tema in northern Arabia.

*Now Cush became the father of **Nimrod**; he became a mighty one on the earth.* Nimrod was the sixth and last son of Cush. His people and his rule extended through Babylonia and into Assyria. In a prophecy, the Assyrians were warned that Israel would be delivered from their invasion (Micha 5:5-6). Scholars try to associate him with Naram-Sin, grandson of Sargon I of Akkad, who dominated

a great portion of the Near East for about fifty years during the last quarter of the third millennium B.C. or Tukulti-Ninurta I of Assyria. Nimrod was the first to use the title "King of the Four Quarters of the World." His achievements were widely commemorated, and he was the subject of numerous tales and legends.

Biblical Text

⁶ The sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. ⁷ The sons of Cush were Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. ⁸ Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth.