



The Sinaitic Light

The Black Jew NOT a Myth

Study Article No. XIII

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This article uses the English terms for Elohim (God), Yah (Father) Yahoshua (Christ).

Objective and Learning Outcome

Objective:

The objective of this lesson is to answer a commonly asked question, “how can you be black and be a Jew”? This question is asked by every ethnic group in the world, those who are ignorant of the *original* pigmentation and hues of post Exodus Israelites. The question is often asked by Anglo Europeans (so-called white people) because they have been programmed to see black as a negative color which has been exacerbated by print and tele media to promote a racialized agenda to disparage so-called black people. Yet, the original pigmentation of Hebrews, Israelites and Jews, was and is a black hue. In other words, hues that would be regarded in today’s vernacular as negro orientation. Therefore, this lesson seeks to demonstrate through science, scholarship, historians, and the Bible that the actual pigmentations of the original Israelite were classified as Africoid hues, thus, ranging in the so-called black color spectrum. The objective of this lesson is not to make pigmentation a salvation issue. It is written to respond to the racist sentiments that have been directed towards African Americans and Black people in general about their claims to a Semitic lineage, thus Hebrewism.

Learning Outcome:

Upon completion of this study, the reader will:

1. Identify scholarship that demonstrate that some African Americans are of an Israelite ancestry;
2. Identify the actual pigmentation of biblical Hebrew Israelites;
3. Understand the expectation that God has for every Israelite;
4. Understand that being a Jew is not limited to one’s visage, but one’s righteousness as it has been explicated in the covenant (Yah’s code of ethics).

Given the remedial nature of this topic. This composition was not written as a study guide. It was written in response to overwhelming inquiries from so-called white people (some racist, some not) who have challenged the claim that African Americans, Africans, and people of color of the negro persuasion have made about their ethnicity and culture.

Introduction

The world today has become fascinated with what many regard as *a new black phenomenon within America, Africa, and Europe*, the emergence of Black Jews. Millions seem to appear out of nowhere claiming to be the descendants of biblical Israelites. They have been covered by CNN, 60 Minutes, PBS, Nova, and many other media outlets. The phenomenon has been researched by historians such as Dr. Tudor Parfitt, Professor of Modern Jewish Studies in the University of London; Dr. Allen Godbey (1864 - 1948), Professor of Old Testament History at Duke University, and Dr. Edith Bruder, a French ethnologist who specializes in the study of African Judaism. Many more scholars who have studied and researched these claims such as Rabbi Harry Rozenberg and the late Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein (1951-2019), all validate the claims of most Black Jews throughout the world. This declaration and the claims of many Blacks have also been reinforced by athletes like Amar'e Stoudemire (basketball player) and rappers like Kendrick Lamar who claim Israelite heritage and have influenced many others to research, study and trace their history. Controversial statements by comedian Nick Canon, and football player, Desean Jackson have elevated discussions of *some* Africans and African Americans being of Semitic and Hebrew ancestry.

There are many more celebrities that acknowledge either Jewish heritage or Israelite descent. These people have caught the attention of the media, mainstream Judaism, and evangelicals who now have to respond to the claims of African Americans who call themselves Jews or Israelites. With limited information about this society, many Ashkenazi Jews and Anglo Europeans¹ struggle with how to respond when these declarations materialize because they have not researched these assertions for themselves. Anglo Europeans and Ashkenazi Jews have merely dismissed these claims as propaganda from Black radicals or Blacks just looking for identity because they don't know who they are. Some within the European and Ashkenazi community argue that such a proposition from African Americans are anti-Semitic sentiments designed to disparage so-call European (Ashkenazi) Jews. This lesson is written to address this so-called phenomenon, and to articulate the origins of these claims by so-called Blacks or African Americans throughout the Western Hemisphere, Africa, and Europe. This is so those who are interested or intrigued by these claims may be properly informed through scholarship, not myth, nor legend, lie, or retorts from the racially biased and ignorance of non-African American ethnic groups.

Very few people in the world today acknowledge the existence of what many refer to as Black Jews and there are many of them throughout the world. They are seldom recognized by the Anglo European populous (and other nations) because tradition for the past one hundred years is

¹ Anglo European or Anglo Saxon denotes Germanic (Angles, Saxons and Jutes) and Scandinavian tribes that invaded Britain in the fifth century AD, settling Great Britain and infusing themselves with the indigenous Celts who were the Britons. The proper biblical designations for these Europeans are Gomerians, Japheth's oldest son. (Gen. 10:3)

that Jews were and are White people.² (In this lesson, *Anglo European*, the proper name for so-called Whites will at times, be used.) In addition, so-called Blacks are not looked upon very favorably by Anglo Europeans or other nations, partly because of how they have been portrayed through the media for the past several hundred years and because of racialization originating from a misinterpretation of Genesis 4:5, 9:20-26 and false sciences. The shallow understanding that exists amongst most Anglo Europeans is that Jews are not Black. They are so-called White or a European orientation. In truth, Jews (Israelites) are an amalgamated people appearing in all pigmentation groups; however, this lesson will only address the group that is the most disregarded, disparaged, disrespected, disenfranchised, and displaced within the Judaic community, the Black Jew.

The Black Jew with his variegated melanated types (various hues of blackness) historically are the original Jews in terms of pigmentation. Scholars and historians allude to this supposition. Roman Historian, Tacitus (AD 56 - 120) when inquiring about the origins of the Israelites said, “Many, again, say that they were a *race of Ethiopian origin*, who in the time of king Cepheus were driven by fear and hatred of their neighbors to seek a new dwelling-place.”³ Strabo (BC 63 - AD 23), Greek Geographer and Historian says they are mixed tribes of Egyptians. “These districts (of Jerusalem and Joppa) lie towards the north; they are inhabited generally, and each place in particular, by mixed tribes of Egyptians, Arabians, and Phoenicians. Of this description are the inhabitants of Galilee, of the plain of Jericho, and of the territories of

² The term White as an ethnic class was coined by the Jacobean playwright, Thomas Middleton. Middleton introduced the term *white people* for a play, *The Triumphs of Truth* first performed on October 29, 1613. The term was later adopted by the ruling class colonists in Virginia (elitists), to set lower-class Anglo Europeans apart from slaves and colored Europeans called negroes and other ethnic groups that partnered together. The lower-class Anglo Europeans were rebelling against the elitist colonist and the corporate oligarchs who sided with Native Americans in fur trades. They felt under-represented by their colonial government led by the King Charles I appointed governor, William Berkeley. They also felt unprotected when the Native Americans attacked them. This revolt was called *Bacon's Rebellion of 1676* led by Nathaniel Bacon. The ruling class responded by hardening the racial caste of slavery and introduced a special class of people called “Whites” in 1681, thereby separating all Anglo Europeans (upper and lower-class) from their negro counterparts who held the same grievances (divide and conquer). The ruling class agenda was facilitated by laws that did not change the financial status of the poor Anglo Europeans who were rebelling against the ruling class colonials. It just gave them a sense of power that they felt they never had which deterred them from forming a united ethnic mob against government. With the adoption of the term “white,” the White race was created strengthened by the Virginia Slave Codes of 1705, regulated activities and interactions between negroes and Anglo Europeans of Virginia. Codes that were not present prior to Bacon's rebellion. These codes stated that “Whites” could not be brought to court by Blacks, Whites could not be employed by Blacks and Blacks could not own firearms. Blacks associating with Whites, would be whipped, branded, or maimed and many other racist laws that were created and enforced by the new nation of people called “Whites.”

No longer would one be considered, Scottish, Irish, French, English, Scandinavian, German etc. in America as they were previously identified. They would now be known as “White.” A superior class over other ethnic bodies, dividing the ethnic classes and *subjugating nonwhites*. The colonial British Americans embraced this term for themselves and everyone with their complexion including southern Italians, Greeks and Ashkenazi Jews who they would classify as *contingency whites*. The colonist wrote laws to create a “White America for the White Brits,” but later included all white Europeans, dropping their national origin and referring to them as an American or White American. All other ethnic types would be relegated to designations such as African American, Chinese American, Native American, Hispanic American, Arab American etc. The term American would be reserved for those of “White European origins and pigmentations.” Thus, to be an American is to be white.

³ Tacitus, *The Histories*, Book V, c. 110 CE [emphasis added].

Philadelphia and Samaria, surnamed Sebaste by Herod; but though there is such a mixture of inhabitants, the report most credited, among many things believed respecting the temple and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *is that the Egyptians were the ancestors of the present Jews.*⁴

The Egyptians were a black people of various hues, from *light brown, reddish brown to dark black, especially* when the Sudanese occupied Egypt. The Sudanese occupied Egypt under King Alara and relatives, Kashta and Piye in the 25th Nubian dynasty, BC 790. The Nubians and Cushites, which are commonly referred to as

Ethiopians dwelled in Egypt during Israel's sojourn. To the right is an Egyptian bust of Tiye who is believed to have lived from about BC 1398 - 1338. Tiye was the wife of Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep III and the mother of Pharaoh Akhenaten and



grandmother of Pharaoh Tutankhamun (King Tut). Her bust can be found in the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin, Germany. In summary, the Israelites emerged from amongst a people group who were so-called colored (Nilotes, Cushites, Nubians and Libyans). Today, these people would be regarded as *negroes* (black). The admixture in Egypt along with those who were along the Nile allowed Israelites to carry various black hues, where previously they may have been browner. This claim can be attested in the Bible during the first temple era (BC 900 - 700).

The Shulamite woman of Israel (Song. 6:13) says to Solomon's maidens, "I am black but



lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, Like the tents of Kedar, Like the curtains of Solomon" (Song. 1:5-6; 5:11). The Shulamite woman's natural complexion was a light brown complexion, perhaps reddish-brown or honey brown.

However, her brothers left her in the field and she became *shachor* שָׁחֹר, which in Hebrew means black.⁵

Kedar is the keyword here.

Dr. John Phillips writes,

"The name Kedar is generally applied to the nomadic Ishmaelites. It is frequently a descriptive term for Arabic Bedouin tribes in general. Usually, the tents of the Bedouins were made of goatskins and were often black in color" (Phillips: 41).



When the second Temple fell in BC 606, Jeremiah described the complexion of some of the most radiant Jewish males in Israel before the destruction and after the destruction when sicknesses, starvation, and diseases overtook them.

⁴ Strabo, The Geography, Book XVI.ii.34-38, 40, 46, c. 22 CE [emphasis added].

⁵ James Strong's, H7838.

Jeremiah writes, “Her princes were purer than snow, whiter than milk; their *bodies were more ruddy* than coral, the beauty of their form was like sapphire. Now their face is *blacker than soot*,⁶ they are not recognized in the streets; their skin has shriveled on their bones; it has become as dry as wood.” (Lam. 4:7-8, ESV) [emphasis added]. Jeremiah identifies the princes in Israel as *reddish-brown* (ruddy) who had become *blacker than soot*. Many have asserted that Jeremiah is referring to them as pure snow and white milk. This is not the proper understanding of their visage. Snow and milk are about their righteousness, their purity, not their visage or image. He describes them as *more ruddy than coral* prior to the fall of the Temple, then after the destruction their *face is blacker than soot*.



Phinehas Ben Eleazar, Ben Aaron, Yah’s high priest (Num. 25:10-13; Judg. 20:28) has been identified as a Hebrew of *negro or black origin*. Not just black, but a Nubian black, hence jet black or charcoal black. The *Oxford Bible Studies on Line* says, “For the Egyptians used to these color variations, the term for their southern neighbors was Neḥesi, “southerner,” which eventually also came to mean “the black” or “the Nubian.” This Egyptian root (nḥsj, with the preformative p’ as a definite article) appears in Exodus 6.25 as the personal name of Aaron’s grandson Phinehas (= Pa-neḥas)” (*The Oxford Companion*). Dr. Daniel I. Block, Professor Emeritus of Old Testament at Wheaton College, writes, “The name Phinehas is Egyptian in origin, being derived from p’-nḥśy, ‘the dark-skinned, the negro’ (Block, 561). Thus, lexically, the Bible seems to reveal to its readers that Phinehas was a Hebrew of a *Nubian complexion* in contrast to the browner black complexion of Israelites and Egyptians.

⁶ Some will argue that the consecrated ones were seen as black as soot because they were covered in *black* sackcloth and ashes as an expression of their mourning. Putting ashes on one’s face and or body was common during fasting, mourning and prayer (Est. 4:1,3; Dan. 9:3; Jon. 3:6; Matt. 11:21; Rev. 6:12). Yet, this is not the majority opinion. The publishers of the Amplified Bible write, [Prolonged famine has made] them look blacker than soot and darkness . . . (Hendrickson Publishers: 989). Longman views the phrase blacker than soot as a metaphor for the noble’s wickedness, as white is a metaphor for righteousness (Tremper Longman III: 382). Hays views the phrase, blacker than soot as a state of being due to the famine. Not black as the color, but they have become darkened (Hays: 349). The point here is that when so-called Whites or Arabs become sick or starved, they do not turn black, those of various negro hues do.

King David was also described as being *ruddy*; the same word applied to the nobles in Jeremiah. “And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance” (1 Sam. 17:42, ESV). Ruddy is the Hebrew word



admoni אָדְמוֹנִי.⁷ The word means reddish (of the hair or the complexion): —red, ruddy. However, the question is what type of red? An indicator is when God calls for an *adom* אָדָם,⁸ a red, heifer (cow) to be sacrificed (Num. 19:2). The cow in the illustration is a dark brownish-red; not white, pale or pasty, but a deep brown. Dr. Merrill C. Tenney, author and editor of The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, writes: “Ruddy (Heb. *Adhmoni*, red), a word used to refer to a red or fair complexion, in contrast to the dark skin of the Hebrews (I

Sam. 16:12; 17:42; Song. 5:10) (Tenney: 733). This is not the ruddy that Anglo Europeans are familiar with, which is a result of *rosacea*, *windburn*, and *sunburn* and not what the Bible depicts with Israelites.

By the time Israelites transitioned to the first temple era, nearly a thousand years later, some Israelites had become lighter in their pigmentation due to intercultural marriages with the Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, etc. However, they still retained a darker hue. Extrabiblical sources attests to this supposition. Dr. David Goldenberg, Associate Professor, University of Pennsylvania and former Professor in Jewish Religion and Thought, University of Cape Town, raises this conversation in the Talmud. He begins by quoting Rabbi Ishamel (AD 90 - 135), a second-century Judean who, quite frankly in this point in history, is writing about the complexion of an *amalgamated* group of Israelites, “Rabbi Ishmael said: ‘The Jews—may I be like an expiatory sacrifice for them [an expression of love]—are like the boxwood tree [*eshkeroa*’], neither black nor white, but in between.’ This statement records a second-century (R. Ishmael) perception that the skin color of Jews is midway between black and white. More precisely it is light brown, the color of the boxwood tree. This early perception of the intermediate, light-brown shade of the Jewish complexion is corroborated by a number of papyri from the Ptolemaic period in Egypt that describe the complexion of various Jews as ‘honey-colored’” (Goldenberg: 95).



The reality is this; according to the Bible, five hundred years after the death of Moses, the Israelites carried various hues of brown to black as we see today in the so-called African American community. Jeremiah said that his people had become blacker than soot, and the Shulamite woman said that she had become blacker than a *black goat* whose hide was used to make tents. These expressions are used in the Black community where the dominant pigmentation is brown, yellowish-brown, bronze, reddish-brown, honey brown and light black

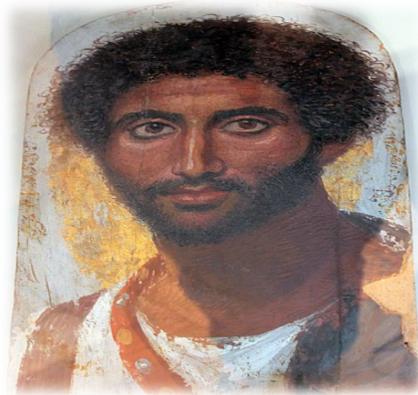
⁷ James Strong’s H132.

⁸ Ibid, H119.

(brownish-black) against those who are dark black or a blue-black, such as the Nubians and Cushites (Sudanese), a people so black that Yah asked the Israelites if they could change their skin. The question suggests that this complexion was not the normative in the Israelite community (Jer. 13:23). For example.

In Acts 13:1, a disciple named Simeon was called Niger, a Latin loan word which means black (Comfort: 495) and thus, he was referred to as Simeon the Black (NLT). Freedman states that the appellation *niger*, “black” may have been applied to him to denote an African origin (Freedman: 964), hence a dark black Israelite. His description of Simeon within the community would allow them to deduce that Simeon was an extremely black person, perhaps with a Nubian or Sudanese complexion (blue-black), yet of Semitic descent from Noah’s oldest son Shem. Many Israelites lived in Africa and came up to Jerusalem at different times, and as one can expect especially on holy days, to worship at the temple (Acts 2:5). The Ethiopian or more properly Sudanese eunuch is a good illustration. It is apparent that he was devout and educated as he had a scroll in his possession and was reading it (Acts 8:27).

Dr. Joan Taylor, Professor of Christian Origins and Second Temple Judaism at King’s College London presents a Mummy Portrait of a young officer with sword belt (AD 100) displayed in the Berlin Museum. Taylor offers this depiction as the most likely depiction of Christ (Yahoshua) in the first century AD. Here she depicts Yahoshua as a black man of North African heritage, and such a depiction would be accurate, as Israel is in North Africa. Thus, the depiction of Christ as she most imagines based upon geography and the ethnic demography of the people living in this region at that time is a black person whom Anglos would regard as a Negro. The depiction of Christ based upon the best depiction of scholars is an Africoid male of dark ruddy, brownish pigmentation. These sentiments accord with some of the oldest depictions of Christ.



Dr. Robert Eisler (1882 - 1949), Austrian Jewish historian of art and culture, and Biblical scholar uses ancient documents which include Slavonic documents lately discovered to recreate Josephus testimony of Yahshua. In his book titled *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist: According to Flavius Josephus’ recently discovered ‘Capture of Jerusalem’ and the other Jewish and Christian Sources.*’ He writes.

At that time there appeared a certain man of magic power. . . if it be meet to call him a man whose name is Jesus, whom certain Greeks call a Son of a God, but his disciples call the true prophet . . . he was a man of simple appearance, mature age, *dark skin*, short growth, three cubits tall [about four-and-a half feet] hunchbacked, with a long face, with a long nose, eyebrows meeting above the nose, so that the spectators could take fright, with scanty curly hair; but having a line in the middle of the head after the fashion of the Nazaraeans, with an undeveloped beard [emphasis added] (*Biblical Studies/cultural Studies*, 382).

Eisler writes that the original passage recorded Yahoshua's skin as dark (black) but was later edited and replaced with reddish, and thus white, which many revisions of this document have recorded. He says, "Fortunately, one of them has preserved the word 'dark-skinned' which must be genuine, because it obviously contradicts the statement '*cum facie sine ruga et macula aliqua, quam rubor venustat,*' which is certainly of Christian origin" (Eisler, 420). *Cum facie sine ruga et macula aliqua, quam rubor venustat* translates "without any wrinkle or stain, embellished by a slightly reddish complexion." (Roelof van den Broek, 60). Eisler asserts that the original depiction of Christ was of a black skinned Semite which was *later amended by the church to reflect a reddish tint of whiteness*. This data merely confirms what many other scholars have submitted for hundreds of years, and that is the idea that the church, when possible tried to depict main characters of the Bible as Europeans or white. White washing the principals of the Bible is the *primary reason* so many people in the world today think that Jews are white people.

African Jew

Claims of Semitic (Shemitic), hence Jewish descent, cannot be made by Blacks and substantiated merely because they (Blacks) say so. Sadly, the creditability of Blacks is lacking amongst the Anglo European (White) populous because of racism and racial programming, etc. It's even lacking amongst Blacks themselves and therefore, it is necessary to involve science and unbiased researchers to substantiate this thesis. "In the mid-1990s a study was conducted by Spurdle and Jenkins to determine whether the Lemba, [an African tribe in South Africa] may have had genetic markers which would indeed point to a partly non-African origin. Such markers were found and indicated that there was a general Semitic contribution to the Lemba gene pool..." (Parfitt, 57). Further testing would be done by Mark Thomas and would conclude that Lemba "could have a purely Judaic origin" (Parfitt, 57). Geneticists and ethnographers confer upon the recently proposed theory that the Lemba, and many other so-called black Africans, are of Semitic descent and "originate via the male line – outside of Africa" (Parfitt: 58). Consequently, tradition supported by data and history demonstrates that there are Negroes who are not Hamitic (African) but Semitic.

The Israeli newspaper, *Haaretz*, published a story on November 14, 2008 revealing that many anthropologists regards Jews of the second century as African oriented people. News Correspondent for *Haaretz*, Ofri Ilany, writes in his subheading "Israeli anthropologist claims the subjects of the Kingdom of Judea looked more like black Africans" (Ilany: 2008). He goes on to write that, "The accepted assumption has been that early Hebrews resembled the people now living in the Middle East or the Mediterranean Basin. However, an Israeli anthropologist researching the question has now made a surprising claim: the subjects of the Kingdom of Judea in the Second Temple Period looked more like black Africans. This theory arose after Prof. Yair Ben David of Tel-Aviv University conducted the first-ever facial reconstruction of its kind" (Ilany: 2008).

Science is demonstrating that the occupants of ancient Israel and Judea were an amalgamation of people, which the Bible will sustain. The children of Israel ranged in hues from a coal black to a reddish brown, and were identified as an African or negro people. This accords with the Shulamite's statement about her pigmentation, Jeremiah's testimony about the color of the Judeans in the first temple era, Phineas's pigmentation, the account of David's pigmentation supported by Dr. Merrill Tenney's description of the pigmentation of an average Jew and the extreme blackness of Simeon. These descriptions all demonstrate that the average complexion of an Israelite during the first temple period between BC 900 - 700 was what societies would refer to as black or Negroid. These descriptions and features do not point to Arabs or Whites. They are pointing to those who are called Blacks, African-Americans, Negroes, and any other ethnic designation society places upon this ethnic group. *The point is that Israelites of antiquity were a black people.* This is not to discount other pigmentations and other ethnic groups, but they were a black people that migrated from Israel and Judea to various African countries establishing Israelite communities. These Hebraic groups had been in Africa for thousands of years practicing the Jewish faith. Some converted to Islam and Christianity for political and religious reasons that were centered upon persecution and social gratuities, while others retained *some* customs and traditions of their Hebrew ancestors.

This leads us to where we are today and the impetus for this lesson. The Igbo community is one of several Black Israelite communities in Africa and nearly 60-70 percent of them were displaced by the transatlantic slave trade. "Documents generated in the Americas containing ethnicity listings point toward an overwhelming Igbo majority among enslaved Africans from the Bight of Biafra, and a diminishing majority during the nineteenth century. Chambers, Gomez, and Walsh, writing about the African population in the British North American mainland during the eighteenth century, assumed that the vast majority of Africans arriving from the Bight of Biafra were Igbo. The highest estimate of Igbo or Igbo-speaking slaves was published by Chambers, who claimed that it was 'likely or at least possible' that they were 80 percent of the Africans arriving from the Bight of Biafra, although he subsequently revised this estimate slightly downward" (*Igbo in the Atlantic World*: 140).

What is interesting about this community is that many of them have always self-identified as Black Jews. This classification has been ratified by many white Jewish scholars, anthropologists, and historians who are continuing to discourse with these Black Jews. Rabbi Harry Rozenberg, has been presenting information about Black Jews in America who came during the transatlantic slave trade. CNN did a special on the Igbo tribe and documented some of their histories, which have been passed down throughout the generations. Customs were observed by European researchers and missionaries like Thomas Basden and Daniel Lis from the Institute for Jewish Studies, University of Basel, Switzerland. Chika Oduah said of Lis, "He is one of the foremost researchers on Jewish identification among the Igbo. He says 'there has been a clear continuity of Jewish identity among the Igbo. It's not just something that happened yesterday'" (Oduah: CNN).

Dr. David Eltis, Professor Emeritus of History at Emory University, maintains a database of slaves who were still being shipped illegally to the Americas and other locations in the mid-nineteenth century. What is interesting about this slave manifest is that many of these slaves had theophoric names, which means names that have God's holy name embedded in them, names that terminate with Yah (Zechariah, Nehemiah, and Jeremiah), or names that begin or end with El, meaning God, such as Elisha, Elijah or Michael. An example of such is a captured slave labeled ID 653. The slave's name is Yaho or Yehu, which means Yah is he (1 Kin. 16:1). He is male, 69 inches in height, 26 years old and is of the Eboo (Igbo) community. He was traveling aboard the Anna Maria in 1821. Other tribes outside of the Igbo community who were Black Jews, either influenced by the Igbo or a separate Jewish tribe altogether was the Calabar. A female named Beneyah or Benayah, meaning Yah has built (2 Sam. 8:18), was aboard the Constante. Her ID number was 1063, age 19, height 55 inches. Eltis writes:

The genesis and history of Voyages Database is laid out on a separate page. In this essay, we wish to alert users to its structure and to its limitations as well as its strengths. The data set contains thousands of names of ship owners and ship captains, but it contains no names of the millions of slaves carried to the Americas. On the other hand, this website does provide the African names of and personal information about 91,491 captives who were found onboard slave vessels detained by naval cruisers attempting to suppress the slave trade in the nineteenth century. These people can be searched and analyzed using the names interface. Although of limited utility for persons seeking their own family histories, our data set does provide an extraordinary source for historical reconstruction of the history of the African peoples in America (Eltis: 2018).

In some parts of America, the Igbo men were especially prized because of their strength, tractability, and endurance. However, many male Igbos developed the nickname "refuse slave" because they would run away or commit suicide rather than be enslaved. The women were considered to be very attractive, smart and hard workers. Nevertheless, they and the Calabar were highly sought-after slaves by the European slavers (*Igbo in the Atlantic World*: 142). These facts led Dr. Allen Howard Godbey, Professor of Old Testament, Hebrew history, Archeology, and Semitics at Duke University to say, "Hundreds of thousands of slaves were brought to America from this Western Africa during the days of the traffic, beginning nearly four hundred years ago . . . How much more of Judaism survived among West African Negroes in that earlier time? *As persecuted communities, they were rather more in danger than other Negroes of being raided by war parties and sold as slaves.* It may be considered certain that many partially Judaized Negroes were among the slaves in America. How many of them might still hold some Jewish customs here is another question? (Godbey, 246).

The Negroes that came to America as slaves sang songs referred to as Negro Spirituals, songs of Israel or Zion. Europeans did not teach them these songs. The churches they established were named after places in Israel. Dr. Rebecca Mark, Professor of English at Tulane University, shows a picture of a church pew and says, “Markings (possibly cursive Hebrew) painted on pews made by enslaved parishioners at the First African Baptist Church in Savannah, Georgia. (Photo courtesy of First African Baptist Church, Savannah, GA.)” (Mark, 216).



“The Church Standard”, an Episcopalian newspaper published an article in 1897 entitled *A Deaf and Dumb Wonder*. It reads in part,

“There has been in the city for the last few days a young African negro who claims to be a Hebrew. He is deaf and dumb and black.... He carries a pad of paper with him and answers all questions by writing them in Hebrew and Loschen Khodish [holy language]. What excites the most wonder is that he writes Loschen Khodish very rapidly. It is the language of the books of Moses and is made a special study of, spoken and written with ease only by the rabbis and highly educated Hebrews. This negro was sent to one of the rabbis of Hartford, who is perfectly satisfied that he is a Hebrew. He says that he came from a large town in Africa, where there is a tribe of about 20,000 black Hebrews who speak Loschen Khodish and are quite prosperous. He also says that his father is a rabbi in that town, and that is why his father took the trouble to teach him to write these languages, which needed an extra amount of labor on account of his being deaf and dumb. He says his people not only write Loschen Khodish, but it is their speaking language as well. He left home a few years ago and has seen a good deal of the world. In each town he hunts up the Jewish section, and there they give him clothes, food, and money. . . What surprises him, he writes, is that no Hebrew knows of his countrymen in Africa” (The Church Standard: 118) [emphasis added].

The amazement from this Black Jew, is that Anglo Europeans did not know that there were Black Jewish communities in Africa who wrote and spoke fluent Hebrew. In this present era, so-called whites and other ethnicities, especially White Jews, *typically* do not believe that there is such a thing as a Black Jew or that Jews were originally black. African-American and Black claims of Jewish ethnicity throughout the world, especially in America, are often met with ridicule, disdain, rejection, and just outright denial because of racism. Claimants are often accused of being Black racists because of the assertion that he or she is an Israelite. The assumption from many other ethnic groups and many Blacks who have been systematically programmed by Anglo European societies, is that these are just a few Blacks trying to capture an identity, sense of purpose, etc., by attempting to infringe on the White Jews legacy of being God’s chosen people (this is far from the case). Oral tradition, science, history, and academia

support long-held claims in America and throughout the world that Jews were and are so-called black, viz., an Africoid people, and have always been considered to be a variegated pigmented ethnic group. Additionally, more data is emerging each year to support this premise.

A Danish Jew records his interactions and observation of Africans on the gold coast of Africa (Guinea) and writes in a letter to his family the things he observed. Wulff Joseph Wulff, writing between 1836 - 1842, says, "The Negroes do not use oars but rather a paddle of wood that much resembles a shovel but has points at the end and is shaped like a heart. They stick [all] these [paddles] into the water at once, in the same rhythm, and at times perform many tricks. The songs they sing while paddling is a mixture of the Negro language, English, Portuguese, as well as Hebrew. There are, in fact, Jews here among the Negroes, but the truth is that they are just as ignorant heathens as the others *and do not know where they originated*" (Wulff, 93). Most Anglo Europeans do not believe Jews are black or that the original Jew would be classified in today's vernacular as being a negro. But history says they were and are. Why the suppression of such information?

Knowledge grew in the 1960's and 70's as Blacks were coming into their own identity. They were motivated, inspired, and driven by scholars who were beginning to reveal a lot about the Negro in North and South America and the Islands. Black intellectualism was emerging. African Americans began to learn quite a bit about their history as it was told by Europeans and Muslims outside of America, information that had been suppressed for 2000 years. They obtained in-depth knowledge of the slave trade, people in the slave trade, and people involved with the slave trade. A lot of history was unearthed. One prominent piece of information that emerged was, many Blacks that came to North and South America were Jews or *had been* Jews before converting to Christianity and Islam under duress. This information would give rise to the presence of "Black Jews" in America who sought to reclaim their identity and heritage. Their objective, like the Nation of Islam, was to purge themselves from the corporate systemic racist religion that had enslaved and oppressed them in the name of the Anglo's Jesus Christ. The Israelite community have been arguing their claim and merely reclaiming what was rightfully and inherently theirs, their identity. This flight to Hebraism *had* and *has* nothing to do with race. In the process of publicly revealing the atrocities of the "new Whites and Ashkenazi Jews" who sought to marginalize, dehumanize, and disenfranchise them; Black Jews pushed back by unearthing information that White and Black intellectuals buried or suppressed for hundreds of years and at least from the seventeenth century (Parfitt, 113).

African American Jews believe they are Israelites because of (1) tradition, (2) prophecy and (3) historical attestations. We have already engaged with brevity the tradition corroborated by Anglo Europeans (White Folk); now, prophecy. The Bible states that the original Jew (and those within the covenant) shall be removed from their land and ill-treated by the various countries in which they live. They will never be able to create economic power as a nation, they would be marginalized, disenfranchised, murdered, called by bywords (because their identity would not be recognized by other nations) and that Yah would cause their identity (name) to cease from amongst the nations where they have been scattered or deported (Deut. 28:15-65).

Finally, their land will be occupied by various European bodies until the Messiah returns (Luke 21:24). These markers would identify them until the coming of the Messiah. This was established long before science intervened (DNA Testing) and the documentation of various European and Islamic witnesses during the medieval era.

For Black people, claiming to be an Israelite is not an attempt to claim something that is not theirs. It is an attempt to articulate who they are based upon what has been passed down from generation to generation. It is a desire to practice the faith their ancestors once practiced, long before Christianity or Islam was imposed upon them. They continue to pass a tradition to their children that they were the “Israelites of the Bible, Israelites, true Jews or the chosen people,” not Africans. There were many Blacks that came from Africa during the slave trade. Some of them were indigenous Africans, but a great many were Semitic non-Africans, “Black Jews.” It was (and is) very difficult to differentiate between them because their pigmentation was the same or similar, although their features were different from the indigenous Africans in many respects. Yet, they were all called Negroes by European slave traders

For most Black Judaic organizations and communities, it is not about one’s blackness and Israelite ethnicity. It is not a *movement* based upon one’s disenchantment with the world. It is not a movement or an ideology at all. It is re-acculturation through identity awareness. It is about reclaiming something that was stolen, hidden and suppressed by other ethnic groups, mainly the Anglo European Jew and the Anglo European American now referred to so proudly by the racist term “White.” It is about returning to the covenantal decrees that Yah gave His people and their descendants. There is no racist or supremacist agenda for most Black Jews. Sadly, there are a number of Black Judaic organizations that are just as racist as the Ku Klux Klan, so-called Alt-right white nationalist groups as well as many within the Anglo European Jewish community and any other racist supremacist group. These Black Jews may be descendants of the biblical Israelites, but due to their racist ideology as an attribute of their doctrine, they by no means accord with the faith that Yah has called His people to proclaim.

Yah is not a racist. He is a separatist Who has commanded that all come to Him. Regardless of skin color, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, we are to come to Him in truth, love, righteousness, and the love for *humanity*. Yah’s people are to separate themselves from every pagan Gentile tradition introduced by the world, every political and politicized agenda that represents the antithesis of who Yah is, every act that is immoral, unclean, and perverse to be joined to Him by covenant (Lev. 18:24-30; 20:24-27; Jer. 10:1-2; 31:31). This covenant was not made with a particular pigmentation in mind. It is a covenant that has been made with all human beings who choose to enter by faith in the name of Yahoshua the Messiah (Gal. 3:26-29). It is these people that are referred to as the Israel of God, which is to say what Yah envisioned an Israelite to be (Gal. 6:16).

New Covenant Congregation of Israel (NCCI) is a Messianic Sinaitic community composed of African Americans, Indians, Hispanics, Asians, Africans, and Anglo Europeans. All ethnicities are welcome, and all are Israelites by *adoption*. We do affirm that *many* of our ancestors who were brought to America from Africa were a part of the Hebrew community. But

we also affirm that this does not make us righteous. We are merely practicing the culture of our ancestors without Jewish tradition and without the paganism of neo-Christianity. Our society practices Messianic Sinaiticism in the faith of the Messiah to win Yah's approval, love, and acceptance, so we may receive that beatific vision of immortality. One should not be concerned with whom the Jews are, and whom the Jews are not, *ethnically* (1 Tim. 1:4; Titus 3:9). A Jew card does not entitle one to salvation. Only righteousness will (Rom. 2:25-29).

NCCI cares about righteousness and loving all humanity because there is only one race of people, and that is the human race (Acts 17:26). NCCI acknowledges that the covenants were made with the nation of Israel who later became a mixed multitude, an amalgamated people from Egypt (Ex. 12:38; 24:8; Jer. 31:31; Ps. 147:19-20; Zech. 8:23; John 4:22; Rom. 3:1-2). The purpose of Yah calling the Israelites and giving them His covenant was so they could master it. At the appointed time, Israel was to teach all nations Yah's code of ethics so they would be led into the bond of Yah's beautiful New Covenant (Is. 2:1-4; 8:7-8; Zech. 8:23; Rev. 22:17). This is the covenant that was also made with the nation of Israel, no one else (Jer. 31:31-37). NCCI is attempting to fulfill the proclamation to evangelize Yah's Sinaitic covenant ratified in the blood of Yahoshua to bring our brothers and sisters, "the Adamic community" to Yah if they so desire to have a sound covenantal relationship with Him, as we enjoy in our community (Is. 49:6; Matt. 28:19; Acts 13:46-48).

There is much more to discuss on this subject. If you have questions about this study and others, please join us in fellowship, prayer, praise, and study every Saturday at 11:30 a.m. or, call for consultation pertaining to this subject, and any others you might find intriguing. We are a Messianic Sinaitic assembly, teaching the doctrine of Sinaiticism, which means keeping Yah's word in the faith of the Messiah (Rev. 12:17; 14:12-13), and proclaiming His gospel to the world to those who are seeking His truth without interpretation or church tradition. May the blessings of the Most High be with you and thank you for reading this lesson.

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