

As an African-American pastor I have heard many Blacks say that the Bible is the White man's book. William Dwight McKissic, Sr. says, "The argument goes something like this: the Bible is a White man's book. It was written by the White man, for the White man, and has been used by the White man to mentally and physically enslave Black people."<sup>1</sup>

While some of the above statements, in the past, have been applicable to the American brand of anglicized Christianity, they do not represent the true essence of the Holy Scriptures given by God in its Christian-Judeo context. In this pamphlet we will see that the Bible is a book for Black people, about Black people, and some of it was probably written by Black people.

There is a lot of external evidence (information outside of the Bible), but in this brief treatment of the subject we will focus on internal evidence (information inside of the Bible). Also, even though there are many people of color in the Bible, this will focus on those who are of African descent.

## **THE ORIGINATION OF THE BLACK RACE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

I have read books and Bibles that make just about every key figure in the Old Testament black (ex. Moses, David, Solomon etc.). Even though some of these individuals may have had a dark

complexion, that does not necessarily mean they were black. In this brief brochure we will look at those individuals in the Bible who are of true African descent.

When God sent the great flood during the time of Noah, the population of the world was destroyed with the exception of eight people—Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives (Gen. 7:12-13). Noah's three sons were Shem, Ham and Japheth (Gen. 9:18-19). Noah's son Ham had four sons Cush, Put, Mizraim and Canaan (Gen. 10:6). Ham's son, Cush, was the progenitor of the Black race. The term "Cush" means black. Another name used for the "Cush" was Ethiopian which also meant black.

## **NOTABLE BLACKS IN THE BIBLE**

### *CUSH*

He was the son of Ham, grandson of Noah and the forefather of the Black race (Gen. 10:7). Many of his descendants settled in Africa and Egypt (Ps. 68:31; Isa. 11:11; 18:7).

### *NIMROD*

He was the son of Cush and the first man of renown, "a mighty one in the earth" (Gen. 10:8). He was also "a powerful hunter before the Lord" (Gen. 10:9). It is also believed he was a formidable king who ruled on the earth.

### *MOSES' WIFE*

Moses married an unnamed Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). Moses' sister Miriam was struck with leprosy because she spoke out against his marriage to this woman (Num. 12:1-10).

### *CUSHI*

He was a key military figure in David's army (1 Sam. 18:21-32).

### *CUSHITE SOLDIERS*

There were Cushite soldiers in the ancient world who fought as mercenaries (Jer. 46:9).

### *TIRHAKAH*

He was a famous king of Ethiopia who came to help Judah fight against Assyria (Isa. 37:9).

### *QUEEN OF SHEEBA*

This is an African queen who journeyed to see Solomon because she heard about his kingdom and great wisdom (1 Kings 10:1). She was a woman of great wealth and substance herself (1 Kings 10:2, 10). Jesus spoke highly of this queen when he said, "she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon (Matt. 12:42).

### *EBED-MELECH*

God used this man to rescue the prophet Jeremiah from the cistern in which he was imprisoned (Jer. 38:7-13).

### *THE PROPHET ZEPHANIAH*

Some believe the prophet Zephaniah could have been of African descent. He was the son of Cush (Zeph. 1:1).

### *SIMON OF CYRENE*

Simon, a man from North Africa, was compelled to carry the cross of Christ as He was on His way to be crucified (Matt. 27:32; Mk. 15:21; Lk. 23:26)

### *THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH*

He was led to Christ by Philip the evangelist (Acts 8:27). Many believe that he was the one who took the Gospel to the continent of Africa.

## **WAS JESUS BLACK?**

I grew up in an era in America where all I ever saw was a blond hair blue-eyed Jesus. Because the dominate culture in America for the most part has been European, Jesus has been depicted according to the conception of that ethnicity.

In an attempt to move away from that picture of Jesus some have presented extensive research to demonstrate that He was a black man. Some have even enlisted the Bible to support this by using passages such as Revelation 1:13-18 where Jesus is described as having hair like wool, eyes like a flame of fire and feet as if they were

burned in a furnace. However this passage is meant to be interpreted symbolic and not to give a literal description of Jesus.

In answer to this question, one thing we can definitely say is that Jesus was Jewish. From a racial standpoint, He was of Jewish nationality and from an appearance standpoint He most likely would have had light to dark-brown skin. From this we can safely conclude that He was not black either in race or appearance.

The more important question here is not the color of Jesus' skin but the content of His salvation. He came from Heaven, lived on this earth, died on a cross, was buried in the tomb and rose from the dead. All who accept Him as Savior and Lord are a part of His Body and, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).

<sup>1</sup>William Dwight McKissic, Sr., *Beyond Roots: In Search of Blacks in the Bible*, (Wenonah, NJ: Renaissance Productions, 1990), 48.

Dr. William R. Glaze, Pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, can be heard every Monday thru Friday on the Anchored in Jesus Radio Broadcast on WORD-FM, 7 to 7:30 p.m. More information about Anchored in Jesus Ministries can be found at

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# **BLACKS IN THE BIBLE**



“Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.” Psalm 68:31

**Dr. William R. Glaze**