

One Blood, One Family in Jesus Christ

by Rolaant McKenzie



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Many years ago, I was listening to a morning news, commentary, and opinion radio show when a man calling himself Davey called in to give his opinion on a news story covered by the show host. But it became clear very quickly that he was more interested in changing the subject to talk about his religious views. And since the radio show host was a strong advocate of free speech, even speech advocating ideas he personally abhorred, he allowed him to continue.

Davey had a great interest in bloodlines. He expressed his “Christian” belief that White people were the true descendants of Adam and that



people of all other races were made beforehand on the fifth day of creation as the “beasts of the earth” mentioned in Genesis 1:24-25. He went on to say that White people were the true Israel, the chosen seed line superior to all other peoples, and heirs of the promises made to Abraham and his descendants.

According to Davey, Cain was the offspring of Eve and Satan (the serpent in the Garden of Eden), and that Cain and his descendants intermarried with the pre-Adamic races mentioned previously, resulting in a "serpent seed" race called the Jews. He believed in an Armageddon scenario he based on Genesis 3:15 that there was coming a final conflict between the woman's seed and the serpent's seed, where there would be a victorious war waged by the true Jews (Whites) against non-Whites, especially the "serpent seed race" (false Jews).

I was appalled at Davey's racist views he tried to pass off as "Christian". In the spirit of 1 Peter 3:15, which calls on Christians to be ready to make a defense respectfully and gently for their hope in Christ Jesus, I responded to his twisting of Scripture after his call was over, which the show host graciously broadcast on air.

What Davey was promoting was a belief system called *Christian Identity*, known for its hostility to non-Whites, especially Jews and Blacks. Its theory that all non-Whites are descended from a pre-Adamite race of human beings is contradicted by passages such as Genesis 1:27 and Acts 17:24-26, which teach that God created man in His image. "Man" in this passage includes people of all races and nations. The phrase "beasts of the earth" in Genesis 1:24-25 has always referred to land animals and never to humans of any ethnicity. Genesis 4:1 clearly describe Cain's parents as Adam and Eve, not the serpent and Eve. Also, nowhere in the Bible is the final judgment of the wicked presented as a battle between peoples of different races.

The radio show host welcomed my well-reasoned and Biblical response and hoped that anyone else listening to the show who held such odious views would take heed.

Sadly, there are other religious groups claiming belief in Jesus who hold to similar kinds of views. Another such group is the *Israelite Church of God in Jesus Christ*. It is a

religious group of those professing to be Black Hebrew Israelites. Based in New York City, it has congregations in several cities in the United States. This group teaches that the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes and true biblical Jews are the Black Americans, West Indians, and the Native Americans of North and South America and those scattered throughout the world. The group claims that the "Black Israelites" have divine favor, inspiration and are superior to "Edomites" (White people) and all other non-Israelite people. They also hold strong apocalyptic views regarding the end times. They believe that Yahawashi (Jesus) is God's divine Son and Messiah, and the redeemer for the sins of the Israelites and no other nation. They also believe that the Old and New Testaments and Apocrypha are inspired Scripture, but the group does not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity.

Sometimes the situation is not necessarily one ethnicity forming a religious group and declaring others of different skin color to be inferior or inherently evil. It can involve an attempt to remedy wrongs done by one group to another within the same religious organization.

On September 22, 1943, Lucille Byard was admitted in critical condition to the Washington Sanitarium and Hospital, a Seventh-day Adventist institution in Maryland. Mrs. Byard had fair skin, so the hospital staff did not realize at first that she was Black. But once this became known, they arranged to transport her to Freedman's Hospital (now Howard University Hospital) six miles away in Washington, D.C. While these arrangements were being made, she was removed from her room and put in the hallway in a hospital gown. Although Mrs. Byard was admitted in critical condition, no one at the Washington Sanitarium examined or treated her before they attempted to transfer her. She was eventually discharged and transported by car, not being allowed to use the ambulance, to the Freedman's Hospital. Thirty-eight days after being denied equal treatment at the Washington Sanitarium, Lucille Byard died at Freedman's

Hospital on October 30, 1943.

The word circulated among Black Seventh-day Adventists in the Washington, D.C. area about her treatment and it greatly angered them. They were not only upset about admittance to hospitals, but exclusion from certain Adventist colleges and facilities such as the Review and Herald cafeteria, and lack of employment or leadership opportunities in Adventist institutions generated much resentment.

This tragic situation eventually led to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists creating in North America separate conferences where Black Adventists could have the employment, educational, and leadership opportunities not available to them in White conferences. This arrangement continues to this day.

An ideology that is gaining ground in many mainline and evangelical churches is Critical Race Theory (CRT). This theory, derived in part from Marxism, divides society based on race into oppressors and groups that are oppressed by them. In the context of American culture especially, it proposes that systematic racism instituted by White people (whether consciously or unconsciously) has been designed to suppress people of color throughout the major areas of society. Promoting the sentiment that racism is everywhere all the time, CRT becomes the standard by which virtually everything is viewed and judged.

Some of the results of CRT include the viewing of people as groups rather than individuals, and the attitude that all White people are guilty of racism merely for being White. As this ideology has grown in many mainline and evangelical churches, those formerly united by their faith in Jesus Christ have found themselves being polarized, with racial bias being promoted against brothers and sisters who happen to be White.

In Donna Fletcher Crow's book, *The Fields of Bannockburn: A*

Novel of Scotland from Origins to Independence, Margaret, a Saxon and English princess fled England after William the Conqueror, a Norman, defeated King Harold II at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 A.D. The sailing vessel meant to aid her escape back to continental Europe was blown north off course and shipwrecked in Scotland. She received refuge from King Malcolm III, whom she later married and became Queen of Scotland.

Queen Margaret was known for her pious devotion to Christ and charitable works serving the poor and orphans. She desired to build a great stone church in Scotland with the help of renowned architect Cyril de Vailly. But Cyril was viewed with deep suspicion by some in the Scottish court because he was a Norman, and King William was at war with the Saxons in England and with Scotland.

However, on one occasion Cyril saved the life of the Queen's primary aide, Elswyth, while she was running to get help for the Queen who was in labor with her first child and heir to the throne. She slipped on a wet hillside path over a deep, would-be-fatal drop. But Cyril grabbed her hand just in time to prevent her from falling down the steep incline to her death. As result, not only was Elswyth saved, but also the Queen and her son.

On another occasion, the now toddler Prince Edward wandered off into a rushing stream near a waterfall. A large log was moving quickly toward him and would have hit him. If the log striking Edward did not kill him, it would have knocked him over the waterfall to his death. But Cyril leaped into the water and grabbed the child, taking the full blow of the log on his back. Though seriously injured, he managed to maintain his grip on the child and get him to shore.

While recovering on a bed, Cyril was confronted by Elswyth. She wanted to understand how a Norman, an enemy of her people, would risk his life to save a Scot and Saxon. Cyril expressed

his sorrow for the Battle of Hastings and the Saxons who were slain there. But Elswyth added that thousands in the north of England died during King William's scorched earth campaigns where whole towns were slaughtered.

Cyril said, "You are right. William is my king, but he has done much of which I disapprove. But I serve also a higher King, and He bids us to love one another. As His created ones, we are to be reconciled to Him and then to each other. In such there is no Norman or Saxon or Scot. That is why I build. I build places of worship to serve for reconciliation in a world where so much would tear men apart."

Cyril de Vailly in this story seemed to have a better understanding of the gospel message than those described in the previous four situations. He looked beyond his ethnicity, his nation and king, to the King of Kings, Jesus Christ, the Creator of all humanity, the Mediator that reconciles to God all who trust in Him.

His words echoed that of Paul in Galatians 3:26-29,

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise."

The apostle Paul, in his gospel presentation to the Greeks at Mars' Hill in Athens, pointed out the unity of humanity from the fact that God created from one man every nation and that in Him we have life and movement (Acts 17:22-31). This message he presented was for people of every nation, and not just for a particular ethnicity.

"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made

with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and **He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist,** as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'" (Acts 17:24-28)

The apostle Peter after his meeting with Cornelius, a Roman centurion, where he and his family believed the gospel message he brought and were saved, realized that God welcomes anyone from any nation who fears Him and seeks to do what is right (Acts 10:34-35). Being born again of the Spirit was for the Gentiles, too.

"While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. **All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.** For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, 'Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?' And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.'" (Acts 10:44-48)

The apostle John in his first epistle to the church emphasized that hatred has no place in the life of a believer in Jesus. The one who loves his brother shows that he loves God who made him and walks in the light of Christ, while the one who does not is blinded by lies and walks in darkness (1 John 2:9-11).

"If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom

he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” (1 John 4:20-21)

Those involved with religious groups professing some belief in Jesus but are fixated on racial identity show that they have never truly embraced the gospel. Religious organizations that racially divide its adherents for what they believe are for reasons of equity, have also failed to embrace the gospel. Churches that adopt philosophies that divide people by skin color or ethnicity, have forgotten the good news of the new birth, redemption and reconciliation with God brought through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the gospel of Christ, bloodlines, skin color, ethnicity, and national origin do not matter. Only the blood of Jesus shed on the cross for the forgiveness of all who trust in Him matters. In Christ, believers of all nations are united to each other in one body (Ephesians 4:1-6) in love of God and of each other.

“For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, **whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.**” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13)

During the opening ceremonies of the Olympic games, it is customary for the athletes of the many participating nations to march into the stadium under their own nations' flags. This is in preparation for the national teams to compete against each other to gain glory for their respective countries. In contrast, during the closing ceremonies flag bearers of the nations proceed into the stadium together followed by the athletes from the countries those flags represent. The athletes come into the stadium as one body singing, dancing and celebrating their common bond that they participated in

the Olympic games, no matter to what nation they belonged.

There is a greater unity the Lord grants all true believers from wherever they originate in the world. It is an unending bond of love and fellowship that continues into the greater celebration to come.

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, ‘Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.’ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?’ I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.’”
(Revelation 7:9-17)

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