

WHERE
DID THE
'RACES'
COME
FROM

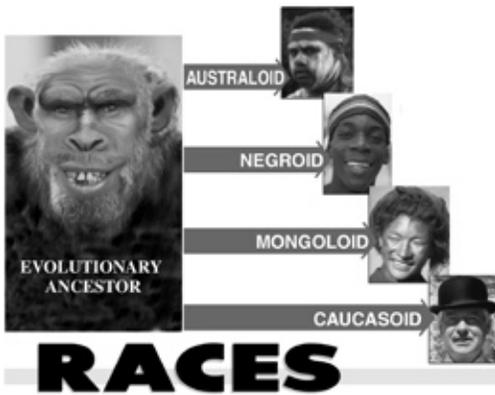


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Dr. Carl Wieland,
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WHERE DID THE 'RACES' COME FROM?

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Many people today are confused about the origin of the so-called “races” of people on the Earth. But the Bible and accepted scientific principles provide easy-to-understand answers. They may challenge your entire thinking on this important topic.



In the 1800s, before Darwinian evolution was popularized, most people, when talking about “races,” were referring to such groups as the “English race,” “Irish race,” and so on. However, this all changed when Charles Darwin published his book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*.

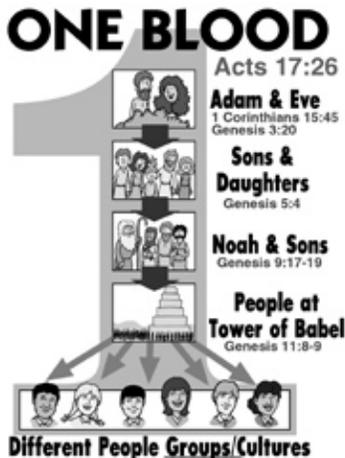
Darwinian evolution was (and still is) inherently a racist philosophy, teaching that different groups or “races” of people evolved at different times and rates, so some groups are more like their ape-like ancestors than others. The Australian Aborigines, for instance, were considered the missing links between an ape-like ancestor and the rest of mankind.¹ This resulted in terrible prejudices and injustices towards the Australian Aborigines.² A leading evolutionary spokesperson, Stephen Jay Gould, stated that “Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1850, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory.”³

Racist attitudes fuelled by evolutionary thinking were largely responsible for an African pygmy actually being displayed, along with an orangutan, in a cage in the Bronx Zoo.⁴

As a result of Darwinian evolution, many people started thinking in terms of the different people groups around the world representing different “races,” but within the context of evolutionary philosophy. This has resulted in many people today, consciously or unconsciously, having ingrained prejudices against certain other groups of people.

However, *all* human beings in the world today are classified as *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Scientists today admit that, biologically, there really is only one race of humans. For instance, a scientist at the Advancement of Science Convention in Atlanta stated, “Race is a social construct derived mainly from perceptions conditioned by events of recorded history, and it has no basic biological reality.”⁵ This person went on to say, “Curiously enough, the idea comes very close to being of American manufacture.”⁵

Reporting on research conducted on the concept of race, the American ABC News science page stated, “More and more scientists find that the differences that set us apart are cultural, not racial. Some even say that the word ‘race’ should be abandoned because it’s meaningless.”⁶ The article went on to say that “we accept the idea of race because it’s a convenient way of putting people into broad categories, frequently to suppress them ... The most hideous example was provided by Hitler’s Germany. And racial prejudice remains common throughout the world.”⁷



In a 1998 article in the *Journal of Counseling and Development*,⁸ researchers argued that the term “race” is basically so meaningless that it should be discarded.

Because of the influences of Darwinian evolution and the resulting prejudices, we believe everyone (and especially Christians) should abandon the term “race(s).” We could refer instead to the different “people groups” around the world.

The Bible and ‘race’

The Bible does not even use the word “race” in reference to people,⁹ but does describe all human beings as being of “one blood” (Acts 17:26). This of course emphasizes that we are all related, for all humans are descendants of the first man Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45).¹⁰ Because Jesus Christ also became a descendant of Adam, being called the “last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45), this is why the gospel should be preached to all tribes and nations. Any descendant of Adam can be saved, because our mutual relative by blood (Jesus Christ) died and rose again.¹¹

'Racial' differences

But some people think there must be different “races” of people because there appear to be major differences between various groups, such as skin color and eye shape.

The truth, though, is that these so-called “racial characteristics” are only minor variations among the people groups. Scientists have found that if one were to take any two people from anywhere in the world, the basic genetic differences between these two people would typically be around 0.2% – even if they came from the same people group.¹² But, these so-called “racial” characteristics that many think are major differences (skin color, eye shape, etc.) account for only 6% of this 0.2% variation, which amounts to a mere 0.012% difference genetically.¹³

In other words, the so-called “racial” differences are absolutely trivial. Overall, there is more variation *within* any group than there is *between* one group and another. If a white person is looking for a tissue match for an organ transplant, for instance, the best match may come from a black person, and vice versa. The ABC (USA) news science page stated, “What the facts show is that there are differences among us, but they stem from culture, not race.”¹⁴

The only reason many people think these differences are major is because they’ve been brought up in a culture that has taught them to see the differences this way.

According to the Bible, all people on Earth today descended from Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and before that from Adam and Eve (Gen. 1–11). The Bible tells us how the population that descended from Noah’s family had one language and were living together and disobeying God’s command to “*fill the earth*” (Gen. 9:1; 11:4).¹⁵ God confused their language, causing a break-up of the population into smaller groups which scattered over the Earth (Gen. 11:8–9). Using modern genetics, we will show how, following such a break-up of a population, variations in skin color, for example, can develop in only a few generations. And there is good evidence to show that the various groups of people we have today have *not* been separated for huge periods of time.¹⁶

One race

There is really only one race — the human race. Scripture distinguishes people by tribal or national groupings, not by skin color or physical appearances. Clearly, though, there are groups of people who have certain features (e.g., skin “color”) in common, which distinguish them from other groups. As stated earlier, we prefer to call these “people groups” rather than “races.”

All peoples can freely interbreed and produce fertile offspring. This shows that the biological differences between the “races” are not very great at all. In fact, the DNA differences are trivial, as already pointed out.

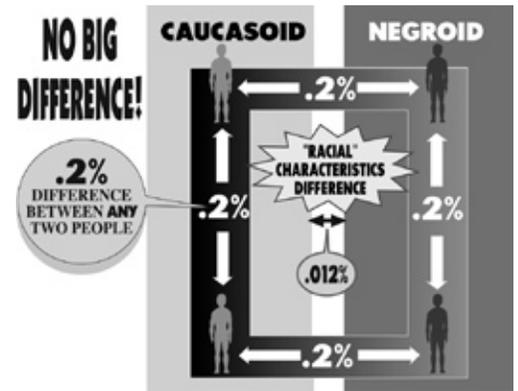
Anthropologists generally classify people into a fairly small number of main racial groups, such as the Caucasoid (European or “white”¹⁷), the Mongoloid (which includes the Chinese and the American Indians), the Negroid (“black” Africans), and the Australoid (the Australian Aborigines). Within each classification, there may be many different sub-groups.

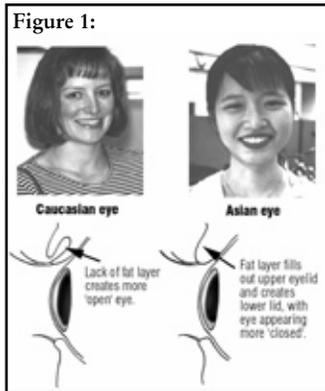
Virtually all evolutionists would now agree that the various people groups did not have separate origins; that is, in the evolutionary belief system, the different people groups did not each evolve from a different group of animals. So they would agree with Biblical creationists that all people groups have come from the same original population. Of course, they believe that such groups as the Aborigines and the Chinese have had many tens of thousands of years of separation. Most people believe that there are such vast differences between groups that there *had* to be many years for these differences to somehow develop.



One reason for this is that many people believe that the observable differences come from some people having unique features in their hereditary make-up which others lack. This is an understandable but incorrect idea. Let’s look at skin color, for instance. It is easy to think that since different groups of people have yellow skin, red skin, black skin, white skin, and brown skin, there must be many different skin pigments or colorings. And since different chemicals for coloring would mean a different genetic recipe or code in the hereditary blueprint in each people group, it appears to be a real problem. How could all those differences develop within a short time?

Here’s how. We all have the same coloring pigment in our skin: melanin. This is a dark brownish pigment that we all have in special cells in our skin. If we have *none* (as do people called albinos, who suffer from an inherited mutation-caused defect, so they lack the





ability to produce melanin), then we will have a very white or pink skin coloring. If we produce a little melanin, it means that we will be European white. If our skin produces a great deal of melanin, we will be a very deep black. And in between, of course, are all shades of brown. There are no other significant skin pigments.¹⁸

Generally, whatever feature we may look at, no people group has anything that is, in its essence, uniquely different from that possessed by another. For example, the Asian, or almond, eye gets its appearance simply by having an extra fold of fat (see Figure 1). Both Asian and Caucasian eyes have fat — the latter simply have less of it.

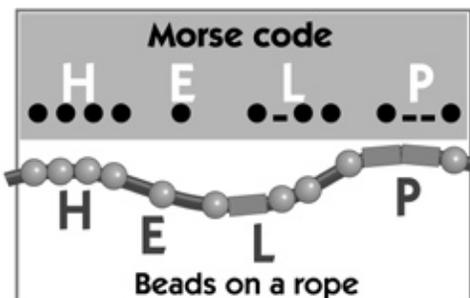
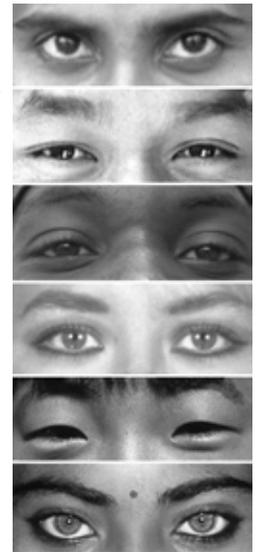
What does melanin do? It protects the skin against damage by ultraviolet light from the Sun. If you have too little in a very sunny environment, you will more easily suffer from sunburn and skin cancer. If you have a great deal of melanin, and you live in a country where there is little sunshine, it is much harder for your body to get adequate amounts of vitamin D (which needs sunshine for

its production in your body). You may then suffer from vitamin D deficiency, which could cause a bone disorder such as rickets.

We also need to be aware that one is not born with a genetically fixed amount of melanin, but rather with a genetically fixed *potential* to produce a certain amount, increasing in response to sunlight. For example, if you are in a Caucasian community, you may have noticed that when your friends headed for the beach at the very beginning of summer, they may, if they spent their time indoors during winter, have all been more or less the same pale white. As the summer went on, however, some became much darker than others.

But how do we explain the formation of many different skin colors arising in such a short Biblical time scale (few thousand years)? Let's look at a few observations that can help us to explain this. From here on, whenever we use such words as different colors, we are, strictly speaking, referring to different shades of the one color, melanin.

If a person from a very black people group marries someone from a very white group, their offspring (called "mulattos") are mid-brown. It has long been known that when mulattos marry each other, their offspring may be virtually any "color," ranging from very black to very white. Understanding this gives us the clues we need for our overall question, so we must first look, in a simple way, at some of the basic facts of heredity.



Heredity

Each of us carries information in our body that describes us a bit like the way a blueprint describes a finished building. It determines not only that we will be human beings, rather than cabbages or crocodiles, but also whether we will have blue eyes, short nose, long legs, etc. When a sperm fertilizes an egg, *all* the information that specifies how the person will be built (ignoring such superimposed factors as exercise and diet) is already present. This information is in coded form in our DNA.¹⁹ To illustrate coding, a piece of rope with beads on it can carry a message in Morse code.

Can you see how the piece of rope, by using a simple sequence of short beads, long beads, and spaces (to represent the dots and dashes of Morse code) can carry the same information as the English word "help" typed on a sheet of paper? The entire Bible could be written thus in Morse code on a long enough piece of rope.

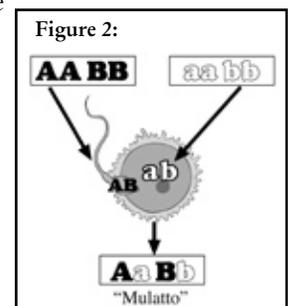
In a similar way, the human blueprint is written in a code (or language convention), which is carried on very long chemical strings called DNA. This is by far the most efficient information storage system known, surpassing any foreseeable computer technology.²⁰ This information is copied (and reshuffled) from generation to generation as people reproduce.

The word "gene" refers to a small part of that information which carries the instructions for manufacturing only one enzyme, for example.²¹ A small portion of the "message string," with only one specification on it, would be a simple way of understanding this gene concept.

So, going back to that cell, and that egg which has just been fertilized — where does all of its information, its genes, come from? One half has come from the father (carried by the sperm), and the other half from the mother (carried in the egg).

Skin 'color'

We know that skin "color" is governed by more than one gene. For simplicity, let's assume there are



only two,²³ A and B, with the correspondingly “more silent” genes a and b. In a similar way to the eye example, the small letters in this case will code for a small amount of melanin in the skin. So, a very dark people which, on intermarriage, kept producing only very dark offspring, would be AABB; the same situation for a very fair-skinned people would be aabb. Let’s look at what combinations would result in a mulatto (the offspring of an AABB and aabb union). (See Figure 2)

What would happen, by using a punnett square, if two such mid-brown mulatto people were to marry (the shading of the squares roughly indicates the resultant skin color)? (Figure 3)

Surprisingly, we find that an entire range of “colors,” from very white to very black, can result in only *one generation*, beginning with this particular type of mid-brown parents.

Those children born with AABB, who are pure black (in the sense of consistently having no other types of offspring), have no genes for lightness at all. If they were to marry and migrate to a place where their offspring could not intermarry with people of lighter color, all their children will be black — a pure “black line” will result.



Those with aabb are white. If they marry other whites and migrate to a place where their offspring cannot marry darker people, a pure (in the same sense) “white line” will result — they have lost genes that give them the ability to be black, that is, to produce a large amount of melanin.

So you can see how it is easily possible, beginning with two middle-brown parents, to get not only all the “colors,” but also people groups with stable coloring. But what about people groups that are permanently middle-brown, such as we have today? Again, this is easily explained. Those of aaBB or AAbb, if they no longer interact with others, will be able to produce only mid-brown colored offspring. (You may want to work this out with your own punnett square.)

If these lines were to interbreed again with other such lines, the process would be reversed. In a short time, their descendants would show a whole range of “colors,” often in the same family. The photo above shows what were called Britain’s “most amazing twins.” One is obviously light, the other obviously darker-skinned.

Of course, this is not amazing at all when you do the exercise on paper, based on what we have discussed. (A clue if you want to do it yourself: mother cannot be AABB.) Also, the twins are obviously not identical twins, which are derived from the same egg.²⁴

If all the humans on Earth were to intermarry freely, and then break into random groups that kept to themselves, a whole new set of combinations could emerge. It may be possible to have almond eyes with black skin, blue eyes with black frizzy short hair, etc. We need to remember, of course, that the way in which genes express themselves is turning out to be much more complex than this simplified picture. Sometimes certain genes are linked together. However, the basic point is unaffected.

Even today, close observation shows that within a particular people group you will often see a feature normally associated with another group. For instance, you will occasionally see a European with a broad flat nose, or a Chinese person with very pale skin, or Caucasian eyes. As pointed out previously, most biologists now agree that among modern humans, “race” has little or no biological meaning. This also argues strongly against the idea that the people groups have been evolving separately for long periods.

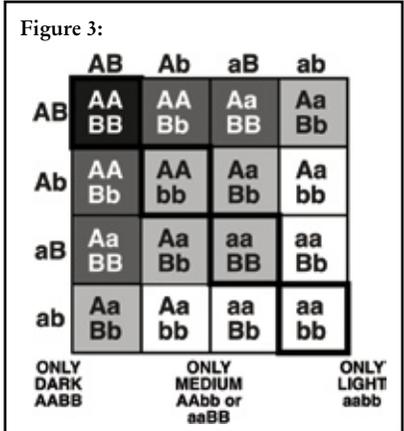
What really happened?

We can now reconstruct the true history of the “people groups,” using:

- The information given by the Creator Himself in the book of Genesis.
- The background information given above.
- Some consideration of the effect of the environment.

The first created man, Adam, from whom all other humans are descended, was created with the best possible combination of genes — for skin “color,” for example. A long time after Creation, a world-wide flood destroyed all humans except a man called Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives. This flood greatly changed the environment. Afterwards, God commanded the survivors to multiply and cover the Earth (Gen. 9:1). A few hundred years later, men chose to disobey God and to remain united in building a great city, with the Tower of Babel as the focal point of rebellious worship.

From Genesis 11, we understand that up to this time there was only one language. God judged the people’s disobedience by



imposing different languages on man, so that they could not work together against God, and so that they were forced to scatter over the Earth as God intended.

So all the “people groups” – “black” Africans, Indo-Europeans, Mongols, and others – have come into existence since that time. Noah and his family were probably mid-brown, with genes for both dark and light skin, because a medium skin “color” would seem to be the most generally suitable (dark enough to protect against skin cancer, yet light enough to allow vitamin D production). As all the factors for skin “color” were present in Adam and Eve, they would most likely have been mid-brown as well. In fact, most of the world’s population today is still mid-brown.

After the Flood, for the few centuries until Babel, there was only one language and one culture group. Thus, there were no barriers to marriage within this group. This would tend to keep the skin “color” of the population away from the extremes. Very dark and very light skin would appear, of course, but people tending in either direction would be free to marry someone less dark or less light than themselves, ensuring that the average “color” stayed roughly the same.

The same would be true of other characteristics, not just skin “color.” Under these sorts of circumstances, distinct differences in appearance will never emerge. This is true for animals as well as human populations, as every biologist knows. To obtain such separate lines, you would need to break a large breeding group into smaller groups and keep them separate, that is, not interbreeding any more.

The effects of Babel

This is exactly what happened at Babel. Once separate languages were imposed, there were instantaneous barriers. Not only would people tend not to marry someone they couldn’t understand, but entire groups which spoke the same language would have difficulty relating to and trusting those which did not. They would tend to move away or be forced away from each other, into different environments. This, of course, is what God intended.

It is unlikely that each small group would carry the same broad range of skin “colors” as the original, larger group. So one group might have more dark genes, on average, while another might have more light genes. The same thing would happen to other characteristics: nose shape, eye shape, etc. And since they would interbreed only within their own language group, this tendency would no longer be averaged out as before.

As these groups migrated away from Babel, they encountered new and different climate zones. This would also have affected the balance of inherited factors in the population, although the effects of the environment are nowhere near as important as the genetic mix with which each group began. As an example, let us look at people who moved to cold areas with little sunlight. In those areas, the dark-skinned members of any group would not be able to produce enough vitamin D, and thus would be less healthy and have fewer children.

So, in time, the light-skinned members would predominate. If several different groups went to such an area, and if one group happened to be carrying few genes for lightness, this particular group could in time die out. This natural selection acts on the characteristics *already present*, and does not evolve new ones.

It is interesting to note that in the Neanderthals of Europe, an extinct variety of man now recognized as fully human,²⁵ many showed evidence of vitamin D deficiency in their bones. In fact, it was this, plus a large dose of evolutionary prejudice, which helped cause them to be classified as “ape-men” for a long time. It is thus quite plausible to suggest that they were a dark-skinned people group who were unfit for the environment into which they moved because of the skin-color genes *they began with*. Notice that this natural selection, as it is called, does not *produce* skin “colors,” but only acts on the created “colors” that are *already there*.

Conversely, fair-skinned people in very sunny regions could easily be affected by skin cancer, in which case dark-skinned people would more readily survive.

So we see that the pressure of the environment can (a) affect the balance of genes within a group, and (b) even eliminate entire groups. This is why we see, to a large extent, a fit of characters to their environment (e.g., Nordic people with pale skin, equatorial people with dark skin, etc.).

But this is not always so. An Inuit (Eskimo) has brown skin, yet lives where there is not much sun. Presumably they have a genetic makeup such as AAbb which would not be able to produce lighter skin. On the other hand, native South Americans living on the equator do not have black skin. These examples show that natural selection does not create new information — if the genetic makeup of a group of people does not allow variation in “color” toward the desirable, natural selection cannot create such variation.

African pygmies live in a hot area, but rarely experience strong sunshine in their dense jungle environment, yet they have dark skin. Pygmies may be a good example of another factor that has affected the racial history of man: discrimination. If a variation from the normal occurs (e.g., a very light person among a dark people), then historically it has been usual for that person to be

regarded as abnormal and unacceptable. Thus, such a person would find it hard to get a marriage partner. People could also recognize the poor fitness of certain characteristics in their environment and so these become incorporated into the selection criteria for marriage partners. This would further tend to eliminate light genes from a dark people near the equator, and dark genes from light people at high latitudes. In this way, groups have tended to “purify” themselves.

Also, in some instances, inbreeding in a small group can highlight any commonly occurring unusual features that would previously have been swamped by continual intermarriage. There is a tribe in Africa whose members all have grossly deformed feet as a result of this inbreeding.

To return to pygmies, if people possessing genes for short stature were discriminated against, and a small group of them sought refuge in the deepest forest, their marrying only each other would ensure a pygmy “race” from then on. The fact that pygmy tribes have never been observed to have their own languages, but instead speak dialects of neighboring non-pygmy languages, is good evidence in support of this.

The effects of choice

People groups that were already equipped with certain characteristics may have made deliberate (or semi-deliberate) choices concerning the environments to which they migrated. For instance, people with genes for a thicker, more insulating layer of fat under their skin would tend to leave areas that were uncomfortably hot.

Other evidence

The evidence for the Bible’s account of human origins is more than just biological and genetic. Since all peoples descended from Noah’s family after the Flood a relatively short time ago, we would be surprised if, in the stories and legends of many of the groups, there was not some memory, albeit distorted by time and retelling, of such a catastrophic event. In fact, an overwhelming number of cultures do have such an account of a world-destroying Flood. Often these have startling parallels to the true, original account (eight people saved in a boat, a rainbow, the sending of the birds, and more).

In summary, the dispersion at Babel, breaking a large interbreeding group into small, inbreeding groups, ensured that the resultant groups would have different mixes of genes for various physical features. By itself, this would ensure, in a short time, that there would be certain fixed differences in some of these groups, commonly called “races.” In addition, the selection pressure of the environment would modify the existing combinations of genes, causing a tendency for characteristics to suit their environment.

There has been no simple-to-complex evolution of any genes, for the genes were present already. The dominant features of the various people groups result from different combinations of previously existing created genes, plus some minor changes in the direction of degeneration, resulting from mutations (accidental changes which can be inherited). The originally created (genetic) information has been either reshuffled or has degenerated, not been added to.

Consequences of false beliefs about the origin of ‘races’

- **Rejection of the gospel** The accuracy of the historical details of Genesis is crucial to the trustworthiness of the Bible and to the whole gospel message.²⁶ So the popular belief that people groups evolved their different features, and could not all have come from Noah’s family (contrary to the Bible), has eroded belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- **Racism** One of the biggest justifications for racial discrimination in modern times is the belief that, because people groups have allegedly evolved separately, they are at different stages of evolution, and some people groups are more backward. Thus, the other person may not be as fully human as you. This sort of thinking inspired Hitler in his quest to eliminate Jews and Gypsies and to establish the “master race.” Sadly, some Christians have been infected with racist thinking through the effects on our culture of evolutionary indoctrination, that people of a different “color” are inferior because they are supposedly closer to the animals.²⁷
- **Influence on missionary outreach** Historically, the spread of evolutionary belief was associated with a slackening of fervor by Christians to reach the lost in far-away countries. The idea of savage, half-evolved inferior peoples somehow does not give rise to the same missionary urgency as the notion that our “cousins,” closely linked to us in time and heredity, have yet to hear the gospel. Even many of the finest of today’s missionary organizations have been influenced, often unconsciously, by this deeply ingrained belief in the evolutionary view of how other peoples and their religions came about.

‘Inter-racial’ marriage?

Now that we understand that the so-called “races” in reality constitute just one race with different people groups, what about the issue of so-called “inter-racial marriage?”

If a Chinese person were to marry a Polynesian, or an African with dark skin were to marry a Japanese, or a person from India

were to marry a person from America with light skin, would these marriages be in accord with Biblical principles?

There are a significant number of Christians (particularly in America) who would claim that such “inter-racial” marriages violate God’s principles in the Bible, and should not be allowed.

But does the Word of God really condemn such mixes as those above? Is there ultimately any such thing as “inter-racial marriage?”

True science in the present fits with the Biblical view that all people are rather closely related – there is only one “race” biologically. Therefore, there is in essence no such thing as “inter-racial marriage.” So we are left with this – is there anything in the Bible that speaks clearly against men and women from different people groups marrying?

Origin of people groups

In Genesis 11, we read of the rebellion at the tower of Babel that resulted in people being scattered over the Earth. Because of this dispersion, and the resulting splitting of the gene pool, different cultures formed, with certain features becoming predominant within each group. Some of these (skin “color,” eye shape, and so on) became general characteristics of each particular people group.²⁸

Note that the context of Genesis 11 makes it clear that the reason for God’s scattering the people over the Earth was that they had united in rebellion against God. Some Christians point to this event in an attempt to provide a basis for their arguments against so-called “inter-racial” marriage. They believe that it is implied here that to keep the nations apart, God is declaring that people from different people groups can’t marry. However, there is no such indication in this passage that what is called “inter-racial marriage” is condemned. Besides, there has been so much mixing of people groups over the years that it would be impossible for every human being today to trace their lineage to know for certain which group(s) they are descended from.

We need to understand that the sovereign Creator God is in charge of the nations of this world. Paul makes this very clear in Acts 17:26. Some people erroneously claim this verse to mean that people from different nations shouldn’t marry. But this passage has nothing to do with marriage. As John Gill makes clear in his classic commentary, the context is that God is in charge of all things – where, how, and for how long any person, tribe or nation will live, prosper, and perish.²⁹

In all of this, God is working to redeem for Himself a people who are one in Christ. The Bible makes it clear in Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:11, and Romans 10:12-13 that in regard to salvation, there is no distinction between male or female or Jew or Greek or bond or free. In Christ, any separation between people is broken down. As Christians, we are one in Christ and thus have a common purpose – to live for Him who made us. This oneness in Christ is vital to understanding marriage.

Purpose of marriage

Malachi 2:15 declares that an important purpose of marriage is to produce godly offspring – progeny that are trained in the ways of the Lord. Jesus in Matthew 19 and Paul in Ephesians 5 make it clear that when a man and woman marry, they become one flesh (because they were one flesh historically – Eve was made from Adam). Also, the man and woman must be one spiritually so they can fulfill the command to produce godly offspring. This is why Paul states in 2 Corinthians 6:14, “*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*”



According to the Bible then, which of these impending marriages to the right does God counsel against entering into?



The answer is obvious – the third one. According to the Bible, the priority in marriage is that a Christian should marry only a Christian.



Sadly, there are some Christian homes where the parents are more concerned about their children not marrying someone from another “race” than whether or not they are marrying a Christian. When Christians marry non-Christians, it negates the spiritual (not the physical) oneness in marriage, resulting in negative consequences for the couple and their children.³⁰

Rahab and Ruth

The examples of Rahab and Ruth help us understand how God views the issue of marriage between those who are from different people groups but trust in the true God.

Rahab was a Canaanite. She came from an ungodly culture – descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham. Remember that Canaan was cursed because of his obvious rebellious nature. Unfortunately, many Christians state that Ham was cursed – but this is not true.³¹ Some have even said that this non-existent curse of Ham resulted in the black “races.” This is absurd and is the type of false teaching that has reinforced and justified prejudices against people with dark skin.

In the genealogy in Matthew 1, it is traditionally understood that the same Rahab is listed here as being in the line leading to Christ. Thus Rahab, a descendant of Ham, must have married an Israelite (descended from Shem). Since this was clearly a union approved by God, it underlines the fact that the particular “people group” she came from was irrelevant – what mattered was that she trusted in the true God of the Israelites.³²

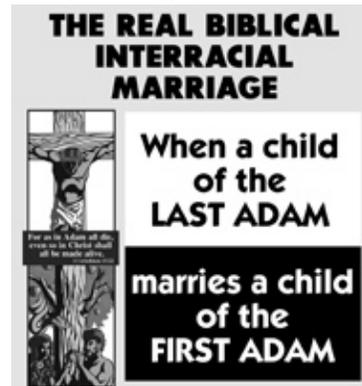
The same can be said of Ruth, who, as a Moabitess, also married an Israelite, and is also listed in the genealogy in Matthew 1 that leads to Christ. Prior to her marriage, she had expressed faith in the true God (Ruth 1:16).

When Rahab and Ruth became children of God, there was no longer any barrier to Israelites marrying them, even though they were from different “people groups.”

Real Biblical ‘inter-racial’ marriage

If one wants to use the term “inter-racial,” then the real “inter-racial” marriage that God says we should not enter into is when a child of the Last Adam (one who is a new creation in Christ – a Christian) marries one who is an unconverted child of the First Adam (one who is dead in trespasses and sin – a non-Christian).³³

Some Christian leaders claim that allowing so-called “inter-racial marriage” would bring the nations together again that were split up at the Tower of Babel, thus helping to bring in a one-world government. If this were true, then Christians should not be learning other languages, which would negate the Great Commission to preach to all tribes and nations (Matthew 28). Rules regarding whom one could marry were not a part of the event of the Tower of Babel.



Cross-cultural problems

Because many people groups have been separated since the Tower of Babel, they have developed many cultural differences. If two people from very different cultures marry, they can have a number of communication problems, even if both are Christians. Expectations regarding relationships with members of the extended family, for example, can also differ. Even people from different English-speaking countries can have communication problems because words may have different meanings. Counselors should go through this in detail, anticipating the problems and giving specific examples. Some marriages have failed because of such cultural differences. However, such problems have nothing to do with genetics or “race.”

In summary then:

1. There is no Biblical justification for claiming that people from different so-called “races” (best described as “people groups”) should not marry.
2. The Biblical basis for marriage makes it clear that a Christian should *only* marry a Christian.

When Christians legalistically impose non-Biblical ideas such as “no inter-racial marriage” onto their culture, they are helping to perpetuate prejudices that have often arisen from evolutionary influences. If we are really honest, in countries like America the main reason for Christians being against “inter-racial marriage” is, in most instances, really because of skin “color.” (As we have shown, every human being has the same skin color – it just depends on how much of the color one has.)

The Christian church could greatly relieve the tensions over racism if only the leaders would teach that all people are descended from one man and woman and all people are equal before God. Furthermore, all are sinners in need of salvation; all need to build their thinking on God’s Word and judge all their cultural aspects accordingly; all need to be one in Christ and put an end to their rebellion against their Creator.

Are black people the result of a curse on Ham?

It has been clearly shown that the blackness of, for example, black Africans is merely one particular combination of inherited factors. This means that these factors themselves, though not in that combination, were originally present in Adam and Eve. This belief that the skin color of black people is a result of a curse on Ham and his descendants **is taught nowhere in the Bible**. Furthermore, it was not Ham who was cursed, it was his son, Canaan (Gen. 9:18,25; 10:6), and Canaan’s descendants were probably brown-skinned (Gen. 10:15–19).

False teaching about Ham has been used to justify slavery and other non-Biblical, racist attitudes. It is traditionally believed that the African nations are largely Hamitic, because the Cushites (Cush was a son of Ham – Gen. 10:6) are thought to have lived where Ethiopia is today. Genesis suggests that the dispersion was probably along family lines, and it may be that Ham’s descendants were on average darker than, say, Japheth’s. However, it could just as easily have been the other way around.



Answers in Genesis seeks to give glory and honor to God as Creator, and to affirm the truth of the Biblical record of the real origin and history of the world and mankind.

Part of this real history of mankind is the bad news that Adam's rebellion brought death, suffering, and separation from God into this world. We see the results all around us. Humans, who are all sinful from conception (Psalm 51:1), cannot live with a Holy God, but are condemned to separation from God.

But the good news is that God has done something about it. God provided a wonderful means of deliverance from sin. The Bible teaches that God sent Christ His own Son to be the perfect sacrifice and to suffer the full penalty of man's sin. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who created the world, (Col. 1:16), and came to Earth as All of God and All of Man, so that He could suffer the penalty of death for sin, for you and me. *"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"* (I Corinthians 15:20-22).

The Lord Jesus Christ died on a cross, but on the third day, rose again, conquering death, so that anyone who believes in Him and accepts Him into his or her life, is able to come back to God and live for eternity with the Creator. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16); *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (I John 1:9).

For those who do not accept by faith what Christ has done for them and do not recognize their sinful nature and need for redemption, the Bible warns that such people will live forever, but will be separated from God in a place of torment that the Bible calls Hell. But for those who commit their lives to the Lord—what a wonderful message! What a wonderful Savior! What a wonderful salvation in Christ the Creator!

(For more information on what the Bible says about receiving eternal life, please write or call the ***Answers in Genesis*** office nearest you—see inside front cover.)

Endnotes

- ¹ “Missing links with mankind in early dawn of history,” *New York Tribune*, February 10, 1924, p. 11.
- ² Carl Wieland, “Darwin’s body snatchers,” *Creation* 14(2):16-18, 1992.
- ³ Stephen Jay Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, Belknap-Harvard Press, Cambridge, Mass., USA, pp. 127-128, 1977.
- ⁴ Jerry Bergman, “Ota Benga: The man who was put on display in the zoo!,” *Creation* 16(1):48-50, 1993.
- ⁵ Robert Lee Hotz, “Race has no basis in biology, researchers say,” *Los Angeles Times* article reprinted in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, February 20, 1997, p. A3.
- ⁶ “We’re all the same,” American Broadcasting Corporation News, September 10, 1998, <www.abcnews.com/sections/science/DyeHard/dye72.html>
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Susan Chavez Cameron and Susan Macias Wycoff, “The destructive nature of the term race: growing beyond a false paradigm,” *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 76:277-285, 1998.
- ⁹ The NIV does use the word in two places. However, in Ezra 9:2 the Hebrew is literally “seed,” and in Romans 9:3 the phrase “those of my own race” is, in the original Greek, literally “my relatives according to the flesh” (KJV: “my kinsmen according to the flesh”).
- ¹⁰ Ken Ham, *Where did Cain get his wife?* Answers in Genesis, Florence, Kentucky, USA, 1997.
- ¹¹ When Jesus Christ became a man (God-man), he became a descendant of Adam. Thus he became our relative – totally man, a descendant of the first Adam, yet totally God.
- ¹² J.C. Gutin, “End of the rainbow,” *Discover*, November 1994, pp. 72-73.
- ¹³ Susan Chavez Cameron, 76:277-285.
- ¹⁴ “We’re all the same,” ABC News, Sept. 10, 1998
- ¹⁵ The KJV says “replenish the Earth,” but replenish simply meant “fill” when the KJV was translated. The word has changed its meaning.
- ¹⁶ World-wide variations in mitochondrial DNA (the “Mitochondrial Eve” story) were claimed to show that all people today trace back to a single mother (living in a small population) 70,000 to 800,000 years ago. Recent findings on the rate of mitochondrial DNA mutations shortens this period drastically to put it within the Biblical time-frame. See Lowe, L., and Scherer, S., 1997. Mitochondrial Eve: the plot thickens. *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*, 12(11):422-423; Wieland, C., 1998. A shrinking date for Eve. *Creation Ex Nibilo Technical Journal*, 12(1):1-3.
- ¹⁷ However, people inhabiting the Indian subcontinent are mainly Caucasian and their skin color ranges from light brown to quite dark. Even within Europe, skin color ranges from very pale to brown.
- ¹⁸ Other substances can in minor ways affect skin shading, such as the colored fibers of the protein elastin and the pigment carotene. However, once again we all share these same compounds, and the principles governing their inheritance are similar to those outlined here. Factors other than pigment in the skin may influence the shade perceived by the observer in subtle ways, such as the thickness of the overlying (clear) skin layers, the density and positioning of the blood capillary networks, etc. In fact, “melanin,” which is produced by cells in the body called melanocytes, consists of two pigments, which also account for hair color. Eumelanin is very dark brown, pheomelanin is more reddish. People tan when sunlight stimulates eumelanin production. Redheads, who are often unable to develop a protective tan, have a high proportion of pheomelanin. They have probably inherited a defective gene which makes their pigment cells “unable to respond to normal signals that stimulate eumelanin production.” See Cohen, P., 1995. “Redheads come out of the shade,” *New Scientist*, 147(1997):18.
- ¹⁹ Most of this DNA is in the nucleus of each cell, but some is contained in mitochondria, which are outside the nucleus in the cytoplasm. Sperm contribute only nuclear DNA when the egg is fertilized, so mitochondrial DNA is generally inherited only from the mother, via the egg.
- ²⁰ Gitt, W., 1997. “Dazzling design in miniature.” *Creation ex nibilo*, 20(1):6.
- ²¹ Incredibly, sometimes the same stretch of DNA can be “read” differently, to have more than one function. The creative intelligence behind such a thing is mind-boggling.
- ²² Scattering intensity is proportional to the fourth power of the frequency of the light. Blue light has the highest frequency and so scatters the most.
- ²³ In some forms of albinism a minute amount of melanin is produced and the eyes may be bluish.
- ²⁴ Actually the technical term for a variant form of the same gene is an “allele,” but that is not important here.
- ²⁵ This simplification is not done to help our case — the more genes there are, the easier it is to have a huge range of “different” colors. The principle involved can be understood from using two as an example.
- ²⁶ i.e., monozygous
- ²⁷ For a detailed examination and refutation of the so-called “ape-men,” see Dr. Marvin Lubenow’s *Bones of Contention*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, 1992.
- ²⁸ Ham, Ken. *The Lie: Evolution*, Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, California, USA, 1987.
- ²⁹ Of course racism pre-dated Darwinian evolution – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked...” (Jer. 17:9), but evolutionary thinking in a sense gave scientific respectability to racism.
- ³⁰ “Races very close,” *Creation* 17(2):9, 1995.
- “Modern ‘stone Age’ reconsidered,” *Creation* 15(4):51, 1993.
- Carl Wieland, “Shades of Babel,” *Creation* 13(1):23, 1990.
- Dennis and Lyn Field (translators), “Julmbanu: Aboriginal Babel,” *Creation* 8(2):11, 1990.
- Jerry Bergman, “Evolution and the origins of the biological race theory,” *CEN Technical Journal* 7(2):155-168, 1993.

- ³¹ See note on Acts 17:26, in: John Gill, *An exposition of the Old and New Testament; the whole illustrated with notes, taken from the most ancient Jewish writings* (nine volumes), London: printed for Mathews and Leigh, 18 Strand, by W. Clowes, Northumberland-Court, 1809. Edited, revised, and updated by Larry Pierce, 1994-1995 for the *Online Bible* CD-ROM.
- ³² It is true that in some exceptional instances when a Christian has married a non-Christian, the non-Christian spouse, by the grace of God, has become a Christian. This is a praise point but it does not negate the fact that Scripture indicates that it should not have been entered into in the first place. This does not mean that the marriage is not actually valid, nor does it dilute the responsibilities of the marital union – see also 1 Corinthians 7:12-14, where the context is of one partner becoming a Christian after marriage.
- ³³ See Genesis 9:18-27.
- ³⁴ It is true that the Israelites were told by God not to marry people from surrounding nations (Leviticus 18), but this was because these were pagan peoples, and marriages with them would destroy God's purpose for this sacred institution.
- ³⁵ Examples of such “mixed marriages” and their negative consequences can be seen in Nehemiah 9 and 10, and Numbers 25.