

Jesus + Modern-Day Substitutes – *Master Class*

"IN CHRIST ALONE"

As a reminder, Paul tells us:

- "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to DECEITFUL SPIRITS and DOCTRINES OF DEMONS, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,"(1 Tim 4:1-2)

1) BLACK HEBREW ISRAELITES

a) A category of groups whose members are of black African descent, who claim Hebrew / Israelite ancestry, yet each are very distinct from one another. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, dozens of Black Hebrew organizations were established by Frank Cherry (Chattanooga, TN 1886), William Saunders Crowdy (Lawrence, KS 1896). Ben Carter (Ben Ammi Ben-Israel) of Chicago in 1966, established, the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem, claiming an angelic visit from Gabriel, a time when black nationalism was on the rise. In 1969, moved to Liberia, then to Israel with about 30 Hebrew Israelites.

- African Israelites [Original African Hebrew Israelite Nation of Jerusalem]
- Church of the Living God, The Pillar Ground of Truth for All Nations (1886)
- The Church of God and Saints of Christ (1896)
- The Commandment Keepers (1919)
- African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem (1966)
- Nation of Yahweh (*black supremacist*)
- Israelite Church of God in Jesus Christ (*black supremacist*)

b) Concerning African Ancestry

- Are these groups that claim Jewish ancestry truly descendants of the biblical Hebrews?
 - First ask, "Are there groups of blacks with PARTIAL Jewish ancestry living in the world today?"
 - **Yes, there could be.** Given Israel's proximity to Africa, it is possible that there are African Jewish groups. The nation of Israel recognizes some African Jews.
 - The entire Jewish nation spent 400 years in Africa (Egypt) before returning to the Promised Land (modern-day Israel)
 - Interactions between the Hebrews and African nations are documented throughout the Old Testament
 - But there is no proof that all people of color are Jews. That is not even probable.
- Their claim as the original tribes of Israel is centered on one Scripture: **Deuteronomy 28**
 - They believe that they alone fulfill the curses in Deuteronomy 28, but the last verse dispels that

c) Their Key Scriptures

- Deuteronomy 28-64-68
- Leviticus 23:41-44
- Acts 2:17-21

d) Considerations

- Are you African? Are you all African / Are you purely African?
- Which country???
- Are you European? [Those from the European continent don't even like the term European.]
- It's like asking, are you Spanish [from Spain] or latino? Are you pure?
- Are you Asian? Chinese? Japanese? Indonesian? Vietnamese? Filipino? Malaysian? Korean?
- So, you see, **no one is purely anything!** Are you a Black Hebrew / Black Israelite? No one knows! So, leave

- e) Even if it could be proven that a Black Hebrew / Israelite group is partially genetically descended from the biblical Israelites, **WHAT THESE GROUPS BELIEVE is "far more important" than their ancestry!**
- Unbiblical beliefs
 - Misunderstanding of who Jesus is
 - Denial of who Jesus is
 - Denial of what Jesus taught
 - Deny the purpose of His death, burial, resurrection
 - Salvation: Don't believe that it is Jesus and Jesus alone!

Almost all of these groups deny:

- 1) The DEITY of Jesus Christ
- 2) His atoning death
- 3) His life-giving resurrection

- Apart from Jesus there can be no salvation. Whether someone is historically Hebrew or not, salvation comes through JESUS ALONE (Gal 3:27–29).
- Salvation is by grace through faith alone thru Christ alone. (1 Pet 1:2)

f) Conclusion:

- Isaiah 53:2 ...He has no *stately* form or majesty. That we would look at Him, Nor an appearance that we would take pleasure in Him
- Act 10:3-3 Eph5 [God “does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right”]
- 1 Tim 1:4; Titus 3:9 [avoid foolish genealogies and myths which promote speculations instead of stewardship, advancing the plan of God, which is by FAITH]
- It does not matter in the whole scheme of redemption of who is a BLACK ISRAELITE, but rather WHO JESUS IS, TO YOU!
- Ephesians 1:7 [in Him we have redemption through His BLOOD, the forgiveness of our wrongdoings according to the riches of His grace]

2) ZODIAC SIGNS

- a. Roots in timing of birth with planetary alignment to determine personality. From the Latin word “Horoscopus” which means observing the hour.
- b. Astrology is mentioned in Scripture by several biblical prophets. The first direct mention of astrology in the Bible is in Isaiah 47:13 (NIV):
 - All the counsel you have received has only worn you out!
 - Let your astrologers come forward,
 - those stargazers who make predictions month by month,
 - let them save you from what is coming upon you.
- c. Astrology is also referenced in Daniel 2:2 (NIV): “So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed.” Jeremiah 8:2 (NIV) also appears to reference astrologers: “They will be exposed to the sun and the moon and all the stars of the heavens, which they have loved and served and which they have followed and consulted and worshiped.” Because astrology was a form of inductive divination, it appears to be directly forbidden in Leviticus 19:26 (“Do not practice divination or seek omens”).

- d. In the New Testament, the only obvious—though disputed—reference to astrologers appears in Matthew 2:1-2 (NIV): “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.’” Their description of seeing a celestial body as a portent of a significant event appears to be a type of mundane astrology (i.e., the study of significant celestial moments to social groups, nations, or all of humanity). Even if the magi (a term from which we get the word “magic”) were actual astrologers, this would not be a biblical endorsement of astrology. Instead, it would be an example of how even pagans would recognize Jesus as God. As David Mathis says, “These magi are not respected kings but pagan specialists in the supernatural, experts in astrology, magic, and divination, blatant violators of Old Testament law—and they are coming to worship Jesus.”
- e. Astrology, the stars, the zodiacs bare witness to the truth. They can be used to track seasons, days or hours. They merely testify of the awesome creative ability of our God but we must always rely, listen to and seek the face of the creator and not the created

3) CHAKRAS – Generally denotes the embodiments of a **person's energies**

- a) Chakras are a concept in the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism and in the practice of Yoga
- b) Yes, both **yoga** and **acupuncture** stem from these beliefs. It's when you look to this more than Jesus alone
- c) believed to be points of energy on the **surface of a soul**; central hubs of energies that run thru your body
- d) Christians who have experienced some forms of meditation associated with chakras say the **spiritual experience** of such mediation is real—but it is not of God. 2 Cor 11:14, Satan is shown as an angel of light.
- e) Acupuncture and other forms of Chinese medicine claim to use energies and meridians for healing.
- f) Now, **acupuncture** has helped many **find relief from pain**, meaning there might be a **physical benefit** to acupuncture, but **independent** of the misguided spiritual philosophy undergirding it.
- g) All Eastern religions, including Buddhism and Hinduism, are inconsistent with Christianity and therefore heresy
- h) 1 John 4:1 tells us not to believe every spirit, but to test them to see if they are from God (agrees w/His Word)

4) WAIST BEADS

- a) Of African origin and mysticism:
 - Female personal adornment worn around the waist
 - Multiple strands of colored beads made from ivory, clay, stone, seeds, glass or bone
 - Worn to draw attention to, and enhance her femininity accentuating the waistline, shape, sexuality or believed to promote fertility and abundances
 - Bead coloring and placement can also mean something, symbolizing emotion and connection to events and feelings. For example, black – Power and protection, blue – Loyalty and truth, brown – Earth and stability, gold – Good health, power and wealth, green – Abundance, fertility, nature and prosperity, purple – Royalty, spirituality and wisdom, yellow – Energy, joy and happiness.
 - In some cultures, waist bead colors help convey a message to lovers: White – all is good and ready for sex, Black – not in the mood, Yellow – in last days of period, Blue/Green – I'm open for sex

- b) Uses:
- Cosmetics or adornment: Women would wear for beauty
 - Weight Management: Help keep the waist small and a measurement tool of weight gain or loss
 - Celebratory: Sometimes mothers adorn their daughters with waist beads during their first menstruation as a rite of passage into womanhood; in celebration of how they have matured
 - Sexual attraction or intimacy: Sometimes worn for seduction and can provoke desire, drawing attention to the hips, buttocks and thighs of the wearer. Wives and women would often lure their husbands or partners with the rattle of beads or use them as a means to communicate their fertility at certain times of the month
 - Originally worn inside your clothes; western culture wears outside the clothes for attraction mid-waist or low just above the womb to
 - Spiritual purposes (not biblical):
 - Protection against evil spirits – many believe it keeps negative energy and spirits away. Some also believe it protects women from killers and rapists.
 - Fertility – many believe that it enables a woman to conceive children in some mystic way

5) CRYSTALS (used for healing purposes; for extra power that Jesus doesn't have)

REMEMBER, Paul tells us:

- That "**All things are lawful** for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will **NOT be controlled by anything.**" (1 Cor 6:12)
- That **JESUS IS THE CENTER (Col 2:2-10a)**
 - "...resulting in a **true knowledge of God's** mystery, that is, **CHRIST HIMSELF,**" (Col 2:2c NASB)
 - "I am saying this so **that no one will deceive you** with arguments that sound reasonable." (Col 2:4 CSB)
 - "See to it that no one takes you CAPTIVE through **PHILOSOPHY** and **EMPTY DECEPTION**, according to the TRADITION OF MEN, according to the ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD, rather than according to Christ. For in Him (Christ) all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and **IN HIM (Jesus) YOU HAVE BEEN MADE COMPLETE**...; (Col 2:8-10a)

In Christ Alone (Christian song)

In Christ alone my hope is found;
he is my light, my strength, my song.
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! – who took on flesh,
fulness of God in helpless babe!
This Gift of love and righteousness,
scorned by the ones he came to save,
till on that cross as Jesus died
the wrath of God was satisfied –
for every sin on him was laid:
here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground his body lay:
Light of the world by darkness slain.
Then bursting forth in glorious day,
up from the grave he rose again!
And as he stands in victory,
sin’s curse has lost its grip on me,
for I am his and he is mine –
bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death;
this is the power of Christ in me;
from life’s first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of Hell, no scheme of man
can ever pluck me from his hand:
till he returns or calls me home,
here in the power of Christ I’ll stand!