



Which colour are you? -- God's wonderful racial diversity

“Race” is defined as “a major group of human beings that share certain distinctive physical traits.”

Diversity exists and it is in the Lord's glorious plan. Where did racial diversity begin?

To make a long story short, after the Flood waters receded, Noah and his sons fathered the ancestors of new nations. As their descendants spread over the earth, they founded new cities and,

eventually, clans, nations and languages developed. But this spreading was not carried out on the basis of pre-existing ethnic or racial differences God had created. God never intended that the nations would break off into groups of “higher” or “lower” human forms.

In God's eyes, there is no worth associated with the colour of one's skin. God did not separate people by the colour of their skin: we humans created that distinction. 1 Samuel 16:7 says that “the Lord does not see as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”

God created the various races and gave them their unique identity. Each nation shared the same ancestors. He built His creative masterpiece with all of the ingredients for adaptation to various extremes of temperature; for living in high mountains and in deserts; or being able to live in long exposure to the sun or withstand extreme cold, etc.

In Genesis 1 and 2, the first human is simply identified as Adam, which means ‘humankind.’ Adam and Eve were not Hebrews or Egyptians “nor ‘white’, ‘black’ or ‘yellow’”. Their ‘race’ or ‘ethnicity’ is not identified.

Genetic variation is a gift from God. From a biological standpoint, we were made with the potential for ethnic expansion, thanks to the marvellous mechanism for variation packaged within the human genetic reservoir by our Creator. When a gene is passed by both parents to his or her offspring, that child will inherit the physical feature or character trait represented such as colour of skin, type of hair, temperament, height, physical strengths or weaknesses, etc. But that does not represent racial inferiority or superiority.

At any time, discrimination can raise its ugly head. All through history, some races have been horribly mistreated and suffered severe discrimination. We heard a lot about black slavery, but there was also white slavery, as by North Africans and Ottomans, or by other Europeans, such as the Vikings. Any group of people can experience racial prejudice, not only people with black skin, but also white people, coloured people, Indian or Asian people, etc...

Racist allegations used by religious people about the relationship between the colour of skin and biblical punishment are unfounded. These people misused and distorted Scriptures taken out of context such as Genesis 9:25, when Noah cursed his grandson, Canaan, for the sin of his father Ham. It is noteworthy that the curse was made by Noah, not by God.

However, the Old Testament does not mention that black skin was a punishment. But over the time, certain religious groups spread fake teaching that Ham had a black skin because he was cursed by Noah. This teaching was used to justify racism and slavery of black people in some parts of the world.

There's a convincing explanation for why human skin tone varies as a global gradient, with the darkest populations around the equator and the lightest ones near the poles. Put simply, dark complexion is advantageous in sunnier places, whereas fair skin fairs better in regions with less sun. A range of skin colours evolved at different times, in different populations, as human spread across the globe. God intended to have a people from all ethnic groups. All shades and all shapes. God designed, aimed, purposed to have a people that is very diverse.

There is no doubt that people of all colours can experience severe discrimination, harassment and be the victims of prejudice. But blackness or whiteness or any skin colour are not our identity. Our truest identity is our spiritual connexion to God.

“God created man in His image” (Genesis 1:27). “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). No believer in God has any excuse for racial hatred, violence, or discrimination of any kind.

In God's eyes, there is no worth associated with the color of one's skin. We are not black or white, we are spiritual beings created in God's image and in His likeness. Just as God breathed into Adam and he became a living soul, so the people of every race and colour did become living souls. The Lord Himself gave each one of us a heart, life, breath, existence and worth. All people across the globe share the same original “parents” and the same God (whether they honour Him or not).

We were individually, lovingly created in person by God. Whatever the colour of our skin, God is our Father.