

We Are All Africans

For centuries, Christians on the American and European continents heard periodic appeals from guest speakers who came to their churches to promote missionary work for delivering the word of God to “The Dark Continent”.

These appeals to bring religion to Africa ring ironic when you realize the reverse is true—God’s relationship with man *began* in Africa—to be carried out to the rest of the world.

Genesis 2:10-14 identifies four rivers of Eden found in a region now known as North Africa, encompassing Mesopotamia and Ethiopia (which was known by its ancient name of Cush).

Cush was also the name of one of Noah’s grandsons. We read in Numbers 12:1 that Moses (who likely did not resemble Charlton Heston) married a Cushite woman. A Cushite in the Israelite army delivered news to King David of his military victory over Absalom (2 Samuel 18). After a summit meeting with another of David’s sons Solomon, the visiting Queen of Sheba exclaimed, “*Blessed be the Lord your God...*” (1 Kings 10:9). Then, in Jeremiah 38, we read of Ebedmelech, the Ethiopian who rescued Jeremiah from imprisonment in a cistern.

Zephaniah 1:1 identifies the author of that Old Testament book as “*son of Cushi*”. And, the first record found in the book of Acts of a Gentile conversion was the story of the Ethiopian eunuch, who was the treasury chief to Queen Candace.

It is also worth noting that after the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (who were neither Greek nor Roman) took him and fled to Egypt where they remained in hiding until King Herod’s death—a feat that would be conspicuous in a North African country if they been actually painted with the coloring and features of later European artists.

During the special days or months set aside for recognition of African American heritage, we often focus on the contributions made by people of color to secular history.

However, we Christians can also appreciate the *spiritual* heritage passed down to us as sons and daughters of Moses, Abraham, Noah...and Adam and Eve, who came forth from the original homeland of all mankind, on that continent of the Nile, the Tigris, and Euphrates.