

Shayla: What does the Bible have to say concerning mixed-race marriages?

Meforshim:

- Numbers 12:1-2 HCSB Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because of the Cushite woman he married (for he had married a Cushite woman). They said, "Does the LORD speak only through Moses? Does He not also speak through us?" And the LORD heard it.

Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses, using his marriage to a black Cushite¹ woman as a pretext. I say a pretext because everything she said afterwards leads us to believe their words were completely motivated by jealousy. "Does the Lord speak only through Moses? Does He not also speak through us?" It is important to note the Lord's reaction to their accusation.

- Numbers 12:9-10 HCSB The LORD's anger burned against them, and He left. 10 As the cloud moved away from the tent, Miriam's skin suddenly became diseased, as white as snow. When Aaron turned toward her, he saw that she was diseased

There is an entire book of the Bible dedicated to the depiction of a romance between two people of different races. It's called the Song of Songs, or the Song of Solomon. There, Solomon's lover describes herself in the following terms:

- Song of Solomon 1:5 HCSB Daughters of Jerusalem, I am dark like the tents of Kedar, yet lovely like the curtains of Solomon.

In comparing herself to the "tents of Kedar", she is referring to a Bedouin tribe of north Arabia,² whose tents, woven of goat's hair, are black.

Hashem always made room for interracial relations in His society. Foreigners were allowed to participate in the religious practices of the nation of Israel and even have the same status as a native Israeli so long as they irreversibly committed themselves to God's chosen people.³ The same laws applied to both native and adoptive Israelis.⁴

Hashem gave us the motivation behind this unusually open acceptance of other races. He said,

- Exodus 23:9 HCSB You must not oppress a foreign resident; you yourselves know how it feels to be a foreigner because you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.
- Leviticus 19:33-34 HCSB "When a foreigner lives with you in your land, you must not oppress him. 34 You must regard the foreigner who lives with you as the native-born among you. You are to love him as yourself, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.

The Ransomed, themselves wandering nomads looking forward to their true home with Yahweh, should have a unique empathy for those who are strangers in our midst.

Some may feel that many of the Old Covenant principles do not apply to those who live in the Age of Grace. However, lest we feel that the Lord God has changed His view of interracial relations, we need to consider,

- Colossians 3:11 HCSB Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all.
- Romans 10:12 HCSB for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, since the same Lord of all is rich to all who call on Him.
- 1 Corinthians 12:13 HCSB For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
- Galatians 3:28 HCSB There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

¹ Jeremiah 13:23

² Genesis 25:13

³ Exodus 12:48

⁴ Exodus 12:49; 20:10; Leviticus 16:29; 17:12-15; 18:26;

This holds to the Ransomed view that all those who accept Christ become true sons of Abraham, regardless of their genetic makeup. This principle allows Hashem to fulfill His ancient vow to our spiritual ancestor when He promised to make Abraham the father of and a blessing to many nations.

- Genesis 17:4-6 HCSB "As for Me, My covenant is with you, and you will become the father of many nations. 5 Your name will no longer be Abram, but your name will be Abraham, for I will make you the father of many nations. 6 I will make you extremely fruitful and will make nations and kings come from you.
- Genesis 17:15-16 HCSB God said to Abraham, "As for your wife Sarai, do not call her Sarai, for Sarah will be her name. 16 I will bless her; indeed, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she will produce nations; kings of peoples will come from her."
- Genesis 18:18 HCSB Abraham is to become a great and powerful nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him.

Therefore, a difference in race should not be a hindrance in the marriage of two of God's children. It is a factor that must be taken into account, for differences of language and culture may create tensions in the relationship, but in and of itself, the racial card should not be used to deny two people a loving relationship.