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Jah

Jah or **Yah** (Hebrew: יָהּ, *Yāh*) is a short form of the Tetragrammaton יהוה (YHWH), the personal name of God: Yahweh, which the ancient Israelites used. The conventional Christian English pronunciation of *Jah* is /ˈdʒɑː/, even though the letter J here transliterates the palatal approximant (Hebrew י *yodh*). The spelling *Yah* is designed to make the pronunciation /ˈjɑː/ explicit in an English-language context (see also romanization of Hebrew), especially for Christians who may not use Hebrew regularly during prayer and study.

This short form of the name occurs 50 times in the text of the Hebrew Bible, of which 24 form part of the phrase "Hallelujah", a phrase that continues to be employed by Jews and Christians to give praise to Yahweh.[1][2] In the 1611 King James Version of the Christian Bible there is a single instance of *JAH* (capitalized), in Psalm 68:4. *An American Translation* (1939) and the New King James Version[3] (NKJV), published in 1982, follows the KJV in using *Yah* in this verse.

While pronouncing the Tetragrammaton is forbidden for Jews, articulating *Yah* (which is used more frequently in the Jewish context than *Jah* is) is allowed but is usually confined to prayer and study.[4][5]

The name *Jah* is frequently employed by adherents of Rastafari to refer to God.[6]

Etymology

The name of the national god of the kingdoms of Israel (Samaria) and Judah is written in the Hebrew Bible as יהוה (YHWH), which modern scholars often render as *Yahweh*.[7] The short form *Jah/Yah*, appears in Exodus 15:2 and 17:16, Psalm 89:9, (arguably, by emendation) Song of Songs 8:6,[8] as well as in the phrase *Hallelujah*. The name of Yahweh is also incorporated into several theophoric names, however, in almost all cases the Hebrew name itself uses *-yāhū*, not *-yāh*. This does not preclude the translation of several *-yāhū* names without the added *ū*, such as Elijah (*Ēlīyyāhū*) or Hezekiah (*Ḫīzəqīyyahū*), or the existence of several Hebrew names which *do* use the *-yāh* form, such as Jedidjah, Malchijah, and Adonijah.[1]

In the Tanakh

Yah occurs 50 times:[9] 43 times in the Psalms, in Exodus 15:2; 17:16; and Isaiah 12:2; 26:4, as well as twice in Isaiah 38:11.

In the Christian New Testament

At Revelation 19:1-6, *Jah* is embedded in the phrase "hallelujah" (Tiberian *halləlûyāh*), a Hebrew expression that literally means "Praise Jah". The short form "IA" (Yah or Jah (יה)) in the phrase hallelouia (Ἀλληλουιά) is transcribed by the Greek *ia*.[10]

Jewish and Christian Bibles

In the King James Version of the Christian Bible, the Hebrew יה[11] is transliterated as "JAH" (capitalised) in only one instance: "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him".[12] *An American Translation* renders the Hebrew word as "Yah" in this verse. In the 1885 Revised Version and its annotated study edition, The Modern Reader's Bible, which uses the Revised Version as its base text, also transliterates "JAH" in Psalms 89:8 which reads, "O LORD God of hosts, who is a mighty one, like unto thee, O JAH? and thy faithfulness is round about thee".

With the rise of the Reformation, reconstructions of the Tetragrammaton became popular. The Tyndale Bible was the first English translation to use the anglicized reconstruction. The modern letter "J" settled on its current English pronunciation only around 500 years ago; in Ancient Hebrew, the first consonant of the Tetragrammaton always represents a "Y" sound.

Rotherham's *Emphasised Bible* includes 49 uses of *Jah*. In the *Sacred Scriptures Bethel Edition* Bible, the Jerusalem Bible, and the New Jerusalem Bible (prior to 1998) the name "YHWH" and its abbreviated form "Yah" is found. The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, used primarily by Jehovah's Witnesses, employs "Jah" in the Hebrew Scriptures, and translates *Hallelujah* as "Praise Jah" in the Greek Scriptures. The Divine Name King James Bible employs "JAH" in 50 instances within the Old Testament according to the Divine Name Concordance of the Divine Name King James Bible, Second Edition.

The Spanish language Reina Valera Bible employs "JAH" in 21 instances within the Old Testament according to the *Nueva Concordancia Strong Exhaustiva*. The Darby Bible, Young's Literal Translation, The Jubilee Bible 2000, Lexham English Bible, The Complete Jewish Bible, Names of God Bible, The Recovery Version, Green's Literal Translation, the New Jewish Publication Society or NJPS Tanakh and World English Bible includes "Jah" (Yah in the Lexham English Bible, Complete Jewish Bible, the NJPS Tanakh and the World English Bible) numerous times within the Old Testament (as well as in the New Testament or New Covenant as is the case in Christian and Messianic Jewish Bibles) as "Hallelujah!" or "Alleluia!" (Praise Jah or Yah in either instance) which is also employed throughout the Old Testament of these Bible versions.

"Hallelujah!" or "Alleluia!" is also used in other Bible versions such as the Divine Name King James Bible, American Standard Version, the Recovery Version, The Tree of Life Version, Amplified Bible, God's Word Translation, Holman Christian Standard Bible, International Standard Version, The Message, New American Bible Revised Edition, The Jerusalem Bible, The New Jerusalem Bible, NJPS Tanakh, The first JPS translation, The Living Bible, The Bible in Living English, Young's Literal Translation, King James Version, The Spanish language Reina Valera and even in Bible versions that otherwise do not generally use the Divine Name such as the New King James Version, English Standard Version, J.B. Phillips New Testament, New International Version, Douay-Rheims Version, God's Word Translation, Revised Standard Version, New Revised Standard Version, The Jubilee Bible 2000, New American Standard Bible, New Century Version, New International Reader's Version and several other versions, translations and/or editions in English and other languages varying from once to numerous times depending on the Bible version especially and most notably in Revelation Chapter 19 in Christian and Messianic Jewish Bibles.

Rastafari usage

Rastafari use the name *Jah* as a term for the Lord God or Haile Selassie, who some Rastafari regard as the incarnation of the God of the Old Testament or as the reincarnation of Jesus Christ, who is also known by the Ethiopian title *Janhoy*.[13]

See also

- Theophory in the Bible

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Entheogenic use of cannabis

Cannabis has served as an entheogen—a chemical substance used in religious or spiritual contexts[1]—in the Indian subcontinent since the Vedic period dating back to approximately 1500 BCE, but perhaps as far back as 2500 BCE in Ancient China. It was introduced to the New World by the Spaniards in 1530-1545.[2]

A man smoking cannabis through a pipe in Kolkata, India

There are several references in Greek mythology to a powerful drug that eliminated anguish and sorrow. Herodotus wrote about early ceremonial practices by the Scythians, thought to have occurred from the 5th to 2nd century BCE. Itinerant Hindu saints have used it in the Indian subcontinent for centuries.[3] Mexican Native American communities occasionally use cannabis in religious ceremonies by leaving bundles of it on church altars to be consumed by the attendees.[4]

Indian subcontinent

Bhang eaters from India, c. 1790; Bhang is an edible preparation of cannabis native to the Indian subcontinent. It has been used in food and drink as early as 1000 BCE by Hindus in ancient India.[5]

The earliest known reports regarding the sacred status of cannabis in the Indian subcontinent come from the Atharva Veda, estimated to have been written sometime around 2000–1400 BCE,[6] which mentions cannabis as one of the "five sacred plants... which release us from anxiety" and that a guardian angel resides in its leaves. The Vedas also refer to it as a "source of happiness," "joy-giver" and "liberator," [7]and in the *Raja Valabba*, the gods send hemp to the human race so that they might attain delight, lose fear and have sexual desires. Many households in India own and grow a cannabis plant to be able to offer cannabis to a passing *sadhu* (ascetic holy men), and during some evening devotional services it is not uncommon for cannabis to be smoked by everyone present.[8]

It is still offered to the Lord Shiva in temples on Shivaratri day, while devotional meetings called *bhajans*, although not necessarily associated with Shiva, are occasions for devotees to consume the drug liberally. *Yogis* or *sadhus* along with other Hindu mystics have been known to smoke a mixture of *cannabis sativa* and tobacco in order to enhance meditation. This is particularly common during the festival of Diwali and Kumbha Mela.[4]

There are three types of cannabis used in the Indian subcontinent. The first, *bhang*, a type of cannabis edible, consists of the leaves and plant tops of the marijuana plant. It is usually consumed as an infusion in beverage form, and varies in strength according to how much cannabis is used in the preparation. The second, ganja, consisting of the leaves and the plant tops, is smoked. The third, called *charas* or *hashish*, consists of the resinous buds and/or extracted resin from the leaves of the marijuana plant. Typically, *bhang* is the most commonly used form of cannabis in religious festivals.

A *sadhu*, or holy person, smoking cannabis in Kolkata, India

In Tantric Buddhism, which originated in the Tibeto-Himalayan region, cannabis serves as an important part of a traditional ritual (which may or may not also include sexual intercourse). Cannabis is taken to facilitate meditation and also heighten awareness of all aspects of the ceremony, with a large oral dosage being taken in time with the ceremony so that the climax of the "high" coincides with the climax of the ceremony.[8]

The usage and acceptance of cannabis among college students demands a deeper understanding of the factors influencing its consumption. Research is crucial to explore the motivations, attitudes, and potential consequences of cannabis use, both short-term and long-term. By conducting studies, effective public health strategies can be developed and informed policy frameworks be made to address this growing trend. *A Review of Historical Context and Current Research on Cannabis Use in India* [9]

Ancient China

The sinologist and historian Joseph Needham concluded "the hallucinogenic properties of hemp were common knowledge in Chinese medical and Taoist circles for two millennia or more",[10] and other scholars associated Chinese *wu* (shamans) with the entheogenic use of cannabis in Central Asian shamanism.[11]

In the mountains of western China, significant traces of THC, the compound responsible for cannabis' psychoactive effects, have been found in wooden bowls, or braziers, excavated from a 2,500-year-old cemetery.[12]

The oldest texts of Traditional Chinese Medicine listed herbal uses for cannabis and noted some psychodynamic effects. The (ca. 100 CE) Chinese pharmacopeia *Shennong Ben Cao Jing* (*Shennong's Classic of Materia Medica*) described the use of *mafen* 麻蕡 "cannabis fruit/seeds":

> To take much makes people see demons and throw themselves about like maniacs (多食令人見鬼狂走). But if one takes it over a long period of time one can communicate with the spirits, and one's body becomes light [of weight] (久服通神明輕身).[13][14]

A Taoist priest in the fifth century A.D. wrote in the *Ming-I Pieh Lu* that:

> Cannabis is used by necromancers, in combination with ginseng to set forward time in order to reveal future events.[8]

Later pharmacopia repeated this description, for instance the (ca. 1100 CE) *Zhenglei bencao* 證類本草 ("Classified Materia Medica"):

> If taken in excess it produces hallucinations and a staggering gait. If taken over a long term, it causes one to communicate with spirits and lightens one's body.[15]

The (ca. 730) dietary therapy book *Shiliao bencao* 食療本草 ("Nutritional Materia Medica") prescribes daily consumption of cannabis in the following case: "those who wish to see demons should take it (with certain other drugs) for up to a hundred days."

Cannabis has been cultivated in China since Neolithic times, for instance, hemp cords were used to create the characteristic line designs on Yangshao culture pottery). Early Chinese classics have many references to using the plant for clothing, fiber, and food, but none to its psychotropic properties. Some researchers think Chinese associations of cannabis with "indigenous central Asian shamanistic practices" can explain this "peculiar silence".[8] The botanist Li Hui-lin noted linguistic evidence that the "stupefying effect of the hemp plant was commonly known from extremely early times"; the word *ma* "cannabis; hemp" has connotations of "numbed; tingling; senseless" (e.g., *mamu* 麻木 "numb" and *mazui* 麻醉 "anesthetic; narcotic"), which "apparently derived from the properties of the fruits and leaves, which were used as infusions for medicinal purposes."[16] Li suggested shamans in Northeast Asia transmitted the medical and spiritual uses of cannabis to the ancient Chinese *wu* 巫 "shaman; spirit medium; doctor".

Yangshao culture (ca. 4800 BCE) amphora with hemp cord design

> The use of Cannabis as an hallucinogenic drug by necromancers or magicians is especially notable. It should be pointed out that in ancient China, as in most early cultures, medicine has its origin in magic. Medicine men were practicing magicians. In northeastern Asia, shamanism was widespread from Neolithic down to recent times. In ancient China shamans were known as *wu*. This vocation was very common down to the Han dynasty. After that it gradually diminished in importance, but the practice persisted in scattered localities and among certain peoples. In the far north, among the nomadic tribes of Mongolia and Siberia, shamanism was widespread and common until rather recent times.[17]

Robert Clarke and Mark Merlin, the authors of *Cannabis: Evolution and Ethnobotany*, suggest that:

After the rise of Confucianism, which spread from China through East Asia to Japan, the ingestion of cannabis resin for psychoactive, ritualistic purification was eventually suppressed in Japan, as it was in China.[4]

Ancient Central Asia

Several of the Tarim mummies excavated near Turpan in Xinjiang province of Northwestern China were buried with sacks of cannabis next to their heads.[18] Based on additional grave goods, archaeologists concluded these individuals were shamans: "The marijuana must have been buried with the dead shamans who dreamed of continuing the profession in another world."[19] A team of scientists analyzed one shamanistic tomb that contained a leather basket with well-preserved cannabis (789 grams of leaves, shoots, and fruits; AMS dated 2475 ± 30 years BP) and a wooden bowl with cannabis traces. Lacking any "suitable evidence that the ancient, indigenous people utilized *Cannabis* for food, oil, or fiber", they concluded "the deceased was more concerned with the intoxicant and/or medicinal value of the *Cannabis* remains."[20] The Chinese archaeologist Hongen Jiang and his colleagues excavated a circa 2,400-2,800 BP tomb in northwest China's Turpan Basin and found the remains of an approximately 35-year-old man with Caucasian features who had been buried with thirteen 1-meter cannabis plants, placed diagonally across his chest. Jiang said this is the first archeological discovery of complete cannabis plants, as well as the first incidence of their use as a burial shroud.[21][22]

Cannabis has been associated with Central Asian burial rituals around the 5th century BCE, as archaeological excavations in 1947 of a series of burial mounds at Pazyryk in the Altai Mountains of Siberia revealed 1.2 meter-high wooden frame tents in each of the mounds. Each frame surrounded a bronze vessel filled with the remains of hemp seeds and stones and were presumably left smoking in the grave. In one of the mounds, a leather pouch containing hemp seeds, and scattered hemp, coriander, and melilotus seeds were also recovered.[23] More recent excavations indicate the cannabis used in the most ancient burials were devoid of THC, while significantly stronger psychoactive cannabis was employed at least 2,500 years ago in the Pamir Mountains.[24][25]

Africa

According to Alfred Dunhill (1924), Africans have had a long tradition of smoking hemp in gourd pipes, asserting that by 1884 the King of the Baluka tribe of the Congo had established a "riamba" or hemp-smoking cult in place of fetish-worship. Enormous gourd pipes were used.[26] Cannabis was used in Africa to restore appetite and relieve pain of hemorrhoids. It was also used as an antiseptic. In a number of countries, it was used to treat tetanus, hydrophobia, delirium tremens, infantile convulsions, neuralgia and other nervous disorders, cholera, menorrhagia, rheumatism, hay fever, asthma, skin diseases, and protracted labor during childbirth.[27]

In Africa, there were a number of cults and sects of hemp worship. Pogge and Wissman, during their explorations of 1881, visited the Bashilenge, living on the northern borders of the Lundu, between Sankrua and Balua. They found large plots of land around the villages used for the cultivation of hemp. Originally there were small clubs of hemp smokers, bound by ties of friendship, but these eventually led

to the formation of a religious cult. The Bashilenge called themselves *Bena Riamba*, "the sons of hemp", and their land Lubuku, meaning friendship. They greeted each other with the expression "*moio*", meaning both "hemp" and "life."[28]

Each tribesman was required to participate in the cult of Riamba and show his devotion by smoking as frequently as possible. They attributed universal magical powers to hemp, which was thought to combat all kinds of evil and they took it when they went to war and when they traveled. There were initiation rites for new members which usually took place before a war or long journey. The hemp pipe assumed a symbolic meaning for the Bashilenge somewhat analogous to the significance which the peace pipe had for American Indians. No holiday, no trade agreement, no peace treaty was transacted without it. In the middle Sahara region, the Senusi sect also cultivated hemp on a large scale for use in religious ceremonies.[29]

Part of the Rastafari movement, elders of the 20th-century religious movement known as the Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church, consider cannabis to be the "eucharist", claiming it as an oral tradition from Ethiopia dating back to the time of Christ.[30]

Europe

The (ca. 440 BCE) Greek *Histories* of Herodotus record the Scythians using cannabis steam baths.

> [T]hey make a booth by fixing in the ground three sticks inclined towards one another, and stretching around them woollen felts, which they arrange so as to fit as close as possible: inside the booth a dish is placed upon the ground, into which they put a number of red-hot stones, and then add some hemp-seed. … The Scythians, as I said, take some of this hemp-seed, and, creeping under the felt coverings, throw it upon the red-hot stones; immediately it smokes, and gives out such a vapour as no Grecian vapour-bath can exceed; the Scyths, delighted, shout for joy, and this vapour serves them instead of a water-bath; for they never by any chance wash their bodies with water.[31]

What Herodotus called the "hemp-seed" must have been the whole flowering tops of the plant, where the psychoactive resin is produced along with the fruit ("seeds").[32]

Herodotus also noted that the Thracians, a people who had intimate contact with the Scythians, introduced the plant to the Dacians where it became popular among a shamanic cult named the *Kapnobatai*, or "Those Who Walk in the Clouds." The shamans of the cult, also called *Kapnobatai*, were known to use hemp smoke to induce visions and trances.

Burial tombs of the Phrygians and Scythians frequently contained *cannabis sativa* seeds.[4]

Germanic paganism

In ancient Germanic paganism, cannabis was possibly associated with the Norse love goddess, Freya.[33][34] Linguistics offers further evidence of prehistoric use of cannabis by Germanic peoples: The word *hemp* derives from Old English *hænep*, from Proto-Germanic **hanapiz*, from the same Scythian word that *cannabis* derives from.[35] The etymology of this word follows Grimm's Law by which Proto-

Indo-European initial *k- becomes *h- in Germanic. The shift of *k→h indicates it was a loanword into the Germanic parent language at a time depth no later than the separation of Common Germanic from Proto-Indo-European, about 500 BC.

Middle East

Cannabis oil was likely used throughout the Middle East for centuries before and after the birth of Christ.[4] The Assyrians, Egyptians, and Israelites, among other Afro-Asiatic Languages cultures of the Middle East, mostly acquired cannabis from Aryan cultures and have burned it as an incense as early as 1000 BC. In Egypt, cannabis pollen was recovered from the tomb of Ramesses II, who governed for sixty-seven years during the 19th dynasty, and several mummies contain trace cannabinoids. Cannabis, as an incense, was used in the temples of Assyria and Babylon because "its aroma was pleasing to the Gods."

Ancient Israel

It has been generally held by academics specializing in the archaeology and paleobotany of Ancient Israel, and those specializing in the lexicography of the Hebrew Bible that cannabis is not documented or mentioned in early Judaism. Against this, some popular writers have argued that there is evidence for religious use of cannabis in the Hebrew Bible. The primary advocate of the religious use of cannabis in early Judaism was Polish anthropologist Sula Benet, who claimed that the plant *kaneh bosem* *קְנֵה-בֹשֶׂם* mentioned five times in the Hebrew Bible, and used in the holy anointing oil of the Book of Exodus, was cannabis.[36] According to theories that hold that cannabis was present in Ancient Israelite society, a variant of hashish is held to have been present.[37] While Benet's conclusion regarding the psychoactive use of cannabis is not universally accepted among Jewish scholars, there is general agreement that cannabis is used in talmudic sources to refer to hemp fibers, not hashish, as hemp was a vital commodity before linen replaced it.[38] Lexicons of Hebrew and dictionaries of plants of the Bible such as by Michael Zohary (1985), Hans Arne Jensen (2004) and James A. Duke (2010) and others identify the plant in question as either *Acorus calamus* or *Cymbopogon citratus*, not cannabis.[39]

In 2020, it was announced that cannabis residue had been found on the Israelite sanctuary altar at Tel Arad dating to the 8th century BCE of the Kingdom of Judah, suggesting that cannabis was a part of some Israelite rituals at the time.[40]

United States

The more modern religion of Rastafari (recognized by the Supreme Court as a religion) is quite popular among youth and African American culture.

Even more recently has been the emergence of an entirely new religious philosophy: cantheism. Cantheism is a word that signifies any and all attitudes towards the cannabis plant as a religious experience. While not technically a religion itself, it is a philosophy that examines the inherent religious nature of man’s interaction with the cannabis plant. [41]

United States v. Jefferson, 175 F. Supp. 2d 1123 (N.D. Ind. 2001) states:

> As a practical matter, the Court is in agreement with the Government that smoking marijuana at religious rituals all day, every day appears abusive. However, even if the court held that smoking marijuana "all day every day" was excessive, it would still have to determine what an "acceptable level" of usage would be as part of Israel's religion since it is clear that a main doctrine of the religion involves smoking marijuana this much was conceded by the Government. This court has no evidentiary basis with which to make such a determination and any guesswork on the court's part would result in an administrative quagmire for the Probation Office. Thus, for purposes of the court's analysis, it will assume that Israel's usage is consistent with his religious practice.[42]

Chris Conrad coined the term Kantheism, which later became Cantheism (alternately spelled Cannatheism), in 1996, to promote sacramental cannabis practices.[43]

International movements

It is not known when Rastafari first claimed cannabis to be sacred, but it is clear that by the late 1940s Rastafari was associated with cannabis smoking at the Pinnacle community of Leonard Howell. Rastafari see cannabis as a sacramental and deeply beneficial plant that is the Tree of Life mentioned in the Bible and quote Revelation 22:2, "... the herb is the healing of the nations." The use of cannabis, and particularly of long-stemmed water-pipes called chalices, is an integral part of what Rastafari call "reasoning sessions" where members join together to discuss life according to the Rasta perspective of Livity (spiritual concept). They see the use of cannabis as bringing them closer to God (Jah), allowing the user to penetrate the truth of things more clearly.

While it is not necessary to use cannabis to be a Rastafari, many use it regularly as a part of their faith, and pipes of cannabis are dedicated to His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I before being smoked. According to the Watchman Fellowship "The herb is the key to new understanding of the self, the universe, and God. It is the vehicle to cosmic consciousness" and is believed to burn the corruption out of the human heart. Rubbing the ashes into the skin from smoked cannabis is also considered a healthy practice. The term and name "Ras-Tafari" which also doubles as a mantra of Rastafari, is the pre-ordination namesake of Haile Selassie I before he was King of Ethiopia- King Ras is seen, by the Rastafarians as a direct blood descendant of King Solomon and thus a continuation of the biblical House of David as well as previous prophecies made by Leonard Howell and the Bible.

See also

Cannabis portal

- Cannabis and religion
- Entheogenic drugs and the archaeological record
- History of medical cannabis

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Dreadlocks

Dreadlocks, also known as **dreads** or **locs**, are a hairstyle made of rope-like strands of matted hair. Dreadlocks can form naturally in very curly hair, or they can be created with techniques like twisting, backcombing, or crochet.[1][2][3][4]

Cree chief Poundmaker with locked hair, 1885

Etymology

The word *dreadlocks* is usually understood to come from Jamaican Creole *dread*, "member of the Rastafarian movement who wears his hair in dreadlocks" (compare Nazirite), referring to their dread or awe of God.[5] An older name for dreadlocks was *elflocks*, from the notion that elves had matted the locks in people's sleep.

Other origins have been proposed. Some authors trace the term to the Mau Mau, a group of whom apparently coined it from British colonialists in 1959 as a reference to their dreadful hair.

In their 2014 book *Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America*, Ayana Byrd and Lori Tharps claimed that the name *dredlocs* originated in the time of the slave trade: when transported Africans disembarked from the slave ships after spending months confined in unhygienic conditions, whites would report that their undressed and matted kinky hair was "dreadful". According to them, it is due to these circumstances that many people wearing the style today drop the *a* in *dreadlock* to avoid negative implications.[6]

The word *dreadlocks* refers to locks of entangled hair.[7]

Several languages have names for these locks:

- *Jaṭā* In Sanskrit.
- *Ndiagne* and *Ndjan* in Wolof.[8]
- *Mpesempese* in Akan.
- *Dada* in Yoruba.[9]
- *Ezenwa* and *Elena* in Igbo.[10]
- *Goscha* in Hamer.[11]
- *Mhotsi* in Shona.[12]
- *Nontombi* in Nyaneka.[13]
- *Rastas* in Spanish.

History

Africa

According to Sherrow in *Encyclopedia of Hair: A Cultural History*, dreadlocks date back to ancient times in various cultures. In ancient Egypt, Egyptians wore locked hairstyles and wigs appeared on bas-reliefs, statuary and other artifacts.[14] Mummified remains of Egyptians with locked wigs have also been recovered from archaeological sites.[15] According to Maria Delongoria, braided hair was worn by people in the Sahara desert since 3000 BCE. Dreadlocks were also worn by followers of Abrahamic religions. For example, Ethiopian Coptic Bahatowie priests adopted dreadlocks as a hairstyle before the fifth century CE (400 or 500 CE). Locking hair was practiced by some ethnic groups in East, Central, West, and Southern Africa.[16][17][18]

Pre-Columbian Americas

Pre-Columbian Aztec priests were described in Aztec codices (including the Durán Codex, the Codex Tudela and the Codex Mendoza) as wearing their hair untouched, allowing it to grow long and matted.[19] Bernal Diaz del Castillo records:

> There were priests with long robes of black cloth... The hair of these priests was very long and so matted that it could not be separated or disentangled, and most of them had their ears scarified, and their hair was clotted with blood.

Hairstyles in Europe

The earliest known possible depictions of dreadlocks in Europe date back as far as 1600–1500 BCE in the Minoan Civilization, centered in Crete (now part of Greece).[21] Frescoes discovered on the Aegean island of Thera (modern Santorini, Greece) portray individuals with long braided hair or long dreadlocks.[20][23][24][25] Another source describes the hair of the boys in the Akrotiri Boxer Fresco as long tresses, not dreadlocks. Tresses of hair are defined by Collins Dictionary as braided hair, braided plaits, or long loose curls of hair.[26][27][28]

Nineteenth century

In Senegal, the Baye Fall, followers of the Mouride movement, a Sufi movement of Islam founded in 1887 CE by Shaykh Aamadu Bàmba Mbàkke, are famous for growing dreadlocks and wearing multi-colored gowns.[29]

Cheikh Ibra Fall, founder of the Baye Fall school of the Mouride Brotherhood, popularized the style by adding a mystic touch to it.[30] This sect of Islam in Senegal, where Muslims wear *ndjan* (dreadlocks), aimed to Africanize Islam. Dreadlocks to this group of Islamic followers symbolize their religious orientation.[31][32] Jamaican Rastas also reside in Senegal and have settled in areas near Baye Fall

communities. Baye Fall and Jamaican Rastas have similar cultural beliefs regarding dreadlocks. Both groups wear knitted caps to cover their locs and wear locs for religious and spiritual purposes.[33] Male members of the Baye Fall religion wear locs to detach from mainstream Western ideals.[34]

Boxers with dreadlocks on a fresco from Akrotiri (modern Santorini, Greece), 1600–1500 BCE.[20][21][22]

Twentieth century into present day

In the 1970s, Americans and Britons attended reggae concerts and were exposed to various aspects of Jamaican culture, including dreadlocks. Hippies related to the Rastafarian idea of rejecting capitalism and colonialism, symbolized by the name "Babylon". Rastafarians rejected Babylon in multiple ways, including by wearing their hair naturally in locs to defy Western standards of beauty. The 1960s was the height of the civil rights movement in the U.S., and some White Americans joined Black people in the fight against inequality and segregation and were inspired by Black culture. As a result, some White people joined the Rastafarian movement. Dreadlocks were not a common hairstyle in the United States, but by the 1970s, some White Americans were inspired by reggae music, the Rastafarian movement, and African-American hair culture and started wearing dreadlocks.[35][36] According to authors Bronner and Dell Clark, the clothing styles worn by hippies in the 1960s and 1970s were copied from African-American culture. The word hippie comes from the African-American slang word *hip*. African-American dress and hairstyles such as braids (often decorated with beads), dreadlocks, and language were copied by hippies and developed into a new countercultural movement used by hippies.[37][38]

In Europe in the 1970s, hundreds of Jamaicans and other Caribbean people immigrated to metropolitan centers of London, Birmingham, Paris, and Amsterdam. Communities of Jamaicans, Caribbeans, and Rastas emerged in these areas. Thus Europeans in these metropolitan cities were introduced to Black cultures from the Caribbean and Rastafarian practices and were inspired by Caribbean culture, leading some of them to adopt Black hair culture, music, and religion. However, the strongest influence of Rastafari religion is among Europe's Black population.[39][40]

When reggae music, which espoused Rastafarian ideals, gained popularity and mainstream acceptance in the 1970s, thanks to Bob Marley's music and cultural influence, dreadlocks (often called "dreads") became a notable fashion statement worldwide, and have been worn by prominent authors, actors, athletes, and rappers.[41][42] Rastafari influenced its members worldwide to embrace dreadlocks. Black Rastas loc their hair to embrace their African heritage and accept African features as beautiful, such as dark skin tones, Afro-textured hair, and African facial features.[43]

Hip Hop and rap artists such as Lauryn Hill, Lil Wayne, T-Pain, Snoop Dog, J-Cole, Wiz Khalifa, Chief Keef, Lil Jon, and other artists wear dreadlocks, which further popularized the hairstyle in the 1990s, early 2000s, and present day. Dreadlocks are a part of hip-hop fashion and reflect Black cultural music of liberation and identity.[44][45][46][47] Many rappers and Afrobeat artists in Uganda wear locs, such as

Navio, Delivad Julio, Fik Fameica, Vyper Ranking, Byaxy, Liam Voice, and other artists. From reggae music to hip hop, rap, and Afrobeat, Black artists in the African diaspora wear locs to display their Black identity and culture.[48][49][50]

The rapper Mavi wearing dreadlocks

Youth in Kenya who are fans of rap and hip hop music, and Kenyan rappers and musicians, wear locs to connect to the history of the Mau Mau freedom fighters who wore locs as symbols of anti-colonialism, and to Bob Marley, who was a Rasta.[51] Hip hop and reggae fashion spread to Ghana and fused with traditional Ghanaian culture. Ghanaian musicians wear dreadlocks incorporating reggae symbols and hip hop clothes mixed with traditional Ghanaian textiles, such as wearing Ghanaian headwraps to hold their locs.[52][53] Ghanaian women wear locs as a symbol of African beauty. The beauty industry in Ghana believe locs are a traditional African hair practice and market hair care products to promote natural African hairstyles such as afros and locs.[54] The previous generations of Black artists have inspired younger contemporary Black actresses to loc their hair, such as Chloe Bailey, Halle Bailey, and R&B and Pop music singer Willow Smith. More Black actors in Hollywood are choosing to loc their hair to embrace their Black heritage.[55]

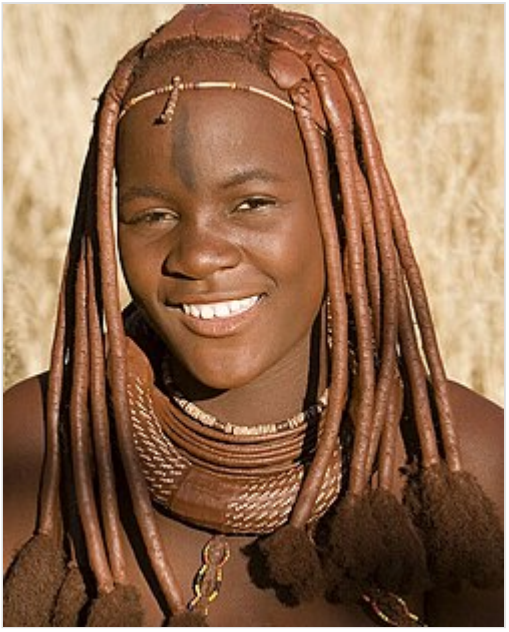
Although more Black women in Hollywood and the beauty and music industries are wearing locs, there has never been a Black Miss America winner with locs because there is pushback in the fashion industry towards Black women's natural hair. For example, model Adesuwa Aighewi locked her hair and was told she might not receive any casting calls because of her dreadlocks. Some Black women in modeling agencies are forced to straighten their hair. However, more Black women are resisting and choosing to wear Black hairstyles such as afros and dreadlocks in fashion shows and beauty pageants.[56][57] For example, in 2007 Miss Universe Jamaica and Rastafarian, Zahra Redwood, was the first Black woman to break the barrier on a world pageant stage when she wore locs, paving the way and influencing other Black women to wear locs in beauty pageants. In 2015, Miss Jamaica World Sanneta Myrie was the first contestant to wear locs to the Miss World Pageant.[58] In 2018, Dee-Ann Kentish-Rogers of Britain was crowned Miss Universe wearing her locs and became the first Black British woman to win the competition with natural locs.[59][60]

Hollywood cinema often uses the dreadlock hairstyle as a prop in movies for villains and pirates. According to author Steinhoff, this appropriates dreadlocks and removes them from their original meaning of Black heritage to one of dread and otherness. In the movie *Pirates of the Caribbean*, the pirate Jack Sparrow wears dreadlocks. Dreadlocks are used in Hollywood to mystify a character and make them appear threatening or living a life of danger. In the movie *The Curse of the Black Pearl*, pirates were dressed in dreadlocks to signify their cursed lives.[61]

By culture

Locks have been worn for various reasons in many cultures and ethnic groups around the world throughout history. Their use has also been raised in debates about cultural appropriation.[62][63][64][65][66][67]

Africa



Himba woman with red dreadlocks

The practice of wearing braids and dreadlocks in Africa dates back to 3,000 BC in the Sahara Desert. It has been commonly thought that other cultures influenced the dreadlock tradition in Africa. The Kikuyu and Somali wear braided and locked hairstyles.[68][69] Warriors among the Fulani, Wolof, and Serer in Mauritania, and Mandinka in Mali were known for centuries to have worn cornrows when young and dreadlocks when old.

In West Africa, the water spirit Mami Wata is said to have long locked hair. Mami Wata's spiritual powers of fertility and healing come from her dreadlocks.[70][71] West African spiritual priests called *Dada* wear dreadlocks to venerate Mami Wata in her honor as spiritual consecrations.[72] Some Ethiopian Christian monks and Bahatowie priests of the Ethiopian Coptic Church lock their hair for religious purposes.[73][74] In Yorubaland, Aladura church prophets called *woolii* mat their hair into locs and wear long blue, red, white, or purple garments with caps and carry iron rods used as a staff.[75] Prophets lock their hair in accordance with the Nazarene vow in the Christian bible. This is not to be confused with the Rastafari religion that was started in the 1930s. The Aladura church was founded in 1925 and syncretizes indigenous Yoruba beliefs about dreadlocks with Christianity.[76] Moses Orimolade Tunolase was the founder of the first African Pentecostal movement started in 1925 in Nigeria. Tunolase wore dreadlocks and members of his church wear dreadlocks in his honor and for spiritual protection.[77]

Hamar women with red ochre locs

The Yoruba word *Dada* is given to children in Nigeria born with dreadlocks.[78][79] Some Yoruba people believe children born with dreadlocks have innate spiritual powers, and cutting their hair might cause serious illness. Only the child's mother can touch their hair. "Dada children are believed to be young gods, they are often offered at spiritual altars for chief priests to decide their fate. Some children end up becoming spiritual healers and serve at the shrine for the rest of their lives." If their hair is cut, it must be cut by a chief priest and placed in a pot of water with herbs, and the mixture is used to heal the child if they get sick. Among the Igbo, Dada children are said to be reincarnated Jujuists of great spiritual power because of their dreadlocks.[80][81] Children born with dreadlocks are viewed as special. However, adults with dreadlocks are viewed negatively. Yoruba Dada

children's dreadlocks are shaved at a river, and their hair is grown back "tamed" and have a hairstyle that conforms to societal standards. The child continues to be recognized as mysterious and special.[82] It is believed that the hair of Dada children was braided in heaven before they were born and will bring good fortune and wealth to their parents. When the child is older, the hair is cut during a special ritual.[83] In Yoruba mythology, the Orisha Yemoja gave birth to a Dada who is a deified king in Yoruba.[84][85] However, dreadlocks are viewed in a negative light in Nigeria due to their stereotypical association with gangs and criminal activity; men with dreadlocks face profiling from Nigerian police.[86][87]

Sangomas wearing white beaded dreadlocks.

In Ghana, among the Ashanti people, Okomfo priests are identified by their dreadlocks. They are not allowed to cut their hair and must allow it to mat and lock naturally. Locs are symbols of higher power reserved for priests.[88][89][90] Other spiritual people in Southern Africa who wear dreadlocks are Sangomas. Sangomas wear red and white beaded dreadlocks to connect to ancestral spirits. Two African men were interviewed, explaining why they chose to wear dreadlocks. "One – Mr. Ngqula – said he wore his dreadlocks to obey his ancestors' call, given through dreams, to become a 'sangoma' in accordance with his Xhosa culture. Another – Mr. Kamlana – said he was instructed to wear his dreadlocks by his ancestors and did so to overcome 'intwasa', a condition understood in African culture as an injunction from the ancestors to become a traditional healer, from which he had suffered since childhood."[91][92] In Zimbabwe, there is a tradition of locking hair called *mhotsi* worn by spirit mediums called *svikiro*. The Rastafarian religion spread to Zimbabwe and influenced some women in Harare to wear locs because they believe in the Rastafari's pro-Black teachings and rejection of colonialism.[93]

Zulu-Shona African Man With Salon-styled dreadlocks. In the Shona language, locs translate to *mhotsi*.

Maasai warriors in Kenya are known for their long, thin, red dreadlocks, dyed with red root extracts or red ochre (red earth clay).[94] The Himba women in Namibia are also known for their red-colored dreadlocks. Himba women use red earth clay mixed with butterfat and roll their hair with the mixture. They use natural moisturizers to maintain the health of their hair. Hamar women in Ethiopia wear red-colored locs made using red earth clay.[95] In Angola, Mwila women create thick dreadlocks covered in herbs, crushed tree bark, dried cow dung, butter, and oil. The thick dreadlocks are dyed using oncula, an ochre of red crushed rock.[96][97][98] In Southern, Eastern, and Northern Africa, Africans use red ochre as sunscreen and cover their dreadlocks and braids with ochre to hold their hair in styles and as a hair moisturizer by mixing it with fats. Red ochre has a spiritual meaning of fertility, and in Maasai culture, the color red symbolizes bravery and is used in ceremonies and dreadlock hair traditions.[99][100]

Historians note that West and Central African people braid their hair to signify age, gender, rank, role in society, and ethnic affiliation. It is believed braided and locked hair provides spiritual protection, connects people to the spirit of the earth, bestows spiritual power, and enables people to communicate with the gods and spirits.[101][102][103] In the 15th and 16th centuries, the Atlantic slave trade saw Black Africans forcibly transported from Sub-Saharan Africa to North America and, upon their arrival in the New World, their heads would be shaved in an effort to erase their culture.[104][105][106][107] Enslaved Africans spent months in slave ships and their hair matted into dreadlocks that European slave traders called "dreadful."[108][109]

African diaspora

Alice Walker delivering a speech.

In the African diaspora, people loc their hair to have a connection to the spirit world and receive messages from spirits. It is believed locs of hair are antennas making the wearer receptive to spiritual messages.[110] Other reasons people loc their hair are for fashion and to maintain the health of natural hair, also called kinky hair.[111] In the 1960s and 1970s in the United States, the Black Power movement, Black is Beautiful movement, and the natural hair movement inspired many Black Americans to wear their hair natural in afros, braids, and locked hairstyles.[112][113] The Black is Beautiful cultural movement spread to Black communities in Britain. In the 1960s and 1970s, Black people in Britain were aware of the civil rights movement and other cultural movements in Black America and the social and political changes occurring at the time. The Black is Beautiful movement and Rastafari culture in Europe influenced Afro-Britons to wear their hair in natural loc styles and afros as a way to fight against racism, Western standards of beauty, and to develop unity among Black people of diverse backgrounds.[114][115] From the twentieth century to the present day, dreadlocks have been symbols of Black liberation and are worn by revolutionaries, activists, womanists, and radical artists in the diaspora.[116][117] For example, Black American literary author Toni Morrison wore locs, and Alice Walker wears locs to reconnect with their African heritage.[118]

Natural Black hairstyles worn by Black women are seen as not feminine and unprofessional in some American businesses.[119] Wearing locs in the diaspora signifies a person's racial identity and defiance of European standards of beauty, such as straight blond hair.[120] Locs encourage Black people to embrace other aspects of their culture that are tied to Black hair, such as wearing African ornaments like cowrie shells, beads, and African headwraps that are sometimes worn with locs.[121][122] Some Black Canadian women wear locs to connect to the global Black culture. Dreadlocks unite Black people in the diaspora because wearing locs has the same meaning in areas of the world where there are Black people: opposing Eurocentric standards of beauty and sharing a Black and African diaspora identity.[123][124] For many Black women in the diaspora, locs are a fashion statement to express individuality and the beauty and versatility of Black hair. Locs are also a protective hairstyle to maintain the health of their hair by wearing kinky hair in natural locs or faux locs. To protect their natural hair from the elements during the changing seasons, Black women wear certain hairstyles to protect and retain the moisture in their hair. Black women wear soft locs as a protective hairstyle because they enclose natural hair inside them, protecting their natural hair from environmental damage. This protective soft loc style is created by "wrapping hair around the natural hair or crocheting pre-made soft locs into cornrows."[125] In the

diaspora, Black men and women wear different styles of dreadlocks. Each style requires a different method of care. Freeform locs are formed organically by not combing the hair or manipulating the hair. There are also goddess locs, faux locs, sister locs, twisted locs, Rasta locs, crinkle locs, invisible locs, and other loc styles.[126][127][128]

Australia

An Indigenous Australian with dreadlocks

Some Indigenous Australians of North West and North Central Australia, as well as the Gold Coast region of Eastern Australia, have historically worn their hair in a locked style, sometimes also having long beards that are fully or partially locked. Traditionally, some wear the dreadlocks loose, while others wrap the dreadlocks around their heads or bind them at the back of the head.[129] In North Central Australia, the tradition is for the dreadlocks to be greased with fat and coated with red ochre, which assists in their formation.[130] In 1931 in Warburton Range, Western Australia, a photograph was taken of an Aboriginal Australian man with dreadlocks.[131]

In the 1970s, hippies from Australia's southern region moved to Kuranda, where they introduced the Rastafari movement as expressed in the reggae music of Peter Tosh and Bob Marley to the Buluwai people in the 1970s. Aboriginal Australians found parallels between the struggles of Black people in the Americas and their own racial struggles in Australia. Willie Brim, a Buluwai man born in the 1960s in Kuranda, identified with Tosh's and Marley's spiritually conscious music, and inspired particularly by Peter Tosh's album *Bush Doctor*, in 1978 he founded a reggae band called *Mantaka* after the area alongside the Barron River where he grew up. He combined his people's cultural traditions with the reggae guitar he had played since he was young, and his band's music reflects Buluwai culture and history. Now a leader of the Buluwai people and a cultural steward, Brim and his band send an "Aboriginal message" to the world. He and other Buluwai people wear dreadlocks as a native part of their culture and not as an influence from the Rastafari religion. Although Brim was inspired by reggae music, he is not a Rastafarian as he and his people have their own spirituality.[132] Foreigners visiting Australia think the Buluwai people wearing dreadlocks were influenced by the Rastafarian movement, but the Buluwai say their ancestors wore dreadlocks before the movement began.[133] Some Indigenous Australians wear an Australian Aboriginal flag (a symbol of unity and Indigenous identity in Australia) tied around their head to hold their dreadlocks.[134]

Buddhism

Within Tibetan Buddhism and other more esoteric forms of Buddhism, locks have occasionally been substituted for the more traditional shaved head. The most recognizable of these groups are known as the Ngagpas of Tibet. For Buddhists of these particular sects and degrees of initiation, their locked hair is not only a symbol of their vows but an embodiment of the particular powers they are sworn to carry.[135] Hevajra Tantra 1.4.15 states that the practitioner of particular ceremonies "should arrange his piled up hair" as part of the ceremonial protocol.[136] Archeologists found a statue of a male deity, Shiva, with

dreadlocks in Stung Treng province in Cambodia.[137] In a sect of tantric Buddhism, some initiates wear dreadlocks.[138][139] The sect of tantric Buddhism in which initiates wear dreadlocks is called *weikza* and *Passayana* or Vajrayana Buddhism. This sect of Buddhism is practiced in Burma. The initiates spend years in the forest with this practice, and when they return to the temples, they should not shave their heads to reintegrate.[140]

Hinduism

The practice of wearing a *jaṭā* (dreadlocks) is observed in modern-day Hinduism,[142][143][144] most notably by sadhus who worship Shiva.[145][146] The Kapalikas, first commonly referenced in the 6th century CE, were known to wear the *jaṭā*[147] as a form of deity imitation of the deva Bhairava-Shiva.[148] Shiva is often depicted with dreadlocks. According to Ralph Trueb, "Shiva's dreadlocks represent the potent power of his mind that enables him to catch and bind the unruly and wild river goddess Ganga."[149]

The Hindu deity Shiva wears dreadlocks.

In a village in Pune, Savitha Uttam Thorat, some women hesitate to cut their long dreadlocks because it is believed it will cause misfortune or bring down divine wrath. Dreadlocks practiced by the women in this region of India are believed to be possessed by the goddess Yellamma. Cutting off the hair is believed to bring misfortune onto the woman, because having dreadlocks is considered to be a gift from the goddess Yellamma (also known as Renuka).[150] Some of the women have long and heavy dreadlocks that put a lot of weight on their necks, causing pain and limited mobility.[151][152] Some in local government and police in the Maharashtra region demand the women cut their hair, because the religious practice of Yellamma forbids women from washing and cutting their dreadlocks, causing health issues.[153] These locks of hair dedicated to Yellamma are called *jade*, believed to be evidence of divine presence. However, in Southern India, people advocate for the end of the practice.[154] The goddess Angala Parameshvari in Indian mythology is said to have *cataik-kari* matted hair (dreadlocks). Women healers in India are identified by their locs of hair and are respected in spiritual rituals because they are believed to be connected to goddesses. A woman who has a *jata* is believed to derive her spiritual powers or *shakti* from her dreadlocks.[155]

Two sadhus (ascetic monks) with their hair in traditional *jaṭā* style[141]

Rastafari

Rastafari movement dreadlocks are symbolic of the Lion of Judah, and were inspired by the Nazarites of the Bible.[156] Jamaicans locked their hair after seeing images of Ethiopians with locs fighting Italian soldiers during the Second Italo-Ethiopian War. The afro is the preferred hairstyle worn by Ethiopians.

During the Italian invasion, Ethiopians vowed not to cut their hair using the Biblical example of Samson, who got his strength from his seven locks of hair, until emperor Ras Tafari Makonnen (Haile Selassie) and Ethiopia were liberated and Selassie was returned from exile.[157] Scholars also state another indirect Ethiopian influence for Rastas locking their hair are the Bahatowie priests in Ethiopia and their tradition of wearing dreadlocks for religious reasons since the 5th century AD.[158] Another African influence for Rastas wearing locs was seeing photos of Mau Mau freedom fighters with locs in Kenya fighting against the British authorities in the 1950s. Dreadlocks to the Mau Mau freedom fighters were a symbol of anti-colonialism, and this symbolism of dreadlocks was an inspiration for Rastas to loc their hair in opposition to racism and promote an African identity.[159][160][161] The branch of Rastafari that was inspired to loc their hair after the Mau Mau freedom fighters was the *Nyabinghi Order*, previously called *Young Black Faith*. Young Black Faith were considered a radical group of younger Rastafari members. Eventually, other Rastafari groups started locking their hair.[162]

Rasta Bongo - A Rasta wearing a *tam* (Rastacap) to cover his locs.

In the Rastafarian belief, people wear locs for a spiritual connection to the universe and the spirit of the earth. It is believed that by shaking their locs, they will bring down the destruction of Babylon. Babylon in the Rastafarian belief is systemic racism, colonialism, and any system of economic and social oppression of Black people.[163][164] Locs are also worn to defy European standards of beauty and help to develop a sense of Black pride and acceptance of African features as beautiful.[165][166] In another branch of Rastafari called *Boboshanti Order of Rastafari*, dreadlocks are worn to display a black person's identity and social protest against racism.[167] The Bobo Ashanti are one of the strictest Mansions of Rastafari. They cover their locs with bright turbans and wear long robes and can usually be distinguished from other Rastafari members because of this.[168] Other Rastas wear a Rastacap to tuck their locs under the cap.[169]

The *Bobo Ashanti* ("Bobo" meaning "black" in Iyaric;[170] and "Ashanti" in reference to the Ashanti people of Ghana, whom the Bobos claim are their ancestors),[171] were founded by Emmanuel Charles Edwards in 1959 during the period known as the "groundation", where many protests took place calling for the repatriation of African descendants and slaves to Kingston. A Boboshanti branch spread to Ghana because of repatriated Jamaicans and other Black Rastas moving to Ghana. Prior to Rastas living in Ghana, Ghanaians and West Africans previously had their own beliefs about locked hair. Dreadlocks in West Africa are believed to bestow children born with locked hair with spiritual power, and that *Dada* children, that is, those born with dreadlocks, were given to their parents by water deities. Rastas and Ghanaians have similar beliefs about the spiritual significance of dreadlocks, such as not touching a person's or child's locs, maintaining clean locs, locs spiritual connections to spirits, and locs bestowing spiritual powers to the wearer.[172]

In sports

Dreadlocks have become a popular hairstyle among professional athletes. However, some athletes are discriminated against and were forced to cut their dreadlocks. For example, in December 2018, a Black high school wrestler in New Jersey was forced to cut his dreadlocks 90 seconds before his match, sparking a civil rights case that led to the passage of the CROWN Act in 2019.[173]

In professional American football, the number of players with dreadlocks has increased since Al Harris and Ricky Williams first wore the style during the 1990s. In 2012, about 180 National Football League players wore dreadlocks. A significant number of these players are defensive backs, who are less likely to be tackled than offensive players. According to the NFL's rulebook, a player's hair is considered part of their "uniform", meaning the locks are fair game when attempting to bring them down.[174][175]

In the NBA, there has been controversy over Brooklyn Nets guard Jeremy Lin, an Asian-American who garnered mild controversy over his choice of dreadlocks. Former NBA player Kenyon Martin accused Lin of appropriating African-American culture in a since-deleted social media post, after which Lin pointed out that Martin has multiple Chinese characters tattooed on his body.[176]

David Diamante, the American Boxing ring announcer of Italian American heritage, sports prominent dreadlocks.

Formation and Maintenance

Dreadlocks can be formed through several methods. Very curly hair forms single-strand knots that can naturally entangle into dreadlocks.[177] For other types of hair various methods utilized to create dreadlocks include crochet hooks and backcombing. Dreadlocks should not be confused with matting, which occurs from the unintentional neglect and damage of any type of hair.[178]

Hair discrimination

On 3 July 2019, California became the first US state to prohibit discrimination over natural hair. Governor Gavin Newsom signed the CROWN Act into law, banning employers and schools from discriminating against hairstyles such as dreadlocks, braids, afros, and twists.[179] Likewise, later in 2019, Assembly Bill 07797 became law in New York state; it "prohibits race discrimination based on natural hair or hairstyles".[180][181] Scholars call discrimination based on hair "hairism". Despite the passage of the CROWN Act, hairism continues, with some Black people being fired from work or not hired because of their dreadlocks.[182][183][184] According to the CROWN 2023 Workplace Research Study, sixty-six percent of Black women change their hairstyle for job interviews, and twenty-five percent of Black women said they were denied a job because of their hairstyle.[185] The CROWN Act was passed to challenge the idea that Black people must emulate other hairstyles to be accepted in public and educational spaces.[186] As of 2023, 24 states have passed the CROWN Act. July 3 is recognized as National CROWN Day, also called Black Hair Independence Day.[187][188][189]

The Perception Institute conducted a "Good Hair Study" using images of Black women wearing natural styles in locs, afros, twists, and other Black hairstyles. The Perception Institute is "a consortium of researchers, advocates and strategists" that uses psychological and emotional test studies to make

participants aware of their racial biases. A Black-owned hair supply company, Shea Moisture, partnered with Perception Institute to conduct the study. The tests were done to reduce hair- and racially-based discrimination in education, civil justice, and law enforcement places. The study used an implicit-association test on 4,000 participants of all racial backgrounds and showed most of the participants had negative views about natural Black hairstyles. The study also showed Millennials were the most accepting of kinky hair texture on Black people. "Noliwe Rooks, a Cornell University professor who writes about the intersection of beauty and race, says for some reason, natural Black hair just frightens some White people."[190][191]

Black students in the Black diaspora are discriminated against and some are suspended from school for wearing locs.

In September of 2016, a lawsuit was filed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against the company Catastrophe Management Solutions located in Mobile, Alabama. The court case ended with the decision that it was not a discriminatory practice for the company to refuse to hire an African American because they wore dreadlocks.[192]

In some Texas public schools, dreadlocks are prohibited, especially for male students, because long braided hair is considered unmasculine according to Western standards of masculinity which define masculinity as "short, tidy hair." Black and Native American boys are stereotyped and receive negative treatment and negative labeling for wearing dreadlocks, cornrows, and long braids. Non-white students are prohibited from practicing their traditional hairstyles that are a part of their culture.[193][194]

The policing of Black hairstyles also occurs in London, England. Black students in England are prohibited from wearing natural hairstyles such as dreadlocks, afros, braids, twists, and other African and Black hairstyles. Black students are suspended from school, are stereotyped, and receive negative treatment from teachers.[195]

In Midrand, north of Johannesburg in South Africa, a Black girl was kicked out of school for wearing her hair in a natural dreadlock style . Hair and dreadlock discrimination is experienced by people of color all over the world who do not conform to Western standards of beauty.[196][197] At Pretoria High School for Girls in Gauteng province in South Africa, Black girls are discriminated against for wearing African hairstyles and are forced to straighten their hair.[198]

In 2017, the United States Army lifted the ban on dreadlocks. In the army, Black women can now wear braids and locs under the condition that they are groomed, clean, and meet the length requirements.[199] From slavery into the present day, the policing of Black women's hair continues to be controlled by some institutions and people. Even when Black women wear locs and they are clean and well-kept, some people do not consider locs to be feminine and professional because of the natural kinky texture of Black hair.[200][201]

Four African countries approved the wearing of dreadlocks in their courts: Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. However, hairism continues despite the approval. Although locked hairstyles are a traditional practice on the African continent, some Africans disapprove of the hairstyle because of cultural

taboos or pressure from Europeans in African schools and local African governments to conform to Eurocentric standards of beauty.[202][203]

Police profiling

According to a 2011 article from *The New Republic*, Black men who wear locs are racially profiled and watched more by the police and are believed to be "thugs" or involved in gangs and violent crimes than Black men who do not wear dreadlocks.[204]

Black women in the United States Army can wear Black hairstyles.

Guinness Book of World Records

On 10 December 2010, the *Guinness Book of World Records* rested its "longest dreadlocks" category after investigating its first and only female title holder, Asha Mandela, with this official statement:

> Following a review of our guidelines for the longest dreadlock, we have taken expert advice and made the decision to rest this category. The reason for this is that it is difficult, and in many cases impossible, to measure the authenticity of the locks due to expert methods employed in the attachment of hair extensions/re-attachment of broken-off dreadlocks. Effectively the dreadlock can become an extension and therefore impossible to adjudicate accurately. It is for this reason Guinness World Records has decided to rest the category and will no longer be monitoring the category for longest dreadlock.[205]

See also

- List of hairstyles
- Protective hairstyle
- Braids
- Box braids
- Elflock
- Cornrows
- French braid
- Polish plait

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External links

- Media related to Dreadlocks at Wikimedia Commons
- Celtic Hair History (https://blogsarchive.sites.haverford.edu/celticfringe/2017/02/17/celtic-hair-history/#:~:text=Both%20men%20and%20women%20sometime,out%20of%20bone%20or%20horn./) from Haverford University student blogs
- The cultural ramifications of dreadlocks (https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/twisted-locks-fraught-with-meaning/2015/06/10/72949b8c-f595-11e4-bcc4-e8141e5eb0c9_story.html/) from the Washington Post
- *Dreadlocks Story* – Documentary by Linda Aïnouche (https://web.archive.org/web/20160618174330/http://www.dreadlockstory.com/)
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Ital

Ital, also spelled **I-tal** (/ˈaɪtɑːl/), is food often celebrated by those in the Rastafari movement. It is compulsory in the Bobo Ashanti and Nyabinghi mansions, though not in the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The word derives from the English word "vital", with the initial "v" removed.[1] This emphasis on the letter "I" is done to many words in the Rastafari vocabulary to signify the unity of the speaker with God and all of nature. The expression of Ital eating varies widely from Rasta to Rasta, and there are few universal rules of Ital living.

The primary goal of adhering to an Ital diet is to increase liveliness. The life energy that Rastafari generally believe lives within all human beings, as conferred from the Almighty, is referred to as Livity.[2] A common tenet of Rastafari beliefs is the sharing of a central Livity among living things, and what is put into one's body should enhance Livity rather than reduce it. Though there are different interpretations of ital regarding specific foods, the general principle is that food should be natural, or pure, and directly from the earth; Rastafari therefore often avoid food which is chemically modified or contains artificial additives (e.g., colour, flavourings, and preservatives). Some also avoid added salt in foods, especially salt with the artificial addition of iodine, while pure sea or kosher salt is eaten by some. In strict interpretations, foods that have been produced using chemicals such as pesticides and fertilizer are not considered ital.[3] Early adherents adopted their dietary laws based on their interpretation of several books of the Bible, including the Book of Genesis ("Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food'. (Genesis 1:29)), the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Along with growing dreadlocks and the sacramental smoking of ganja, observing a vegetarian diet is one of the practices early Rastafari adopted from Indian indentured servants living in Jamaica. Rastafari's founder, Leonard Howell, affectionately called "Gong" and "Gyangunguru Maragh", though not of Indian descent, was fascinated with Hindu practices and was instrumental in promoting a plant-based diet in the Rastafari community of Pinnacle.

Vegetarianism

Most expressions of the Ital diet include adherence to a strict vegetarian diet. This is based in part on the belief that since meat is dead, eating it would therefore work against Livity elevation. It is also practiced because as adherents to natural living, Rastafarians often believe the human being is a natural vegetarian based on human physiology and anatomy. Some adherents to Ital diets are vegans, as they do not consider dairy to be natural for human consumption either.[4] Despite most adherents being vegetarian, some consider fish to be acceptable.[5]

Drugs

Rastafari does not approve of alcohol consumption.[6] However, some choose to drink alcohol in moderation as long as it does not reach a level that clouds the mind or reduces their livity. Most Rastas disapprove of cigarettes due to the serious health concerns associated with their use, and some avoid coffee and other caffeinated beverages (though this is less common). Some Rastafari grow their own coffee, sugar, and cocoa.

Other restrictions

The strictest interpretations also avoid the consumption of rock salt (sea salt can be substituted), and food that has been preserved by canning or drying, and even prohibit the use of metal cooking utensils. In this case, only clay and wood cooking pots, crockery, and cutlery are used. Few adherents of ital follow the strictest interpretation; some Rastafarians do not adhere to them at all.[7]

See also

- Christian vegetarianism
- Kashrut
- Sattvic diet
- Halal
- Jewish vegetarianism
- List of diets
- Taboo food and drink

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Iyaric

Iyaric, also called **Dread Talk** or **Rasta Talk**, is a form of language constructed by members of the Rastafari movement through alteration of vocabulary. When Africans were taken into captivity as a part of the slave trade, English was imposed as a colonial language. In defiance, the Rastafari movement created a modified English vocabulary and dialect, with the aim of liberating their language from its history as a tool of colonial oppression. This is accomplished by avoiding sounds and words with negative connotations, such as "back", and changing them to positive ones. Iyaric sometimes also plays a liturgical role among Rastas,[1] in addition to Amharic and Ge'ez.[2]

Iyaric	
Dread Talk, Rasta Talk	
Native to	Jamaica
Native speakers	31,000 (liturgical language)
Language family	English creole ▪ Atlantic ▪ Western ▪ Jamaican Patois ▪ **Iyaric**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	–

Features

Phonology

Iyaric shares phonological features with Jamaican Creole, with certain sounds, such as /a/, being stressed for the purpose of group identification distinct from Jamaican Creole.[3] In 2015, Doctor of linguistics Havenol M. Schrenk adapted a phoneme inventory from the President Emeritus of the International Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, Rocky Ricardo Meade, as follows:

Consonants[4]

	Labial		Alveolar		Post-alveolar		Palatal		Velar	
Nasal		m		n				ɲ		ŋ
Stop	p	b	t	d	tʃ	dʒ	c	ɟ	k	g
Fricative	f	v	s	z	ʃ					
Approximant/Lateral				ɹ				j		w
				l						

Vowels[4]

Letter	IPA
i	i
e	ɛ
a	a
o	o
u	u

Pronominal system

Iyaric's lexical departure from the pronominal system of Jamaican Creole is one of the dialect's defining features.[5][6] Linguistics researcher Benjamin Slade comments that Jamaican Creole and Standard English pronoun forms are all acceptable in Iyaric, but speakers almost always use the I-form of first-person pronouns, while I-form usage for second-person pronouns is less frequent.[5] He details his findings in the table below:

Pronominal forms in English, Jamaican Creole, and Iyaric[5]

	Standard English	Jamaican Creole	Iyaric
1sg	I / me / my	mi	I, Iman, (I and I)* ...
2sg	you / your	yu	de I, de Iman (thy) ...
3sg	he, she, it / him, her, it / his, her, its	im, (i, shi, ar)	(im, i, shi) ...
1pl	we / us / our	wi	I and I, (I, we) ...
2pl	you (all) / your	yu, unu	de Is, (unu) ...
3pl	they / them / their	dem	(dem, dey) ...
*Forms in brackets are less common			

Vocabulary

Some Rastas avoid using certain words in the English language because they contain phonetic sounds that invoke negative connotations. Iyaric vocabulary developed in response to this, resulting in a dialect that challenged the negative colonial framework Rastas perceive in Jamaica's vernacular English.[7]

Morphology

The base word forms for Iyaric are imported from Jamaican Creole,[3] and the constituent phonemes for those words are analyzed for positive or negative connotation against an English lexifier. Words whose phonetic connotations conflict with the word's overall semantics are called the "Babylon" (colonial English) form of the word, and Iyaric uses a system called "Iformation" (*"I" + transformation*)[5] to

substitute those incongruously connoted phonetic matches with new phonemes that match the connotation of the overall word. This process of phono-semantic matching results in a lexicon containing only Zionic word forms, which exclude negative phonemes[8] from positive words and positive phonemes from negatively connoted words.

The purpose for favoring Zionic word forms over Babylonic word forms is to influence the speaker's cognition[9] through the structure of the dialect, with the intent to challenge colonial biases that may be inherent in the structures of English.

For example, the word "hello" is not used because they see it as containing phonetic matches for the negatively connoted English words "hell" and "low". Instead, expressions such as 'wa gwaan', 'yes I' and 'cool nuh lyah' (or 'cool alyuh'. 'alyuh'-all of you) are used because they uplift people. If at a Rastafari church, they would use their formal church greetings. For instance, the Rastafari branch known as the Twelve Tribes of Israel would say, "Greetings in that Most Precious and Divine Name of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has revealed Himself through the wonderful personality of H.I.M. Emperor Haile Selassie the 1st of Ethiopia".[10]

I words

- *I* replaces "me", which is much more commonly used in Jamaican English than in the more conventional forms. *Me* is felt to turn the person into an object whereas *I* emphasises the subjectivity of an individual.
- *I and I* (also spelled *I&I*, *InI*, *I-n-I* or *Ihi yahnh Ihi*) is a complex term, referring to the oneness of Jah (God) and every human. As quoted by Rastafari scholar E. E. Cashmore: "*I and I* is an expression to totalise the concept of oneness. . . When he's addressing a brethren as himself, he says "I am I" — as being the oneness of two persons. So God is within all of us and we're one people in fact." He continues: "I and I means that God is in *all* men. The bond of Ras Tafari is the bond of God, of man."[11] The term is often used in place of "you and I" or "we" among Rastafari, implying that both persons are united under the love of Jah. Also in the Twi language (in which patois uses a lot of Twi loan words) of Ghana, Me ne me is also said, which literally translates to "I and I".
- *I-tal* or *Di food fula itality* is spiritually blessed food that has not touched modern chemicals and is served without preservatives, condiments or salts. Alcohol, coffee, milk, and flavoured beverages are generally viewed as not I-tal. Most Rastas follow the I-tal proscriptions generally, and many are vegetarians or vegans. Even meat-eating Rastas abstain from eating pork, as pigs are scavengers of the dead, as are crabs, lobsters, and shrimp (whose banning coincides with the restrictions of Kashrut).
- *I man* is the inner person within each Rastafari believer.
- *Irie* refers to positive emotions or feelings, or anything that is good. Specifically it refers to high emotions and peaceful vibrations. This is a phonetical representation of "all right".
- *Ites* derived from English "heights", means "joy" and also the colour "red". It can also be short for "Israelites".
- *Itesquake* replaces "earthquake".
- *Irator* replaces "creator", and *Iration* replaces "creation".
- *Idren* or *Bredren* and *Sistren* refer to the oneness of Rastafari and are used to describe one's peers (male – "bredren", female – "sistren").
- *Itinually* replaces continually. It has the everlasting/everliving sense of I existing continuously.
- *Inity* replaces "unity", demonstrating a general pattern of replacing "you" and similar sounds with "I".

- *Iya* (higher): Rastafari vocabulary is full of references to the "iya man", "stepping higher and higher", etc. It is not a reference to the "high" normally associated with cannabis, but to stepping into higher realms of reality, as in higher awareness. Iya is also used to refer to a friend. As in "Yes Iya", or "Cool (no) Iya".
- *Iyaric* is the self-applied term for Rastafari language. It is formed by a combination of *Iya* (higher) and *Amharic,* the language spoken by Haile Selassie I. Other terms for Iyaric include *I-talk, Livalect,* and *Wordsound.*
- *Iwa* replaces "time" or more accurately, "hour": *"Inna this ya iwa."*

Other words

- *Dreadlocks* describes the locks commonly worn among Rastas, now universally called dreadlocks in English. The 'dread' component refers to the fear of the Lord, as well as the fear inspired when Rastas first began to grow locks in the 1940s in Jamaica. To Rastas, dreadlocks can be a deeply spiritual part of their identity. The Nazirite vow in the Torah and the story of Samson are commonly cited: "And she made a vow, saying, 'O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head'." 1 Samuel 1:11 (https://www.biblica.com/bible/?osis=niv:1%20Samuel%201:11). Rastas see this as the most natural way to grow one's hair, as well as a symbol of defiance of Rome and Babylon.
- *Dreads* can refer to the dreadlocks, or to those who wear them. Because the latter sense of the word is a synonym for "Rasta", Iyaric is often called *Dread Talk*, as evidenced in the body of research by Jamaican linguistics scholar Velma Pollard.
- Persons without dreads are sometimes called *baldheads* (somewhat derisive) or *lack* (more respectful); however as a common Rasta refrain points out, "It's not the dread upon your head, but the love in your heart that makes you Rasta..." meaning that many Rasta faithful themselves lack dreadlocks, while some non-Rastas, *wolves inna sheeps clothes*, may wear dreads solely for fashion. Dreads that were induced artificially or with additives, rather than allowed to take their natural course, are known as *bathroom locks*.
- *Babylon* is an important Rastafari term, referring to governments and institutions that are seen as in rebellion against the will of Jah (God). The etymology of the word is rooted in the story of the Tower of Babel, which is a Biblical origin story explaining the reasons why different cultures of the world speak different languages. In it, the Babylonians were an advanced civilisation who were constructing a tall tower, with the intentions of reaching the heavens. However, God intervened by confounding their speech, so that they could no longer communicate to each other, and subsequently could no longer construct the tower. This would have been an especially important story to the early Rastas, who all came from vastly different cultures and spoke different languages. This may also have given the early Rastas a sense of pride in their own dialect of the English language, which at the time was considered to be "broken English"; it is now officially recognised as Jamaican Patois. *Babylon* is further used by some to mean specifically the racist European tyrants who had oppressed black people for centuries through slavery, and people of colour through the system of indentured servitude. It has gone on to also refer to corrupt members of government, or "politricksters" who continue to oppress the poor, regardless of race. Historically, the term Babylon may have been used to refer to the Roman Empire, who were pagans, and were known to scrutinise the early Christians and were also the ones who crucified Yeshua. This relation was reinforced after the 1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia, then ruled by Rastafari's 'Living God', Haile Selassie I, and also partly because the Roman Catholic church, as an institution, was considered an opponent of Selassie I, and thus also of Rastafari. *Babylon* is also sometimes used by some Rastas with the more specific meaning of "police", insofar as they are seen as executive agents of Babylon's will. In a

more general sense, it is used to refer to the powers that be, any system that oppresses or discriminates against any peoples.

- *Politricks* is a Rasta term replacing English "politics", because so many politicians, etc. turn out, they say, to be more like tricksters. *Politrickster* n.
- *Everliving* replaces "everlasting", particularly in the context of Life Everliving. The "last" in "everlasting", although actually implying survival (to "last" is to "survive" or "bide through"), is seen by the Rastas as implicative of an end (as in the term "at last"), and as the life the Rastas have will never end according to them, they being immortalists. Often used in the phrase "I and I is Everliving, Everfaithful, Eversure. Ras Tafari."
- *H.I.M.* (His Imperial Majesty), pronounced *him*, and referring to Haile Selassie I.
- *Downpression* replaces "oppression", because oppression holds man down instead of keeping him up (pronounced *op* in Jamaican patois.) Similarly "downgression" = "violence" (from *aggression*). *Downpressor* n.
- *Livication* replaces "dedication", to rid itself of a connotation of death. *adj. Livicated. v. Livicate.*
- *Outvention* replaces "invention", because mechanical devices are seen as outward; it is the inner experience of being Rastafari that is invention.
- *Overstanding* (also "innerstanding") replaces "understanding", referring to enlightenment that raises one's consciousness.
- *Apprecilove* replaces "appreciate" because of the similarity to hate.
- *Amagideon*/*Gideon* is a Rasta theological concept meaning the general state the entire world is in now, and has been getting progressively deeper in since 1930, and especially since 1974. This is a slight mutation of Armageddon, a name appearing in Revelation.
- *Zion* refers to either Ethiopia or the whole continent of Africa, after the Day of Judgment, as well as a state of mind one can enter through Rastafari.
- *Know* replaces "believe". Rastafari would not say they "believe" Haile Selassie is Jah and that they, the Rastas, are the chosen people. They would say they "know" these things.
- *Wordsound* is a name for Iyaric derived from the Rastafari principle of "Word, Sound and Power", which several scholars have compared to West African concepts regarding a power or essence being encapsulated within the pronounced sound of a name or word.
- *Whore of Babylon* is the Revelation character sometimes considered to be Queen Elizabeth II, who was the Head of State of Jamaica; or the papacy; or both.

Popular impact

The earliest origin of Iyaric is debated, though it is generally agreed that the dialect was deliberately created by Rastas as an argot.[12] Despite the dialect's secretive beginnings, Iyaric words and meaning have migrated outside of Rasta communities into wider usage around the globe through reggae music and media.[13] The term *dreadlocks*, for example, is used worldwide for the hairstyle that was popularized by the Rastafari movement. Rastafari metaphors like *Zion* and *Babylon*, as well as the Iyaric words "overstand" and "politricks" have entered hip hop culture through Caribbean-American and Caribbean-British rappers/musicians. In Europe, perhaps influenced by popular culture depictions of or actual encounters with Afro-Caribbean "rude boy" gangs, the term *Babylon* is sometimes used to refer to the police.

See also

- Language and thought

- Linguistic determinism
- Linguistic relativity
- Phono-semantic matching

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Lion of Judah

The **Lion of Judah** (Hebrew: אריה יהודה, *Aryeh Yehudah*) is a Jewish national and cultural symbol, traditionally regarded as the symbol of the tribe of Judah. The association between the Judahites and the lion can first be found in the blessing given by Jacob to his fourth son, Judah, in the Book of Genesis of the Hebrew Bible.[1]

It is also mentioned in the Book of Revelation of the New Testament as a term representing Jesus of Nazareth, according to Christian theology.[2] The Lion of Judah was also one of the titles used by Ethiopian emperors from the Solomonic dynasty.

The Lion of Judah on a Bezalel ceramic tile.

History

Judaism

The biblical Judah (in Hebrew: *Yehuda*) is the eponymous ancestor of the Tribe of Judah, which is traditionally symbolized by a lion. In Genesis, the patriarch Jacob ("Israel") gave that symbol to this tribe when he refers to his son Judah as a *Gur Aryeh'* גּוּר אַרְיֵה יְהוּדָה, "Young Lion" (Genesis 49:9) when blessing him.[3] In Jewish naming tradition the Hebrew name and the substitute name are often combined as a pair, as in this case. The Lion of Judah was used as a Jewish symbol for many years, and as Jerusalem was the capital of the Kingdom of Judah, in 1950 it was included in the Emblem of Jerusalem.[4][5]

Emblem of Jerusalem

Christianity

The phrase appears in the New Testament in Revelation 5:5 (https://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Revelation%205:5&version=nrsv):

> Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

This is widely regarded as a reference to the Second Coming among Christians.

Many Christian organizations and ministries use the lion of Judah as their emblem or even as their names.

Lion of Judah ("Thesouro de Nobreza", 1675)

Ethiopia

It was depicted on a map of the Upper Nile published in 1683 by the German Hiob Ludolf describing the Lion of Judah symbol as the royal insignia of the Ethiopian Empire. The Solomonic dynasty of Ethiopia claims to have its patrilineal origin in the Israelite Royal House of Judah. The Lion of Judah served as the hereditary title of the Solomonic Ethiopian emperors and nobles including Sabagadis Woldu, Kenfu Hailu, Wube Haile Mariam, Tewodros II, Yohannes IV, Menelik, and Haile Selassie and was depicted on the flag of Ethiopia from 1897 to 1974. Due to its association with Haile Selassie, it continues to be an important symbol among members of the Rastafari movement.[6]

The Lion of Judah motif figured prominently on the old imperial flag, currency, stamps, etc. and may still be seen gracing the terrace of the capital as a national symbol. After the collapse of the Derg in 1990, a minor political party bearing the name *Mo'a Anbessa'* made its appearance.

Imperial Flag of Haile Selassie of Ethiopia with the Lion of Judah, cross scepter, five Stars of David and the words "Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah" in Attention

Kebra Nagast

Ethiopia's history as recorded and elaborated in a 13th-century treatise, the *Kebra Nagast*, asserts descent from a retinue of Israelites who returned with Makeda, the Queen of Sheba from her visit to King Solomon in Jerusalem, by whom she had conceived the Solomonic dynasty's founder Menelik I. As Solomon was of the tribe of Judah, his son Menelik I would continue the line, which according to Ethiopian history was passed directly down from king to king until Emperor Haile Selassie I (ostensibly the 225th king from King David) was deposed in 1974.[7][8][9]

Both Christian and Jewish Ethiopian history have it that there were also immigrants of the Tribes of Dan and Judah that accompanied Makeda back from her visit to Solomon; hence the Ge'ez motto *Mo`a 'Anbessa Ze'imnegede Yihuda* ("The Lion of Judah has conquered"), included among the titles of the Emperor throughout the Solomonic Dynasty.

Rastafari

The Lion of Judah is a prominent symbol in the Rastafari movement. It represents Emperor Haile Selassie I as well as being a symbol of strength, kingship, pride and African sovereignty.[10] Rastafari consider the mention of "The Lion of Judah" in Genesis 49:9 and Revelation 5:5 of the Bible to refer to Emperor Haile Selassie I. Rastafari hail Haile Selassie I with the titles "King of kings, lord of lords, conquering Lion of Judah, elect of God, the light of the world".[11]

The Lion of Judah 1981

In 1981 Lutz Becker published archival film footage showing the occupation of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy in the documentary film *The Lion of Judah*. The archival footage shows the illegal combat with mustard gas.[12]

In literature

Inspired by the Lion of Judah, C. S. Lewis used a lion named Aslan to represent Jesus in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.[13][14][15][16]

See also

- Monument to the Lion of Judah, a historic statue in Ethiopia

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Zion

Zion (Hebrew: צִיּוֹן, romanized: *Ṣīyyōn*;[a] Biblical Greek: Σιών) is a placename in the Tanakh, often used as a synonym for Jerusalem[3][4] as well as for the Land of Israel as a whole.

Zion (1903), Ephraim Moses Lilien

The name is found in 2 Samuel (2 Sam 5:7 (https://bible.oremus.org/?passage=2%20Samuel%205:7&version=nrsv)), one of the books of the Tanakh dated to approximately the mid-6th century BCE. It originally referred to a specific hill in Jerusalem, Mount Zion, located to the south of Mount Moriah (the Temple Mount). According to the narrative of 2 Samuel 5, Mount Zion held the Jebusite fortress of the same name that was conquered by David and was renamed the City of David. That specific hill ("mount") is one of the many squat hills that form Jerusalem.

The term *Tzion* came to designate the area of Davidic Jerusalem where the Jebusite fortress stood, and was used as well as synecdoche for the entire city of Jerusalem; and later, when Solomon's Temple was built on the adjacent Mount Moriah (which, as a result, came to be known as the Temple Mount), the meanings of the term *Tzion* were further extended by synecdoche to the additional meanings of the Temple itself, the hill upon which the Temple stood, the entire city of Jerusalem, the entire biblical Land of Israel, and "the World to Come", the Jewish understanding of the afterlife.

Over many centuries, until as recently as the 16th century (Ottoman period), the city walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt many times in new locations, so that the particular hill known in biblical times as Mount Zion is no longer within the city walls, but its location is now just outside the Old City and southeast of it. Most of the original City of David itself is thus also outside the current "Old City" wall. Adding to the confusion, another ridge, the Western Hill rather than the original Southeastern Hill (City of David) or the Southern Hill (Temple Mount), has been called 'Mount Zion' for the last two millennia.

Etymology

The etymology of the word *Zion* (*ṣiyyôn*) is uncertain.[3][4][5]

Mentioned in the Old Testament in the Books of Samuel (2 Samuel 5:7) as the name of a Jebusite fortress conquered by David, its origin seems to predate the Israelites.[3][4] If Semitic, it may be derived from the Hebrew root *ṣiyyôn* ("castle") or the Hebrew צִיָּה *ṣiyya* ("dry land" or "desert", Jeremiah 51:43). A non-Semitic relationship to the Hurrian word *šeya* ("river" or "brook") has also been suggested[5] as also one of Hittite[6] origin.

The form ציון (*Tzion*, Tiberian vocalization: *Ṣiyyôn*) appears 108 times in the Tanakh, and once with article, as *HaTzion*.[7][8]

Tsade is usually rendered as *z* in English translations, hence the spelling *Zion* (rather than *Tzion*). This convention apparently originates in German orthography,[9] where **z** stands for the consonant [t͡s].

Judaism: religion and Zionism

Hebrew Bible: Zion, daughter(s) of Zion

Zion is mentioned 152 times in the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), most often in the Prophetic books, the Book of Psalms, and the Book of Lamentations, besides six mentions in the Historical books (Kings, Samuel, Chronicles) and a single mention of the "daughters of Zion" in the Song of Songs (3:11)

Ephraim Moses Lilien, Stamp for the Jewish National Fund, Vienna, 1901–2. The symbolic design presents a Star of David containing the word Zion in the Hebrew alphabet.

Out of the 152 mentions, 26 instances are within the phrase of "Daughter of Zion" (Hebrew "bat Tzion"). This is a personification of the city of Jerusalem, or of its population.[10]

In Psalm 137, Zion (Jerusalem) is remembered from the perspective of the Babylonian Captivity. "By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows[a] there we hung up our lyres. For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”

Psalm 147 uses "Jerusalem" and "Zion" interchangeably to address the faithful: "The Lord builds up Jerusalem; He gathers the outcasts of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man, but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!"

Religious practice; exegesis

The location of the Temple, and in particular its Holy of Holies (innermost sanctum), is the most holy place in the world for the Jewish people, seen as the connection between God and humanity. Observant Jews recite the Amidah three times a day facing the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, praying for the rebuilding of the Holy Temple, the restoration of the Temple service, the redemption of the world, and for the coming of the Messiah.

In Kabbalah, the more esoteric reference is made to Tzion being the spiritual point from which reality emerges, located in the Holy of Holies of the First, Second and future Third Temple.[11]

Jewish–Roman wars

The name "Zion" appears in the coins minted by the revolutionary government in Jerusalem during the Great Jewish Revolt against Rome (66–73 CE). Bronze coins from the revolt bear inscriptions such as 'freedom of Zion' (from years two and three) and 'for the redemption of Zion' (from year four).[12] David Goodblatt argues that these slogans were used to communicate the rebels' goals to the masses, serving as a unifying rallying cry for the fight for Zion.[12] James S. McLaren suggests that its appearance on the coins may specifically refer to the Temple Mount, as part of a set of terms conveying varying layers of identity: 'Jerusalem,' representing its location and the city's as the national capital, and 'Israel,' reflecting the new independent state.[13] According to Ya'akov Meshorer, the name "Zion" was used on the coins as a 'poetic term' with nationalistic connotations, symbolizing not only Jerusalem but also "its history, religion, culture and desire for freedom".[14]

Zionism

The term "Zionism", coined by Austrian Nathan Birnbaum, was derived from the German rendering of Tzion in his journal *Selbstemanzipation* ("self emancipation") in 1890.[15] Zionism as a modern political movement started in 1897 and supported a "national home", and later a state, for the Jewish people in the Land of Israel, though the idea has been around since the end of Jewish independent rule. The Zionist movement declared the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, following the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine. Since then, and with varying ideologies, Zionists have focused on developing and protecting this state.

A World War I recruitment poster. The Daughter of Zion (representing the Hebrew people): "Your Old New Land must have you! Join the Jewish regiment."

The last line of the Israeli national anthem *Hatikvah* (Hebrew for "The Hope") is "....Eretz Zion, ViYerushalayim", which means literally "The land of Zion and Jerusalem".

Islamic tradition

Ṣahyūn (Arabic: صهيون, *Ṣahyūn* or *Ṣihyūn*) is the word for Zion in Arabic and Syriac.[16][17] Drawing on biblical tradition, it is one of the names accorded to Jerusalem in Arabic and Islamic tradition.[17][18] A valley called *Wādī Sahyũn* seemingly preserves the name and is located approximately one and three-quarter miles from the Old City's Jaffa Gate.[16]

For example, the reference to the "precious cornerstone" of the new Jerusalem in the Book of Isaiah 28:16 is identified in Islamic scholarship as the Black Stone of the Kaaba.[19] This interpretation is said by ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292–1350) to have come from the People of the Book, though earlier Christian scholarship identifies the cornerstone with Jesus.[19]

Latter Day Saint

Within the Latter Day Saint movement, Zion is often used to connote a peaceful ideal society. In the Latter Day Saints belief system the term *Zion* is often used to denote a place of gathering for the saints. It is also often used to denote an area or city of refuge for the saints.

Rastafari movement

> I say fly away home to Zion, fly away home...One bright morning when my work is over, man will fly away home...
>
> —Rastaman Chant, Bob Marley and the Wailers

In Rastafari, "Zion" stands for a utopian place of unity, peace and freedom, as opposed to "Babylon", the oppressing and exploiting system of the materialistic modern world and a place of evil.[20]

It proclaims Zion, as reference to Ethiopia, the original birthplace of humankind, and from the beginning of the movement calls to repatriation to Zion, the Promised Land and Heaven on Earth.[21] Some Rastafari believe themselves to represent the real Children of Israel in modern times, and their goal is to repatriate to Ethiopia, or to Zion. The Ge'ez-language *Kebra Nagast* serves as inspiration for the idea that the "Glory of Zion" transferred from Jerusalem to Ethiopia in the time of Solomon and Sheba, c. 950 BCE.

Rastafari reggae contains many references to Zion; among the best-known examples are the Bob Marley songs "Zion Train", "Iron Lion Zion", the Bunny Wailer song "Rastaman" ("The Rasta come from Zion, Rastaman a Lion!"), The Melodians song "Rivers of Babylon" (based on Psalm 137, where the captivity of *Babylon* is contrasted with the freedom in *Zion*), the Bad Brains song "Leaving Babylon", the Damian Marley song featuring Nas "Road to Zion", The Abyssinians' "Forward Unto Zion" and Kiddus I's "Graduation in Zion", which is featured in the 1977 cult roots rock reggae film *Rockers*, and "Let's Go to Zion" by Winston Francis. Reggae groups such as Steel Pulse and Cocoa Tea also have many references to Zion in their various songs.

The Jewish longing for Zion, starting with the deportation and enslavement of Jews during the Babylonian captivity, was adopted as a metaphor by Christian black slaves in the United States. Thus, Zion symbolizes a longing by wandering peoples for a safe homeland. This could be an actual place such as Ethiopia for Rastafari or Israel for the Jews. Rastafari, while not identifying as "Jews", identify themselves and Africa as Zion. Specifically, Ethiopia is acknowledged as the mountains of Zion. Further, Rastafari ontology views all Africans as God's Chosen People. This differs from Judaic narratives.[22]

The Bahá’í Faith

References to Zion occur in the writings of the Bahá’í Faith. Bahá’u’lláh, the prophet-founder of the Bahá’í Faith wrote, concerning the Bahá’í Revelation,

"The time foreordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled. Out of Zion hath gone forth the Law of God, and Jerusalem, and the hills and land thereof, are filled with the glory of His Revelation." -Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*[23]

"Call out to Zion, O Carmel, and announce the joyful tidings: He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come! His all-conquering sovereignty is manifest; His all-encompassing splendor is revealed." -Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet of Carmel, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*[24]

Mount Zion today

Today, Mount Zion refers to a hill south of the Old City's Armenian Quarter, not to the Temple Mount. This apparent misidentification dates at least from the 1st century AD, when Josephus calls Jerusalem's Western Hill "Mount Zion".[25] The Abbey of the Dormition and King David's Tomb are located upon the hill currently called Mount Zion.

Abbey of the Dormition on the modern Mount Zion.

See also

- Beulah (land)
- Book of Micah
- Jerusalem of Gold
- Names of Jerusalem
- New Jerusalem
- New world order (Bahá'í)
- Prisoners of Zion

Notes

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Haile Selassie

Haile Selassie I[a] (born **Tafari Makonnen or Lij Tafari**;[4] 23 July 1892 – 27 August 1975)[5] was Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974. He rose to power as the Regent Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia (*Enderase*) under Empress Zewditu between 1916 and 1930. Widely considered to be a defining figure in modern Ethiopian history, he is accorded divine importance in Rastafari, an Abrahamic religion that emerged in the 1930s. A few years before he began his reign over the Ethiopian Empire, Selassie defeated Ethiopian army commander Ras Gugsa Welle Bitul, nephew of Empress Taytu Betul, at the Battle of Anchem.[6][7] He belonged to the Solomonic dynasty, founded by Emperor Yekuno Amlak in 1270.

Selassie, seeking to modernise Ethiopia, introduced political and social reforms including the 1931 constitution and the abolition of slavery in 1942. He led the empire during the Second Italo-Ethiopian War, and after its defeat was exiled to the United Kingdom. When the Italian occupation of East Africa began, he traveled to Anglo-Egyptian Sudan to coordinate the Ethiopian struggle against Fascist Italy; he returned home after the East African campaign of World War II. He dissolved the Federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1950, and annexed Eritrea as one of Ethiopia's provinces, while also fighting to prevent Eritrean secession.[8] As an internationalist, Selassie led Ethiopia's accession to the United Nations.[9] In 1963, he presided over the formation of the Organisation of African Unity, the precursor of the African Union, and served as its first chairman. By the early 1960s, prominent African socialists such as Kwame Nkrumah envisioned the creation of a "United States of Africa". Their rhetoric was anti-Western; Selassie saw this as a threat to his alliances. He attempted to influence a more moderate posture within the group.[10]

Amidst popular uprisings, Selassie was overthrown by the Derg in the 1974 Ethiopian coup d'état. With support from the Soviet Union, the Derg began governing Ethiopia as a Marxist–Leninist state. In 1994, three years after the fall of the Derg military junta, it was revealed to the public that the Derg had assassinated Selassie at the Jubilee Palace in Addis Ababa on 27 August 1975.[11][12] On 5 November 2000, his excavated remains were buried at the Holy Trinity Cathedral of Addis Ababa.

Among adherents of Rastafari, Selassie is called the returned Jesus, although he was an adherent of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church himself.[13][14] He has been criticised for his suppression of rebellions among the landed aristocracy (*Mesafint*), which consistently opposed his changes. Others have criticised Ethiopia's failure to modernise rapidly enough.[15][16] During his reign, the Harari people were persecuted and many left their homes.[17][18][19] His administration was criticised as autocratic and illiberal by groups such as Human Rights Watch.[16][20] According to some sources, late into Selassie's administration, the Oromo language was banned from education, public speaking and use in administration,[21][22][23] though there was never a law that criminalised any language.[24][25][26] His government relocated many Amhara people into southern Ethiopia.[27][28][29] Following the death of Ethiopian civil rights activist Hachalu Hundessa in 2020, his bust in the United Kingdom was destroyed by Oromo protesters, and an equestrian monument depicting his father was removed from Harar.[30][31][32]

Haile Selassie
ቀዳማዊ ኀይለ ሥላሴ

Negusa Nagast

Photographed in 1970

Emperor of Ethiopia	
Reign	2 April 1930 – 12 September 1974[nb 1]
Coronation	2 November 1930
Predecessor	Zewditu
Successor	Amha Selassie
Prime Minister	See list *Himself* Wolde Tzaddick Makonnen Endelkachew Abebe Aregai Imru Haile Selassie Aklilu Habte-Wold Endelkachew Makonnen Mikael Imru
Regent of Ethiopia	
Reign	27 September 1916 – 2 April 1930
Predecessor	Tessema Nadew

Name

Haile Selassie was known as a child as **Lij Tafari Makonnen** (Ge'ez: ልጅ ተፈሪ መኮንን, romanized: *Läj Täfäri Mäkonnän*). *Lij* is translated as "child" and serves to indicate that a youth is of noble blood. His given name *Tafari* means "one who is respected or feared". Like most Ethiopians, his personal name "Tafari" is followed by that of his father Makonnen and that of his grandfather Woldemikael. His name *Haile Selassie* was given to him at his infant baptism and adopted again as part of his regnal name in 1930.[3]

On 1 November 1905, at the age of 13, Tafari was appointed by his father as the Dejazmatch of Gara Mulatta (a region some twenty miles southwest of Harar).[33] The literal translation of Dejazmatch is "keeper of the door"; it is a title of nobility equivalent to a count.[34] On 27 September 1916, he was proclaimed Crown Prince and heir apparent to the throne (*Alga Worrach*),[35][36] and appointed Regent Plenipotentiary (*Balemulu Silt'an Enderase*).[35][37] On 11 February 1917, he was crowned Le'ul-Ras[38] and became known as Ras Tafari Makonnen listen. *Ras* is translated as "head"[39][36] and is a rank of nobility equivalent to a duke,[36][40] though it is often rendered in translation as "prince". Originally the title *Le'ul*, which means "Your Highness", was only ever used as a form of address;[41] however, in 1916 the title *Le'ul-Ras* replaced the senior office of *Ras Bitwoded* and so became the equivalent of a royal duke.[42][43] In 1928, Empress Zewditu planned on granting him the throne of Shewa; however, at the last moment opposition from certain provincial rulers caused a change and his title *Negus* or "King" was conferred without geographical qualification or definition.[44][45]

On 2 November 1930, after the death of Empress Zewditu, Tafari was crowned *Negusa Nagast*, literally "King of Kings", rendered in English as "Emperor".[46] Upon his ascension, he took as his regnal name Haile Selassie I. *Haile* means in Ge'ez "Power of" and *Selassie* means trinity – therefore *Haile Selassie* roughly translates to "Power of the Trinity".[47] Selassie's full title in office was "By the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, King of Kings of Ethiopia, Lord of Lords, Elect of God".[48][38][41][49][50][nb 2] This title reflects Ethiopian dynastic traditions, which hold that all monarchs must trace their lineage to Menelik I, who is described by the Kebra Nagast (a 14th-century CE national epic) as the son of the tenth-century BCE King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.[52]

To Ethiopians, Selassie has been known by many names, including Janhoy ("His Majesty") Talaqu Meri ("Great Leader") and Abba Tekel ("Father of Tekel", his horse name).[51] The Rastafari movement employs many of these appellations, also referring to him as Jah, Jah Jah, Jah Rastafari, and HIM (the abbreviation of "His Imperial Majesty").[51]

Monarch	Zewditu
Successor	Kirubel Abraham
Born	Lij Tafari Makonnen (*Täfäri Mäkonnän*) ልጅ ተፈሪ መኮንን 23 July 1892 Ejersa Goro, Hararghe, Ethiopian Empire
Died	27 August 1975 (aged 83) Jubilee Palace, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Burial	5 November 2000 Holy Trinity Cathedral, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Spouse	Menen Asfaw (m. 1911; died 1962)
Issue *Detail*	Crown Prince Asfaw Wossen Prince Makonnen Prince Sahle Selassie Princess Romanework Princess Tenagnework Princess Zenebework Princess Tsehai
Regnal name	ቀዳማዊ ኀይለ ሥላሴ (Qädamawi Haylä Səllasé)
House	Shewa
Dynasty	Solomonic dynasty
Father	Makonnen Wolde Mikael
Mother	Yeshimebet Ali
Religion	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo
Signature	
Chief Minister	
In office	12 December 1926 – 1 May 1936
Preceded by	Habte Giyorgis Dinagde
Succeeded by	Wolde Tzaddick
1st and 5th Chairperson of the Organisation of African Unity	
In office	25 May 1963 – 17 July 1964
Succeeded by	Gamal Abdel Nasser
In office	5 November 1966 – 11 September 1967
Preceded by	Joseph Arthur Ankrah
Succeeded by	Mobutu Sese Seko
Military career	

Allegiance	Ethiopian Empire
Years of service	1930–1974
Rank	▪ Field Marshal ▪ Admiral of the Fleet ▪ Marshal of the Air
Commands	Commander-in-chief
Battles / wars	*See list:* Gugsa Wale's rebellion Second Italo-Ethiopian War ├ First Battle of Tembien ├ Battle of Amba Aradam ├ Second Battle of Tembien ├ Battle of Shire └ Battle of Maychew World War II └ East African campaign Korean War 1964 Ethiopian–Somali Border War

Haile Selassie I's voice

0:00 / 0:00

Speech to the Ethiopian Parliament following the occasion of a new Constitution
Recorded 4 November 1955

Early life

Then Tafari Makonnen wearing a warrior's dress

Ras Makonnen Woldemikael and his son Lij Tafari Makonnen

Tafari's royal line (through his paternal grandmother) descended from the Shewan Amhara Solomonic king, Sahle Selassie.[53] He was born on 23 July 1892, in the village of Ejersa Goro, in the Hararghe province of Ethiopia. Tafari's mother, Woizero ("Lady") Yeshimebet Ali Abba Jifar, was paternally of Oromo descent and maternally of Silte heritage, while his father, Ras Makonnen Wolde Mikael, was maternally of Amhara descent but his paternal lineage remains disputed.[54][55][56] Tafari's paternal grandfather belonged to a noble family from Shewa and was the governor of the districts of Menz and Doba, which are located in Semien Shewa.[57] Tafari's mother was the daughter of a ruling chief from Were Ilu in Wollo province, Dejazmach Ali Abba Jifar.[58] Ras Makonnen was the grandson of King Sahle Selassie who was once the ruler of Shewa. He served as a general in the First Italo–Ethiopian War, playing a key role at the Battle of Adwa;[58] Selassie was thus able to ascend to the imperial throne through his paternal grandmother, Woizero Tenagnework Sahle Selassie, who was an aunt of Emperor Menelik II and daughter of the Solomonic Amhara King of Shewa, Negus Sahle Selassie. As such, Selassie claimed direct descent from Makeda, the Queen of Sheba, and King Solomon of ancient Israel.[59]

Ras Makonnen arranged for Tafari as well as his first cousin, Imru Haile Selassie, to receive instruction in Harar from Abba Samuel Wolde Kahin, an Ethiopian Capuchin friar, and from Dr. Vitalien, a surgeon from Guadeloupe. Tafari was named Dejazmach (literally "commander of the gate", roughly equivalent to "count")[60] at the age of 13, on 1 November 1905.[61][33] Shortly thereafter, his father Makonnen died at Kulibi, in 1906.[62]

Governorship

Dejazmatch Tafari, as governor of Harar

Tafari assumed the titular governorship of Selale in 1906, a realm of marginal importance,[63] but one that enabled him to continue his studies.[61] In 1907, he was appointed governor over part of the province of Sidamo. It is alleged that during his late teens, Selassie was married to *Woizero* Altayech, and that from this union, his daughter Princess Romanework was born.[64]

Following the death of his brother Yelma in 1907, the governorate of Harar was left vacant,[63] and its administration was left to Menelik's loyal general, *Dejazmach* Balcha Safo. Balcha Safo's administration of Harar was ineffective, and so during the last illness of Menelik II, and the brief reign of Empress Taytu Betul, Tafari was made governor of Harar in 1910 or 1911.[62][64]

Marriage

On 3 August 1911, Tafari married Menen Asfaw of Ambassel, niece of the heir to the throne Lij Iyasu. Menen Asfaw was 22 years old while Tafari was 19 years of age. Menen had already married two previous noblemen, while Tafari had one previous wife and one child. The marriage between Menen

Asfaw and Selassie lasted for 50 years. Although possibly a political match designed to create peace between Ethiopian nobles, the couple's family had said they married with mutual consent. Selassie described his spouse as a "woman without any malice whatsoever".[65]

Together with his wife, Empress Menen Asfaw, 1955

Regency

The extent to which Tafari Makonnen contributed to the movement that would come to depose Lij Iyasu has been discussed extensively, particularly in Selassie's own detailed account of the matter. Iyasu was the designated but uncrowned emperor of Ethiopia from 1913 to 1916. Iyasu's reputation for scandalous behavior and a disrespectful attitude towards the nobles at the court of his grandfather, Menelik II,[66] damaged his reputation. Iyasu's flirtation with Islam was considered treasonous among the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian leadership of the empire. On 27 September 1916, Iyasu was deposed.[67]

Contributing to the movement that deposed Iyasu were conservatives such as *Fitawrari* Habte Giyorgis, Menelik II's longtime Minister of War. The movement to depose Iyasu preferred Tafari, as he attracted support from both progressive and conservative factions. Ultimately, Iyasu was deposed on the grounds of conversion to Islam.[39][67] In his place, the daughter of Menelik II (the aunt of Iyasu) was named Empress Zewditu, while Tafari was elevated to the rank of *Ras* and was made heir apparent and Crown Prince. In the power arrangement that followed, Tafari accepted the role of Regent Plenipotentiary (*Balemulu 'Inderase*)[nb 3] and became the *de facto* ruler of the Ethiopian Empire (*Mangista Ityop'p'ya*). Zewditu would govern while Tafari would administer.[70]

While Iyasu had been deposed on 27 September 1916, on 8 October he managed to escape into the Ogaden Desert and his father, *Negus* Mikael of Wollo, had time to come to his aid.[71] On 27 October, *Negus* Mikael and his army met an army under *Fitawrari* Habte Giyorgis loyal to Zewditu and Tafari. During the Battle of Segale, Mikael was defeated and captured. Any chance that Iyasu would regain the throne was ended, and he went into hiding. On 11 January 1921, after avoiding capture for about five years, Iyasu was taken into custody by Gugsa Araya Selassie.[72][73]

On 11 February 1917, the coronation for Zewditu took place. She pledged to rule justly through her regent, Tafari. While Tafari was the more visible of the two, Zewditu was not simply an honorary ruler, but she did have some political restraints due to the complicated nature of her position compared to other Ethiopian monarchs, one was that it required that she arbitrate the claims of competing factions. In other words, she had the last word. But unlike other monarchs Tafari carried the burden of daily administration, but, initially because his position was relatively weak, this was often an exercise in futility. His personal army was poorly equipped, his finances were limited, and he had little leverage to withstand the combined influence of the Empress, the Minister of War, or the provincial governors. Nonetheless, her authority weakened while Tafari's power increased, she focused on praying and fasting and much less in her official duties which allowed Tafari to later have greater influence than even the Empress.[71][74]

Ras Tafari in 1924 at the International Labour Organization

During his Regency, the new Crown Prince developed the policy of cautious modernisation initiated by Menelik II. Also, during this time, he survived the 1918 flu pandemic, having come down with the illness[75] as someone fairly "prone to" the effects of disease throughout his life.[76] He secured Ethiopia's admission to the League of Nations in 1923 by promising to eradicate slavery; each emperor since Tewodros II had issued proclamations to halt slavery,[77] but without effect: the internationally scorned practice persisted well into Selassie's reign with an estimated 2 million slaves in Ethiopia in the early 1930s.[78][79]

Travel abroad

In 1924, Ras Tafari toured Europe and the Middle East visiting Jerusalem, Alexandria, Paris, Luxembourg, Brussels, Amsterdam, Stockholm, London, Geneva, Gibraltar and Athens. With him on his tour was a group that included Ras Seyum Mangasha of western Tigray Province; Ras Hailu Tekle Haymanot of Gojjam province; Ras Mulugeta Yeggazu of Illubabor Province; Ras Makonnen Endelkachew; and *Blattengeta* Heruy Welde Selassie. The primary goal of the trip to Europe was for Ethiopia to gain access to the sea. In Paris, Tafari was to find out from the French Foreign Ministry (*Quai d'Orsay*) that this goal would not be realised.[80] However, failing this, he and his retinue inspected schools, hospitals, factories, and churches. Although patterning

With King George V at Buckingham Palace, 1924

many reforms after European models, Tafari remained wary of European pressure. To guard against economic imperialism, Tafari required that all enterprises have at least partial local ownership.[81] Of his modernisation campaign, he remarked, "We need European progress only because we are surrounded by it. That is at once a benefit and a misfortune."[82]

Throughout Tafari's travels in Europe, the Levant, and Egypt, he and his entourage were greeted with enthusiasm and fascination. Seyum Mangasha accompanied him and Hailu Tekle Haymanot who, like Tafari, were sons of generals who contributed to the victorious war against Italy a quarter-century earlier at the Battle of Adwa.[83] Another member of his entourage, Mulugeta Yeggazu, actually fought at Adwa as a young man. The "Oriental Dignity" of the Ethiopians[84] and their "rich, picturesque court dress"[85] were sensationalised in the media; among his entourage he even included a pride of lions, which he distributed as gifts to President Alexandre Millerand and Prime Minister Raymond Poincaré of France, to King George V of the United Kingdom, and to the Zoological Garden (*Jardin Zoologique*) of Paris, France.[83] As one historian noted, "Rarely can a tour have inspired so many anecdotes".[83] In return for two lions, the United Kingdom presented Tafari with the imperial crown of Emperor Tewodros II for its safe return to Empress Zewditu. The crown had been taken by General Sir Robert Napier during the 1868 Expedition to Abyssinia.[86]

In this period, the Crown Prince visited the Armenian monastery of Jerusalem. There, he adopted 40 Armenian orphans (አርባ ልጆች *Arba Lijoch*, "forty children"), who had lost their parents during the Armenian Genocide. Tafari arranged for the musical education of the youths, and they came to form the imperial brass band.[87]

Reign

King and Emperor

Tafari's authority was challenged in 1928 when *Dejazmach* Balcha Safo went to Addis Ababa with a sizeable armed force. When Tafari consolidated his hold over the provinces, many of Menelik's appointees refused to abide by the new regulations. Balcha Safo, the governor (*Shum*) of coffee-rich Sidamo Province, was particularly troublesome. The revenues he remitted to the central government did not reflect the accrued profits and Tafari recalled him to Addis Ababa. The old man came in high dudgeon and, insultingly, with a large army.[nb 4] The *Dejazmatch* paid homage to Empress Zewditu, but snubbed Tafari.[88][89] On 18 February, while Balcha Safo and his personal bodyguard[nb 5] were in Addis Ababa, Tafari had *Ras* Kassa Haile Darge buy off Balcha Safo's army, and arranged to have him replaced as *Shum* of Sidamo Province[90] by Birru Wolde Gabriel – who himself was replaced by Desta Damtew.[71]

Coronation as Emperor on 2 November 1930

Even so, the gesture of Balcha Safo empowered Empress Zewditu politically and she attempted to have Tafari tried for treason. He was tried for his benevolent dealings with Italy including a 20-year peace accord that was signed on 2 August.[61] In September, a group of palace reactionaries including some courtiers of the Empress made a final bid to get rid of Tafari. The attempted *coup d'état* was tragic in its origins and comic in its end. When confronted by Tafari and a company of his troops, the ringleaders of the coup took refuge on the palace grounds in Menelik's mausoleum. Tafari and his men surrounded them, only to be surrounded themselves by the personal guard of Zewditu. More of Tafari's khaki clad soldiers arrived and decided the outcome in his favor with superiority of arms.[91] Popular support, as well as the support of the police,[88] remained with Tafari. Ultimately, the Empress relented, and, on 7 October 1928, she crowned Tafari as *Negus* (Amharic: "King").[92][93]

The crowning of Tafari as King was controversial. He occupied the same territory as the Empress rather than going off to a regional kingdom of the empire. Two monarchs, even with one being the vassal and the other the emperor (in this case empress), had never ruled from a single location simultaneously in Ethiopian history. Conservatives agitated to redress this perceived insult to the crown's dignity, leading to the *Ras* Gugsa Welle's rebellion. Gugsa Welle was the husband of the Empress and the *Shum* of Begemder Province. In early 1930, he raised an army and marched it from his governorate at Gondar towards Addis Ababa. On 31 March 1930, Gugsa Welle was met by forces loyal to *Negus* Tafari and was defeated at the Battle of Anchem. Gugsa Welle was killed in action.[94] News of Gugsa Welle's defeat and death had hardly spread through Addis Ababa when the Empress died suddenly on 2 April 1930. Although it was long rumored that the Empress was poisoned upon her husband's defeat,[95] or alternately that she died from shock upon hearing of the death of her estranged yet beloved husband,[96] it has since been documented that Zewditu succumbed to paratyphoid fever and complications from diabetes after the Orthodox clergy imposed strict rules concerning her diet during Lent, against her physicians' orders.[97][98]

Official coronation painting by Beatrice Playne c. 1950s

Upon Zewditu's death, Tafari himself rose to emperor and was proclaimed *Neguse Negest ze-'Ityopp'ya*, "King of Kings of Ethiopia". He was crowned on 2 November 1930, at Addis Ababa's Cathedral of St. George. The coronation was by all accounts "a most splendid affair",[99] and it was attended by royals and dignitaries from all over the world. Among those in attendance were the Duke of Gloucester (King George V's son), Marshal Louis Franchet d'Espèrey of France, and the Prince of Udine representing King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy. Special Ambassador Herman Murray Jacoby attended the coronation as the personal representative of U.S. president Herbert Hoover.[100][101][102][103] Emissaries from Egypt, Turkey, Sweden, Belgium, and Japan were there.[99] British author Evelyn Waugh was also present, penning a contemporary report on the event, and American travel lecturer Burton Holmes made the only known film footage of the event.[104][105] One American newspaper report suggested that the celebration had incurred a cost in excess of $3,000,000.[106] Many of those in attendance received lavish gifts;[107] in one instance the Emperor, a Christian, even sent a gold-encased Bible to an American bishop who had not attended the coronation, but who had dedicated a prayer for the Emperor on the day of the coronation.[108]

Cover of *Time* magazine, 3 November 1930

Selassie introduced Ethiopia's first written constitution on 16 July 1931,[109] providing for a bicameral legislature.[110] The constitution kept power in the hands of the nobility, but it did establish democratic standards among the nobility, envisaging a transition to democratic rule: it would prevail "until the people are in a position to elect themselves."[110] The constitution limited succession to the throne to descendants of Selassie, which had the effect of placing other dynastic princes at the time (including the princes of Tigrai, and even the Emperor's loyal cousin Ras Kassa Haile Darge) outside of the line for the throne.[111]

In 1932, the Sultanate of Jimma was formally absorbed into Ethiopia following the death of Sultan Abba Jifar II of Jimma.[112]

Conflict with Italy

Ethiopia became the target of renewed Italian imperialist designs in the 1930s. Benito Mussolini's Fascist regime was keen to avenge the military defeats Italy had suffered to Ethiopia in the First Italo-Abyssinian War, and to efface the failed attempt by "liberal" Italy to conquer the country, as epitomised by the defeat at Adwa.[113][114][115] A conquest of Ethiopia could also empower the cause of fascism and embolden its empire's rhetoric.[115] Ethiopia would also provide a bridge between Italy's Eritrean and Italian Somaliland possessions. Ethiopia's position in the League of Nations did not dissuade the Italians from invading in 1935; the "collective security" envisaged by the League proved useless, and a scandal erupted when the Hoare–Laval Pact revealed that Ethiopia's League allies were scheming to appease Italy.[116]

Mobilisation

Following the Welwel Incident of 5 December 1934, Selassie joined his northern armies and set up headquarters at Desse in Wollo province. He issued a generalized mobilization order on 3 October 1935. On 19 October 1935, he gave more precise orders for his army to his Commander-in-Chief, Ras Kassa, instructing the men to choose hidden positions, to conserve ammunition, and to avoid wearing conspicuous clothing for fear of air attack.[117] Compared to the Ethiopians, the Italians had an advanced, modern military that included a large air force. The Italians also came to employ chemical weapons throughout the conflict, even targeting Red Cross field hospitals.[118]

Progress of the war

Starting in early October 1935, the Italians invaded Ethiopia. But, by November, the pace of invasion had slowed appreciably, and Selassie's northern armies were able to launch what was known as the "Christmas Offensive".[119] During this offensive, the Italians were forced back in places and put on the defensive. In early 1936, the First Battle of Tembien stopped the progress of the Ethiopian offensive and the Italians were ready to continue their offensive. Following the defeat and destruction of the northern Ethiopian armies at the Battle of Amba Aradam, the Second Battle of Tembien, and the Battle of Shire, Selassie took the field with the last Ethiopian army on the northern front. On 31 March 1936, he launched a counterattack against the Italians himself at the Battle of Maychew in southern Tigray. The Emperor's army was defeated and retreated in disarray. As his army withdrew, the Italians attacked from the air along with rebellious Raya and Azebo tribesmen on the ground, who were armed and paid by the Italians.[120][121][122] Many of the Ethiopian military were obsolete compared to the invading Italian forces, being mostly untrained and possessing non-modern rifles and weaponry.[123][124][125][126]

Selassie made a solitary pilgrimage to the churches at Lalibela, at considerable risk of capture, before returning to his capital.[127] After a stormy session of the council of state, it was agreed that because Addis Ababa could not be defended, the government would relocate to the southern town of Gore, and that in the interest of preserving the imperial house, Empress Menen Asfaw and the rest of the imperial family should immediately depart for French Somaliland, and from there continue on to Jerusalem.[128][129][130]

Exile debate

After further debate as to whether Selassie should go to Gore or accompany his family into exile, it was agreed that he should leave Ethiopia with his family and present the case of Ethiopia to the League of Nations at Geneva. The decision was not unanimous and several participants, including the nobleman Blatta Tekle Wolde Hawariat, strenuously objected to the idea of an Ethiopian monarch fleeing before an invading force.[131] Selassie appointed his cousin Ras Imru Haile Selassie as Prince Regent in his absence, departing with his family for French Somaliland on 2 May 1936.[132]

The Emperor arrives in Jerusalem, May 1936.

On 5 May, Marshal Pietro Badoglio led Italian troops into Addis Ababa, and Mussolini declared Ethiopia an Italian province. Victor Emanuel III was proclaimed as the new Emperor of Ethiopia. On the previous day, the Ethiopian exiles had left French Somaliland aboard the British cruiser HMS *Enterprise*. They were bound for Jerusalem in the British Mandate of Palestine, where the Ethiopian imperial family maintained a residence. The family disembarked at Haifa and then went on to Jerusalem. Once there, Selassie and his retinue prepared to make their case at Geneva. The choice of Jerusalem was highly symbolic, since the Solomonic Dynasty claimed descent from the House of David. Leaving the Holy Land, Selassie and his entourage sailed aboard the British cruiser HMS *Capetown* for Gibraltar, where he stayed at the Rock Hotel. From Gibraltar, the exiles were transferred to an ordinary liner. By doing this, the United Kingdom government was spared the expense of a state reception.[133]

Collective security and the League of Nations, 1936

On 12 May 1936, the League of Nations allowed Selassie to address the assembly. In response, Italy withdrew its League delegation.[134] Although fluent in French, Selassie chose to deliver his speech in his native Amharic. He asserted that Italy was employing chemical weapons on military and civilian targets alike.[135]

At the League of Nations appealing Italy's invasion in 1936

At the beginning of 1936, *Time* named Selassie "Man of the Year" for 1935,[136] and his June 1936 speech made him an icon for anti-fascists around the world. He failed, however, to get the diplomatic and matériel support he needed. The League agreed to only partial sanctions on Italy, and Selassie was left without much-needed military equipment. Only six nations in 1937 did not recognise Italy's occupation: China, New Zealand, the Soviet Union, the Republic of Spain, Mexico and the United States.[114]

Exile

Selassie spent his exile years (1936–1941) in Bath, England, in Fairfield House, which he bought. The Emperor and Kassa Haile Darge took morning walks together behind the 14-room Victorian house's high walls. His favorite reading was "diplomatic history". It was during his exile in England that he began writing his 90,000-word autobiography.[137]

Prior to Fairfield House, he briefly stayed at Warne's Hotel in Worthing[138] and in Parkside, Wimbledon.[139] A bust of Haile Selassie by Hilda Seligman stood in nearby Cannizaro Park to commemorate his stay, and was a popular place of pilgrimage for London's Rastafari community, until it was destroyed by protestors on 30 June 2020.[140] Selassie stayed at the Abbey Hotel in Malvern in the 1930s, and his granddaughters and daughters of court officials were educated at Clarendon School for Girls in North Malvern. During his time in Malvern, he attended services at Holy Trinity Church, in Link Top. A blue plaque commemorating his stay in Malvern was unveiled on Saturday, 25 June 2011. As part of the ceremony, a delegation from the Rastafari movement gave a short address and a drum recital.[141][142][143]

Fairfield House, Bath, was Selassie's residence for five years during the Second Italo-Ethiopian War and parts of World War II

Selassie's activity in this period was focused on countering Italian propaganda as to the Ethiopian resistance and the legality of the occupation.[144] He spoke out against the desecration of houses of worship and historical artifacts, including the theft of a 1,600-year-old imperial obelisk, and condemned the atrocities suffered by the Ethiopian civilian population.[145] He continued to plead for League intervention and to voice his certainty that "God's judgment will eventually visit the weak and the mighty alike",[146] though his attempts to gain support for the struggle against Italy were largely unsuccessful until Italy entered World War II on the German side in June 1940.[147]

Haile Selassie with Brigadier Daniel Sandford (left) and Colonel Wingate (right) in Dambacha Fort, after its capture, 15 April 1941

Selassie's pleas for international support took root in the United States, particularly among African-American organisations sympathetic to the Ethiopian cause.[148] In 1937, Haile Selassie was to give a Christmas Day radio address to the American people to thank his supporters when his taxi was involved in a traffic accident, leaving him with a fractured knee.[149] He delivered the address despite his injury, in which he linked Christianity and goodwill with the Covenant of the League of Nations, and asserted that war can be resolved diplomatically.[149]

During this period, Selassie suffered several personal tragedies. His two sons-in-law, Ras Desta Damtew and Dejazmach Beyene Merid, were both executed by the Italians.[146] The Emperor's daughter, Princess Romanework, wife of Dejazmach Beyene Merid, was taken into captivity with her children, and she died in Italy in 1941.[150] His daughter Tsehai died during childbirth shortly after the restoration in 1942.[151]

After his return to Ethiopia, Selassie donated Fairfield House to the city of Bath as a residence for the aged.[152] In 2019, two blue plaques commemorating his residence at Fairfield and his visits to nearby Weston-super-Mare were unveiled by his grandson.[153]

Restoration

World War II and return

In 1942

British forces, which consisted primarily of Ethiopian-backed African and South African colonial troops under the "Gideon Force" of Colonel Orde Wingate, coordinated the military effort to liberate Ethiopia. Selassie issued several imperial proclamations in this period, demonstrating that British military might and the Emperor's popular appeal could be joined in the concerted effort to liberate Ethiopia.[147]

On 18 January 1941, during the East African Campaign, Selassie crossed the border between Sudan and Ethiopia, near the village of Um Iddla. The standard of the Lion of Judah was raised again. Two days later, he and a force of Ethiopian patriots joined with Gideon Force, which was already in Ethiopia and preparing the way.[154]

Italy was defeated by combined forces of the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth of Nations, Free France, Free Belgium, and Ethiopian partisans. On 5 May 1941, Selassie entered Addis Ababa and personally addressed the Ethiopian people, exactly five years after the fascist forces entered Addis Ababa. He urged them not to reciprocate the atrocities they had been subjected to.[155]

On 27 August 1942, Selassie confirmed the legal basis for the abolition of slavery that had been illegally enacted by Italian occupying forces throughout the empire and imposed severe penalties, including capital punishment for slave trading.[156][157]

Postwar

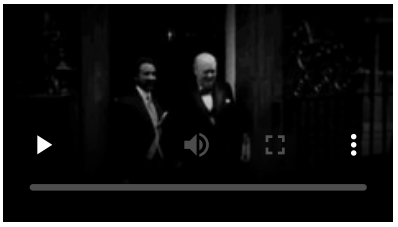
After World War II, Ethiopia became a charter member of the United Nations. In 1948, the Ogaden, a region disputed with both Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland, was granted to Ethiopia.[158] After the war, Italy was stripped of all her overseas possessions. On 2 December 1950, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 390 (V), which ceded the former Italian colony known as the federation of Eritrea to the Ethiopian Empire.[159] Eritrea was to have its own constitution, which would provide for ethnic, linguistic, and cultural balance, while Ethiopia was to manage its finances, defense, and foreign policy.[159]

Despite his centralisation policies that had been made before World War II, Selassie still found himself unable to push for all the programmes he wanted. In 1942, he attempted to institute a progressive tax scheme, but this failed due to opposition from the nobility, and only a flat tax was passed; in 1951, he agreed to reduce this as well.[160] Ethiopia was still "semi-feudal",[161] and the Emperor's attempts to alter its social and economic form by reforming its modes of taxation met with resistance from the nobility and clergy, which were eager to resume their privileges in the post-war era.[160] Where Selassie actually did succeed in effecting new land taxes, the burdens were often still passed by the landowners onto the peasants.[160]

With Queen Elizabeth II heading to Buckingham Palace, 1954

Between 1941 and 1959, Selassie worked to establish the autocephaly of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.[162] For centuries the Ethiopian Orthodox Church had been headed by the *Abuna*, a bishop chosen by and answerable to the Pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria. In 1942 and 1945, Selassie applied to the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church to establish the independence of Ethiopian bishops, and when his appeals were denied he threatened to sever relations with the Coptic Church of Alexandria.[162] Finally, in 1959, Pope Kyrillos VI elevated the *Abuna* to Patriarch-Catholicos.[162] The Ethiopian Church remained affiliated with the Alexandrian Church.[160] In addition to these efforts, Selassie changed the Ethiopian church-state relationship by introducing taxation of church lands, and by restricting the legal privileges of the clergy, who had formerly been tried in their own courts for civil offenses.[160]

With President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on board the USS *Quincy* (CA-71) in Egypt after the Yalta Conference, 13 February 1945



Selassie with Sir Winston Churchill at Downing Street, 22 October 1954

In 1956, on a state visit to India, he met with Indian leaders who supported Ethiopia against fascist Italy's illegal occupation during the 1935–1941 war against the country. Selassie also discussed with Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru relating to Asian and African decolonisation, and cooperation between economic and education sectors.[163]

In 1948, Harari and Somali Muslims staged a significant rebellion against the empire in Harar. The state responded with a violent crackdown. Hundreds were arrested and the entire town of Harar was put under martial law.[164] The government also seized many assets and estates belonging to the people.[165][166] This led to a massive exodus of Hararis from the region.[19][167] Harari dissatisfaction stemmed from the fact that they had never received autonomy for Harar, which was promised by Menelik II after his conquest of the kingdom. The promise was eroded by successive Amhara governors of Harar and infringed by Selassie himself.[168][169] According to historians Tim Carmicheal and Roman Loimeier, Selassie was directly involved in the suppression of the Harari movement that formed as a response to the crackdown on Hararis who collaborated with the Italians during their occupation of Ethiopia from 1935 to 1941.[170][171]

In keeping with the principle of collective security, for which he was an outspoken proponent, Selassie sent Ethiopian armed forces to take part in the Korean War to fight in support of the United Nations Command. The elite Kagnew Battalion, under General Mulugueta Bulli, was attached to the American 7th Infantry Division, and fought with distinction in a number of major engagements including the Battle of Pork Chop Hill.[172] In a 1954 speech, Selassie spoke of Ethiopian participation in the Korean War as a redemption of the principles of collective security.[173][174]

Second constitutional period

During the celebrations of his Silver Jubilee in November 1955, Selassie introduced a revised constitution,[175] whereby he retained effective power, while extending political participation to the people by allowing the lower house of parliament to become an elected body. Party politics were not provided for. Modern educational methods were more widely spread throughout the Empire.[176][177][178]

The country embarked on a development scheme and plans for modernisation, tempered by Ethiopian traditions, and within the framework of the state's ancient monarchical structure. Selassie compromised, when practical, with the traditionalists in the nobility and church. He also tried to improve relations between the state and ethnic groups, and granted autonomy to Afar lands that were difficult to control. Still, his reforms to end feudalism were slow and weakened by the compromises he made with the entrenched aristocracy. The revised constitution of 1955 has been criticised for reasserting "the indisputable power of the monarch" and maintaining the relative powerlessness of the peasants.[179]

Selassie also maintained cordial relations with the government of the United Kingdom through charitable gestures. He sent aid to the British government in 1947 when Britain was affected by heavy flooding. His letter to Lord Meork, National Distress Fund, London said, "even though We are busy of helping our people who didn't recover from the crises of the war, We heard that your fertile and beautiful country is devastated by the unusually heavy rain, and your request for aid. Therefore, We are sending small amount of money, about one thousand pounds through our embassy to show our sympathy and cooperation."[180]

Haile Selassie with Nikita Khrushchev, Moscow, 1959

1958 famine of Tigray

In the summer of 1958, a widespread famine in the Tigray province of northern Ethiopia was already two years old yet people in Addis Ababa knew hardly anything about it. When significant reports of death finally reached the Ministry of Interior in September 1959 the central government immediately disclosed the information to the public and began asking for contributions. The Emperor personally donated 2,000 tons of relief grain, the U.S. sent 32,000 tons, which was distributed between Eritrea and Tigray, and money for aid was raised throughout the country but it is estimated that approximately 100,000 people had died before the crisis ended in August 1961. The causes of the famine were attributed to drought, locusts, hailstone and epidemics of small-pox, typhus, measles and malaria.[181][182][183]

Attempted coup and era of decolonization

Selassie contributed Ethiopian troops to the United Nations Operation in the Congo peacekeeping force during the 1960 Congo Crisis, per United Nations Security Council Resolution 143.

With John F. Kennedy, October 1963

On 13 December 1960, while Selassie was on a state visit to Brazil, the imperial guard staged an unsuccessful coup, briefly proclaiming Selassie's elder son, Asfa Wossen, as emperor. The regular army and police forces crushed the coup d'état. The coup plotters lacked broad popular support, were denounced by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and was unpopular with the military and police. Nonetheless, the effort had support among students and the educated classes.[184] The attempt has been characterised as a pivotal moment in Ethiopian history, the point at which Ethiopians "for the first time questioned the power of the king to rule without the people's consent".[185] Student populations began to empathise with the peasantry and poor and advocate on their behalf.[185] The coup spurred Selassie to accelerate reform, manifested as land grants to military and police officials and political groups.[186]

Selassie continued to be a staunch ally of the West, while pursuing a firm policy of decolonisation in Africa, which was still largely under European colonial rule. The United Nations conducted a lengthy inquiry regarding Eritrea's status, with the superpowers each vying for a stake in the state's future. Britain, the administrator at the time, suggested Eritrea's partition between Sudan and Ethiopia, separating Christians and Muslims. The idea was instantly rejected by Eritrean political parties, as well as the UN.[187][188]

Eritrean annexation and uprising

Video of Haile Selassie's 1968 United Nations speech

A UN plebiscite voted to have Eritrea federated with Ethiopia, later stipulated on 2 December 1950 in resolution 390 (V). Eritrea would have its own parliament and administration and would be represented in what had been the Ethiopian parliament and would become the federal parliament.[189] Selassie rejected European attempts to draft a separate constitution under which Eritrea would be governed, and wanted his own 1955 constitution protecting families to apply in both Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1961 the 30-year Eritrean War for Independence began, followed by the dissolution of the federation and shutting down of Eritrea's parliament.[190][191]

In September 1961, Selassie attended the Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade, FPR Yugoslavia. This is considered to be the founding conference of the Non-Aligned Movement.[192]

With Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser in Addis Abeba for the Organisation of African Unity summit, 1963

In 1961, tensions between independence-minded Eritreans and Ethiopian forces culminated in the Eritrean War of Independence. Eritrea's elected parliament voted to become the fourteenth province of Ethiopia in 1962.[193][194] The war would continue for 30 years; first Selassie, then the Soviet-backed junta that succeeded him, attempted to retain Eritrea by force.[195]

In 1963, Selassie presided over the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the precursor of the continent-wide African Union (AU). The new organisation would establish its headquarters in Addis Ababa. In May of that year, Selassie was elected as the OAU's first official chairperson, a rotating seat. Along with Modibo Keïta of Mali, the Ethiopian leader would later help successfully negotiate the Bamako Accords, which brought an end to the border conflict between Morocco and Algeria. In 1964, Selassie would initiate the concept of the United States of Africa, a proposition later taken up by Muammar Gaddafi.[196][197]

In 1963, a revolt in Bale occurred, where peasant rioters whom were discouraged by the Ethiopian taxation headed by Prime Minister Aklilu Habte-Wold later turned into an insurgency.[198] This caused a semi-civil war with terrorist activities carried out by rebels supported by Somalia which later forced the Ethiopian government to declare a state of emergency.[199][200][201] The Emperor's armed forces led by Prime Minister Aklilu's cabinet with the support of the United Kingdom and the United States were able to end the revolt after over six years of insurgency. This assured weakened diplomatic ties with Siad Barre's Somalia.[199][201][202]

Reform efforts and relations with the West

On 4 October 1963, Selassie addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations.[203][204][205]

At the state funeral of John F. Kennedy, 25 November 1963

On 25 November 1963, the Emperor traveled to Washington, D.C., and attended the state funeral of assassinated U.S. president John F. Kennedy. He was the only African head of state to attend the funeral.[206] In addition, he was the only one of the three prominent world leaders that would have another meeting with the new president, Lyndon B. Johnson, in Washington during his presidency; he met Johnson again during an informal visit to the United States in 1967.[207][208][209]

In 1966, Selassie attempted to replace the historical tax system with a single progressive income tax, which would weaken the nobility who had avoided paying most of their taxes.[210] This law led to a revolt in Gojjam, which was repressed although enforcement of the tax was abandoned. Having achieved its design in undermining the tax, the revolt encouraged other landowners to defy Selassie.[211] In October that year, Selassie had a four-day visit to the Kingdom of Jordan hosted by King Hussein. During this trip, Selassie visited Jerusalem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.[212]

While he had assured Ethiopia's participation in UN-approved collective security operations, including Korea and Congo, Selassie drew a distinction between it and the intervention in Indochina, deploring it as needless suffering and calling for the Vietnam War to end. At the same time, he remained open toward the United States, commending it for making progress with African

Americans' Civil Rights legislation in the 1950s and 1960s and visiting the US several times during these years.[213][214][215]

In 1967, he visited Montréal, Canada, to open the Ethiopian Pavilion at the Expo '67 World's Fair where he received great acclaim among other World leaders there for the occasion.[216][217][218]

Selassie with Queen Elizabeth II in Addis Ababa on her 1965 state visit to Ethiopia

Later reign

As the 1970s began, in contrast to most monarchs at the era, Selassie's political influence continued to be of great significance; he was said to utilize as many as four spy agencies, all which concurrently spied on each other as well as civilian and military circles of the nation. He was the only person who knew the 'true' scope of things in Ethiopia.[219]

During a visit to Washington, D.C. with President Lyndon B. Johnson, 1967

Student unrest became a regular feature of Ethiopian life in the 1960s and 1970s. Communism took root among the Ethiopian intelligentsia, particularly those who had studied abroad and been exposed to radical and left-wing sentiments.[184] Resistance by conservatives at the Imperial Court and Parliament, and by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, made Selassie's land reform proposals difficult to implement. The standing of the government was damaged, costing Selassie much goodwill and sowing resentment among the peasant population. Efforts to weaken unions also hurt his image.[220][221]

In the last years of his rule, civil liberties and political rights in Ethiopia were low, with Freedom House giving Ethiopia a "Not Free" score in both categories.[222] Common human rights abuses included poor prison conditions and the imprisonment and torture of political dissidents. Nonetheless, the Emperor was known for pardoning hundreds of prisoners at a time and there were no more than ten political prisoners during his entire reign.[20][223]

The Imperial Army also carried out a multiple atrocities during the war with Eritrean separatists in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[224][225][226][227]

Foreign relations

As these issues began to pile up, Selassie left much of domestic governance to Aklilu Habte-Wold and concentrated more on foreign affairs. Over the previous two decades, Ethiopia had received over 400 million dollars in aid, 140 million of that being for the Ethiopian military, and 240 million for economic assistance.[228]

In Beijing, China, with Chinese leader and Chairman of the CPC Mao Zedong in 1971. Selassie also met Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in his state visit.

Outside Ethiopia, Selassie continued to enjoy enormous prestige and respect. As the longest-serving head of state in power, he was often given precedence over other leaders at state events, such as the state funerals of John F. Kennedy and Charles de Gaulle, the summits of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the 1971 celebration of the 2,500 years of the Persian Empire.[229][230]

In 1970, Selassie visited Italy as a guest of President Giuseppe Saragat, and in Milan he met Giordano Dell'Amore, President of the Italian Savings Banks Association. He visited China in October 1971, and was the first foreign head of state to meet Mao Zedong following the death of Mao's designated successor Lin Biao in a plane crash in Mongolia.[231][232]

Selassie went to meet Pope Paul VI in 1970 at Vatican City, where they discussed issues regarding both their countries and history.[233]

Wollo famine

Famine – mostly in Wollo, north-eastern Ethiopia, as well as in some parts of Tigray – is estimated to have killed 40,000 to 80,000 Ethiopians between 1972 and 1974.[16][235] Some reports suggest that the Emperor was unaware of the famine's extent,[236][237][238] while others assert that he was well aware of it.[239][240] The famine and its image in the media undermined the government's popular support, and his once unassailable popularity declined.[241]

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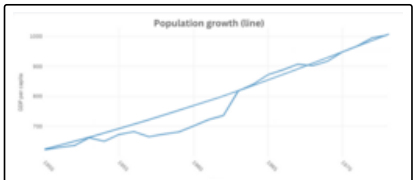
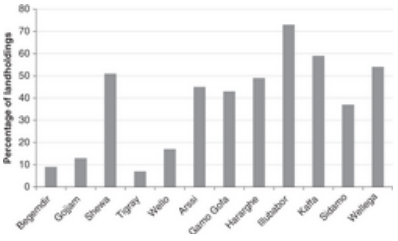
Selassie's speech regarding human rights on 23 October 1970, which marked the 25th anniversary of the United Nations' founding

Selassie with Pope Paul VI at the Holy See, 10 November 1970

In addition to the exposure of attempts by corrupt local officials to cover up the famine from the imperial government, the Kremlin's depiction of Selassie's Ethiopia as backwards and inept (relative to the purported utopia of Marxism–Leninism) contributed to the popular uprising that led to its downfall and the rise of Mengistu Haile Mariam.[242] The crisis was exacerbated by military mutinies and high oil prices. The costs of imported goods, gasoline, and food skyrocketed, while unemployment spiked.[179]



Ethiopia's population and GDP Per Capita growth during a part of Selassie's reign from 1950 to 1973



The Land distribution throughout the Ethiopian Empire to nobles throughout each region.[234]

The Ethiopian revolution

In February 1974, four days of serious riots in Addis Ababa against sudden economic inflation left five dead. The Emperor responded by announcing on national television a reduction in petrol prices and a freeze on the cost of basic commodities. This calmed the public, but the promised 33% military wage hike was not substantial enough to pacify the army, which then mutinied, beginning in Asmara and spreading throughout the empire. This mutiny led to the resignation of Aklilu Habte-Wold as prime minister on 27 February 1974.[243] Selassie again went on television to agree to the army's demands for still greater pay, and named Endelkachew Makonnen as the new prime minister.[244][245] Despite Endalkatchew's many concessions, discontent continued in March with a four-day general strike that paralyzed the nation.[246]

Imprisonment

The Derg, a clique of junior officers and enlisted men, set up in June to investigate the military's demands, took advantage of the government's disarray to depose the 82-year-old Selassie on 12 September.[247] General Aman Mikael Andom, a Protestant of Eritrean origin,[243] served briefly as provisional head of state pending the return of Crown Prince Asfa Wossen, who was then receiving medical treatment abroad. Selassie was imprisoned briefly at the 4th Army Division in Addis Ababa[243] before being moved back to the Grand Palace where the Emperor spent the last months of his life under house arrest.[248]

Though initially most of the imperial family was detained at the late Duke of Harar's residence in the north of the capital, most were later moved into Addis Ababa's Kerchele Prison, also known as "Alem Bekagn". On 23 November 60 former high officials of the imperial government were summarily executed by firing squad,[249] including Selassie's grandson, Rear Admiral Iskinder Desta, General Aman and two former prime ministers.[248][250] These killings, known to Ethiopians as "Black Saturday", were condemned by the Crown Prince; the Derg responded to his rebuke by revoking its acknowledgment of his imperial legitimacy, and announcing the end of the Solomonic dynasty.[249]

Following the 1974 coup d'état, much of the Ethiopian royal family fled the country, were imprisoned, or were executed.

Execution and cover-up

On 27 August 1975, Selassie was murdered on the orders of the Derg regime, a fact that was to remain undiscovered for another twenty years. On 28 August 1975, state media reported that Selassie had died on 27 August of "respiratory failure" following complications from a

prostate examination followed up by a prostate operation.[251] Dr. Asrat Woldeyes denied that complications had occurred and rejected the government version of his death. The prostate operation in question apparently had taken place months before the state media claimed, and Selassie had apparently enjoyed strong health in his last days.[252]

In 1994, an Ethiopian court found several former military officers guilty of strangling the Emperor in his bed in 1975. Three years after the Derg regime was overthrown,[253] the court charged them with genocide and murder, claiming that it had obtained documents attesting to a high-level order from the military regime to assassinate Selassie for leading a "feudal regime".[12] Documents have been widely circulated online showing the Derg's final assassination order and bearing the military regime's seal and signature.[254][255] The veracity of these documents has been corroborated by multiple former members of the Derg regime.[256][257]

Funeral and veneration

The tombs of Haile Selassie and Menen Asfaw inside the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa

The Soviet-backed People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Derg's successor, fell in 1991. In 1992, Selassie's bones were found under a concrete slab on the palace grounds.[258][259] Selassie's coffin rested in Bhata Church for nearly a decade, near his great-uncle Menelik II's resting place.[260] On 5 November 2000, the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa gave him a funeral, but the government refused calls to declare the ceremony an official imperial funeral.[261] This may have been due to the government's reluctance to endorse or give even subtle political recognition to Royalists.[260][262][263]

Rastafari reaction

Prominent Rastafari figures such as Rita Marley participated in the funeral, but most Rastafari rejected the event and refused to accept that the bones were Selassie's remains. There is some debate within the Rastafari movement whether he actually died in 1975.[264]

Rastafari messiah

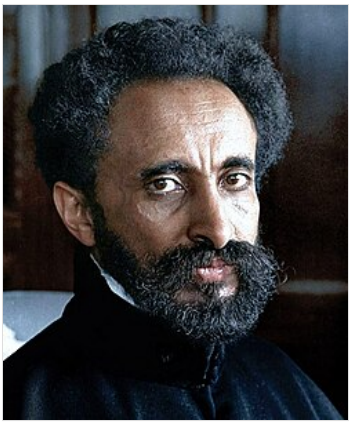
Selassie is worshipped as God incarnate[265][266] among some followers of the Rastafari movement (taken from Selassie's pre-imperial name *Ras* – meaning *Head*, a title equivalent to Duke – Tafari Makonnen), which emerged in Jamaica during the 1930s. He is viewed as the messiah who will lead the peoples of Africa and the African diaspora to freedom.[267] His official titles are *Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah* and *King of Kings of Ethiopia*, *Lord of Lords and Elect of God*, and his lineage is thought to be from Solomon and Sheba.[268] These notions are perceived by Rastafari as confirmation of the return of the messiah in the Book of Revelation. Rastafari faith in the divinity of Selassie[269][270] began after news reports of his coronation reached Jamaica,[271] particularly via the two *Time* magazine articles on the coronation before and after the event. Selassie's own perspectives permeate the philosophy of the movement.[271][272]

In 1961, the Jamaican government sent a delegation of both Rastafari and non-Rastafari leaders to Ethiopia to discuss repatriation with the Emperor. He told the Rastafari delegation "Tell the Brethren to be not dismayed, I personally will give my assistance in the matter of repatriation."[273]

Selassie visited Jamaica on 21 April 1966, and approximately one hundred thousand Rastafari went to Palisadoes Airport in Kingston to greet him.[271] Spliffs[274] and chalices[275] were openly[276] smoked, causing "a haze of ganja smoke" to drift through the air.[277][278][279] Selassie arrived at the airport but was unable to come down the airplane's steps, as the crowd rushed the tarmac. He returned into the plane. The Jamaican authorities were obliged to request Ras Mortimer Planno, a well-known Rasta leader, to climb the steps, enter the plane, and negotiate the Emperor's descent.[280][281] This day is held by scholars to be a turning point for the movement,[282][283][284] and it is commemorated by Rastafari as Grounation Day. From then on, the Jamaican authorities were asked to ensure that Rastafari representatives were present at all state functions attended by the Emperor,[283][284] and Rastafari elders also ensured that they obtained a private audience with the Emperor,[283] where he told them that they should not emigrate to Ethiopia until they had first liberated the people of Jamaica. This dictum came to be known as "liberation before repatriation".[285]

Selassie defied expectations of the Jamaican authorities[286] and never rebuked the Rastafari for their belief in him as God. Instead, he presented the movement's faithful elders with gold medallions.[287][288] During PNP leader (later Jamaican prime minister) Michael Manley's visit to Ethiopia in October 1969, the Emperor recalled his 1966 reception with amazement, and

stated that he felt that he had to be respectful of their beliefs.[289] This was the visit when Manley received the Rod of Correction or Rod of Joshua as a present from the Emperor, thought to have helped him to win the 1972 election in Jamaica.[290][291]


Haile Selassie pictured in 1935, during the same period where Rastafarian worship emerged

Rita Marley converted to the Rastafari faith after seeing Selassie on his Jamaican trip. She claimed that she saw a *stigmata* print on the palm of Selassie's hand as he waved to the crowd.[292] Rastafari became much better known throughout much of the world due to the popularity of Bob Marley.[293] Marley's posthumously released song "Iron Lion Zion" may refer to Selassie.[294]

Selassie's position

In a 1967 interview with the CBC's Bill McNeil, Selassie denied his alleged divinity.[295] For many Rastafari, the CBC interview is not interpreted as a denial. According to Robert Earl Hood, Selassie neither denied nor affirmed his divinity.[296][297][298]

CBC Interview

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Selassie visited Canada in 1967 for an official state visit, CBC news interviewed him and asked him a variety of questions including his position on Rastafarianism

Problems playing this file? See media help.

After his return to Ethiopia, Selassie dispatched Archbishop Abuna Yesehaq Mandefro to the Caribbean. According to Yesehaq, this was to help draw Rastafari and other West Indians to the Ethiopian church.[299][300] Some sources suggest that certain islanders and their leaders were resenting the services of their former colonial churches, and vocalised their interest of establishing the Ethiopian church in the Caribbean.[301]

In 1969, Manley visited the Emperor at his palace in Addis Ababa before his election as prime minister of Jamaica in 1972. Selassie spoke about his 1966 visit to Jamaica and told Manley that, though he was confused by the Rastafarians' beliefs, he respected them.[302]

In 1948, Selassie donated 500 hectares of land at Shashamane, 250 kilometres (160 mi) south of Addis Ababa, to the Ethiopian World Federation Incorporated for the use of people of African descent who supported Ethiopia during the war.[303] Numerous Rastafari families settled there and still live as a community to this day.[304][305] This was controversial among the locals, as the Rastas settled on traditionally Oromo land.[306][307][308]

Residences and finance

In 1974, Ethiopian media during the revolution claimed the Emperor had a net worth of 11 billion dollars.[309] However, records indicate that Selassie's entire net worth was just £22,000.00 as late as 1959.[310] He was also accused by the Derg to have hoarded millions in Swiss banks, claiming Selassie illegally acquired the money from exploiting the Ethiopian people.[311]

The Jubilee Palace served as the residence of Selassie since 1955

The Jubilee Palace, built in 1955, served as the official residence of the head of state of Ethiopian Empire from 1955 to 1974. The Palace sits on 11,450 square metres (123,200 sq ft) in the center of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia since 1889.[312] The Palace's estimated initial construction cost and its value today are undisclosed, but due to its size, location and historical importance, its value would be in the hundreds of millions of dollars.[313]

Selassie owned a large fleet of cars including ones gifted to him during overseas visits, which may be worth millions of dollars.[314] In addition, a battle took place over a decade regarding his Patek Phillipe watch, which was initially offered in a Christie's auction with an estimated value of over $1 million.[315] However, after the feud ended, the watch was withdrawn from the auction.[316][317]

Personal life

Visual, performing, and literary arts

In his private life, Selassie advocated the growth of Ethiopian art. He believed that arts could 'rebuild' the country. He was interested in a modern outlook towards traditional Ethiopian arts, including those of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. He addressed Afewerk Tekle, an Ethiopian laureate, when he left for Europe to gain skills to improve Ethiopian art. Later, Tekle created multiple artworks putting Ethiopian life on display.[318] Selassie created an art program which enrolled multiple artists, including Agegnehu Engida. He gave a scholarship to Ale Felege Selam. Selassie travelled regularly to Bishoftu to see displays of paintings by Ethiopian artists such as Lemma Guya. Selassie was impressed by Guya's paintings of Ethiopian military aircraft. Guya later joined the Airforce but continued to paint with Selassie's support.[319][320][321]

Selassie commissioned the opening of Ethiopia's first Hager Fikir Theater House in 1935 and the National Theatre in Addis Ababa in 1955.[322]

Selassie wrote an autobiography, "My Life and Ethiopia's Progress", covering his years as ruler. He began the first volume while in exile during the Second Italo-Ethiopian War. He allegedly wrote the second volume towards the end of the war, though it is widely believed that officials assembled the materials and constructed the book.[323][324][325]

Awarding Abebe Bikila the Order of the Star of Ethiopia, 1960, after winning the Olympic Gold Medal

Sports

During his reign, Selassie expanded international Ethiopian sports, including the Ethiopian Football Federation and Ethiopian national basketball team. He awarded Ethiopia the AFCON award when it won its first title.[326] He supported Ethiopia in the 1960 Olympics and gave Olympian Abebe Bikila with multiple national awards such as the Star of Ethiopia and the Order of Menelik II. He supported other Ethiopian athletes, such as Mamo Wolde, by writing personal letters to them.[327][328]

Religion

With Pope Cyril VI of Alexandria

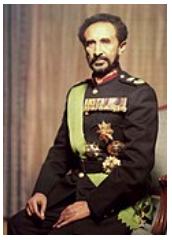
Selassie was an adherent of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. He was raised following Ethiopia's traditional Christian background. He was born Tafari Makonnen; after his coronation, he adopted his baptismal name as his official and legal name. He participated in the 1966 Berlin Congress for World Evangelism organised by evangelist Billy Graham.[329][330]

He tried to unify the Oriental Orthodox community extending into Egypt, Armenia, and Syria. Despite this, he did not try to stop the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church from having its own Patriarch when it was granted autocephaly by the Egyptian Coptic Church. He adhered to the intracontinental and overseas relations between the Orthodox churches, and believed that it would be reasonable to try to move unification forward.[332][333][334]

He maintained a good relationship with Pope Cyril VI of Alexandria, Patriarch of the Coptic Church in Egypt. Pope Cyril was awarded the Star of Solomon by Selassie for his role in nominating Abuna Basilios as the first Ethiopian Patriarch of the Tewahedo Church. Christianity played an official role in the Constitutional Monarchy, but to a limited degree compared to his predecessors. Under Selassie's reign in 1942, Islamic courts were allowed to have judicial power concerning Muslim matters. He also recognized concerns from the Muslim community and gave audiences to its respective leaders.[335][336]

Defender of the Faith

Haile Selassie I



Emperor

Resting place	Addis Ababa
Venerated in	Oriental Orthodoxy[331] ▪ Armenian Apostolic Church ▪ Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church ▪ Coptic Orthodox Church ▪ Indian Orthodox Church

- Syriac Orthodox Church

Family

Selassie, being the head of the Royal Family, legally had precedent over all matters within his household. He contrasted with the Solomonic dynasty and gave more political powers, dukedoms, and government offices to members of his immediate family, including his grandson Rear Admiral Iskinder Desta. An individual source according to Paulos Milkias, a professor at Montreal, Canada, claimed that Desta threatened his grandfather with death at gunpoint unless he changed the successional line (although this was never definitively confirmed). Selassie only wanted to give him an apolitical position as a commissioned officer in the Ethiopian military, and Iskinder was made deputy commander of the Imperial Ethiopian Navy in 1958.[337][338]

His son Prince Asfaw Wossen and other members of the Royal Family of Ethiopia

In 1963, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh is said to have helped Haile Selassie to put his grandson in the elite Gordonstoun school.[339] Selassie was able to put his other grandchildren into top schools throughout the U.S. and Europe, such as Columbia University.[340]

Legacy

Public opinion and media depiction

During the early years of his reign, especially in the 1930s and 1940s when Fascist Italy invaded Ethiopia, media coverage of Selassie was predominantly positive. He was portrayed as a hero resisting fascist forces and a symbol of hope for Africa, aligning with the Allies during World War II.[341] In 1935, during the invasion, he was even named *Time* magazine's "Man of the Year".[342] British Pathé reported that Selassie's return was "As an Emperor returns and triumphs to his people."[343] During one of his interviews with *Meet the Press* during a 1963 state visit to the U.S., a time when the Civil Rights movement was in full swing, Selassie condemned race-based oppression and advocated for Pan-African unity.[344] However, media responses were mixed. NBC News ridiculed the visit months later, prompting *The New York Times* to defend the Ethiopian Emperor, questioning NBC's intent and criticizing its insensitivity. The paper remarked that "NBC News cannot afford to be a handmaiden of the State Department" and asked what "civilized purpose" was served by ridiculing the visit, to the probable embarrassment of Ethiopian diplomats in the U.S.[345][346]

Haile Selassie I visiting a children's hospital in 1969, with Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, on her state visit to Ethiopia

Emperor Haile Selassie I saluting Soviet, American, British and French Ships present at the annual Ethiopian Navy Day celebrations

During the 1950s, when the Silver Jubilee of the Emperor's reign was celebrated, he adopted the 1955 Constitution which legally gave more democratic rights to the public, and legally restricted the monarch's power. Following the end of World War II, Selassie sought to limit the influence of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. During the 1950s, he was widely regarded as a modernizing and capable leader in Ethiopia.[347][348][349] In the 1970s, due to economic turmoil and a famine, Selassie's reputation suffered. Mass protests broke out against his reign. It was widely believed he should abdicate due to his old age and failed land reform policy. These factors ultimately led to his removal from power.[350]

Selassie's legacy remains a topic of debate. He played a leading role in founding Addis Ababa University and the Organisation of African Unity, the latter of which would later become the African Union. He was also a prominent anti-colonial leader.[351][352][353][354] *Time* magazine listed him among the most important figures in political history, placing him in the "Top 25 Political Icons" of all time.[355][356]

In 1997, Selassie was mentioned in the Ween song *Mutilated Lips*. In 2001, Ethiopian pop star Teddy Afro released a song titled "Haile Selassie", depicting its namesake in a nationalistic light.[357][358]

Selassie appears as a leader of Ethiopia in *Civilization V: Gods and Kings*.[359]

Old Ethiopian Birr depicting Haile Selassie over bank notes rarely circulating in Ethiopia

In 2021, a false headline had circulated of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip bowing down to Selassie and his wife during the Queen's state visit to Ethiopia at Jubilee Palace.[360][361][362] A documentary titled *Grandpa Was an Emperor* was released by Selassie's granddaughter in 2021, showcasing the life of the Ethiopian royal family.[363][364] In the 2024 biopic *Bob Marley: One Love*,[365] Selassie is depicted in Rastafarian religious lore.[366][367][368] There is a part where Selassie, whilst riding a horse, takes alongside him a young Bob Marley.[369]

Selassie has been depicted by photographers, artists, and sculptors such as Edward Copnall, Beulah Woodard, Jacob Epstein, William H. Johnson, Yevonde Middleton and Alvin Gittins.[370][371][372][373][374][375]

Memorials

Multiple memorials were built for Selassie, mainly in Ethiopia. One of these memorials was unveiled in 2019 at the African Union's Headquarters in Addis Ababa. This memorial was made to honor his long efforts of Pan-Africanism and anti-colonialism during his rule.[376][377] A wax statue of Haile Selassie can be found in Addis Ababa's Unity Park.[378][379][380] A high school in Kingston, Jamaica is named after Haile Selassie.[381][382] In 2020, a bust statue built in 1957 was destroyed by protestors as a response to the assassination of Oromo singer Hachalu Hundessa.[383][384][385] One of the three major expressways in Nairobi, Kenya is named after Haile Selassie.[386][387]

Haile Selassie I's statue located at the AU Conference HQ, Addis Ababa

Former standing statue of the Emperor in Wimbledon, England

A plaster figure of Selassie by Jacob Epstein in 1936, The New Art Gallery Walsall, England

A blue plaque, unveiled in 2011 in Great Malvern, England

Titles, styles, arms, honours

- 23 July 1892 – 1 November 1905: *Lij* Tafari Makonnen[33][388]
- 1 November 1905 – 11 February 1917: *Dejazmach* Tafari Makonnen[33][38]

Styles of
Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia

- 11 February 1917 – 7 October 1928: *Balemulu Silt'an Enderase Le'ul-Ras* Tafari Makonnen[37][41][389]
- 7 October 1928 – 2 November 1930: *Negus* Tafari Makonnen[390]
- 2 November 1930 – 12 September 1974: By the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, *His Imperial Majesty* Haile Selassie I, King of Kings of Ethiopia, Elect of God.[38][41][49][391][392]

Reference style	His Imperial Majesty Amharic: ግርማዊ; *girmāwī*
Spoken style	Your Imperial Majesty Amharic: ጃንሆይ; *djānhoi* lit. *"O [esteemed] royal"*
Alternative style	Our Lord (familiar) Amharic: ጌቶቹ; *getochu* lit. *"Our master"* (pl.)

National orders

- Chief Commander of the Order of the Star of Ethiopia (1909)[393]
- Grand Collar of the Order of Solomon (1930)[394][395]
- Grand Cordon of the Order of the Seal of Solomon[396][397]
- Grand Cordon with Collar of the Order of the Queen of Sheba[398]
- Grand Cordon of the Order of the Holy Trinity[399]
- Grand Cordon of the Order of Menelik II[400]
- Order of Fidelity[401]

Foreign Coat of Arms

Coat of arms in Spain under the order of Charles III of Spain

Coat of arms as Emperor in the United Kingdom under the Order of Garter

Coat of arms as Emperor in Sweden under the Order of the Seraphim

As sovereign

Imperial Royal Standard for Haile Selassie I obverse

Imperial Royal Standard for Haile Selassie I reverse

Military ranks

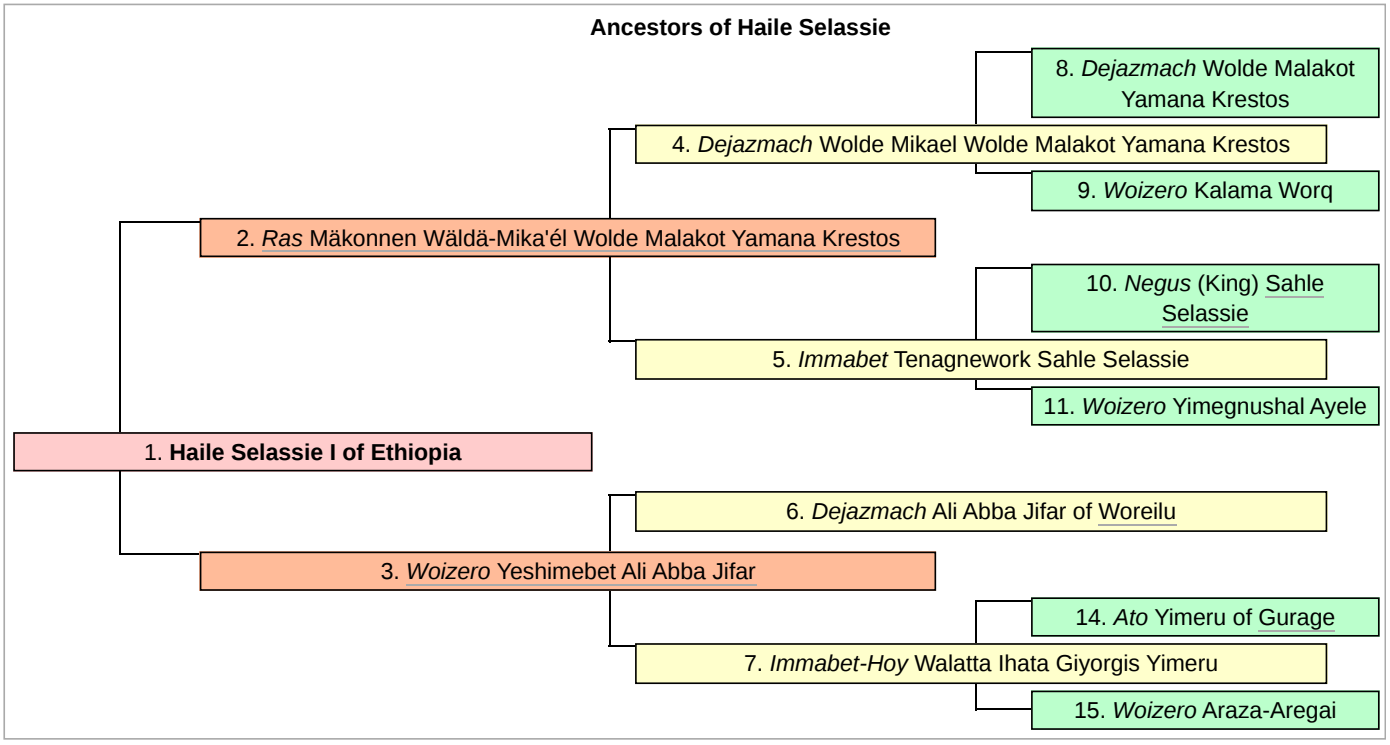
Selassie held the following ranks:

- Field Marshal, Imperial Ethiopian Army[402][403]
- Admiral of the Fleet, Imperial Ethiopian Navy[403]
- Marshal of the Imperial Ethiopian Air Force[403]
- Honorary Field Marshal, British Army, 20 January 1965[404][405][406]

Issue

Name	Birth	Death	Notes
Princess Romanework	1909	14 October 1940	Married Dejazmatch Beyene Merid in the late 1920s, had four children. Dejazmatch Beyene Merid died in 1937.
Princess Tenagnework	12 January 1912	6 April 2003	Married from 1924 to 1937 (death) to Ras Desta Damtew, had six children. Remarried to Andargachew Messai, who died in 1981, had two children.
Crown Prince Amha Selassie	27 July 1916	17 January 1997	Married Wolete Israel Seyoum in 1931, had one daughter. Amha and Wolete later divorced. Married Medferiashwork Abebe in 1945, had four children.
Princess Zenebework	25 July 1917	24 March 1934	Married Dejazmach Haile Selassie Gugsa, no issue
Princess Tsehai	13 October 1919	17 August 1942	Married Lij Abiye Abebe in 1941, had a stillborn daughter
Prince Makonnen, Duke of Harar	16 October 1924	13 May 1957	Married Sara Gizaw, had five children
Prince Sahle Selassie	27 February 1932	24 April 1962	Married Princess Mahisente Habte Mariam, had one son

Ancestry



See also

- Black Lions
- Ethiopian Empire
- Ethiopian Monarchs
- List of people who have been considered deities
- List of unsolved deaths

Notes

a. Ge'ez: ቀዳማዊ ኀይለ ሥላሴ, romanized: *Qädamawi Ḫäylä Śəllase*, Amharic pronunciation: [kʼədäˈmäwi ˈhäjlə sɨlˈläse] ⓘ, lit. 'Power of the Trinity';[2][3]

1. In exile from 2 May 1936 – 20 January 1941[1]
2. Ge'ez ግርማዊ ቀዳማዊ አፄ ኃይለ ሥላሴ ሞዓ አንበሳ ዘእምነገደ ይሁዳ ንጉሠ ነገሥት ዘኢትዮጵያ ሰዩመ እግዚአብሔር; *girmāwī ḳedāmāwī 'aṣē ḫayle śillāsē, mō'ā 'anbessā ze'imneggede yihudā niguse negest ze'ītyōṗṗyā, siyume 'igzī'a'bihēr*.[51]
3. *Bālemulu* literally means "fully empowered" or "wholly authorised", thus distinguishing it from the general use of *Enderase*, that being a representative or lieutenant of the Emperor to fiefs or vassals, essentially a Governor-General or Viceroy, by which term provincial governors in the contemporary Imperial period, during Haile Selassie's reign, were referred.[68][69]
4. Balcha Safo brought an army of ten thousand with him from Sidamo.[71]
5. Balcha Safo's personal bodyguard numbered about five hundred.[71]

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Jesus

Jesus[e] (c. 6 to 4 BC – AD 30 or 33), also referred to as **Jesus Christ**,[f] **Jesus of Nazareth**, and many other names and titles, was a 1st-century Jewish preacher and religious leader.[12] He is the central figure of Christianity, the world's largest religion. Most Christians consider Jesus to be the incarnation of God the Son and awaited messiah, or Christ, a descendant from the Davidic line that is prophesied in the Old Testament. Virtually all modern scholars of antiquity agree that Jesus existed historically.[g] Accounts of Jesus' life are contained in the Gospels, especially the four canonical Gospels in the New Testament. Academic research has yielded various views on the historical reliability of the Gospels and how closely they reflect the historical Jesus.[20][h][23][24]

According to Christian tradition, as preserved in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, Jesus was circumcised at eight days old, was baptized by John the Baptist as a young adult, and after 40 days and nights of fasting in the wilderness, began his own ministry. He was an itinerant teacher who interpreted the law of God with divine authority and was often referred to as "rabbi".[25] Jesus often debated with his fellow Jews on how to best follow God, engaged in healings, taught in parables, and gathered followers, among whom twelve were appointed as his chosen apostles. He was arrested in Jerusalem and tried by the Jewish authorities,[26] turned over to the Roman government, and crucified on the order of Pontius Pilate, the Roman prefect of Judaea. After his death, his followers became convinced that he rose from the dead, and following his ascension, the community they formed eventually became the early Christian Church that expanded as a worldwide movement.[27] It is hypothesized that accounts of his teachings and life were initially conserved by oral transmission, which was the source of the written Gospels.[28]

Jesus

The Christ Pantocrator of Saint Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai, 6th century AD[a]

Born	c. 6 to 4 BC[b] Herodian kingdom, Roman Empire[7]
Died	AD 30 or 33 (aged 33 or 38) Jerusalem, Judaea, Roman Empire
Cause of death	Crucifixion[c]
Known for	▪ Central figure of Christianity ▪ Manifestation of God in Bahá'í Faith

	▪ Major prophet in Islam and Druze Faith
Parent(s)	Mary, Joseph[d]

Christian theology includes the beliefs that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born of a virgin named Mary, performed miracles, founded the Christian Church, died by crucifixion as a sacrifice to achieve atonement for sin, rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven from where he will return. Commonly, Christians believe Jesus enables people to be reconciled to God. The Nicene Creed asserts that Jesus will judge the living and the dead, either before or after their bodily resurrection, an event tied to the Second Coming of Jesus in Christian eschatology. The great majority of Christians worship Jesus as the incarnation of God the Son, the second of three persons of the Trinity.[i] The birth of Jesus is celebrated annually, generally on 25 December,[j] as Christmas. His crucifixion is honored on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter Sunday. The world's most widely used calendar era—in which the current year is AD 2025 (or 2025 CE)—is based on the approximate date of the birth of Jesus.[29]

Jesus in Islam[k] is considered the messiah and a prophet of God, who was sent to the Israelites and will return to Earth before the Day of Judgement. Muslims believe Jesus was born of the virgin Mary but was neither God nor a son of God. Most Muslims do not believe that he was killed or crucified but that God raised him into Heaven while he was still alive.[l] Jesus is also revered in the Bahá'í Faith, Druze and Rastafari. In contrast, Judaism rejects the belief that Jesus was the awaited messiah, arguing that he did not fulfill messianic prophecies, was not lawfully anointed and was neither divine nor resurrected.

Name

A typical Jew in Jesus's time had only one name, sometimes followed by a patronymic phrase of the form "son of [father's name]", or the individual's hometown.[30] Thus, in the New Testament, Jesus is commonly referred to as "Jesus of Nazareth".[m] Jesus's neighbours in Nazareth referred to him as "the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon", "the carpenter's son", or "Joseph's son"; in the Gospel of John, the disciple Philip refers to him as "Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth".[31]

From top-left: Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and English transcriptions of the name *Jesus*

The English name *Jesus*, (Ancient Greek: Ἰησοῦς, romanized *Iēsous*), is a rendering of *Joshua* (Hebrew or Aramaic: יֵשׁוּעַ, romanized *Yehoshua*, later *Yeshua*), and was not uncommon in Judea at the time of the birth of Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew tells of an angel that appeared to Joseph instructing him "to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins".[32]

Jesus Christ

Since the early period of Christianity, Christians have commonly referred to Jesus as "Jesus Christ".[33] The word *Christ* was a title or office ("the Christ"), not a given name.[34][35] It derives from the Greek Χριστός (*Christos*),[36][37] a translation of the Hebrew *mashiakh* (משיח) meaning 'anointed', and is usually transliterated into English as *messiah*.[38] In biblical Judaism, sacred oil was used to anoint certain exceptionally holy people and objects as part of their religious investiture.[39]

Christians of the time designated Jesus as "the Christ" because they believed him to be the messiah, whose arrival is prophesied in the Hebrew Bible and Old Testament. In postbiblical usage, *Christ* became viewed as a name—one part of "Jesus Christ". The term *Christian* (meaning a follower of Christ) has been in use since the 1st century.[40]

Life and teachings in the New Testament

Canonical gospels

The four canonical gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) are the foremost sources for the life and message of Jesus.[30] But other parts of the New Testament also include references to key episodes in his life, such as the Last Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.[41][42][43][44] Acts of the Apostles[45] refers to Jesus's early ministry and its anticipation by John the Baptist.[46][47][12] Acts 1:1–11[48] says more about the Ascension of Jesus[49] than the canonical gospels do.[50] In the undisputed Pauline letters, which were written earlier than the Gospels, Jesus's words or instructions are cited several times.[51][n]

A 3rd-century Greek papyrus of the Gospel of Luke

Some early Christian groups had separate descriptions of Jesus's life and teachings that are not in the New Testament. These include the Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Peter, and Gospel of Judas, the Apocryphon of James, and many other apocryphal writings. Most scholars conclude that these were written much later and are less reliable accounts than the canonical gospels.[54][55][56]

Authorship, date, and reliability

The canonical gospels are four accounts, each by a different author. The authors of the Gospels are pseudonymous, attributed by tradition to the four evangelists, each with close ties to Jesus:[57] Mark by John Mark, an associate of Peter;[58] Matthew by one of Jesus's disciples;[57] Luke by a companion of Paul mentioned in a few epistles;[57] and John by another of Jesus's disciples,[57] the "beloved disciple".[59]

According to the Marcan priority, the first to be written was the Gospel of Mark (written AD 60–75), followed by the Gospel of Matthew (AD 65–85), the Gospel of Luke (AD 65–95), and the Gospel of John (AD 75–100).[60] Most scholars agree that the authors of Matthew and Luke used Mark as a source for their gospels. Since Matthew and Luke also share some content not found in Mark, many scholars assume that they used another source (commonly called the "Q source") in addition to Mark.[61]

One important aspect of the study of the Gospels is the literary genre under which they fall. Genre "is a key convention guiding both the composition and the interpretation of writings".[62] Whether the gospel authors set out to write novels, myths, histories, or biographies has a tremendous impact on how they

ought to be interpreted. Some recent studies suggest that the genre of the Gospels ought to be situated within the realm of ancient biography.[63][64][65] Although not without critics,[66] the position that the Gospels are a type of ancient biography is the consensus among scholars today.[67][68]

Concerning the accuracy of the accounts, viewpoints run the gamut from considering them inerrant descriptions of Jesus's life,[69] to doubting whether they are historically reliable on a number of points,[70] to considering them to provide very little historical information about his life beyond the basics.[71][72] According to a broad scholarly consensus, the Synoptic Gospels (the first three—Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are the most reliable sources of information about Jesus.[73][74][30]

Comparative structure and content

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the Synoptic Gospels, from the Greek σύν (*syn*, 'together') and ὄψις (*opsis*, 'view'),[75][76][77] because they are similar in content, narrative arrangement, language and paragraph structure, and one can easily set them next to each other and synoptically compare what is in them.[75][76][78] Scholars generally agree that it is impossible to find any direct literary relationship between the Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John.[79] While the flow of many events (e.g., Jesus's baptism, transfiguration, crucifixion and interactions with his apostles) are shared among the Synoptic Gospels, incidents such as the transfiguration and Jesus's exorcising demons[80] do not appear in John, which also differs on other matters, such as the cleansing of the Temple.[81]

The Synoptics emphasize different aspects of Jesus. In Mark, Jesus is the Son of God whose mighty works demonstrate the presence of God's Kingdom.[58] He is a tireless wonder worker, the servant of both God and man.[82] This short gospel records a few of Jesus's words or teachings.[58] The Gospel of Matthew emphasizes that Jesus is the fulfilment of God's will as revealed in the Old Testament, and the Lord of the Church.[83] He is the "Son of David", a "king", and the Messiah.[82][84] Luke presents Jesus as the divine-human saviour who shows compassion to the needy.[85] He is the friend of sinners and outcasts, who came to seek and save the lost.[82] This gospel includes well-known parables, such as the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son.[85]

The prologue to the Gospel of John identifies Jesus as an incarnation of the divine Word (Logos).[86] As the Word, Jesus was eternally present with God, active in all creation, and the source of humanity's moral and spiritual nature.[86] Jesus is not only greater than any past human prophet but greater than any prophet could be. He not only speaks God's Word; he is God's Word.[87] In the Gospel of John, Jesus reveals his divine role publicly. Here he is the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the True Vine, and more.[82]

The authors of the New Testament generally showed little interest in an absolute chronology of Jesus or in synchronizing the episodes of his life with the secular history of the age.[88] As stated in John 21:25, the Gospels do not claim to provide an exhaustive list of the events in Jesus's life.[89] The accounts were primarily written as theological documents in the context of early Christianity, with timelines as a secondary consideration.[90] In this respect, it is noteworthy that the Gospels devote about one third of their text to the last week of Jesus's life in Jerusalem, referred to as the Passion.[91] The Gospels do not provide enough details to satisfy the demands of modern historians regarding exact dates, but it is possible to draw from them a general picture of Jesus's life story.[70][88][90]

Genealogy and nativity

Jesus was Jewish,[12] born to Mary, wife of Joseph.[92] The Gospels of Matthew and Luke offer two accounts of his genealogy. Matthew traces Jesus's ancestry to Abraham through David.[93][94] Luke traces Jesus's ancestry through Adam to God.[95][96] The lists are identical between Abraham and David but differ radically from that point. Matthew has 27 generations from David to Joseph, whereas Luke has 42, with almost no overlap between the names on the two lists.[o][97] Various theories have been put forward to explain why the two genealogies are so different.[p]

Adoration of the Shepherds by Gerard van Honthorst, 1622

Both Matthew and Luke describe Jesus's birth, especially that Jesus was born to a virgin named Mary in Bethlehem in fulfilment of prophecy. Luke's account emphasizes events before the birth of Jesus and centers on Mary, while Matthew's mostly covers those after the birth and centers on Joseph.[98][99][100] Both accounts state that Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph, who was descended from King David and was not his biological father, and both support the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus, according to which Jesus was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb when she was still a virgin.[101][102][103] At the same time, there is evidence, at least in the Lukan Acts of the Apostles, that Jesus was thought to have had, like many figures in antiquity, a dual paternity, since there it is stated he descended from the seed or loins of David.[104] By taking him as his own, Joseph will give him the necessary Davidic descent.[105] Some scholars suggest that Jesus had Levite heritage from Mary, based on her blood relationship with Elizabeth.[106]

In Matthew, Joseph is troubled because Mary, his betrothed, is pregnant,[107] but in the first of Joseph's four dreams an angel assures him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife because her child was conceived by the Holy Spirit.[108] In Matthew 2:1–12, wise men or Magi from the East bring gifts to the young Jesus as the King of the Jews. They find him in a house in Bethlehem. Herod the Great hears of Jesus's birth and, wanting him killed, orders the murders of male infants in Bethlehem and its surroundings. But an angel warns Joseph in his second dream, and the family flees to Egypt—later to return and settle in Nazareth.[108][109][110]

The Circumcision by Giovanni Bellini, c. 1500. The work depicts the circumcision of Jesus.

In Luke 1:31–38, Mary learns from the angel Gabriel that she will conceive and bear a child called Jesus through the action of the Holy Spirit.[99][101] When Mary is due to give birth, she and Joseph travel from Nazareth to Joseph's ancestral home in Bethlehem to register in the census ordered by Caesar Augustus. While there Mary gives birth to Jesus, and as they have found no room in the inn, she places the newborn in a manger.[111] An angel announces the birth to a group of shepherds, who go to Bethlehem to see Jesus, and subsequently spread the news abroad.[112] Luke 2:21 tells how Joseph and Mary have their baby circumcised on the eighth day after birth, and name him Jesus, as Gabriel had commanded Mary.[113] After the presentation of Jesus at the Temple, Joseph, Mary and Jesus return to Nazareth.[99][101]

Early life, family, and profession

The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple by William Holman Hunt, 1860

Jesus's childhood home is identified in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew as Nazareth, a town in Galilee in present-day Israel, where he lived with his family. Although Joseph appears in descriptions of Jesus's childhood, no mention is made of him thereafter.[114][115] His other family members, including his mother, Mary, his four brothers James, Joses (or Joseph), Judas, and Simon, and his unnamed sisters, are mentioned in the Gospels and other sources.[116] Jesus's maternal grandparents are named Joachim and Anne in the Gospel of James.[117] The Gospel of Luke records that Mary was a relative of Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist.[118] Extra-biblical contemporary sources consider Jesus and John the Baptist to be second cousins through the belief that Elizabeth was the daughter of Sobe, the sister of Anne.[119][120][121]

The Gospel of Mark reports that at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus comes into conflict with his neighbours and family.[122] Jesus's mother and brothers come to get him[123] because people are saying that he is mentally ill.[124] Jesus responds that his followers are his true family. In the Gospel of John, Jesus and his mother attend a wedding at Cana, where he performs his first miracle at her request.[125] Later, she follows him to his crucifixion, and he expresses concern over her well-being.[126]

Jesus is called a τέκτων (*tektōn*) in Mark 6:3, a term traditionally understood as carpenter but could also refer to makers of objects in various materials, including builders.[127][128] Given the term's broad semantic range and "the socio-historical reality of a common Nazarene τέκτων", Matthew K. Robinson, minister and academic, prefers to translate τέκτων as 'builder-craftsman'.[129][130] The Gospels indicate that Jesus could read, paraphrase, and debate scripture, but this does not necessarily mean that he received formal scribal training.[131]

The Gospel of Luke reports two journeys of Jesus and his parents in Jerusalem during his childhood. They come to the Temple in Jerusalem for the presentation of Jesus as a baby in accordance with Jewish Law, where a man named Simeon prophesies about Jesus and Mary.[132] When Jesus, at the age of twelve, goes missing on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Passover, his parents find him in the temple sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions, and the people are amazed at his understanding and answers. Mary scolds Jesus for going missing, to which Jesus replies that he must "be in his father's house".[133]

Baptism and temptation

The synoptic gospels describe Jesus's baptism in the Jordan River and the temptations he suffered while spending forty days in the Judaean Desert, as a preparation for his public ministry.[134] The accounts of Jesus's baptism are all preceded by information about John the Baptist.[135][136][137] They show John preaching penance and repentance for the remission of sins and encouraging the giving of alms to the poor[138] as he baptizes people in the area of the Jordan River around Perea and foretells the arrival of someone "more powerful" than he.[139][140]

Jesus and the devil depicted in *The Temptation of Christ*, by Ary Scheffer, 1854

In the Gospel of Mark, John the Baptist baptizes Jesus, and as he comes out of the water he sees the Holy Spirit descending to him like a dove and a voice comes from heaven declaring him to be God's Son.[141] This is one of two events described in the Gospels where a voice from Heaven calls Jesus "Son", the other being the Transfiguration.[142][143] The spirit then drives him into the wilderness where he is tempted by Satan.[144] Jesus then begins his ministry in Galilee after John's arrest.[145]

The Baptism of Christ by John the Baptist, by José Ferraz de Almeida Júnior, 1895

In the Gospel of Matthew, as Jesus comes to him to be baptized, John protests, saying, "I need to be baptized by you."[146] Jesus instructs him to carry on with the baptism "to fulfill all righteousness".[147] Matthew details three temptations that Satan offers Jesus in the wilderness.[148]

In the Gospel of Luke, the Holy Spirit descends as a dove after everyone has been baptized and Jesus is praying.[149] Later John implicitly recognizes Jesus after sending his followers to ask about him.[150] Luke also describes three temptations received by Jesus in the wilderness, before starting his ministry in Galilee.[151]

The Gospel of John leaves out Jesus's baptism and temptation.[152] Here, John the Baptist testifies that he saw the Spirit descend on Jesus.[153][154] John publicly proclaims Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb of God, and some of John's followers become disciples of Jesus.[74] Before John is imprisoned, Jesus leads his followers to baptize disciples as well,[155] and they baptize more people than John.[156]

Public ministry

The Synoptics depict two distinct geographical settings in Jesus's ministry. The first takes place north of Judea, in Galilee, where Jesus conducts a successful ministry, and the second shows Jesus rejected and killed when he travels to Jerusalem.[25] Often referred to as "rabbi",[25] Jesus preaches his message orally.[28] Jesus forbids those who recognize him as the messiah to speak of it, including people he heals and demons he exorcises (see Messianic Secret).[157] John depicts Jesus's ministry as largely taking place in and around Jerusalem, rather than in Galilee, and Jesus's divine identity is openly proclaimed and immediately recognized.[87]

Scholars divide the ministry of Jesus into several stages. The Galilean ministry begins when Jesus returns to Galilee from the Judaean Desert after rebuffing the temptation of Satan. Jesus preaches around Galilee, and in Matthew 4:18–20, his first disciples, who will eventually form the core of the early Church, encounter him and begin to travel with him.[137][158] This period includes the Sermon on the Mount, one

of Jesus's major discourses,[158][159] as well as the calming of the storm, the feeding of the 5,000, walking on water and a number of other miracles and parables.[160] It ends with the Confession of Peter and the Transfiguration.[161][162]

Sermon on the Mount, by Carl Bloch, 1877, depicts Jesus's important discourse.

As Jesus travels towards Jerusalem, in the Perean ministry, he returns to the area where he was baptized, about a third of the way down from the Sea of Galilee along the Jordan River.[163][164][165] The final ministry in Jerusalem begins with Jesus's triumphal entry into the city on Palm Sunday.[166] In the Synoptic Gospels, during that week Jesus drives the money changers from the Second Temple and Judas bargains to betray him. This period culminates in the Last Supper and the Farewell Discourse.[135][166][167]

Disciples and followers

Near the beginning of his ministry, Jesus appoints twelve apostles. In Matthew and Mark, despite Jesus only briefly requesting that they join him, Jesus's first four apostles, who were fishermen, are described as immediately consenting, and abandoning their nets and boats to do so.[168] In John, Jesus's first two apostles were disciples of John the Baptist. The Baptist sees Jesus and calls him the Lamb of God; the two hear this and follow Jesus.[169][170] In addition to the Twelve Apostles, the opening of the passage of the Sermon on the Plain identifies a much larger group of people as disciples.[171] Also, in Luke 10:1–16 Jesus sends 70 or 72 of his followers in pairs to prepare towns for his prospective visit. They are instructed to accept hospitality, heal the sick, and spread the word that the Kingdom of God is coming.[172]

The Exhortation to the Apostles, by James Tissot, portrays Jesus talking to his twelve disciples.

Teachings and miracles

In the Synoptics, Jesus teaches extensively, often in parables,[173] about the Kingdom of God (or, in Matthew, the Kingdom of Heaven). The Kingdom is described as both imminent[174] and already present in the ministry of Jesus.[175] Jesus promises inclusion in the Kingdom for those who accept his message.[176] He talks of the "Son of man", an apocalyptic figure who will come to gather the chosen.[30]

Jesus and the rich young man by Heinrich Hofmann, 1889

Jesus calls people to repent their sins and to devote themselves completely to God.[30] He tells his followers to adhere to Jewish law, although he is perceived by some to have broken the law himself, for example regarding the Sabbath.[30] When asked what the greatest commandment is, Jesus replies: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all

your mind ... And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "[177] Other ethical teachings of Jesus include loving your enemies, refraining from hatred and lust, turning the other cheek, and forgiving people who have sinned against you.[178][179]

John's Gospel presents the teachings of Jesus not merely as his own preaching, but as divine revelation. John the Baptist, for example, states in John 3:34: "He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure." In John 7:16 Jesus says, "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me." He asserts the same thing in John 14:10: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works."[180][181]

The Return of the Prodigal Son by Pompeo Batoni, 1773

Approximately 30 parables form about one-third of Jesus's recorded teachings.[180][182] The parables appear within longer sermons and at other places in the narrative.[183] They often contain symbolism, and usually relate the physical world to the spiritual.[184][185] Common themes in these tales include the kindness and generosity of God and the perils of transgression.[186] Some of his parables, such as the Prodigal Son,[187] are relatively simple, while others, such as the Growing Seed,[188] are sophisticated, profound and abstruse.[189] When asked by his disciples why he speaks in parables to the people, Jesus replies that the chosen disciples have been given to "know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven", unlike the rest of their people, "For the one who has will be given more and he will have in abundance. But the one who does not have will be deprived even more", going on to say that the majority of their generation have grown "dull hearts" and thus are unable to understand.[190]

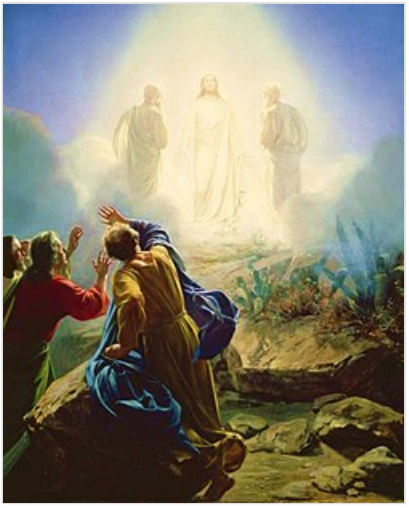
In the gospel accounts, Jesus devotes a large portion of his ministry to performing miracles, especially healings.[191] The miracles can be classified into two main categories: healing miracles and nature miracles.[192][193][194] The healing miracles include cures for physical ailments, exorcisms,[80][195] and resurrections of the dead.[196][197][198][199] The nature miracles show Jesus's power over nature, and include turning water into wine, walking on water, and calming a storm, among others. Jesus states that his miracles are from a divine source. When his opponents suddenly accuse him of performing exorcisms by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons, Jesus counters that he performs them by the "Spirit of God" (Matthew 12:28) or "finger of God", arguing that all logic suggests that Satan would not let his demons assist the Children of God because it would divide Satan's house and bring his kingdom to desolation; furthermore, he asks his opponents that if he exorcises by Beelzebub, "by whom do your sons cast them out?".[200][30][201] In Matthew 12:31–32, he goes on to say that while all manner of sin, "even insults against God" or "insults against the son of man", shall be forgiven, whoever insults goodness (or "The Holy Spirit") shall never be forgiven; they carry the guilt of their sin forever.

Jesus cleansing a leper, medieval mosaic from the Monreale Cathedral, late 12th to mid-13th centuries

In John, Jesus's miracles are described as "signs", performed to prove his mission and divinity.[202][203] In the Synoptics, when asked by some teachers of the Law and some Pharisees to give miraculous signs to prove his authority, Jesus refuses,[202] saying that no sign shall come to corrupt and evil people except the sign of the prophet Jonah. Also, in the Synoptic Gospels, the crowds regularly respond to Jesus's miracles with awe and press on him to heal their sick. In John's Gospel, Jesus is presented as unpressured by the crowds, who often respond to his miracles with trust and faith.[204] One characteristic shared among all miracles of Jesus in the gospel accounts is that he performed them freely and never requested or accepted any form of payment.[205] The gospel episodes that include descriptions of the miracles of Jesus also often include teachings, and the miracles themselves involve an element of teaching.[206][207] Many of the miracles teach the importance of faith. In the cleansing of ten lepers and the raising of Jairus's daughter, for instance, the beneficiaries are told that their healing was due to their faith.[208][209]

Proclamation as Christ and Transfiguration

At about the middle of each of the three Synoptic Gospels are two significant events: the Confession of Peter and the Transfiguration of Jesus.[162][210][142][143] These two events are not mentioned in the Gospel of John.[211]



The Transfiguration of Jesus, depicted by Carl Bloch, 19th century

In his Confession, Peter tells Jesus, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."[212][213][214] Jesus affirms that Peter's confession is divinely revealed truth.[215][216] After the confession, Jesus tells his disciples about his upcoming death and resurrection.[217]

In the Transfiguration,[218][142][143][162] Jesus takes Peter and two other apostles up an unnamed mountain, where "he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white".[219] A bright cloud appears around them, and a voice from the cloud says, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him."[220][142]

Passion Week

The description of the last week of the life of Jesus (often called Passion Week) occupies about one-third of the narrative in the canonical gospels.[91] It starts with Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and ends with his Crucifixion.[135][166]

Activities in Jerusalem

In the Synoptics, the last week in Jerusalem is the conclusion of the journey through Perea and Judea that Jesus began in Galilee.[166] Jesus rides a young donkey into Jerusalem, reflecting the tale of the Messiah's Donkey, an oracle from the Book of Zechariah in which the Jews' humble king enters Jerusalem this way.[221][58] People along the way lay cloaks and small branches of trees (known as palm fronds) in front of him and sing part of Psalms 118:25–26.[222][223][224][225]

Jesus next expels the money changers from the Second Temple, accusing them of turning it into a den of thieves through their commercial activities. He then prophesies about the coming destruction, including false prophets, wars, earthquakes, celestial disorders, persecution of the faithful, the appearance of an

"abomination of desolation", and unendurable tribulations.[226] The mysterious "Son of Man", he says, will dispatch angels to gather the faithful from all parts of the earth.[227] Jesus warns that these wonders will occur in the lifetimes of the hearers.[228][157] In John, the Cleansing of the Temple occurs at the beginning of Jesus's ministry instead of at the end.[229][87]

A painting of Jesus's final entry into Jerusalem, by Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1897

Jesus comes into conflict with the Jewish elders, such as when they question his authority and when he criticizes them and calls them hypocrites.[223][225] Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles, secretly strikes a bargain with the Jewish elders, agreeing to betray Jesus to them for 30 silver coins.[230][231]

The Gospel of John recounts two other feasts in which Jesus taught in Jerusalem before the Passion Week.[232][122] In Bethany, a village near Jerusalem, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. This potent sign[87] increases the tension with authorities,[166] who conspire to kill him.[233][122] Mary of Bethany anoints Jesus's feet, foreshadowing his entombment.[234] Jesus then makes his messianic entry into Jerusalem.[122] The cheering crowds greeting Jesus as he enters Jerusalem add to the animosity between him and the establishment.[166] In John, Jesus has already cleansed the Second Temple during an earlier Passover visit to Jerusalem. John next recounts Jesus's Last Supper with his disciples.[122]

Last Supper

The Last Supper is the final meal that Jesus shared with his twelve apostles in Jerusalem before his crucifixion. The Last Supper is mentioned in all four canonical gospels; Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians[235] also refers to it.[43][44][236] During the meal, Jesus predicts that one of his apostles will betray him.[237] Despite each Apostle's assertion that he would not betray him, Jesus reiterates that the betrayer would be one of those present. Matthew 26:23–25 and John 13:26–27 specifically identify Judas as the traitor.[43][44][237]

The Last Supper, depicted by Juan de Juanes, c. 1562

In the Synoptics, Jesus takes bread, breaks it, and gives it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you." He then has them all drink from a cup, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."[238][43][239] The Christian sacrament or ordinance of the Eucharist is based on these events.[240] Although the Gospel of John does not include a description of the bread-and-wine ritual during the Last Supper, most scholars agree that John 6:22–59 (the Bread of Life Discourse) has a eucharistic character and resonates with the institution narratives in the Synoptic Gospels and in the Pauline writings on the Last Supper.[241]

In all four gospels, Jesus predicts that Peter will deny knowledge of him three times before the rooster crows the next morning.[242][243] In Luke and John, the prediction is made during the Supper.[244] In Matthew and Mark, the prediction is made after the Supper; Jesus also predicts that all his disciples will desert him.[245][246] The Gospel of John provides the only account of Jesus washing his disciples' feet after the meal.[109] John also includes a long sermon by Jesus, preparing his disciples (now without Judas) for his departure. Chapters 14–17 of the Gospel of John are known as the Farewell Discourse and are a significant source of Christological content.[247][248]

Agony in the Garden, betrayal, and arrest

In the Synoptics, Jesus and his disciples go to the garden Gethsemane, where Jesus prays to be spared his coming ordeal. Then Judas comes with an armed mob, sent by the chief priests, scribes and elders. He kisses Jesus to identify him to the crowd, which then arrests Jesus. In an attempt to stop them, an unnamed disciple of Jesus uses a sword to cut off the ear of a man in the crowd. After Jesus's arrest, his disciples go into hiding, and Peter, when questioned, thrice denies knowing Jesus. After the third denial, Peter hears the rooster crow and recalls Jesus's prediction about his denial. Peter then weeps bitterly.[246][157][242]

A depiction of the kiss of Judas and arrest of Jesus, by Caravaggio, c. 1602

In John 18:1–11, Jesus does not pray to be spared his crucifixion, as the gospel portrays him as scarcely touched by such human weakness.[249] The people who arrest him are Roman soldiers and Temple guards.[250] Instead of being betrayed by a kiss, Jesus proclaims his identity, and when he does, the soldiers and officers fall to the ground. The gospel identifies Peter as the disciple who used the sword, and Jesus rebukes him for it.

Trials by the Sanhedrin, Herod, and Pilate

After his arrest, Jesus is taken late at night to the private residence of the high priest, Caiaphas, who had been installed by Pilate's predecessor, the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus.[251] The Sanhedrin was a Jewish judicial body.[252] The gospel accounts differ on the details of the trials.[253] In Matthew 26:57, Mark 14:53, and Luke 22:54, Jesus is taken to the house of the high priest, Caiaphas, where he is mocked and beaten that night. Early the next morning, the chief priests and scribes lead Jesus away into their council.[254][255][256] John 18:12–14 states that Jesus is first taken to Annas, Caiaphas's father-in-law, and then to the high priest.[254][255][256]

During the trials Jesus speaks very little, mounts no defence, and gives very infrequent and indirect answers to the priests' questions, prompting an officer to slap him. In Matthew 26:62, Jesus's unresponsiveness leads Caiaphas to ask him, "Have you no answer?".[254][255][256] In Mark 14:61, the high priest then asks Jesus, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?". Jesus replies, "I am", and then predicts the coming of the Son of Man.[30] This provokes Caiaphas to tear his own robe in anger and to accuse Jesus of blasphemy. In Matthew and Luke, Jesus's answer is more ambiguous:[30][257] in Matthew 26:64, he responds, "You have said so", and in Luke 22:70 he says, "You say that I am."[258][259]

The Jewish elders take Jesus to Pilate's Court and ask the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, to judge and condemn Jesus for various allegations: subverting the nation, opposing the payment of tribute, claiming to be Christ, a king, and claiming to be the son of God.[260][256] The use of the word "king" is central to the discussion between Jesus and Pilate. In John 18:36, Jesus states, "My kingdom is not from this world", but he does not unequivocally deny being the King of the Jews.[261][262] In Luke 23:7–15, Pilate realizes that Jesus is a Galilean, and thus comes under the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea.[263][264] Pilate sends Jesus to Herod to be tried,[265] but Jesus says almost nothing in response to Herod's questions. Herod and his soldiers mock Jesus, put an expensive robe on him to make him look like a king, and return him to Pilate,[263] who then calls together the Jewish elders and announces that he has "not found this man guilty".[265]

Ecce homo! Antonio Ciseri's 1871 depiction of Pontius Pilate presenting Jesus to the public

Observing a Passover custom of the time, Pilate allows one prisoner chosen by the crowd to be released. He gives the people a choice between Jesus and a murderer called Barabbas (בר-אבא or *Bar-abbâ*, "son of the father", from the common given name *Abba*: 'father').[266] Persuaded by the elders,[267] the mob chooses to release Barabbas and crucify Jesus.[268] Pilate writes a sign in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek that reads "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (abbreviated as INRI in depictions) to be affixed to Jesus's cross,[269][270] then scourges Jesus and sends him to be crucified. The soldiers place a crown of thorns on Jesus's head and ridicule him as the King of the Jews. They beat and taunt him before taking him to Calvary,[271] also called Golgotha, for crucifixion.[254][256][272]

Crucifixion and entombment

Jesus's crucifixion is described in all four canonical gospels. After the trials, Jesus is led to Calvary carrying his cross; the route traditionally thought to have been taken is known as the Via Dolorosa. The three Synoptic Gospels indicate that Simon of Cyrene assists him, having been compelled by the Romans to do so.[273][274] In Luke 23:27–28, Jesus tells the women in the multitude of people following him not to weep for him but for themselves and their children.[273] At Calvary, Jesus is offered a sponge soaked in a concoction usually offered as a painkiller. According to Matthew and Mark, he refuses it.[273][274]

The soldiers then crucify Jesus and cast lots for his clothes. Above Jesus's head on the cross is Pilate's inscription, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Soldiers and passersby mock him about it. Two convicted thieves are crucified along with Jesus. In Matthew and Mark, both thieves mock Jesus. In Luke, one of them rebukes Jesus, while the other defends him.[273][275][276] Jesus tells the latter: "today you will be with me in Paradise."[277] The four gospels mention the presence of a group of female disciples of Jesus at the crucifixion. In John, Jesus sees his mother Mary and the beloved disciple and tells him to take care of her.[278]

In John 19:33–34, Roman soldiers break the two thieves' legs to hasten their death, but not those of Jesus, as he is already dead. Instead, one soldier pierces Jesus's side with a lance, and blood and water flow out.[275] The Synoptics report a period of darkness, and the heavy curtain in the Temple is torn when Jesus dies. In Matthew 27:51–54, an earthquake breaks open tombs. In Matthew and Mark, terrified by the events, a Roman centurion states that Jesus was the Son of God.[273][279]

Pietro Perugino's depiction of the Crucifixion as *Stabat Mater*, 1482

On the same day, Joseph of Arimathea, with Pilate's permission and with Nicodemus's help, removes Jesus's body from the cross, wraps him in a clean cloth, and buries him in his new rock-hewn tomb.[273] In Matthew 27:62–66, on the following day the chief Jewish priests ask Pilate for the tomb to be secured, and with Pilate's permission the priests place seals on the large stone covering the entrance.[273][280]

Resurrection and ascension

The Gospels do not describe the moment of the resurrection of Jesus. They describe the discovery of his empty tomb and several appearances of Jesus, with distinct differences in each narrative.[281]

In the four Gospels, Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb on Sunday morning, alone or with one or several other women.[282] The tomb is empty, with the stone rolled away, and there are one or two angels, depending on the accounts. In the Synoptics, the women are told that Jesus is not here and that he is risen.[283] In Mark and Matthew, the angel also instructs them to tell the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee.[284] In Luke, Peter visits the tomb after he is told it is empty.[285] In John, he goes there with the beloved disciple.[286] Matthew mentions Roman guards at the tomb,[287] who report to the priests of Jerusalem what happened. The priests bribe them to say that the disciples stole Jesus's body during the night.[288]

Appearance of Jesus Christ to Maria Magdalena by Alexander Andreyevich Ivanov, 1835

The four Gospels then describe various appearances of Jesus in his resurrected body. Jesus first reveals himself to Mary Magdalene in Mark 16:9 and John 20:14–17,[289] along with "the other Mary" in Matthew 28:9,[290] while in Luke the first reported appearance is to two disciples heading to Emmaus.[291] Jesus then reveals himself to the eleven disciples, in Jerusalem or in Galilee.[292] In Luke 24:36–43, he eats and shows them his tangible wounds to prove that he is not a spirit.[293] He also shows them to Thomas to end his doubts, in John 20:24–29.[294] In the Synoptics, Jesus commissions the disciples to spread the gospel message to all nations,[109][295] while in John 21, he tells Peter to take care of his sheep.[50][296]

Jesus's ascension into Heaven is described in Luke 24:50–53, Acts 1:1–11, and mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:16. In the Acts of the Apostles, forty days after the Resurrection, as the disciples look on, "he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight". 1 Peter 3:22 states that Jesus has "gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God".[50]

The Acts of the Apostles describes several appearances of Jesus after his Ascension. In Acts 7:55, Stephen gazes into heaven and sees "Jesus standing at the right hand of God" just before his death.[297] On the road to Damascus, the Apostle Paul is converted to Christianity after seeing a blinding light and hearing a voice saying, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."[298] In Acts 9:10–18, Jesus instructs Ananias of Damascus in a vision to heal Paul.[299] The Book of Revelation includes a revelation from Jesus concerning the last days of Earth.[300]

Early Christianity

After Jesus's life, his followers, as described in the first chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, were all Jews either by birth or conversion, for which the biblical term "proselyte" is used,[301] and referred to by historians as Jewish Christians. The early Gospel message was spread orally, probably in Aramaic,[302] but almost immediately also in Greek.[303] The New Testament's Acts of the Apostles and Epistle to the Galatians record that the first Christian community was centered in Jerusalem and its leaders included Peter, James, the brother of Jesus, and John the Apostle.[304]

A 3rd-century depiction of Jesus as the Good Shepherd

After his conversion, Paul the Apostle spread the teachings of Jesus to various non-Jewish communities throughout the eastern Mediterranean region. Paul's influence on Christian thinking is said to be more significant than that of any other New Testament author.[305] By the end of the 1st century, Christianity began to be recognized internally and externally as a separate religion from Judaism which itself was refined and developed further in the centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple.[306]

Numerous quotations in the New Testament and other Christian writings of the first centuries indicate that early Christians generally used and revered the Hebrew Bible (the Tanakh) as religious text, mostly in the Greek (Septuagint) or Aramaic (Targum) translations.[307] Early Christians wrote many religious works, including the ones included in the canon of the New Testament. The canonical texts, which have become the main sources used by historians to try to understand the historical Jesus and sacred texts within Christianity, were probably written between 50 and 120 AD.[308]

Historical views

Prior to the Enlightenment, the Gospels were usually regarded as accurate historical accounts, but since then scholars have emerged who question the reliability of the Gospels and draw a distinction between the Jesus described in the Gospels and the Jesus of history.[309] Since the 18th century, three separate

scholarly quests for the historical Jesus have taken place, each with distinct characteristics and based on different research criteria, which were often developed during the quest that applied them.[80][310] While there is widespread scholarly agreement on the existence of Jesus,[g] and a basic consensus on the general outline of his life,[q] the portraits of Jesus constructed by various scholars often differ from each other, and from the image portrayed in the gospel accounts.[312][313]

Approaches to the historical reconstruction of the life of Jesus have varied from the "maximalist" approaches of the 19th century, in which the gospel accounts were accepted as reliable evidence wherever it is possible, to the "minimalist" approaches of the early 20th century, where hardly anything about Jesus was accepted as historical.[314] In the 1950s, as the second quest for the historical Jesus gathered pace, the minimalist approaches faded away, and in the 21st century, minimalists such as Price are a small minority.[315][316] Although a belief in the inerrancy of the Gospels cannot be supported historically, many scholars since the 1980s have held that, beyond the few facts considered to be historically certain, certain other elements of Jesus's life are "historically probable".[315][317][318] Modern scholarly research on the historical Jesus thus focuses on identifying the most probable elements.[319][320]

Judea and Galilee in the 1st century

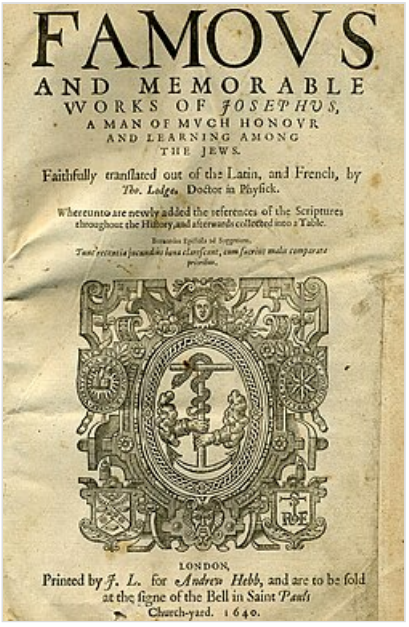
In AD 6, Judea, Idumea, and Samaria were transformed from a Herodian client state of the Roman Empire into an imperial province, also called Judea. A Roman prefect, rather than a client ruler, governed the land. The prefect governed from Caesarea Maritima, leaving Jerusalem to be run by the High Priest of Israel.[321] As an exception, the prefect came to Jerusalem during religious festivals, when religious and patriotic enthusiasm sometimes inspired unrest or uprisings. Galilee with Perea was a Herodian client state under the rule of Herod Antipas since 4 BC.[321] Galilee was evidently prosperous, and poverty was limited enough that it did not threaten the social order.[30] Philip (d. 34 AD), half-brother of Herod Antipas, ruled as Tetrarch yet another Herodian client state to the north and east of the sea of Galilee that included Gaulanitis, Batanea, and Iturea, though this was mostly non-Jewish.[322] South of this on the east bank of the Jordan was the Decapolis; a collection of Hellenistic city-states that were at this time clients of the Roman empire. North of Galilee were the cities of Tyre and Sidon which were in the Roman province of Syria. Though non-Jewish lands surrounded the mostly Jewish territories of Judea and Galilee, Roman law and practice allowed Jews to remain separate legally and culturally.[30]

Judea, Galilee and neighbouring areas at the time of Jesus

This was the era of Hellenistic Judaism, which combined Jewish religious tradition with elements of Hellenistic culture. Until the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the Muslim conquests of the Eastern Mediterranean, the main centers of Hellenistic Judaism were Alexandria (Egypt) and Antioch (now Southern Turkey), the two main Greek colonies of the Middle East and North Africa area, both founded at the end of the 4th century BC in the wake of the conquests of Alexander the Great. Hellenistic Judaism also existed in Jerusalem during the Second Temple Period, where there was conflict between Hellenizers and traditionalists (sometimes called Judaizers). The Hebrew Bible was translated from Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic into Jewish Koine Greek; the Targum translations into Aramaic were also generated during this era, both due to the decline of knowledge of Hebrew.[323]

Jews based their faith and religious practice on the Torah, five books said to have been given by God to Moses. The three prominent religious parties were the Pharisees, the Essenes, and the Sadducees. Together these parties represented only a small fraction of the population. Most Jews looked forward to a time when God would deliver them from their pagan rulers, possibly through war against the Romans.[30]

Sources


FAMOVS
AND MEMORABLE
WORKS OF IOSEPHVS,
A MAN OF MVCH HONOVR
AND LEARNING AMONG
THE IEWS.
Faithfully translated out of the Latin, and French, by
Tho. Lodge, Doctor in Physick.
Whereunto are newly added the references of the Scriptures throughout the History, and afterwards collected into a Table.
LONDON,
Printed by I. L. for Andrew Hebb, and are to be sold at the signe of the Bell in Saint Pauls Church-yard. 1640.

A 1640 edition of the works of Josephus, a 1st-century Roman-Jewish historian who referred to Jesus[324]

New Testament scholars face a formidable challenge when they analyse the canonical Gospels.[325] The Gospels are not biographies in the modern sense, and the authors explain Jesus's theological significance and recount his public ministry while omitting many details of his life.[325]

The reports of supernatural events associated with Jesus's death and resurrection make the challenge even more difficult.[325] Scholars regard the Gospels as compromised sources of information because the writers were trying to glorify Jesus.[70] Ed Sanders states that the sources for Jesus's life are better than sources scholars have for the life of Alexander the Great.[70]

Scholars use a number of criteria, such as the criterion of independent attestation, the criterion of coherence, and the criterion of discontinuity to judge the historicity of events.[326] The historicity of an event also depends on the reliability of the source; indeed, the Gospels are not independent nor consistent records of Jesus's life. Mark, which is most likely the earliest written gospel, has been considered for many decades the most historically accurate.[327] John, the latest written gospel, differs considerably from the Synoptic Gospels, and thus is generally considered less reliable, although more and more scholars now also recognize that it may contain a core of older material as historically valuable as the Synoptic tradition or even more so.[328]

Some scholars (such as the Jesus Seminar) believe that the non-canonical Gospel of Thomas might be an independent witness to many of Jesus's parables and aphorisms. For example, Thomas confirms that Jesus blessed the poor and that this saying circulated independently before being combined with similar sayings

in the Q source.[329] However, the majority of scholars are sceptical about this text and believe it should be dated to the 2nd century AD.[330][331] Other select non-canonical Christian texts may also have value for historical Jesus research.[74]

Early non-Christian sources that attest to the historical existence of Jesus include the works of the historians Josephus and Tacitus.[r][324][333] Josephus scholar Louis Feldman has stated that "few have doubted the genuineness" of Josephus's reference to Jesus in book 20 of the *Antiquities of the Jews*, and it is disputed only by a small number of scholars.[334][335] Tacitus referred to Christ and his execution by Pilate in book 15 of his work *Annals*. Scholars generally consider Tacitus's reference to the execution of Jesus to be both authentic and of historical value as an independent Roman source.[336]

Non-Christian sources are valuable in two ways. First, they show that even neutral or hostile parties never show any doubt that Jesus actually existed. Second, they present a rough picture of Jesus that is compatible with that found in the Christian sources: that Jesus was a teacher, had a reputation as a miracle worker, had a brother James, and died a violent death.[337]

Archaeology helps scholars better understand Jesus's social world.[338] Recent archaeological work, for example, indicates that Capernaum, a city important in Jesus's ministry, was poor and small, without even a forum or an agora.[339][340] This archaeological discovery resonates well with the scholarly view that Jesus advocated reciprocal sharing among the destitute in that area of Galilee.[339]

Chronology

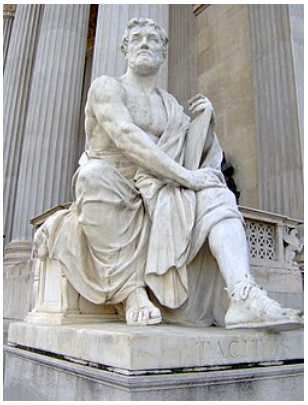
Jesus was a Galilean Jew,[12] born around the beginning of the 1st century, who died in AD 30 or 33 in Judea.[341] The general scholarly consensus is that Jesus was a contemporary of John the Baptist and was crucified as ordered by the Roman governor Pontius Pilate,[193] who held office from AD 26 to 36.[193]

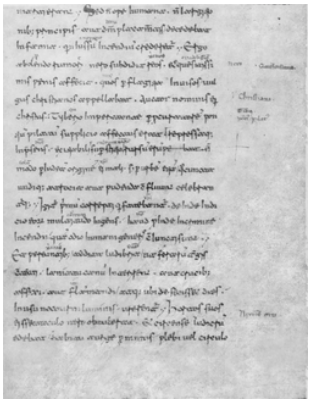
The Gospels offer several indications concerning the year of Jesus's birth. Matthew 2:1 associates the birth of Jesus with the reign of Herod the Great, who died around 4 BC, and Luke 1:5 mentions that Herod was on the throne shortly before the birth of Jesus,[342][343] although this gospel also associates the birth with the Census of Quirinius which took place ten years later.[344][345] Luke 3:23 states that Jesus was "about thirty years old" at the start of his ministry, which according to Acts 10:37–38 was preceded by John the Baptist's ministry, which was recorded in Luke 3:1–2 to have begun in the 15th year of Tiberius's reign (AD 28 or 29).[343][346] By collating the gospel accounts with historical data and using various other methods, most scholars arrive at a date of birth for Jesus between 6 and 4 BC,[346][347] but some propose estimates that include a wider range.[s]

The date range for Jesus's ministry has been estimated using several different approaches.[348][349] One of these applies the reference in Luke 3:1–2, Acts 10:37–38, and the dates of Tiberius's reign, which are well known, to give a date of around 28–29 AD for the start of Jesus's ministry.[350] Another approach estimates a date around 27–29 AD by using the statement about the temple in John 2:13–20, which asserts that the temple in Jerusalem was in its 46th year of construction at the start of Jesus's ministry, together with Josephus's statement[351] that the temple's reconstruction was started by Herod the Great in the 18th year of his reign.[348][352] A further method uses the date of the death of John the Baptist and the marriage of Herod Antipas to Herodias, based on the writings of Josephus, and correlates it with Matthew 14:4 and Mark 6:18.[353][354] Given that most scholars date the marriage of Herod and Herodias as AD 28–35, this yields a date about AD 28–29.[349]

A number of approaches have been used to estimate the year of the crucifixion of Jesus. Most scholars agree that he died in AD 30 or 33.[341][355] The Gospels state that the event occurred during the prefecture of Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea from AD 26 to 36.[356][357][358] The date for the conversion of Paul (estimated to be AD 33–36) acts as an upper bound for the date of Crucifixion. The dates for Paul's conversion and ministry can be determined by analysing the Pauline epistles and the Acts of the Apostles.[359][360] Astronomers have tried to estimate the precise date of the Crucifixion by analysing lunar motion and calculating historic dates of Passover, a festival based on the lunisolar Hebrew calendar. The most widely accepted dates derived from this method are 7 April AD 30, and 3 April AD 33 (both Julian).[361]

Historicity of events





Roman senator and historian Tacitus (pictured left) mentioned the execution of "Christus" ('Jesus') by Pilate in a passage describing the Great Fire of Rome and Nero's persecution of Christians in the *Annals*, a history of the Roman Empire during the 1st century.

Nearly all historians (both modern and historical) agree that Jesus was a real person who historically existed.[g] Scholars have reached a limited consensus on the basics of Jesus's life.[362]

Family

Many scholars agree that Joseph, Jesus's father, died before Jesus began his ministry. Joseph is not mentioned in the Gospels during Jesus's ministry. Joseph's death would explain why in Mark 6:3, Jesus's neighbours refer to Jesus as the "son of Mary" (sons were usually identified by their fathers).[363]

According to Theissen and Merz, it is common for extraordinary charismatic leaders, such as Jesus, to come into conflict with their ordinary families.[364] In Mark, Jesus's family comes to get him, fearing that he is mad (Mark 3:20–34), and this account is thought to be historical because early Christians would probably not have invented it.[365] After Jesus's death, many members of his family joined the Christian movement.[364] Jesus's brother James became a leader of the Jerusalem Church.[366]

Géza Vermes says that the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus arose from theological development rather than from historical events.[367] Despite the widely held view that the authors of the Synoptic Gospels drew upon each other (the so-called synoptic problem), other scholars take it as significant that the virgin birth is attested by two separate gospels, Matthew and Luke.[368][369][370][371][372][373]

According to E. P. Sanders, the birth narratives in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke are the clearest cases of invention in the Gospel narratives of Jesus's life. Marcus Borg concurs, explaining that, "I (and most mainline scholars) do not see these stories as historically factual."[374] Both accounts have Jesus born in Bethlehem, in accordance with Jewish salvation history, and both have him growing up in Nazareth. But Sanders points out that the two Gospels report completely different and irreconcilable explanations for how that happened. Luke's account of a census in which everyone returned to their ancestral cities is not plausible. Matthew's account is more plausible, but the story reads as though it was invented to identify Jesus as a new Moses, and the historian Josephus reports Herod the Great's brutality without ever mentioning that he massacred little boys.[375] The contradictions between the two Gospels were probably apparent to the early Christians already, since attempts to harmonize the two narratives are already present in the earlier apocryphal infancy gospels (the Infancy Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of James), which are dated to the 2nd century AD.[376][377]

Conservative scholars argue that despite the uncertainty of the details, the gospel birth narratives trace back to historical, or at least much earlier pre-gospel traditions.[378][379][380][381] For instance, according to Ben Witherington:

> What we find in Matthew and Luke is not the story of ... a [god] descending to earth and, in the guise of a man, mating with a human woman, but rather the story of a miraculous conception without the aid of any man, divine or otherwise. As such, this story is without precedent either in Jewish or pagan literature.[382]

Sanders says that the genealogies of Jesus are based not on historical information but on the author's desire to show that Jesus was the universal Jewish saviour.[94] In any event, once the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus became established, that tradition superseded the earlier tradition that he was descended from David through Joseph.[383] The Gospel of Luke reports that Jesus was a blood relative of John the Baptist, but scholars generally consider this connection to be invented.[94][384]

Baptism

Most modern scholars consider Jesus's baptism to be a definite historical fact, along with his crucifixion.[8] The theologian James D. G. Dunn states that they "command almost universal assent" and "rank so high on the 'almost impossible to doubt or deny' scale of historical facts" that they are often the starting points for the study of the historical Jesus.[8] Scholars adduce the criterion of embarrassment, saying that early Christians would not have invented a baptism that might imply that Jesus committed sins and wanted to repent.[385][386] According to Theissen and Merz, Jesus was inspired by John the Baptist and took over from him many elements of his teaching.[387]

Baptism in the Jordan River, the river where Jesus was baptized

Ministry in Galilee

Most scholars hold that Jesus lived in Galilee and Judea and did not preach or study elsewhere.[388] They agree that Jesus debated with Jewish authorities on the subject of God, performed some healings, taught in parables and gathered followers.[193] Jesus's Jewish critics considered his ministry to be scandalous because he feasted with sinners, fraternized with women, and allowed his followers to pluck grain on the Sabbath.[57] According to Sanders, it is not plausible that disagreements over how to interpret the Law of Moses and the Sabbath would have led Jewish authorities to want Jesus killed.[389]

According to Ehrman, Jesus taught that a coming kingdom was everyone's proper focus, not anything in this life.[390] He taught about the Jewish Law, seeking its true meaning, sometimes in opposition to traditions. Jesus put love at the center of the Law, and following that Law was an apocalyptic necessity.[391] His ethical teachings called for forgiveness, not judging others, loving enemies, and caring for the poor.[392] Funk and Hoover note that typical of Jesus were paradoxical or surprising turns of phrase, such as advising one, when struck on the cheek, to offer the other cheek to be struck as well.[393][394]

The Gospels portray Jesus teaching in well-defined sessions, such as the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew or the parallel Sermon on the Plain in Luke. According to Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, these teaching sessions include authentic teachings of Jesus, but the scenes were invented by the respective evangelists to frame these teachings, which had originally been recorded without context.[74] While Jesus's miracles fit within the social context of antiquity, he defined them differently. First, he attributed them to the faith of those healed. Second, he connected them to end times prophecy.[395]

Jesus chose twelve disciples (the "Twelve"),[396] evidently as an apocalyptic message. All three Synoptics mention the Twelve, although the names on Luke's list vary from those in Mark and Matthew, suggesting that Christians were not certain who all the disciples were. The twelve disciples might have represented the twelve original tribes of Israel, which would be restored once God's rule was instituted. The disciples were reportedly meant to be the rulers of the tribes in the coming Kingdom.[397] According to Bart Ehrman, Jesus's promise that the Twelve would rule is historical, because the Twelve included Judas Iscariot. In Ehrman's view, no Christians would have invented a line from Jesus, promising rulership to the disciple who betrayed him.[398]

In Mark, the disciples play hardly any role other than a negative one. While others sometimes respond to Jesus with complete faith, his disciples are puzzled and doubtful. They serve as a foil to Jesus and to other characters. The failings of the disciples are probably exaggerated in Mark, and the disciples make a better showing in Matthew and Luke.[399]

Sanders says that Jesus's mission was not about repentance, although he acknowledges that this opinion is unpopular. He argues that repentance appears as a strong theme only in Luke, that repentance was John the Baptist's message, and that Jesus's ministry would not have been scandalous if the sinners he ate with had been repentant.[400] According to Theissen and Merz, Jesus taught that God was generously giving people an opportunity to repent.[401]

Role

Jesus taught that an apocalyptic figure, the "Son of Man", would soon come on clouds of glory to gather the elect or chosen ones.[402] He referred to himself as a "son of man" in the colloquial sense of "a person", but scholars do not know whether he also meant himself when he referred to the heavenly "Son

of Man". Paul the Apostle and other early Christians interpreted the "Son of Man" as the risen Jesus.[30]

The Gospels refer to Jesus not only as a messiah but in the absolute form as "the Messiah" or, equivalently, "the Christ". In early Judaism, this absolute form of the title is not found, but only phrases such as "his messiah". The tradition is ambiguous enough to leave room for debate as to whether Jesus defined his eschatological role as that of the Messiah.[403] The Jewish messianic tradition included many different forms, some of them focused on a messiah figure and others not. Based on the Christian tradition, Gerd Theissen advances the hypothesis that Jesus saw himself in messianic terms but did not claim the title "Messiah".[404] Bart Ehrman argues that Jesus did consider himself to be the Messiah, albeit in the sense that he would be the king of the new political order that God would usher in,[405] not in the sense that most people today think of the term.[406]

Passover and crucifixion in Jerusalem

Around AD 30, Jesus and his followers travelled from Galilee to Jerusalem to observe Passover.[396] Jesus caused a disturbance in the Second Temple,[26] which was the center of Jewish religious and civil authority. Sanders associates it with Jesus's prophecy that the Temple would be totally demolished.[407] Jesus held a last meal with his disciples, which is the origin of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. His words as recorded in the Synoptic gospels and Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians do not entirely agree, but this meal appears to have pointed to Jesus's place in the coming Kingdom of God when very probably Jesus knew he was about to be killed, although he may have still hoped that God might yet intervene.[408]

The Gospels say that Jesus was betrayed to the authorities by a disciple, and many scholars consider this report to be highly reliable.[152] He was executed on the orders of Pontius Pilate, the Roman prefect of Judaea.[26] Pilate most likely saw Jesus's reference to the Kingdom of God as a threat to Roman authority and worked with the Temple elites to have Jesus executed.[409] The Sadducean high-priestly leaders of the Temple more plausibly had Jesus executed for political reasons than for his teaching.[152] They may have regarded him as a threat to stability, especially after he caused a disturbance at the Second Temple.[152][410] Other factors, such as Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, may have contributed to this decision.[411] Most scholars consider Jesus's crucifixion to be factual because early Christians would not have invented the painful death of their leader.[8][412]

After crucifixion

After Jesus's death, his followers said he was restored to life, although the exact details of their experiences are unclear. The gospel reports contradict each other, possibly suggesting competition among those claiming to have seen him first rather than deliberate fraud.[413] On the other hand, L. Michael White suggests that inconsistencies in the Gospels reflect differences in the agendas of their unknown authors.[362] The followers of Jesus formed a community to wait for his return and the founding of his kingdom.[26]

Portraits of Jesus

Modern research on the historical Jesus has not led to a unified picture of the historical figure, partly because of the variety of academic traditions represented by the scholars.[414] Given the scarcity of historical sources, it is generally difficult for any scholar to construct a portrait of Jesus that can be

considered historically valid beyond the basic elements of his life.[71][72] The portraits of Jesus constructed in these quests often differ from each other, and from the image portrayed in the Gospels.[312][415]

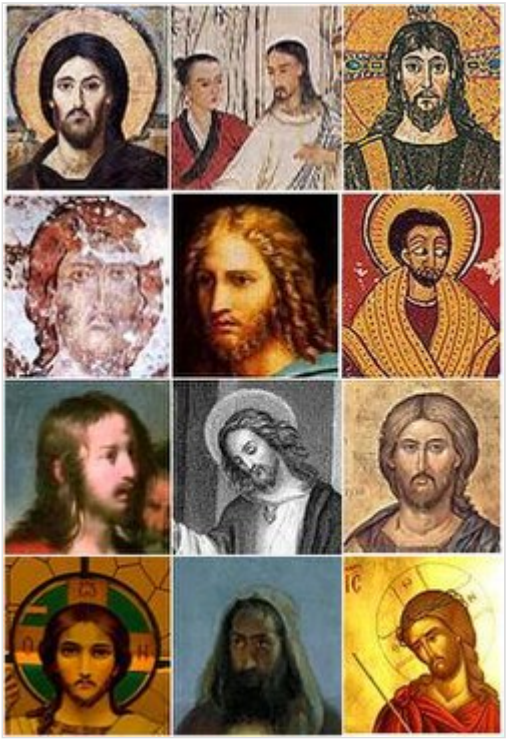
The Resurrection of Christ from a 16th-century manuscript of *La Passion de Nostre Seigneur*

Jesus is seen as the founder of, in the words of Sanders, a "renewal movement within Judaism". One of the criteria used to discern historical details in the "third quest" is the criterion of plausibility, relative to Jesus's Jewish context and to his influence on Christianity. A disagreement in contemporary research is whether Jesus was apocalyptic. Most scholars conclude that he was an apocalyptic preacher, such as John the Baptist and Paul the Apostle. In contrast, certain prominent North American scholars, such as Burton Mack and John Dominic Crossan, advocate for a non-eschatological Jesus, one who is more of a Cynic sage than an apocalyptic preacher.[416] In addition to portraying Jesus as an apocalyptic prophet, a charismatic healer or a cynic philosopher, some scholars portray him as the true messiah or an egalitarian prophet of social change.[417][418] However, the attributes described in the portraits sometimes overlap, and scholars who differ on some attributes sometimes agree on others.[419]

Since the 18th century, scholars have occasionally put forth that Jesus was a political national messiah, but the evidence for this portrait is negligible. Likewise, the proposal that Jesus was a Zealot does not fit with the earliest strata of the Synoptic tradition.[152]

Language, ethnicity, and appearance

Jesus grew up in Galilee and much of his ministry took place there.[422] The languages spoken in Galilee and Judea during the 1st century AD include Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek, with Aramaic being predominant.[423][424] There is substantial consensus that Jesus gave most of his teachings in Aramaic[425] in the Galilean dialect.[426][427] Other than Aramaic and Hebrew, it is likely that he was also able to speak in Greek.[428][429][430]



The ethnicity of Jesus in art has been influenced by cultural settings.[420][421]

Modern scholars agree that Jesus was a Jew of 1st-century Judea.[431] *Ioudaios* in New Testament Greek[t] is a term which in the contemporary context may refer to religion (Second Temple Judaism), ethnicity (of Judea), or both.[434][435][436] In a review of the state of modern scholarship, Amy-Jill Levine writes that the entire question of ethnicity is "fraught with difficulty", and that "beyond recognizing that 'Jesus was Jewish', rarely does the scholarship address what being 'Jewish' means".[437]

The New Testament gives no description of the physical appearance of Jesus before his death—it is generally indifferent to racial appearances and does not refer to the features of the people it mentions.[438][439][440] Jesus probably looked like a typical Jewish man of his time and place; standing around 166 cm (5 ft 5 in) tall with a thin but fit build, olive-brown skin, brown eyes and short, dark hair. He also probably had a beard that was not particularly long or heavy.[441]

Christ myth theory

The Christ myth theory is the hypothesis that Jesus of Nazareth never existed; or if he did, that he had virtually nothing to do with the founding of Christianity and the accounts in the gospels.[u] Stories of Jesus's birth, along with other key events, have so many mythic elements that some scholars have suggested that Jesus himself was a myth.[443]

Bruno Bauer (1809–1882) taught that the first Gospel was a work of literature that produced history rather than described it. According to Albert Kalthoff (1850–1906), a social movement produced Jesus when it encountered Jewish messianic expectations. Arthur Drews (1865–1935) saw Jesus as the concrete form of a myth that predated Christianity.[444] Despite arguments put forward by authors who have questioned the existence of a historical Jesus, virtually all scholars of antiquity accept that Jesus was a historical figure and consider Christ's myth theory fringe.[445][446][447][448][449][450][451]

Religious perspectives

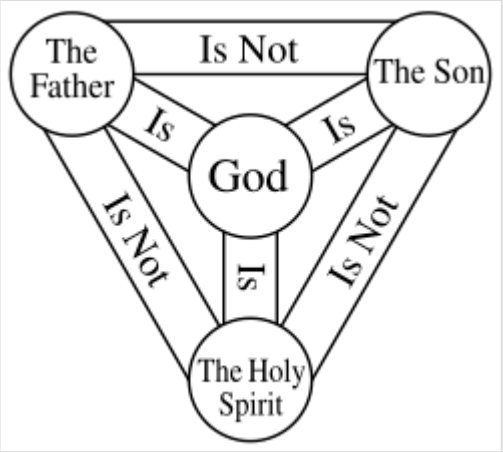
Jesus's teachings and the retelling of his life story have significantly influenced the course of human history, and have directly or indirectly affected the lives of billions of people, even non-Christians, worldwide.[452][453] He is considered by many people to be the most influential figure to have ever lived, finding a significant place in numerous cultural contexts.[454][455]

Apart from his own disciples and followers,[456] the Jews of Jesus's day generally rejected him as the messiah,[457] as does Judaism today.[458] Christian theologians, ecumenical councils, reformers and others have written extensively about Jesus over the centuries. Christian denominations have often been defined or characterized by their descriptions of Jesus. Meanwhile, Manichaeans, Gnostics, Muslims, Druzes,[459] the Bahá′ís, and others have found prominent places for Jesus in their religions.[460][461][462]

Christianity

Jesus is the central figure of Christianity.[84] Although Christian views of Jesus vary, it is possible to summarize the key beliefs shared among major denominations, as stated in their catechetical or confessional texts.[463][464][465] Christian views of Jesus are derived from the texts of the New Testament, including the canonical gospels and letters such as the Pauline epistles and the Johannine writings. These documents outline the key beliefs held by Christians about Jesus, including his divinity, humanity, and earthly life, and that he is the Christ and the Son of God.[466] Despite their many shared beliefs, not all Christian denominations agree on all doctrines, and both major and minor differences on teachings and beliefs have persisted throughout Christianity for centuries.[467]

The New Testament states that the resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of the Christian faith.[468][469] Christians believe that through his sacrificial death and resurrection, humans can be reconciled with God and are thereby offered salvation and the promise of eternal life.[197] Recalling the words of John the Baptist in the gospel of John, these doctrines sometimes refer to Jesus as the Lamb of God, who was crucified to fulfill his role as the servant of God.[470][471] Jesus is thus seen as the new and last Adam, whose obedience contrasts with Adam's disobedience.[472] Christians view Jesus as a role model, whose God-focused life believers are encouraged to imitate.[84]



The Trinity is the belief in Christianity that God is one God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit.

At present, most Christians believe that Jesus is both human and the Son of God.[473] While there has been theological debate over his nature,[v] Trinitarian Christians generally believe that Jesus is the Logos, God's incarnation and God the Son, both fully divine and fully human. However, the doctrine of the Trinity is not universally accepted among Christians.[475][476] With the Reformation, Christians such as Michael Servetus and the Socinians started questioning the ancient creeds that had established Jesus's two natures.[30] Nontrinitarian Christian groups include the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,[477] Unitarians and Jehovah's Witnesses.[474]

Jesus is depicted with the Alpha and Omega letters in the Catacombs of Rome from the 4th century.

Christians revere not only Jesus himself but also his name. Devotions to the Holy Name of Jesus go back to the earliest days of Christianity.[478][479] These devotions and feasts exist in both Eastern and Western Christianity.[479]

Judaism's view

Judaism rejects the idea of Jesus (or any future Jewish messiah) being God,[410] or a mediator to God, or part of a Trinity.[480] It holds that Jesus is not the messiah, arguing that he neither fulfilled the messianic prophecies in the Tanakh nor embodied the personal qualifications of the Messiah.[481] Jews argue that Jesus did not fulfill prophecies to build the Third Temple,[482] gather Jews back to Israel,[483] bring world peace,[484] and unite humanity under the God of Israel.[485][486] Furthermore, according to Jewish tradition, there were no prophets after Malachi,[487] who delivered his prophecies in the 5th century BC.[488]

Judaic criticism of Jesus is long-standing, and includes a range of stories in the Talmud, written and compiled from the 3rd to the 5th century AD.[489] In one such story, *Yeshu HaNozri* ('Jesus the Nazarene'), a lewd apostate, is executed by the Jewish high court for spreading idolatry and practising magic.[490] According to some, the form Yeshu is an acronym which in Hebrew reads "may his name and memory be blotted out".[491] The majority of contemporary scholars consider that this material provides

no information on the historical Jesus.[492] The *Mishneh Torah*, a late 12th-century work of Jewish law written by Moses Maimonides, states that Jesus is a "stumbling block" who makes "the majority of the world to err and serve a god other than the Lord".[493]

Medieval Hebrew literature contains the anecdotal "Episode of Jesus" (known also as *Toledot Yeshu*), in which Jesus is described as being the son of Joseph, the son of Pandera (see: *Episode of Jesus*). The account portrays Jesus as an impostor.[494]

Manichaeism

Manichaeism, an ancient religious movement, became one of the earliest organized religions outside of Christianity to honor Jesus as a significant figure.[495][496][497] Within the Manichaean belief system, Jesus is revered alongside other prominent prophets such as Zoroaster, Gautama Buddha, and Mani himself.[498][499]

Islam

A major figure in Islam,[500][501][502] Jesus (often referred to by his Quranic name *Īsā*) is considered to be a messenger of God and the messiah (*al-Masīḥ*) who was sent to guide the Children of Israel (*Banī Isrāʾīl*) with a new scripture, the Gospel (referred to in Islam as *Injīl*).[502][503] Muslims regard the gospels' accounts in the New Testament as partially authentic, and believe that Jesus's original message was altered (*taḥrīf*) and that Muhammad came later to revive it.[504] Belief in Jesus (and all other messengers of God) is a requirement for being a Muslim.[505] The Quran mentions Jesus by name 25 times—more often than Muhammad[506][507]—and emphasizes that Jesus was a mortal human who, like all other prophets, had been divinely chosen to spread God's message.[508] While the Quran affirms the Virgin birth of Jesus, he is considered to be neither an incarnation nor a son of God.[509][510] Islamic texts emphasize a strict notion of monotheism (*tawḥīd*) and forbid the association of partners with God, which would be idolatry.[511]

The Quran describes the annunciation to Mary (*Maryam*) by the Holy Spirit that she is to give birth to Jesus while remaining a virgin. It calls the virgin birth a miracle that occurred by the will of God.[512][513] The Quran (21:91 (https://quran.com/21?startingVerse=91) and 66:12 (https://quran.com/66?startingVerse=12)) states that God breathed his spirit into Mary while she was chaste.[512][513] Jesus is called a "spirit from God" because he was born through the action of the Spirit,[512] but that belief does not imply his pre-existence.[514]

To aid in his ministry to the Jewish people, Jesus was given the ability to perform miracles, by permission of God rather than by his own power.[510] Through his ministry, Jesus is seen as a precursor to Muhammad.[508] In the Quran (4:157–159 (https://quran.com/4?startingVerse=157)) it is said that Jesus was not killed but was merely made to appear that way to unbelievers,[515] and that he was raised into the heavens while still alive by God.[516] According to most classic Sunni and Twelver Shi'ite interpretations of these verses, the likeness of Jesus was cast upon a substitute (most often one of the apostles), who was crucified in Jesus's stead.[517] However, some medieval Muslims (among others, the *ghulāt* writing under the name of al-Mufaddal ibn Umar al-Ju'fi, the Brethren of Purity, various Isma'ili philosophers, and the Sunni mystic al-Ghazali) affirmed the historicity of Jesus's crucifixion. These thinkers held the docetic view that, although Jesus's human form (his body) had died on the cross, his true divine nature (his spirit) had survived and ascended into heaven, so that his death was only an appearance.[518] Nevertheless, to

Muslims it is the *ascension* rather than the *crucifixion* that constitutes a major event in the life of Jesus.[519] There is no mention of his resurrection on the third day, and his death plays no special role in Islamic theories of salvation.[520] However, Jesus is a central figure in Islamic eschatology: Muslims believe that he will return to Earth at the end of time and defeat the Antichrist (*ad-Dajjal*) by killing him.[502][521][522][523]

Persian miniature of Mary and Jesus

According to the Quran, the coming of Muhammad (also called "Ahmad") was predicted by Jesus:

> And ˹remember˺ when Jesus, son of Mary, said, "O children of Israel! I am truly Allah's messenger to you, confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving good news of a messenger after me whose name will be Aḥmad." Yet when the Prophet came to them with clear proofs, they said, "This is pure magic."
>
> —Surah As-Saf 61:6 (https://quran.com/61?startingVerse=6)

Through this verse, early Arab Muslims claimed legitimacy for their new faith in the existing religious traditions and the alleged predictions of Jesus.[524]

Ahmadiyya

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has several distinct teachings about Jesus.[525] Ahmadis believe that he was a mortal man who survived his crucifixion and died a natural death at the age of 120 in Kashmir, India, and is buried at Roza Bal.[526]

Druze

In the Druze faith,[459] Jesus is considered and revered as one of the seven spokesmen or prophets (*natiq*), defined as messengers or intermediaries between God and mankind, along with figures including Moses, Muhammad and Muhammad ibn Isma'il, each of them sent at a different period of history to preach the message of God.[459][527][528][529][530] In Druze tradition, Jesus is known under three titles: the True Messiah (*al-Masih al-Haq*), the Messiah of all Nations (*Masih al-Umam*), and the Messiah of Sinners. This is due, respectively, to the belief that Jesus delivered the true Gospel message, the belief that he was the Saviour of all nations, and the belief that he offers forgiveness.[531]

Bahá'í Faith

In the Bahá'í Faith, Jesus is considered one of the Manifestations of God,[532] defined as divine messengers or prophets sent by God to guide humanity, along with other religious figures such as Moses, Krishna, Zoroaster, Buddha, Muhammad, and Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'ís believe that these religious founders or leaders have contributed to the progressive revelation by bringing spiritual and moral values to humanity in their own time and place.[533][534][535][536][537] As a Manifestation of God, Jesus is believed to reflect

God's qualities and attributes, but is not considered the only saviour of humanity nor the incarnation of God.[538][539][540] Bahá'ís believe in the virgin birth,[541][542] but see the resurrection and the miracles of Jesus as symbolic.[543][542]

Other

In Christian Gnosticism (now a largely extinct religious movement),[544] Jesus was sent from the divine realm and provided the secret knowledge (gnosis) necessary for salvation. Most Gnostics believed that Jesus was a human who became possessed by the spirit of "the Christ" at his baptism. This spirit left Jesus's body during the crucifixion but was rejoined to him when he was raised from the dead. Some Gnostics, however, were docetics, believing that Jesus did not have a physical body, but only appeared to possess one.[545]

Jesus depicted as the liberator of Black slaves, on the masthead of the abolitionist paper *The Liberator*

Enthroned Jesus image on a Manichaean temple banner from c. 10th-century Qocho

Some Hindus consider Jesus to be an avatar or a sadhu.[546] Paramahansa Yogananda, an Indian guru, taught that Jesus was the reincarnation of Elisha and a student of John the Baptist, the reincarnation of Elijah.[547] Some Buddhists, including Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, regard Jesus as a bodhisattva who dedicated his life to the welfare of people.[548] The New Age movement entertains a wide variety of views on Jesus.[549] Theosophists, from whom many New Age teachings originated,[550] refer to Jesus as the Master Jesus, a spiritual reformer, and they believe that Christ, after various incarnations, occupied the body of Jesus.[551] *The Urantia Book* teaches Jesus is one of more than 700,000 heavenly sons of God.[552] Antony Theodore in the book *Jesus Christ in Love* writes that there is an underlying oneness of Jesus's teachings with the messages contained in Quran, Vedas, Upanishads, Talmud and Avesta.[553] Atheists reject Jesus's divinity, but have different views about him—from challenging his mental health[554][555] to emphasizing his "moral superiority" (Richard Dawkins).[556]

Artistic depictions

Some of the earliest depictions of Jesus at the Dura-Europos church are firmly dated to before 256.[558] Thereafter, despite the lack of biblical references or historical records, a wide range of depictions of Jesus appeared during the last two millennia, often influenced by cultural settings, political circumstances and theological contexts.[420][421][439] As in other Early Christian art, the earliest depictions date to the late 2nd or early 3rd century, and surviving images are found especially in the Catacombs of Rome.[559]

Jesus healing a paralytic in one of the first known images of Jesus from Dura Europos in the 3rd century[557]

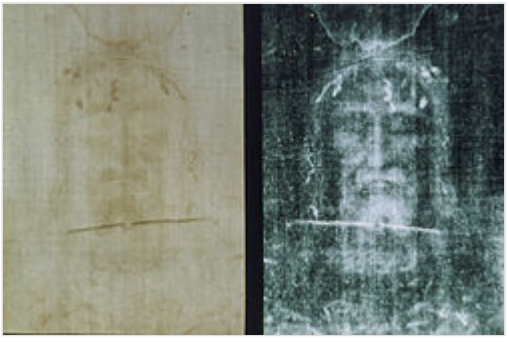
The depiction of Christ in pictorial form was highly controversial in the early Church.[560][w][561] From the 5th century onward, flat painted icons became popular in the Eastern Church.[562] The Byzantine Iconoclasm acted as a barrier to developments in the East, but by the 9th century, art was permitted again.[420] The Protestant Reformation brought renewed resistance to imagery, but total prohibition was atypical, and Protestant objections to images have tended to reduce since the 16th century. Although large images are generally avoided, few Protestants now object to book illustrations depicting Jesus.[563][564] The use of depictions of Jesus is advocated by the leaders of denominations such as Anglicans and Catholics[565][566][567] and is a key element of the Eastern Orthodox tradition.[568][569]

In Eastern Christian art, the Transfiguration was a major theme, and every Eastern Orthodox monk who had trained in icon painting had to prove his craft by painting an icon depicting it.[570] Icons receive the external marks of veneration, such as kisses and prostration, and they are thought to be powerful channels of divine grace.[562]

In Western Europe, the Renaissance brought forth a number of artists who focused on depictions of Jesus; Fra Angelico and others followed Giotto in the systematic development of uncluttered images.[420] Before the Protestant Reformation, the crucifix was common in Western Christianity. It is a model of the cross with Jesus crucified on it. The crucifix became the central ornament of the altar in the 13th century, a use that has been nearly universal in Roman Catholic churches since then.[571]

Associated relics

The total destruction that ensued with the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70 made the survival of items from 1st-century Judea very rare and almost no direct records survive about the history of Judaism from the last part of the 1st century through the 2nd century.[573][574][x] Margaret M. Mitchell writes that although Eusebius reports (*Ecclesiastical History* III 5.3) that the early Christians left Jerusalem for Pella just before Jerusalem was subjected to the final lockdown, we must accept that no first-hand Christian items from the early Jerusalem Church have reached us.[576] Joe Nickell writes, "as investigation after investigation has shown, not a single, reliably authenticated relic of Jesus exists."[577][y]



The Shroud of Turin, Italy, is the best-known claimed relic of Jesus and one of the most studied artefacts in human history.[572]

However, throughout the history of Christianity, a number of relics attributed to Jesus have been claimed, although doubt has been cast on them. The 16th-century Catholic theologian Erasmus wrote sarcastically about the proliferation of relics and the number of buildings that could have been constructed from the

wood claimed to be from the cross used in the Crucifixion.[580] Similarly, while experts debate whether Jesus was crucified with three nails or with four, at least thirty holy nails continue to be venerated as relics across Europe.[581]

Some relics, such as purported remnants of the crown of thorns placed on the head of Jesus, receive only a modest number of pilgrims, while the Shroud of Turin (which is associated with an approved Catholic devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus), has received millions,[582] including the popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.[583][584]

See also

- Outline of Jesus
- Jesuism
- Jesus in comparative mythology
- Jesus in the Talmud
- Language of Jesus
- Last Adam – title of Jesus
- Liminal deity – deity who is a crosser of boundaries
- List of books about Jesus
- List of founders of religious traditions
- List of messiah claimants
- List of people claimed to be Jesus
- List of people who have been considered deities
- List of statues of Jesus
- Sexuality and marital status of Jesus
- Tiberius Julius Abdes Pantera – Roman soldier, hypothesized to be connected to Jesus

Notes

a. Christ's features on his right side (the viewer's left) are theorized to represent the qualities of his human nature, while his left side (the viewer's right) represents his divinity.[1][2]

b. John P. Meier writes that Jesus's birth year is c. 7 or 6 BC.[3] Karl Rahner states that the consensus among Christian scholars is c. 4 BC.[4] E. P. Sanders also favours c. 4 BC and refers to the general consensus.[5] Jack Finegan uses the study of early Christian traditions to support c. 3 or 2 BC.[6]

c. James Dunn writes that the baptism and crucifixion of Jesus "command almost universal assent" and "rank so high on the 'almost impossible to doubt or deny' scale of historical facts" that they are often the starting points for the study of the historical Jesus.[8] Bart D. Ehrman states that the crucifixion of Jesus on the orders of Pontius Pilate is the most certain element about him.[9] John Dominic Crossan and Richard G. Watts state that the crucifixion of Jesus is as certain as any historical fact can be.[10] Paul R. Eddy and Gregory A. Boyd say that non-Christian confirmation of the crucifixion of Jesus is now "firmly established".[11]

d. Traditionally, Christians believe that Mary conceived her son miraculously by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Muslims believe that she conceived her son miraculously by the command of God. Joseph was from these perspectives and according to the canonical gospels the acting adoptive father of Jesus.

e. Ancient Greek: Ἰησοῦς, romanized: *Iēsoús*, probably from Hebrew or Aramaic: יֵשׁוּעַ, romanized: *Yēšūaʿ*

f. Coptic: Ⲓⲏⲥⲟⲩⲥ Ⲡⲓⲭ́ⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ; Geʿez: መሲህ ኢየሱስ; Greek: Ἰησοῦς Χριστός; Hebrew: ישוע המשיח; Latin: *Iesus Christus*; Slavonic: Ї҆соу́съ Хрїсто́съ; Syriac: ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ

g. In a 2011 review of the state of modern scholarship, Bart D. Ehrman wrote, "He certainly existed, as virtually every competent scholar of antiquity, Christian or non-Christian, agrees."[13] Richard A. Burridge states: "There are those who argue that Jesus is a figment of the Church's imagination, that there never was a Jesus at all. I have to say that I do not know any respectable critical scholar who says that any more."[14] Robert M. Price does not believe that Jesus existed but agrees that this perspective runs against the views of the majority of scholars.[15] James D. G. Dunn calls the theories of Jesus's non-existence "a thoroughly dead thesis".[16] Michael Grant (a classicist) wrote in 1977, "In recent years, 'no serious scholar has ventured to postulate the non historicity of Jesus' or at any rate very few, and they have not succeeded in disposing of the much stronger, indeed very abundant, evidence to the contrary."[17] Robert E. Van Voorst states that biblical scholars and classical historians regard theories of non-existence of Jesus as effectively refuted.[18] Writing on *The Daily Beast*, Candida Moss and Joel Baden state that, "there is nigh universal consensus among biblical scholars – the authentic ones, at least – that Jesus was, in fact, a real guy."[19]

h. Ehrman writes: "The notion that the Gospel accounts are not completely accurate but still important for the religious truths they try to convey is widely shared in the scholarly world, even though it's not so widely known or believed outside of it."[21]
Sanders writes: "The earliest Christians did not write a narrative of Jesus' life, but rather made use of, and thus preserved, individual units—short passages about his words and deeds. These units were later moved and arranged by authors and editors. ... Some material has been revised and some created by early Christians."[22]

i. A small minority of Christian denominations reject trinitarianism, wholly or partly, as non-scriptural.

j. Most Christians and Alawites celebrate Christmas. Part of the Eastern Christian churches celebrate Christmas on 25 December of the Julian calendar, which currently corresponds to 7 January in the Gregorian calendar. In many countries, Christmas is celebrated on 24 December.

k. Often referred to by his Quranic name, *Īsā*

l. Some medieval Muslims believed that Jesus was crucified, as do the members of the modern Ahmadiyya movement; see § Islamic perspectives.

m. This article uses quotes from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

n. Powell writes: "[Paul] does cite words or instructions of Jesus in a few places,[52] but for the most part he displays little interest in the details of Jesus' earthly life and ministry."[53]

o. Compare Matthew 1:6–16 (https://www.biblica.com/bible/?osis=niv:Matthew%201:6–16) with Luke 3:23–31 (https://www.biblica.com/bible/?osis=niv:Luke%203:23–31). See also Genealogy of Jesus § Comparison of the two genealogies.

p. For an overview of such theories, see Genealogy of Jesus § Explanations for divergence.

q. Amy-Jill Levine writes: "There is a consensus of sorts on a basic outline of Jesus' life. Most scholars agree that Jesus was baptized by John, debated with fellow Jews on how best to live according to God's will, engaged in healings and exorcisms, taught in parables, gathered male and female followers in Galilee, went to Jerusalem, and was crucified by Roman soldiers during the governorship of Pontius Pilate."[311]
r. Tuckett writes: "All this does at least render highly implausible any far-fetched theories that even Jesus' very existence was a Christian invention. The fact that Jesus existed, that he was crucified under Pontius Pilate (for whatever reason) and that he had a band of followers who continued to support his cause, seems to be part of the bedrock of historical tradition. If nothing else, the non-Christian evidence can provide us with certainty on that score."[332]
s. For example, John P. Meier states that Jesus's birth year is c. 7/6 BC,[3] while Finegan favours c. 3/2 BC.[6]
t. In the New Testament, Jesus is described as Jewish / Judean (*Ioudaios* as written in Koine Greek) on three occasions: by the Magi in Matthew 2:2, who referred to Jesus as "King of the Jews" (*basileus ton ioudaion*); by both the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:9 (https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+4:9&version=nkjv) and John 4:20 (https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+4:20&version=nkjv) and by Jesus himself in John 4:22 (https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+4:22&version=nkjv); and (in all four gospels) during the Passion, by the Romans, who also used the phrase "King of the Jews".[432] Jesus was also described as "King of Israel" in John 1:49 (https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1:49&version=nkjv), John 12:13 (https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+12:13&version=nkjv), Mark 15:32 (https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+15:32&version=nkjv) and Matthew 27:42 (https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+27:42&version=nkjv).[433]
u. Ehrman writes: "In simpler terms, the historical Jesus did not exist. Or if he did, he had virtually nothing to do with the founding of Christianity." Further quoting as authoritative the fuller definition provided by Earl Doherty in *Jesus: Neither God Nor Man*. Age of Reason, 2009, pp. vii–viii: it is "the theory that no historical Jesus worthy of the name existed, that Christianity began with a belief in a spiritual, mythical figure, that the Gospels are essentially allegory and fiction, and that no single identifiable person lay at the root of the Galilean preaching tradition".[442]
v. Following the Apostolic Age, there was fierce and often politicized debate in the early church on many interrelated issues. Christology was a major focus of these debates, and was addressed at every one of the first seven ecumenical councils. Some early beliefs viewed Jesus as ontologically subordinate to the Father (Subordinationism), and others considered him an aspect of the Father rather than a separate person (Sabellianism), both were condemned as heresies by the Catholic Church.[30][474] The Church resolved the issues in ancient councils, which established the Holy Trinity, with Jesus both fully human and fully God.[30]
w. Philip Schaff commenting on Irenaeus, wrote, 'This censure of images as a Gnostic peculiarity, and as a heathenish corruption, should be noted.' Footnote 300 on Contr. Her. .I.XXV.6. ANF.
x. Flavius Josephus writing (about 5 years later, c. AD 75) in *The Jewish War* (Book VII 1.1) stated that Jerusalem had been flattened to the point that "there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited".[575] And once what was left of the ruins of Jerusalem had been turned into the Roman settlement of Aelia Capitolina, no Jews were allowed to set foot in it.[574]
y. Polarized conclusions regarding the Shroud of Turin remain.[578] According to former *Nature* editor Philip Ball, "it's fair to say that, despite the seemingly definitive tests in 1988, the status of the Shroud of Turin is murkier than ever. Not least, the nature of the image and how it was fixed on the cloth remain deeply puzzling."[579]

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23. Komoszewski, J. Ed; Bock, Darrell, eds. (2019). *Jesus, Skepticism & The Problem of History: Criteria and Context in the Study of Christian Origins*. Zondervan. pp. 22–23. ISBN 978-0-310-53476-1. "...a considerable number of specific facts about Jesus are so well supported historically as to be widely acknowledged by most scholars, whether Christian (of any stripe) or not:...(lists 18 points)...Nevertheless, what can be known about Jesus with a high degree of confidence, apart from theological or ideological agendas, is perhaps surprisingly robust."

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531. Swayd, Samy (2019). *The A to Z of the Druzes*. Rowman & Littlefield. p. 88. ISBN 978-0-8108-7002-4. "Jesus is known in the Druze tradition as the "True Messiah" (al-Masih al-Haq), for he delivered what Druzes view as the true message. He is also referred to as the "Messiah of the Nations" (Masih al-Umam) because he was sent to the world as "Masih of Sins" because he is the one who forgives."
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Menen Asfaw

Menen Asfaw (baptismal name: **Walatta Giyorgis**; 25 March 1889 – 15 February 1962)[3] was Empress of Ethiopia as the wife of Emperor Haile Selassie.

Menen Asfaw	
Itege	
Empress consort of Ethiopia	
Tenure	2 November 1930 – 15 February 1962
Coronation	2 November 1930
Born	25 March 1889[1][2] Ambassel, Bete Amhara, Ethiopian Empire (now South Wollo, Amhara Region, Ethiopia)
Died	15 February 1962 (aged 72) Addis Ababa, Ethiopian Empire
Burial	Holy Trinity Cathedral, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Spouse	*Dejazmach* Ali *Dejazmach*-Deyas *Ras* Lul Seged Haile Selassie
Issue	Princess Tenagnework Asfaw Wossen Princess Zenebework Princess Tsehai Prince Makonnen Prince Sahle Selassie
Names	
Walatta Giyorgis	
Baptismal name	
Dynasty	House of Solomon
Father	Asfaw, Jantirar of Ambassel
Mother	*Woizero* Sehin Mikael
Religion	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo

Family

Menen Asfaw was born in Ambassel, located in Wollo Province of Ethiopian Empire on 25 March 1889. She was the daughter of Asfaw, Jantirar of Ambassel and Woizero Sehin Michael. Her mother was the daughter of the King Mikael of Wollo and her half-uncle was Lij Iyasu.[4]

According to both published and unpublished reports, the then Woizero Menen Asfaw was first given in marriage by her family to the prominent Wollo nobleman, Dejazmach Ali Mohammed of Cherecha at a very young age, as was the prevailing custom. They had two children, a daughter, Woizero Belaynesh Ali, and a son, Jantirar Asfaw Ali.[5] This first marriage ended in divorce, and her natal family then arranged for Woizero Menen to marry Dejazmach Amede Ali Aba-Deyas, another very prominent nobleman of Wollo. She bore her second husband two children as well, a daughter, Woizero Desta Amede, and a son, Jantirar Gebregziabiher Amede.[6] Following the sudden death of her second husband, Woizero Menen's grandfather, *Negus* Mikael arranged her marriage to Ras Leulseged Atnaf Seged, a prominent Shewan nobleman, who was considerably older than Woizero Menen in late 1909 or early 1910. It is unclear whether Woizero Menen was married to the aged nobleman (and secured a divorce shortly afterwards to marry her royal groom) or whether there was only an engagement between them which was broken without ado.

Woizero Menen probably met Dejazmach Tafari Makonnen (later the Emperor Haile Selassie) at the home of her half-uncle, Lij Iyasu. The rapport between the two may have inspired Lij Iyasu to attempt to bind Dejazmach Tafari to him more firmly through marriage ties. He therefore terminated the arrangement (whether marriage or engagement) between Woizero Menen and Ras Leulseged, and sent her to Harar to marry Dejazmach Tafari Makonnen.[6] Ras Leulseged apparently did not hold a grudge against Dejazmach Tafari for this circumstance, blaming it entirely on Lij Iyasu who had ordered it. Indeed, he was among the leaders who fought on the side of Dejazmach Tafari Makonnen in the Battle of Segale, and died in that battle.[7]

Empress

The account given in the Autobiography of the Emperor, *My Life and Ethiopia's Progress*, mentions no previous marriage or children of Empress Menen and no such order by Iyasu, but states only that at the age of 20, they were married by their own mutual consent, and describes her as "a woman without any malice whatsoever".[8] When Tafari Makonnen became Emperor of Ethiopia as Haile Selassie I, Menen Asfaw was crowned as Empress at his side. Empress Menen had no children by Ras Leulseged.

Empress Menen was active in promoting women's issues in Ethiopia, was Patroness of the Ethiopian Red Cross, and the Ethiopian Women's Charitable Organization. She was also patroness of the Jerusalem Society that arranged for pilgrimages to the Holy Land. She founded the Empress Menen School for Girls in Addis Ababa, the first all-girls school which had both boarding and day students. Girls from all over the Empire were brought to the school to receive a modern education, encouraged by the Empress who visited it often and presided over its graduation ceremonies. The Empress gave generously, as well as sponsored programs for poor, ill and disabled people. She was also a devoutly religious woman who did much to support the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. She built, renovated and endowed numerous churches in Ethiopia and in the Holy Land. Prominent among these are the St. Raguel Church in Addis Ababa's Merkato district, the Kidane Mehret (Our Lady Covenant of Mercy) Church on Mount Entoto, and the Holy Trinity Monastery on the banks of the River Jordan in the Holy Land. She gave generously from her personal funds towards the building of the new Cathedral of St. Mary of Zion at Axum, but did not live to see it completed and dedicated.

Empress Menen Asfaw on a private visit to Israel (6 May 1959)

When the Empress was exiled from Ethiopia during the Italian occupation from 1936 to 1941, she made a pledge to the Virgin Mary at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, promising to give her crown to the church if Ethiopia were liberated from occupation. The Empress made numerous pilgrimages to Holy Sites in then British-ruled Palestine, in Syria and in Lebanon, during her exile to pray for her occupied homeland. Following the return of Emperor Haile Selassie I and his family to Ethiopia in 1941, a replica of the crown was made for future Empresses, but the original crown that Empress Menen was crowned with at her husband's side in 1930 was sent to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Empress Menen, although often seen wearing a tiara at public events that called for it, would never again wear a full crown.

Empress Menen performed perfectly in the role of empress consort. In her public role she combined religious piety, concern for social causes, and support for development schemes with the majesty of her Imperial status. Outwardly she was the dutiful wife, visiting schools, churches, exhibitions and model farms, attending public and state events at her husband's side or by herself. She took no public stand on political or policy issues. Behind the scenes however, she was the Emperor's most trusted advisor, quietly offering advice on a whole range of issues. She avoided the publicly political role that her predecessor as Empress-consort, Empress Taytu Betul, had taken, which had caused deep resentment in government circles during the reign of Menelik II.

The Empress and some of her family were placed under house arrest briefly during the 1960 Imperial Guard coup attempt against her husband at her villa outside the Guenete Leul Palace grounds in northern Addis Ababa. Following the return of the Emperor and the crushing of the coup attempt, there was much speculation as to the conduct of the Crown Prince, who had been proclaimed monarch by the coup leaders. It was noted that the Crown Prince had accompanied his mother in a drive through the palace grounds, making stops at Imperial Guard posts to exchange pleasantries with the guards, on the night before the coup was launched. The ailing Empress had been urged to visit the posts by security officials, who were concerned about the soldiers' morale, and perhaps had an idea that something was brewing. The appearance of the Empress with the Crown Prince at her side may have been used by coup leaders as an indication to their followers that the Empress might sympathise with a movement that brought her favored son to the throne. It is extremely unlikely that either the Empress or the Prince had any idea of what was being plotted. However, a cloud of suspicion never left the Crown Prince, and the Empress was deeply saddened by this.

Following her death in 1962, the Empress was buried in the crypt of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa among the tombs of her children. Prime Minister Aklilu Habte-Wold delivered her eulogy paying tribute to her charity, her piety, and her role as advisor and helpmate to the Emperor, as well as her personal kindness and goodness. On the third day memorial and commemoration after the funeral, the Emperor himself paid tribute to his wife by saying that although the Prime Minister had aptly described what kind of person his late wife had been, he wanted to say that during their five decades of marriage, not once had it been necessary to have a third party mediate between him and his wife, and that their marriage had been one of peace and mutual support.

Later, the Emperor built a pair of grand sarcophagi in the north transept of Holy Trinity Cathedral's nave, in order to transfer his wife's remains there and eventually be buried at her side himself. But due to the revolution, the Emperor was not buried there after his death, and the Empress remained in her original tomb in the crypt. During the ceremonial burial of her husband's remains in November 2000, the remains of Empress Menen were also disinterred from the crypt tomb, and placed in the sarcophagus next to her husband in the nave of the cathedral, as he had originally intended.

As the consort of Emperor Haile Selassie, Empress Menen is highly venerated by members of the Rastafari movement. One name Rastas bestow on the Empress is "Queen Omega" which complements one of the names they give to the Emperor "King Alpha" (as in "Alpha and Omega"). The later name is used to refer to the Emperor in the original version of the reggae song *Rivers of Babylon* by The Melodians but all mention of him was removed from the more popular version by Boney M.[9]

Descendants

Empress Menen and Emperor Haile Selassie were the parents of six children: Princess Tenagnework, Crown Prince Asfaw Wossen, Princess Tsehai, Princess Zenebework, Prince Makonnen, and Prince Sahle Selassie.

Empress Menen Asfaw seated in the centre and standing women from left to right are Princess Tsehai, Princess Tenagnework, and Princess Zenebework, her daughters, and on the far right is Princess Wolete Israel Seyoum, her daughter-in-law.

Empress Mene was step-mother to the Emperor's eldest child Princess Romanework. Princess Romanework was the daughter of a previous union of the emperor with Woizero Woinitu Amede (also known as Woizero Altayech).[10] The emperor's own autobiography mentions that his joy in 1941 following Ethiopia's liberation from Fascist Occupation was tempered by the grief of learning that his eldest child, Princess Romanework, had died under detention in Italy. Princess Romanework had been imprisoned along with her four sons, two of whom also died in Italy. The remaining two, Dejazmatch Samson Beyene Merid, and Dejazmatch Merid Beyene Merid, were repatriated from Italy after the war and were raised by the Emperor and Empress.

Prince Asfaw Wossen was first married to Princess Wolete Israel Seyoum and then following their divorce to Princess Medferiashwork Abebe. Prince Makonnen was married to Princess Sara Gizaw. Prince Sahle Selassie was married to Princess Mahisente Habte Mariam. Princess Romanework married Dejazmatch Beyene Merid. Princess Tenagnework first married Ras Desta Damtew, and after she was widowed later married Ras Andargachew Messai. Princess Zenebework married Dejazmatch Haile Selassie Gugsa. Princess Tsehai married Lt. General Abiye Abebe.

Descendants of Menen Asfaw

Name of Issue	Birth	Death	Spouse	Children
Princess Tenagnework	12 January 1912	6 April 2003	1st Ras Desta Damtew 2nd Ras Andargatchew Messai	Princess Aida Desta Prince Amha Desta Princess Seble Desta Rear Admiral Prince Iskinder Desta Princess Hirut Desta Princess Sophia Desta Emebet Tsige Mariam Abebe Retta Emebet Mentewab Andargatchew (died in childhood)
Crown Prince Asfaw Wossen	27 July 1916	17 February 1997	1st Princess Wolete Israel Seyoum 2nd Princess Medferiashwork Abebe	Princess Ijigayehu Princess Maryam Senna Princess Sehin Azebe Crown Prince Zera Yacob Princess Sifrash Bizu
Princess Zenebework	25 July 1917	25 March 1934	Dejazmatch Haile Selassie Guglsa	
Princess Tsehai	13 October 1919	17 August 1942	Lt. General Abiye Abebe	
Prince Makonnen, Duke of Harar	16 October 1924	13 May 1957	Princess Sara Gizaw, Duchess of Harar	Prince Paul Wossen Seged Makonnen, Duke of Harar Prince Mikael Makonnen Prince Taffari Makonnen Prince Dawit Makonnen (or Makonnen Makonnen) Prince Beede Mariam Makonnen
Prince Sahle Selassie	27 February 1932	24 April 1962	Princess Mahisente Habte Mariam	Prince Ermias Sahle Selassie

Honours

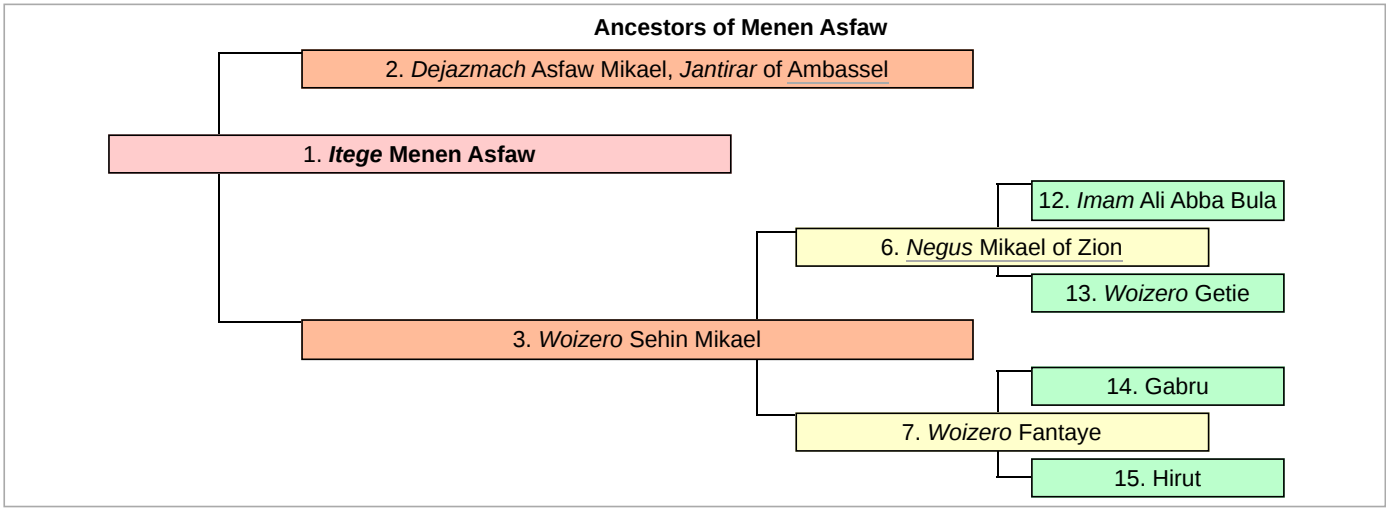
National honours

- Ethiopia: Knight Grand Collar of the Order of Solomon[11][12][13][14]
- Ethiopia: Knight Grand Cordon of the Order of the Seal of Solomon[15][16][17][18]
- Ethiopia: Knight Grand Cordon with Collar of the Order of the Queen of Sheba[19][20]
- Imperial Coronation Medal (1930).
- Refugee Medal (1944).
- Jubilee Medal (1955).

Foreign honours

- Member of the Royal Order of the Seraphim (Kingdom of Sweden, 19 December 1959).

Ancestry



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Marcus Garvey

Marcus Mosiah Garvey Jr. ONH (17 August 1887 – 10 June 1940) was a Jamaican political activist. He was the founder and first President-General of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL) (commonly known as UNIA), through which he declared himself Provisional President of Africa. Garvey was ideologically a black nationalist and Pan-Africanist. His ideas came to be known as Garveyism.

The Right Excellent
Marcus Garvey
ONH

Garvey c. 1920

Born	Marcus Mosiah Garvey 17 August 1887 Saint Ann's Bay, Colony of Jamaica
Died	10 June 1940 (aged 52) London, England
Alma mater	Birkbeck, University of London
Occupation(s)	Publisher, journalist, entrepreneur
Known for	Activism, black nationalism, Pan-Africanism
Spouses	Amy Ashwood (m. 1919; div. 1922) Amy Jacques (m. 1922)
Children	2 including Julius Garvey

Garvey was born into a moderately prosperous Afro-Jamaican family in Saint Ann's Bay and was apprenticed into the print trade as a teenager. Working in Kingston, he became involved in trade unionism. He later lived briefly in Costa Rica, Panama, and England. On returning to Jamaica, he founded the UNIA in 1914. In 1916, he moved to the United States and established a UNIA branch in New York City's Harlem district. Emphasising unity between Africans and the African diaspora, he campaigned for an end to European colonial rule in Africa and advocated the political unification of the continent. He envisioned a unified Africa as a one-party state, governed by himself, that would enact laws to ensure black racial purity. Although he never visited the continent, he was committed to the Back-to-Africa movement, arguing that part of the diaspora should migrate there. Garveyist ideas became increasingly popular, and the UNIA grew in membership. His black separatist views—and his relationship with white racists like the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the interest of advancing their shared goal of racial separatism—caused a division between Garvey and other prominent African-American civil rights activists such as W. E. B. Du Bois, who promoted racial integration.

Believing that black people needed to be financially independent from white-dominated societies, Garvey launched various businesses in the U.S., including the Negro Factories Corporation and *Negro World* newspaper. In 1919, he became President of the Black Star Line shipping and passenger company, designed to forge a link between North America and Africa and

facilitate African-American migration to Liberia. In 1923 Garvey was convicted of mail fraud for selling the company's stock, and was imprisoned in the United States Penitentiary, Atlanta for nearly two years. Garvey blamed Jews and Catholics, claiming that they were prejudiced against him because of his links to the KKK. His sentence was commuted by U.S. president Calvin Coolidge and he was deported to Jamaica in 1927. Settling in Kingston with his wife Amy Jacques, Garvey established the People's Political Party in 1929, briefly serving as a city councillor. With the UNIA in increasing financial difficulty, he relocated to London in 1935, where his anti-socialist stance distanced him from many of the city's black activists. He died there in 1940, and in 1964 his body was returned to Jamaica for reburial in Kingston's National Heroes Park.

Garvey was a controversial figure. Some in the African diasporic community regarded him as a pretentious demagogue, and were highly critical of his collaboration with white supremacists, his violent rhetoric, and his prejudice against mixed-race people and Jews. He received praise for encouraging a sense of pride and self-worth among Africans and the African diaspora amid widespread poverty, discrimination and colonialism. In Jamaica, he is recognized as a national hero, the first person to be recognized as such.[1] His ideas exerted a considerable influence on such movements as Rastafari, the Nation of Islam and the Black Power Movement.

Early life

Childhood: 1887–1904

A statue of Garvey now stands in Saint Ann's Bay, the town where he was born

Marcus Mosiah Garvey was born on 17 August 1887 in Saint Ann's Bay, a town in the British colony of Jamaica.[2] In the context of colonial Jamaican society, which had a colourist social hierarchy, Garvey was considered at the lowest end, being a black child who was of full African descent.[3] However, later genetic research nevertheless revealed that he had ancestors from the Iberian Peninsula.[4] Garvey's paternal great- grandfather had been born into slavery prior to its abolition in Jamaica.[5] His surname, which was of Irish origin, had been inherited from his family's former enslavers.[5]

His father, Malchus Garvey, was a stonemason;[6] his mother, Sarah Richards, was a domestic servant and the daughter of peasant farmers.[7] Malchus had had two previous wives before Sarah, having six children between them.[8] Sarah bore him four additional children, of whom Marcus was the youngest, although two died in infancy.[8] Because of his profession, Malchus' family were wealthier than many of their peasant neighbours;[9] they were petite bourgeoise.[10] Malchus was however reckless with his money and over the course of his life lost most of the land he owned to meet payments.[11] Malchus had a book collection and was self-educated;[12] he also served as a deacon at a local Wesleyan church.[13] [14]Malchus was an intolerant and punitive father and husband;[15] he never had a close relationship with his son.[16]

Up to the age of 14, Garvey attended a local church school; further education was unaffordable for the family.[17] When not in school, Garvey worked on his maternal uncle's tenant farm.[18] He had friends, with whom he once broke the windows of a church, resulting in his arrest.[19] Some of his friends were white, although he found that as they grew older they distanced themselves from him;[20] he later recalled that a close childhood friend was a white girl: "We were two innocent fools who never dreamed of a race feeling and problem."[10] In 1901, Marcus was apprenticed to his godfather, a local printer.[21] In 1904, the printer opened another branch at Port Maria, where Garvey began to work, travelling from Saint Ann's Bay each morning.[22]

Early career in Kingston: 1905–1909

In 1905 he moved to Kingston, where he boarded in Smith Village, a working-class neighbourhood.[22] In the city, he secured work with the printing division of the P.A. Benjamin Manufacturing Company. He rose quickly through the company ranks, becoming their first Afro-Jamaican foreman.[23] His sister and mother, by this point estranged from his father, moved to join him in the city.[24] In January 1907, Kingston was hit by an earthquake that reduced much of the city to rubble.[25] He, his mother, and his sister were left to sleep in the open for several months.[26] In March 1908, his mother died.[24] While in Kingston, Garvey converted to Catholicism.[27]

Garvey became a trade unionist, vice president of the compositors' section of the Printers' Union,[28] and took a leading role in the November 1908 print workers' strike. The strike was broken several weeks later and Garvey was sacked.[29] Henceforth branded a troublemaker, Garvey was unable to find work in the private sector.[30] He then found temporary employment with a government printer.[31] As a result of these experiences, Garvey became increasingly angry at the inequalities present in Jamaican society.[32]

Garvey involved himself with the National Club, Jamaica's first nationalist organization, becoming its first assistant secretary in April 1910.[33] The group campaigned to remove the Governor of Jamaica, Sydney Olivier, from office, and to end the migration of Indian "coolies", or indentured workers, to Jamaica, as they were seen as a source of economic competition by the established population.[34] With fellow Club member Wilfred Domingo he published a pamphlet expressing the group's ideas, *The Struggling Mass*.[34] In early 1910, Garvey began publishing a magazine, *Garvey's Watchman*—its name a reference to George William Gordon's *The Watchman*—although it lasted just three issues.[35] He claimed it had a circulation of 3000, although this was likely an exaggeration.[36] Garvey also enrolled in elocution lessons with the radical journalist Joseph Robert Love, coming to regard him as a mentor.[37] With Garvey's enhanced skill at speaking in a Standard English manner, he entered several public-speaking competitions.[38]

Travels abroad: 1910–1914

Economic hardship in Jamaica led to growing emigration from the island.[39] In mid-1910, Garvey travelled to Costa Rica, where an uncle had secured him employment as a timekeeper on a large banana plantation in the Limón Province owned by the United Fruit Company (UFC).[40] Shortly after his arrival, the area experienced strikes and unrest in opposition to the UFC's attempts to cut its workers' wages.[41] Although as a timekeeper he was responsible for overseeing the manual workers, he became increasingly angered at how they were treated.[42] In the spring of 1911 he launched a bilingual newspaper, *Nation*/*La Nación*, which criticized the actions of the UFC and upset many of the dominant strata of Costa Rican

society in Limón.[43] His coverage of a local fire, in which he questioned the motives of the fire brigade, resulted in his being brought in for police questioning.[44] After his printing press broke, he was unable to replace the faulty part and terminated the newspaper.[45]

In London, Garvey spent time in the Reading Room of the British Museum

Garvey then travelled through Central America, undertaking casual work as he made his way through Honduras, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela.[46] While in the port of Colón in Panama, he set up a new newspaper, *La Prensa* ("The Press").[47] In 1911, he became seriously ill with a bacterial infection and decided to return to Kingston.[48] He then decided to travel to London, the heart of the British Empire, in the hope of advancing his informal education. In the spring of 1912 he sailed to England.[49] Renting a room along Borough High Street in South London,[50] he visited the House of Commons, where he was impressed by the politician David Lloyd George.[50] He also visited Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park and began making speeches there.[51] There were only a few thousand black people in London at the time, and they were often viewed as exotic; most worked as labourers.[52] Garvey initially gained piecemeal work labouring in the city's docks.[53] In August 1912, his sister Indiana joined him in London, where she worked as a domestic servant.[54]

In early 1913, he was employed as a messenger and handyman for the *African Times and Orient Review*, a magazine based in Fleet Street that was edited by Dusé Mohamed Ali.[55] The magazine advocated Ethiopianism and home rule for British-ruled Egypt.[56] In 1914, Mohamed Ali began employing Garvey as a writer for the magazine.[57] Garvey also took several evening classes in law at Birkbeck College in Bloomsbury.[58] He planned a tour of Europe, spending time in Glasgow, Paris, Monte Carlo, Boulogne, and Madrid.[59][60]

Back in London, he wrote an article on Jamaica for the *Tourist* magazine,[61] and spent time reading in the library of the British Museum. There he discovered *Up from Slavery*, a book by the African-American entrepreneur and activist Booker T. Washington.[62] Washington's book heavily influenced Garvey.[63] Now almost financially destitute and deciding to return to Jamaica, he unsuccessfully asked both the Colonial Office and the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society to pay for his journey.[64] After managing to save the funds for a fare, he boarded the *SS Trent* in June 1914 for a three-week journey across the Atlantic.[65] En route home, Garvey talked with an Afro-Caribbean missionary who had spent time in Basutoland and taken a Basuto wife. Discovering more about colonial Africa from this man, Garvey began to envision a movement that would politically unify black people of African descent across the world.[66]

Organization of the UNIA

Forming the UNIA: 1914–1916

Garvey arrived back in Jamaica in July 1914.[68] There, he saw his article for *Tourist* republished in *The Gleaner*.[69] He began earning money selling greeting and condolence cards that he had imported from Britain, before later switching to selling tombstones.[70]

> To the cultured mind the bulk of our [i.e. black] people are contemptible[…] Go into the country parts of Jamaica and you will see there villainy and vice of the worst kind, immorality, obeah and all kinds of dirty things[…] Kingston and its environs are so infested with the uncouth and vulgar of our people that we of the cultured class feel positively ashamed to move about. Well, this society [UNIA] has set itself the task to go among the people[…] and raise them to the standard of civilised approval.
>
> — Garvey, from a 1915 Collegiate Hall speech published in the *Daily Chronicle*[67]

Also in July 1914, Garvey launched the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, commonly abbreviated as UNIA.[71] Adopting the motto of "One Aim. One God. One Destiny",[72] it declared its commitment to "establish a brotherhood among the black race, to promote a spirit of race pride, to reclaim the fallen and to assist in civilising the backward tribes of Africa."[73] Initially, it had only a few members.[74] Many Jamaicans were critical of the group's prominent use of the term "Negro", a term that was often employed as an insult:[73] Garvey, however, embraced the term with reference to black people of African descent.[75]

Garvey became UNIA's president and travelling commissioner;[76] it was initially based out of his hotel room in Orange Street, Kingston.[69] It portrayed itself not as a political organization but as a charitable club,[77] focused on work to help the poor and to ultimately establish a vocational training college modelled on Washington's Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.[78] Garvey wrote to Washington and received a brief, if encouraging reply; Washington died shortly after.[79] UNIA officially expressed its loyalty to the British Empire, King George V, and the British effort in the ongoing First World War.[80] In April 1915, Brigadier General L. S. Blackden lectured to the group on the war effort;[81] Garvey endorsed Blackden's calls for more Jamaicans to sign up to fight for the Empire on the Western Front.[81] The group also sponsored musical and literary evenings as well as a February 1915 elocution contest, at which Garvey took first prize.[82]

In August 1914, Garvey attended a meeting of the Queen Street Baptist Literary and Debating Society, where he met Amy Ashwood, recently graduated from the Westwood Training College for Women.[83] She joined UNIA and rented a better premises for them to use as their headquarters, secured using her father's credit.[84] She and Garvey embarked on a relationship, which was opposed by her parents. In 1915, they secretly became engaged.[70] When she suspended the engagement, he threatened to commit suicide, at which she resumed it.[85]

> I was openly hated and persecuted by some of these colored men of the island who did not want to be classified as Negroes but as white.

Garvey attracted financial contributions from many prominent patrons, including the Mayor of Kingston and the Governor of Jamaica,

> — Garvey, on how he was received in Jamaica[86]

William Manning.[87] By appealing directly to Jamaica's white elite, Garvey had skipped the brown middle-classes, comprising those who were classified as mulattos, quadroons, and octoroons. They were generally hostile to Garvey, regarding him as a pretentious social climber and being annoyed at his claim to be part of the "cultured class" of Jamaican society.[88] Many also felt that he was unnecessarily derogatory when describing black Jamaicans, with letters of complaint being sent into the *Daily Chronicle* after it published one of Garvey's speeches in which he referred to many of his people as "uncouth and vulgar".[89] One complainant, a Dr Leo Pink, related that "the Jamaican Negro can not be reformed by abuse".[67] After unsubstantiated allegations began circling that Garvey was diverting UNIA funds to pay for his own personal expenses, the group's support began to decline.[90] He became increasingly aware of how UNIA had failed to thrive in Jamaica and decided to migrate to the United States, sailing there aboard the *SS Tallac* in March 1916.[91]

Moving to the United States: 1916–1918

Arriving in the United States, Garvey initially lodged with a Jamaican expatriate family living in Harlem, a largely black area of New York City.[93] He began lecturing in the city, hoping to make a career as a public speaker, although at his first public speech he was heckled and fell off the stage.[94] From New York City, he embarked on a U.S. speaking tour, crossing 38 states.[95] At stopovers on his journey he listened to preachers from the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Black Baptist churches.[96] While in Alabama, he visited the Tuskegee Institute and met with its new leader, Robert Russa Moton.[97] After six months traveling across the U.S. lecturing, he returned to New York City.[98]

The UNIA flag, a tricolour of red, black, and green. According to Garvey, the red symbolises the blood of martyrs, the black symbolizes the skin of Africans, and the green represents the vegetation of the African land.[92]

In May 1917, Garvey launched a New York branch of UNIA.[99] He declared membership open to anyone "of Negro blood and African ancestry" who could pay the 25-cents-a-month membership fee.[100] He joined many other speakers who made speeches on the street, standing on step-ladders;[101] he often did so at Speakers' Corner on 135th Street.[102] In his speeches, he sought to reach across to both Afro-Caribbean migrants like himself and native African Americans.[103] Through this, he began to associate with Hubert Harrison, who was promoting ideas of black self-reliance and racial separatism.[104] In June, Garvey shared a stage with Harrison at the inaugural meeting of the latter's Liberty League of Negro-Americans.[105] Through his appearance here and at other events organized by Harrison, Garvey attracted growing public attention.[106]

After the U.S. entered the First World War in April 1917, Garvey initially signed up to fight but was ruled physically unfit to do so.[107] He later became an opponent of African-American involvement in the conflict, following Harrison in accusing it of being a "white man's war".[108] In the wake of the East St. Louis Race Riots in May to July 1917, in which white mobs targeted black people, Garvey began calling for armed self-defense.[109] He produced a pamphlet, *The Conspiracy of the East St Louis Riots*, which was widely distributed; proceeds from its sale went to victims of the riots.[110] The Bureau of

Investigation began monitoring him, noting that in speeches he employed more militant language than that used in print; it for instance reported his expressing the view that "for every Negro lynched by whites in the South, Negroes should lynch a white in the North."[111]

By the end of 1917, Garvey had attracted many of Harrison's key associates in his Liberty League to join UNIA.[112] Garvey also secured the support of the journalist John Edward Bruce, agreeing to step down from the group's presidency in favor of Bruce.[113] Bruce then wrote to Dusé Mohamed Ali to learn more about Garvey's past. Mohamed Ali responded with a negative assessment of Garvey, suggesting that he simply used UNIA as a money-making scheme. Bruce read this letter to a UNIA meeting and put pressure on Garvey's position.[114] Garvey then resigned from UNIA, establishing a rival group that met at Old Fellows Temple.[115] He also launched legal proceedings against Bruce and other senior UNIA members, with the court ruling that UNIA's name and membership—now estimated at 600—belonged to Garvey, who resumed control over the organization.[116]

The growth of UNIA: 1918–1921

UNIA membership grew rapidly in 1918.[100] In June that year it was incorporated,[117] and in July a commercial arm, the African Communities' League, filed for incorporation.[100] Garvey envisioned UNIA establishing an import-and-export business, a restaurant, and a laundry.[100] He also proposed raising the funds to secure a permanent building as a base for the group.[100] In April, Garvey launched a weekly newspaper, the *Negro World*,[118] which Edmund David Cronon later noted remained "the personal propaganda organ of its founder".[119] Financially, the *Negro World* was backed by philanthropists such as Madam C. J. Walker,[120] but six months after its launch was pursuing a special appeal for donations to keep it afloat.[121]

Various journalists took Garvey to court for his failure to pay them for their contributions, a fact much publicized by rival publications;[120] at the time, there were more than 400 black-run newspapers and magazines in the U.S.[122] Unlike many of these, Garvey refused to feature adverts for skin-lightening and hair-straightening products,[123] urging black people to "take the kinks out of your mind, instead of out of your hair".[124] By the end of its first year, the circulation of *Negro World* was nearing 10,000;[120] copies circulated not only in the U.S., but also in the Caribbean, Central, and South America.[125] Several British West Indian islands banned the publication.[126]

Garvey appointed his old friend Domingo, who had also arrived in New York City, as the newspaper's editor.[127] However, Domingo's socialist views alarmed Garvey, who feared that they would imperil UNIA.[128] Garvey had Domingo brought before UNIA's nine-person executive committee, where the latter was accused of writing editorials professing ideas at odds with UNIA's message. Domingo resigned several months later; he and Garvey henceforth became enemies.[129] In September 1918, Amy Ashwood sailed from Panama to be with Garvey, arriving in New York City in October.[130] In November, she became General Secretary of UNIA.[131] At UNIA gatherings, she was responsible for reciting black-authored poetry, as was the actress Henrietta Vinton Davis, who had also joined the movement.[132]

After the First World War ended, President Woodrow Wilson declared his intention to present a 14-point plan for world peace at the forthcoming Paris Peace Conference. Garvey joined various African Americans in forming the International League for Darker People, a group that sought to lobby Wilson and the conference to give greater respect to the wishes of people of color; their delegates nevertheless were unable to secure the travel documentation.[133] At Garvey's prompting, UNIA sent a young Haitian,

Eliezer Cadet, as its delegate to the conference.[134] Despite these efforts, the political leaders who met in Paris largely ignored the perspectives of non-European peoples, instead reaffirming their support for continued European colonial rule.[135]

Negro World

GREAT WORLD CONVENTION OF NEGROES

Members of the Race From All Parts of the World to Assemble at Liberty Hall, New York, Sunday, August 1, at 10 A. M.—Biggest and Most Representative Assemblage in History of the Race

CONSTITUTION OF NEGRO LIBERTY IS TO BE WRITTEN

HON. MARCUS GARVEY, WORLD FAMED ORATOR

LIBERTY HALL

In 1918, Garvey's UNIA began publishing the *Negro World* newspaper.

In the U.S., many African Americans who had served in the military refused to return to their more subservient role in society and throughout 1919 there were various racial clashes throughout the country.[136] The government feared that African Americans would be encouraged toward revolutionary behavior following the October Revolution in Russia,[137] and in this context, military intelligence ordered Major Walter Loving to investigate Garvey.[138] Loving's report concluded that Garvey was a "very able young man" who was disseminating "clever propaganda".[139] The Bureau of Investigation's J. Edgar Hoover decided that Garvey was politically subversive and should be deported from the U.S., adding his name to the list of those to be targeted in the forthcoming Palmer Raids. To ratify the deportation, the Bureau of Investigation presented Garvey's name to the Labor Department under Louis F. Post; however, Post's department refused to do so, stating that the case against Garvey was not proven.[140]

Success and obstacles

Garvey speaking at Liberty Hall, Harlem, in 1920

UNIA grew rapidly and in just over 18 months it had branches in 25 U.S. states, as well as divisions in the West Indies, Central America, and West Africa.[141] The exact membership is not known, although Garvey—who often exaggerated numbers—claimed that by June 1919 it had two million members.[141] It remained smaller than the better established National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP),[141] although there was some crossover in membership of the two groups.[142] The NAACP and UNIA differed in their approach; while the NAACP was a multi-racial organization which promoted racial integration, UNIA had a black-only membership policy. The NAACP focused its attention on what it termed the "talented tenth" of the African-American population, such as doctors, lawyers, and teachers, whereas UNIA included many poorer people and Afro-Caribbean migrants in its ranks, seeking to project an image of itself as a mass organization.[143] To promote his views to a wide audience, Garvey took to shouting slogans from a megaphone as he was driven through Harlem in a Cadillac.[144]

There were tensions between UNIA and the NAACP and the latter's supporters accused Garvey of stymieing their efforts at bringing about racial integration in the U.S.[145] Garvey was dismissive of the NAACP leader W. E. B. Du Bois, and in one issue of the *Negro World* called him a "reactionary under [the] pay of white men".[146] Du Bois generally tried to ignore Garvey,[147] regarding him as a demagogue,[148] but at the same time wanted to learn all he could about Garvey's movement.[149] In 1921, Garvey twice reached out to Du Bois, asking him to contribute to UNIA publications, but the offer

was rebuffed.[150] Their relationship became acrimonious; in 1923, Du Bois described Garvey as "a little fat black man, ugly but with intelligent eyes and big head".[151] By 1924, historian Colin Grant has suggested, the two hated each other.[151]

UNIA established a restaurant and ice cream parlor at 56 West 135th Street,[152] and also launched a millinery store selling hats.[153] With an increased income coming in through UNIA, Garvey moved to a new residence at 238 West 131st Street;[143] in 1919, a young middle-class Jamaican migrant, Amy Jacques, became his personal secretary.[154] UNIA also obtained a partly-constructed church building at 114 West 138 Street in Harlem, which Garvey named "Liberty Hall" after its namesake in Dublin, Ireland, which had been established during the Easter Rising of 1916.[155] The adoption of this name reflected Garvey's fascination with the Irish independence movement.[156] Liberty Hall's dedication ceremony was held in July 1919.[157] During the hunger strike of Terence MacSwiney, Garvey supported solidarity strikes in support of MacSwiney[158] and made appeals to the British government on his behalf.[159]

Garvey also organized the African Legion, a group of uniformed men who would attend UNIA parades;[160] a secret service was formed from Legion members, providing Garvey with intelligence about group members.[161] The formation of the Legion further concerned the Bureau of Investigation, who sent their first full-time black agent, James Wormley Jones, to infiltrate UNIA.[162] In January 1920, Garvey incorporated the Negro Factories League,[163] through which he opened a string of grocery stores, a restaurant, a steam laundry, and publishing house.[164] According to Grant, a personality cult had grown up around Garvey within the UNIA movement;[165] life-size portraits of him hung in the UNIA headquarters and phonograph records of his speeches were sold to the membership.[166]

A UNIA parade through Harlem in 1920

In August 1920, UNIA organized the First International Conference of the Negro Peoples in Harlem.[167] This parade was attended by Gabriel Johnson, the Mayor of Monrovia in Liberia.[168] As part of it, an estimated 25,000 people assembled in Madison Square Gardens.[169] At the conference, UNIA delegates declared Garvey to be the Provisional President of Africa, charged with heading a government-in-exile that could take power in the continent when European colonial rule ended via decolonization.[170] Some of the West Africans attending the event were angered by this, believing it wrong that an Afro-Jamaican, rather than a native African, was taking this role.[171]

Many outside the movement ridiculed Garvey for giving himself this title.[172] The conference then elected other members of the African government-in-exile,[173] resulting in the production of a "Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World" which condemned European colonial rule across Africa.[174] In August 1921, UNIA held a banquet in Liberty Hall, at which Garvey gave out honors to various supporters, including such titles as the Order of the Nile and the Order of Ethiopia.[175]

UNIA established growing links with the Liberian government, hoping to secure land in the West African nation on which it could settle African-American migrants.[176] Liberia was in heavy debt, with UNIA launching a fundraising campaign to raise $2 million towards a Liberian Construction Loan.[176] In 1921, Garvey sent a UNIA team to assess the prospects of mass African-American settlement in Liberia.[177] Internally, UNIA experienced various feuds. Garvey pushed out Cyril Briggs and other members of the African Blood Brotherhood from UNIA, wanting to place growing distance between himself and black

socialist groups.[178] In the *Negro World*, Garvey then accused Briggs—who was of mixed heritage—of being a white man posing as a black man. Briggs successfully sued Garvey for criminal libel.[179] This was not the only time he faced this charge; in July 1919, Garvey had been arrested for comments in the *Negro World* about Edwin P. Kilroe, the Assistant District Attorney in the District Attorney's office of the County of New York.[180] When this case eventually came to court, the court ordered Garvey to provide a printed retraction.[181]

Assassination attempt, marriage, and divorce

In October 1919, George Tyler, a part-time vendor of the *Negro World*, entered the UNIA office and told Garvey that Kilroe "had sent him" and tried to assassinate Garvey. Garvey was shot at four times with a .38-calibre revolver, and received two bullets in his right leg and scalp but survived. Tyler was soon apprehended but committed suicide by leaping from the third-tier of the Harlem jail; it was never revealed why he tried to kill Garvey.[182][183] Garvey soon recovered from his wounds; five days later he gave a public speech in Philadelphia.[184] After the assassination attempt, Garvey hired a bodyguard, Marcellus Strong.[185]

"Explanation of the Objects of the Universal Negro Improvement Association"

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Complete 1921 speech

Problems playing this file? See media help.

Shortly after the incident, Garvey proposed marriage to Amy Ashwood and she accepted.[186] On Christmas Day, they had a private Catholic wedding, followed by a major ceremonial celebration in Liberty Hall, attended by 3000 UNIA members.[187] Jacques was Ashwood's maid of honor.[186] After the wedding, Garvey moved into Ashwood's apartment.[188] The newlyweds embarked on a two-week honeymoon in Canada, accompanied by a small UNIA retinue, including Jacques. There, Garvey spoke at two mass meetings in Montreal and three in Toronto.[189] After their return to Harlem, the couple's marriage was soon strained. Ashwood complained of Garvey's growing closeness with Jacques.[188] Garvey was upset by his inability to control his wife, particularly her drinking and her socializing with other men.[190] She was pregnant, although the child was possibly not his; she did not inform him of this, and the pregnancy ended in miscarriage.[191]

Three months into the marriage, Garvey sought an annulment, on the basis of Ashwood's alleged adultery and the claim that she had used "fraud and concealment" to induce the marriage.[192] She launched a counter-claim for desertion, requesting $75-a-week alimony. The court rejected this sum, instead ordering Garvey to pay her $12 a week. It refused to grant him the divorce.[193] The court proceedings continued for two years.[193] Now separated, Garvey moved into a 129th Street apartment with Jacques and Henrietta Vinton Davis, an arrangement that at the time could have caused some social controversy.[194] He was later joined there by his sister Indiana and her husband, Alfred Peart.[195] Ashwood, meanwhile, went on to become a lyricist and musical director for musicals amid the Harlem Renaissance.[196]

The Black Star Line

> Black Star Line was organized for the industrial, commercial and economic development of the race to carry out the program of U.N.I.A., that is to have ships to link up the Negro peoples of the world in commercial trade and in fraternities.
>
> — *The Negro World*[197]

From 56 West 135th Street, UNIA also began selling shares for a new business, the Black Star Line.[152] Seeking to challenge white domination of the maritime industry,[197] the Black Star Line based its name on the White Star Line.[198] Garvey envisioned a shipping and passenger line traveling between Africa and the Americas, which would be black-owned, black-staffed, and utilized by black patrons.[199] He thought that the project could be launched by raising $2 million from African-American donors,[200] publicly declaring that any black person who did not buy stock in the company "will be worse than a traitor to the cause of struggling Ethiopia".[201]

Garvey incorporated the company and then set about trying to purchase a ship.[202] Many African Americans took great pride in buying company stock, seeing it as an investment in their community's future;[203] Garvey also promised that when the company began turning a profit they would receive significant financial returns on their investment.[204] To advertise this stock, he traveled to Virginia,[204] and then in September 1919 to Chicago, where he was accompanied by seven other UNIA members. In Chicago, he was arrested and fined for violating the Blue Sky Laws that banned the sale of stock in the city without a license.[205]

With growing quantities of money coming in, a three-man auditing committee was established, which found that UNIA's funds were poorly recorded and that the company's books were not balanced.[206] This was followed by a breakdown in trust between the directors of the Black Star Line, with Garvey discharging two of them, Richard E. Warner and Edgar M. Grey, and publicly humiliating them at the next UNIA meeting.[207] People continued buying stock regardless and by September 1919, the Black Star Line company had accumulated $50,000 ($910,000 in current dollar terms) by selling stock. It could thus afford a thirty-year-old tramp ship, the SS *Yarmouth*.[208] The ship was formally launched in a ceremony on the Hudson River on 31 October.[209] The company had been unable to find enough trained black seamen to staff the ship, so its initial chief engineer and chief officer were white.[210]

A certificate for stock of the Black Star Line

The ship's first assignment was to sail to Cuba and then to Jamaica, before returning to New York.[211] After that first voyage, the *Yarmouth* was found to contain many problems and the Black Star Line had to pay $11,000 for repairs.[212] On its second voyage, again to the Caribbean, it hit bad weather shortly after departure and had to be towed back to New York by the coastguard for further repairs.[213] Garvey planned to obtain and launch a second ship by February 1920,[147] with the Black Star Line putting down a $10,000 ($160,000 in current dollar terms) deposit on a paddle ship called the SS *Shady Side*.[214] In July 1920, Garvey sacked both the Black Star Line's secretary, Edward D. Smith-Green, and its captain, Joshua Cockburn; the latter was accused of

corruption.[215] In early 1922, the *Yarmouth* was sold for scrap metal, bringing the Black Star Line less than a hundredth of its original purchase price.[216] The worn-out steamboat *Shady Side* was abandoned on the mud flats at Fort Lee, New Jersey, in the fall of 1922, when the Black Star Line collapsed.[217][218]

In 1921, Garvey traveled to the Caribbean aboard a Black Star Line ship, the newly-acquired *Antonio Maceo*.[219] While in Jamaica, he criticized its inhabitants as being backward and claimed that "Negroes are the most lazy, the most careless and indifferent people in the world".[220] His comments in Jamaica earned many enemies, who criticized him on multiple fronts, including the fact he had left his destitute father to die in an almshouse.[221] Attacks back-and-forth between Garvey and his critics appeared in the letters published by *The Gleaner*.[222]

From Jamaica, Garvey traveled to Costa Rica, where the United Fruit Company assisted his transportation around the country, hoping to gain his favor. There, he met with President Julio Acosta.[223] Arriving in Panama, at one of his first speeches, in Almirante, he was booed after doubling the advertised entry price; his response was to call the crowd "a bunch of ignorant and impertinent Negroes. No wonder you are where you are and for my part you can stay where you are."[224] He received a far warmer reception at Panama City,[225] after which he sailed to Kingston. From there he sought a return to the U.S., but was repeatedly denied an entry visa. This was granted only after he wrote directly to the State Department.[226]

Criminal charges: 1922–1923

The steamship *Orion*

In January 1922, Garvey was arrested and charged with mail fraud for having advertised the sale of stocks in a ship, *Orion*, which the Black Star Line did not yet own.[227] He was bailed for $2,500.[228] Hoover and the BOI were committed to securing a conviction;[229] they had also received complaints from a small number of the Black Star Line's stock owners, who wanted them to pursue the matter further.[230] Garvey spoke out against the charges he faced, but focused on blaming not the state, but rival African-American groups, for them.[229] As well as accusing disgruntled former members of UNIA, in a Liberty Hall speech, he implied that the NAACP were behind the conspiracy to imprison him.[231] The mainstream press picked up on the charge, largely presenting Garvey as a con artist who had swindled African-American people.[232]

After his arrest, Garvey announced that the activities of the Black Star Line were being suspended.[233] He also made plans for a tour of the western and southern states.[234] This included a parade in Los Angeles, partly to woo back members of UNIA's California branch, which had recently splintered off to become independent.[235] In June 1922, Garvey met with Edward Young Clarke, the Imperial Wizard *pro tempore* of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) at the Klan's offices in Atlanta.[236] Garvey made a number of incendiary speeches in the months leading up to that meeting; in some, he thanked the whites for Jim Crow.[237] Garvey once stated:

> I regard the Klan, the Anglo-Saxon clubs and White American societies, as far as the Negro is concerned, as better friends of the race than all other groups of hypocritical whites put together. I like honesty and fair play. You may call me a Klansman if you will, but,

> potentially, every white man is a Klansman as far as the Negro in competition with whites socially, economically and politically is concerned, and there is no use lying.[238][239]

Garvey with his wife Amy Jacques in 1922

News of Garvey's meeting with the KKK soon spread and it was covered on the front page of many African-American newspapers, causing widespread upset.[240] When news of the meeting was revealed, it generated much surprise and anger among African Americans; Grant noted that it marked "the most significant turning point in his popularity".[241] Several prominent black Americans—Chandler Owen, A. Philip Randolph, William Pickens, and Robert Bagnall—launched the "Garvey Must Go" campaign in the wake of the revelation.[242] Many of these critics played to nativist ideas by emphasising Garvey's Jamaican identity and sometimes calling for his deportation.[243] Pickens and several other of Garvey's critics claimed to have been threatened, and sometimes physically attacked, by Garveyites.[244] Randolph reported receiving a severed hand in the post, accompanied by a letter from the KKK threatening him to stop criticising Garvey and to join UNIA.[245]

> Have this day interviewed Edward Young Clarke, acting Imperial Wizard Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. In conference of two ours he outlined the aims and objects of the Klan. He denied any hostility towards the Negro Improvement Association. He believes America to be a white man's country, and also states that the Negro should have a country of his own in Africa[…] He has been invited to speak at [UNIA's] forthcoming convention to further assure the race of the stand of the Klan.
>
> —Garvey's telegram to UNIA HQ, June 1922.[246]

1922 also brought some successes for Garvey. He attracted the country's first black pilot, Hubert Fauntleroy Julian, to join UNIA and to perform aerial stunts to raise its profile.[247] The group also launched its Booker T. Washington University from the UNIA-run Phyllis Wheatley Hotel at 3–13 West 136th Street.[248] He also finally succeeded in securing a UNIA delegation to the League of Nations, sending five members to represent the group to Geneva.[249]

Garvey also proposed marriage to his secretary, Jacques. She accepted, although later stated: "I did not marry for love. I did not love Garvey. I married him because I thought it was the right thing to do."[250] They married in Baltimore in July 1922.[251] She proposed that a book of his speeches be published; it appeared as *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, although the speeches were edited to remove more inflammatory material.[252] That year, UNIA also launched a new newspaper, the *Daily Negro Times*.[253]

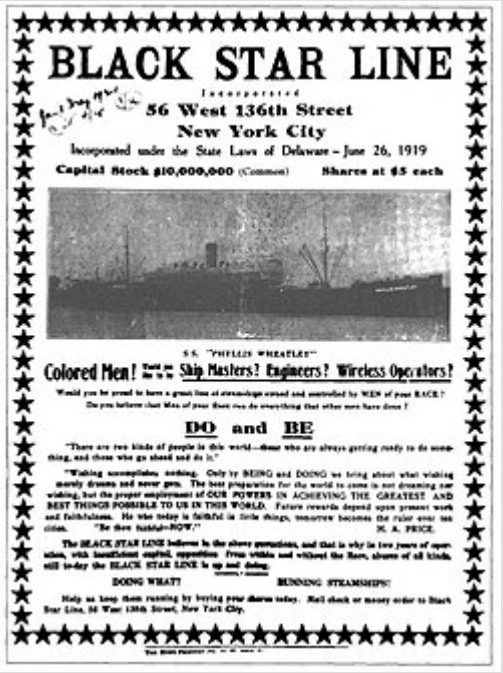
At UNIA's August 1922 convention, Garvey called for the impeachment of several senior UNIA figures, including Adrian Johnson and J. D. Gibson, and declared that the UNIA cabinet should not be elected by the organization's members, but appointed directly by him.[254] When they refused to step down, he resigned both as head of UNIA and as Provisional President of Africa, probably in an act designed to compel their own resignations.[255] He then began openly criticising another senior member, Reverend James Eason, and succeeded in getting him expelled from UNIA.[256]

With Eason gone, Garvey asked the rest of the cabinet to resign; they did so, at which he resumed his role as head of the organization.[257] In September, Eason launched a rival group to UNIA, the Universal Negro Alliance.[243] In January 1923, Eason was assassinated by Garveyites while in New Orleans.[258] Hoover suspected that the killing had been ordered by senior UNIA members, although Garvey publicly denied any involvement; he nevertheless launched a defense fund campaign for Eason's killers.[259]

Following the murder, eight prominent African Americans signed a public letter calling Garvey "an unscrupulous demagogue who has ceaselessly and assiduously sought to spread among Negroes distrust and hatred of all white people". They urged the Attorney-General to bring forth the criminal case against Garvey and disband UNIA.[260] Garvey was furious, publicly accusing them of "the greatest bit of treachery and wickedness that any group of Negroes could be capable of."[261] In a pamphlet attacking them he focused on their racial heritage, lambasting the eight for the reason that "nearly all [are] Octoroons and Quadroons".[262] Du Bois—who was not among the eight—then wrote an article critical of Garvey's activities in the U.S.[263] Garvey responded by calling Du Bois "a Hater of Dark People", an "unfortunate mulatto who bewails every drop of Negro blood in his veins".[264]

Trial: 1923

Having been postponed at least three times,[246] in May 1923, the trial finally came to court, with Garvey and three other defendants accused of mail fraud.[266] The judge overseeing the proceedings was Julian Mack, although Garvey disliked his selection on the grounds that he thought Mack an NAACP sympathiser.[266] At the start of the trial, Garvey's attorney, Cornelius McDougald, urged him to plead guilty to secure a minimum sentence, but Garvey refused, dismissing McDougald and deciding to represent himself in court.[267] The trial proceeded for more than a month.[268] Throughout, Garvey struggled due to his lack of legal training.[269] In his three-hour closing address he presented himself as a selfless leader who was beset by incompetent and thieving staff who caused all the problems for UNIA and the Black Star Line.[270] On 18 June, the jurors retired to deliberate on the verdict, returning after ten hours. They found Garvey himself guilty of a scheme to defraud, but his three co-defendants not guilty.[271]



The Black Star Line brochure for *Phyllis Wheatley*, central exhibit in the Mail Fraud case of 1921. *Phyllis Wheatley* did not exist; this is a doctored photograph of an ex-German ship, *Orion*, put up for sale by the United States Shipping Board. The Black Star Line had proposed to buy her but the transaction was never completed.[265]

Garvey was furious with the verdict, shouting abuse in the courtroom and calling both the judge and district attorney "damned dirty Jews".[272] Imprisoned in The Tombs jail, while awaiting sentence, he continued to blame a Jewish cabal for the verdict. Before this he had never expressed antisemitic sentiment and was supportive of Zionism.[273] When it came to sentencing, Mack sentenced Garvey to five years' imprisonment and a $1000 fine.[273]

The severity of the sentence—which was harsher than those given to similar crimes at the time—may have been a response to Garvey's antisemitic outburst.[273] He felt that they and Catholic jurors had been biased because of their political objections to his meeting with the acting imperial wizard of the antisemitic and anti-Catholic Ku Klux Klan the year before.[274][274][275] In 1928, Garvey told a journalist: "When they wanted to get me they had a Jewish judge try me, and a Jewish prosecutor. I would have been freed but two Jews on the jury held out against me ten hours and succeeded in convicting me, whereupon the Jewish judge gave me the maximum penalty."[274][276] A decade later, however, in a *New Jamaican* editorial on 28 March 1933, he wrote: "The Jewish race is a noble one, and the Jew is only persecuted because he has certain qualities of progress that other people have not learnt", likened antisemitism to anti-Black persecution, and denounced Nazi racial intolerance.[277]

A week after the sentence, 2000 Garveyite protesters met at Liberty Hall to denounce Garvey's conviction as a miscarriage of justice.[278] However, with Garvey imprisoned, UNIA's membership began to decline,[279] and there was a growing schism between its Caribbean and African-American members.[278] From jail, Garvey continued to write letters and articles lashing out at those he blamed for the conviction, focusing much of his criticism on the NAACP.[280]

Out on bail: 1923–1925

In September, appellate judge Martin Manton awarded Garvey bail for $15,000 − which UNIA was able to raise and post — while he appealed against his conviction.[281] At least temporarily a free man, Garvey toured the U.S., giving a lecture at the Tuskegee Institute.[282] In speeches given during this tour he further emphasised the need for racial segregation through migration to Africa, calling the United States "a white man's country".[283] He continued to defend his meeting with the KKK, describing them as having more "honesty of purpose towards the Negro" than the NAACP.[283] Although he previously avoided involvement with party politics, for the first time he encouraged UNIA to propose candidates in elections, often setting them against NAACP-backed candidates in areas with high black populations.[284]

> The American Negro has endured this wretch [Garvey] too long with fine restraint and every effort of cooperation and understanding. But the end has come. Every man who apologizes for or defends Marcus Garvey from this day forth writes himself down as unworthy of the countenance of decent Americans. As for Garvey himself, this open ally of the Ku Klux Klan should be locked up or sent home.
>
> —Du Bois, in *The Crisis*, May 1924.[285]

In February 1924, UNIA put forward its plans to bring 3000 African-American migrants to Liberia. The latter's president, Charles D. B. King, assured them that he would grant them land for three colonies.[286] In June, a team of UNIA technicians was sent to start work in preparing for these colonies.[287] When they arrived in Liberia, they were arrested and immediately deported. At the same time, Liberia's government issued a press release declaring that it would refuse permission for any Americans to settle in their country.[288]

Garvey blamed WEB Du Bois of the NAACP for this apparent change in the Liberian government's attitude, for the latter had spent time in the country and had links with its ruling elite; Du Bois denied the accusation.[289] Later examination suggested that, despite King's assurances to the UNIA team, the Liberian government had never seriously intended to allow African-American colonization, aware that it would harm relations with the British and French colonies on their borders, who feared the political tensions it could bring with it.[290]

UNIA faced further setbacks when John Edward Bruce died; the group organized a funeral procession ending in a ceremony at Liberty Hall.[291] In need of additional finances, *Negro World* dropped its longstanding ban on advertising skin lightening and hair straightening products.[220] The additional revenues allowed the Black Star Line to purchase a new ship, the SS *General G W Goethals*, in October 1924. It was then renamed the SS *Booker T. Washington*.[292]

Garvey in 1924

Imprisonment: 1925–1927

In early February 1925, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit upheld the original court decision.[293] Writing for the unanimous court, judge Charles Merrill Hough opined: "It may be true that Garvey fancied himself a Moses, if not a Messiah; that he deemed himself a man with a message to deliver, and believed that he needed ships for the deliverance of his people; but with this assumed, it remains true that if his gospel consisted in part of exhortations to buy worthless stock, accompanied by deceivingly false statements as to the worth thereof, he was guilty of a scheme or artifice to defraud, if the jury found the necessary intent about his stock scheme, no matter how uplifting, philanthropic, or altruistic his larger outlook may have been. And if such scheme to defraud was accompanied by the use of the mails defined by the statute, he was guilty of an offense under Criminal Code, § 215."[294][295]

Denial of his appeal meant the termination of the bail that had been granted following conviction. Garvey was in Detroit at the time and was arrested while aboard a train back to New York City.[296] He was taken to the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary and incarcerated there.[297] Imprisoned, he was made to carry out cleaning tasks.[298] On one occasion he was reprimanded for insolence towards the white prison officers.[299] There, he became increasingly ill with chronic bronchitis and lung infections.[300] Two years into his imprisonment he was hospitalized with influenza.[301]

A postcard depicting the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary in 1920, a few years before Garvey was imprisoned there

Garvey received regular letters from UNIA members and from his wife;[302] she also visited him every three weeks.[303] With his support, she assembled another book of his collected speeches, *Philosophy and Opinions*; these had often been edited to remove inflammatory comments about wielding violence against white people.[304] He also wrote *The Meditations of Marcus Garvey*, its name an allusion to *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*.[305] From prison, Garvey continued corresponding with far-right white separatist activists like Earnest Sevier Cox of the White American Society and John Powell of the Anglo-Saxon Clubs of America; the latter visited Garvey in prison.[306]

While Garvey was imprisoned, Ashwood launched a legal challenge against his divorce from her. Had the divorce been found void, then his marriage to Jacques would have been invalid.[302] The court ruled in favor of Garvey, recognising the legality of his divorce.[307] With Garvey absent, William Sherrill became acting head of UNIA.[308] To deal with the organization's financial problems, he re-mortgaged Liberty Hall to pay off debts and ended up selling off the *SS Booker T Washington* at a quarter of what UNIA had paid for it.[309]

Garvey was angry and in February 1926 wrote to the *Negro World* expressing his dissatisfaction with Sherrill's leadership.[310] From prison, he organized an emergency UNIA convention in Detroit, where delegates voted to depose Sherrill.[311] The latter's supporters then held a rival convention in Liberty Hall, reflecting the growing schism in the organization.[312] A subsequent court ruling determined that it was UNIA's New York branch, then controlled by Sherrill, rather than the central UNIA leadership itself, that owned Liberty Hall.[313] The financial problems continued, resulting in Liberty Hall being repeatedly re-mortgaged and then sold.[314]

The Attorney General, John Sargent, received a petition with 70,000 signatures urging for Garvey's release.[315] Sargeant warned President Calvin Coolidge that African Americans were regarding Garvey's imprisonment not as a form of justice against a man who had swindled them but as "an act of oppression of the race in their efforts in the direction of race progress".[314] Eventually, Coolidge agreed to commute the sentence so that it would expire immediately, on 18 November 1927, after Garvey had served about half of the five-year term of imprisonment. The commutation stipulated, however, that Garvey should be deported immediately.[316] On being released, Garvey was taken by train to New Orleans, where around a thousand supporters saw him onto the *SS Saramaca* on 3 December.[317] The ship then stopped at Cristóbal in Panama, where supporters again greeted him, but where the authorities refused his request to disembark.[318] He then transferred to the *SS Santa Maria*, which took him to Kingston, Jamaica.[318]

Later years

Return to Jamaica: 1927–1935

In Kingston, Garvey was greeted by supporters.[319] UNIA members had raised $10,000 ($180,000 in current dollar terms)to help him settle in Jamaica,[318] with which he bought a large house in an elite neighbourhood, which he called the "Somali Court".[320] His wife shipped over his belongings—which included 18,000 books and hundreds of antiques—before joining him.[321] In Jamaica, he continued giving speeches, including at a building in Kingston he had also named "Liberty Hall".[322] He urged Afro-Jamaicans to raise their standards of living and rally against Chinese and Syrian migrants who had moved to the island.[323] Meanwhile, the U.S. UNIA had been taken over by E. B. Knox; the latter was summoned to Jamaica for a meeting with Garvey after Laura Kofey, the leader of a group that had broken from UNIA, was killed, bringing the organization into further disrepute.[324][325]

Garvey attempted to travel across Central America but found his hopes blocked by the region's various administrations, who regarded him as disruptive.[326] Instead, he travelled to England in April, where he rented a house in London's West Kensington area for four months.[327] On 6 June 1928 he spoke at the Royal Albert Hall.[328] Later that year, he and his wife visited Paris, where he had his office at the black

newspaper *La Dépêche Africaine* headquarters[329] and spoke at the Club du Fauborg, before traveling to Switzerland.[330] They then travelled to Canada, where Garvey was detained for one night before being barred from making speeches.[331]

While in London, Garvey spoke at the Royal Albert Hall

Back in Kingston, UNIA obtained Edelweiss Park in Cross Roads, which it established as its new headquarters.[332] They held a conference there, opened by a parade through the city which attracted tens of thousands of onlookers.[333] At Edelweiss Park, UNIA also began putting on plays. One of these, *Coronation of an African King*, was written by Garvey and performed in August 1930. Its plot revolved around the crowning of Prince Cudjoe of Sudan, although it anticipated the crowning of Haile Selassie of Ethiopia later that year.[332] In Jamaica, Garvey became a *de facto* surrogate father to his niece, Ruth, whose father had recently died.[332] In September 1930, his first son, Marcus Garvey III, was born; three years later a second son, Julius, followed.[334]

In Kingston, Garvey was elected a city councillor and established the country's first political party, the People's Political Party (PPP), through which he intended to contest the forthcoming legislative council election.[335] In September 1929 he addressed a crowd of 1,500 supporters, launching the PPP's manifesto, which included land reform to benefit tenant farmers, the addition of a minimum wage to the constitution, pledges to build Jamaica's first university and opera house, and a proposed law to impeach and imprison corrupt judges.[336] The latter policy led to Garvey's being charged with demeaning the judiciary and undermining public confidence in it. He pled guilty, and was sentenced to three months in a Spanish Town prison and a £100 fine.[337]

While imprisoned, Garvey was removed from the Kingston council by other councillors. Garvey was furious and wrote an editorial against them, published in the *Blackman* journal.[338] This resulted in his being charged with seditious libel, for which he was convicted and sentenced to six months in prison. His conviction was then overturned on appeal.[338] He then campaigned as the PPP's candidate for the legislative assembly in Saint Andrew Parish, in which he secured 915 votes, being defeated by George Seymour-Jones.[338]

In increasingly strained finances amid the Great Depression, Garvey began working as an auctioneer, and by 1935 was supplementing this with his wife's savings.[339] He re-mortgaged his house and personal properties and in 1934 Edelweiss Park was foreclosed and auctioned off.[339] Dissatisfied with life in Jamaica, Garvey decided to move to London, sailing aboard the *SS Tilapa* in March 1935.[340] Once in London, he told his friend Amy Bailey that he had "left Jamaica a broken man, broken in spirit, broken in health and broken in pocket... and I will never, never, never go back."[341]

Life in London: 1935–1940

In London, Garvey sought to rebuild UNIA, although found there was much competition in the city from other black activist groups.[342] He established a new UNIA headquarters in Beaumont Avenue, West Kensington and launched a new monthly journal, *Black Man*.[343] Garvey returned to speaking at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park.[344] When he spoke in public, he was increasingly harangued by socialists for his conservative stances.[345] He also had hopes of becoming a Member of Parliament, although this amounted to nothing.[342]

Blue plaque at 53 Talgarth Road, London, installed in 2005

In 1935, the Second Italo-Ethiopian War broke out as Italy invaded Ethiopia. Garvey spoke out against the Italians and praised the government of Haile Selassie.[346] By October, however, he was becoming increasingly critical of Selassie, blaming his lack of preparedness for Ethiopia's failures in the war.[347] When Selassie fled his homeland and arrived in Britain, Garvey was among the black delegates who arranged to meet him at Waterloo station, but was rebuffed.[347] From that point he became more openly hostile to Selassie, describing him as a "feudal monarch who looks down upon his slaves and serfs with contempt" and "a great coward who ran away from his country to save his skin".[348] Garvey's vocal criticisms of Selassie further ostracised him from the broader black activist community—including many Garveyites—most of whom were rallying around Selassie as a symbol of Ethiopia's struggle against colonialism.[349]

In June 1937, Garvey's wife and children arrived in England, where the latter were sent to a school in Kensington Gardens.[350] Shortly after, Garvey embarked on a lecture and fundraising tour of Canada and the Caribbean, in which he attended the annual UNIA convention in Toronto.[350] In Trinidad, he openly criticised a recent oil workers' strike; this probably exacerbated tensions between him and two prominent Trinidadian Marxists then living in London, C. L. R. James and George Padmore.[351] Once he had returned to London, Garvey took up a new family home in Talgarth Road, not far from UNIA's headquarters.[352] In public debates, Garvey repeatedly clashed with Padmore, who was chair of the International African Service Bureau.[353] In the summer of 1938, Garvey returned to Toronto for the next UNIA conference.[352]

While Garvey was gone, his wife and sons returned to Jamaica. Doctors had recommended that Marcus Garvey III be moved to a warm climate to aid with his severe rheumatism; Jacques had not informed her husband of the decision.[354] When Garvey returned to London, he was furious with his wife's decision.[355] Garvey was increasingly isolated, while UNIA was running out of funds as its international membership dwindled.[356] For the first time in many years, he met up with Ashwood, who was also living in London.[357]

Death and burial: 1940

In January 1940, Garvey suffered a stroke which left him largely paralysed.[358] His secretary, Daisy Whyte, took on responsibility for his care.[359] At this point, George Padmore spread rumours of Garvey's death; this led to many newspapers publishing premature obituaries in late May 1940, many of which he read.[360] According to his secretary, on the second day of reading through his pile of obituaries, Garvey suffered another massive stroke and died two weeks later at the age of 52 on 10 June 1940.[361] His body was interred in a vault in the catacombs of the chapel of St Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Kensal Green, West London.[362]

Various wakes and memorials were held for Garvey, especially in New York City and Kingston.[362] In Harlem, a procession of mourners paraded to his memorial service.[362] Some Garveyites refused to believe Garvey had died, even when confronted with photographs of his body in its coffin, insisting that

this was part of a conspiracy to undermine his movement.[362] Both Ashwood and Jacques presented themselves as the "widow of Marcus Garvey" and Ashwood launched legal action against Jacques in an attempt to secure control over his body.[363]

The writer Richard Hart later noted that within a decade of his death "a veritable cult" had begun to grow around Garvey's memory in Jamaica.[364] By the 1950s, Jamaican politicians of varied ideological backgrounds were invoking his name.[364] Leslie Alexander, a Kingston real estate agent, proposed the removal of Garvey's body and its return to Jamaica.[365] Alexander's campaign was successful and in 1964 Garvey's remains were exhumed and returned to Jamaica. The body lay in state at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Kingston and thousands of visitors came for a viewing.[366]

His body was then reburied in King George VI Memorial Park on 22 November 1964 with pomp and ceremony befitting a national hero; numerous foreign diplomats attended.[367] The monument, designed by G. C. Hodges, consists of a tomb at the center of a raised platform in the shape of a black star, a symbol often used by Garvey. Behind it, a peaked and angled wall houses a bust, by Alvin T. Marriot, of Garvey, which was added to the park in 1956 (before his reinterment) and relocated after the construction of the monument.[368]

Ideology

Ideologically, Garvey was a black nationalist.[370] Generally referring to dark-skinned peoples of African descent as "Negroes", he and the UNIA insisted that that term should be capitalized, thus affording dignity and respect to those whom it described.[371] His ideas were influenced by a range of sources. According to Grant, while he was living in London, Garvey displayed "an amazing capacity to absorb political tracts, theories of social engineering, African history and the Western Enlightenment."[73] Garvey was exposed to the ideas about race that were prevalent at the time;[372] his ideas on race were also heavily informed by the writings of Edward Wilmot Blyden[373] and by his work in London with Dusé Mohamed Ali.[374]

> Ethiopia, thou land of our fathers,
> Thou land where the gods loved to be,
> As storm cloud at night suddenly gathers
> Our armies come rushing to thee.
> We must in the fight be victorious
> When swords are thrust outward to gleam;
> For us will the vict'ry be glorious
> When led by the red, black, and green.
>
> — Lyrics from the UNIA anthem[369]

During the late 1910s and 1920s, Garvey was also influenced by the ideas of the Irish independence movement, to which he was sympathetic.[375] He saw strong parallels between the subjugation of Ireland and the global subjugation of black people,[156] and identified strongly with the Irish independence leader Éamon de Valera.[376] In 1922, he sent a message to Valera stating that "We believe Ireland should be free even as Africa shall be free for the Negroes of the world. Keep up the fight for a free Ireland."[377]

For Garvey, Ireland's Sinn Féin and the Irish independence movement served as blueprints for his own black nationalist cause.[376] In July 1919, he stated that "the time has come for the Negro race to offer up its martyrs upon the altar of liberty even as the Irish [had] given a long list from Robert Emmet to Roger

Casement."[378] He also expressed admiration for the Indian independence movement, which was seeking independence from British rule in India, describing Mahatma Gandhi as "one of the noblest characters of the day".[379]

Views on Colourism/Complexionism within the Black Community

Garvey believed that darker-skinned Black people were often marginalized, and he sought to challenge systems that favoured lighter-skinned individuals in leadership and social status.[380] His philosophy was rooted in racial pride and self-reliance, encouraging Black people to celebrate their African features and reject Eurocentric beauty standards.[381]

His views sometimes led to tensions with figures like W.E.B. Du Bois, who was of mixed heritage and whom Garvey accused of catering to elite, lighter-skinned Black Americans.[382] However, Garvey's primary mission was to unite people of African descent globally, rather than to divide them based on skin tone.

Race and racial separatism

"Race first" was the adage which was widely used in Garveyism.[383] In Garvey's view, "no race in the world is so just as to give others, for the asking, a square deal in things economic, political and social", but rather each racial group will favor its own interests,[384] rejecting the "melting pot" notion of much 20th century American nationalism.[385] He was hostile to the efforts of the progressive movement to agitate for social and political rights for African Americans, arguing that this was ineffective and that laws would never change the underlying racial prejudice of European Americans.[386][238]

He argued that the European-American population of the U.S. would never tolerate the social integration which was being advocated by activists like Du Bois because he believed that campaigns for such integration would lead to anti-black riots and lynchings.[387] He openly conceded that the U.S. was a white man's country and thus, he did not think that African Americans should expect equal treatment within it. Thus, he opposed attempts to socially and economically integrate the different races which lived within the country.[388] Garveyism promoted the view that whites had no duty to help blacks achieve racial equality, maintaining the view that the latter needed to advance themselves on their own initiative.[389] He advocated racial separatism,[390] but he did not believe in black supremacy.[391] He also rallied against Eurocentric beauty standards among blacks, seeing them as impediments to black self-respect.[388]

> [African Americans should] stop making[...] noise about social equality, giving the White people the idea that we are hankering after their company, and get down to business and build up a strong race, industrially, commercially, educationally and politically, everything social will come afterwards.
>
> — Marcus Garvey, 1921[384]

In the U.S., ideas about the need for black racial purity became central to Garvey's thought.[372] He vehemently denounced miscegenation,[387] believing that mixed-race individuals were "torn by dual allegiances" and they would often ally themselves "with the more powerful race", thus, they would become "traitors to the [black] race".[392] Garvey argued that mixed-race people would be bred out of existence.[393] Cronon believed that

Garvey exhibited "antipathy and distrust of anybody but the darkest-skinned Negroes";[394] the hostility towards black people whose African blood was not considered "pure" was a sentiment which Garvey shared with Blyden.[395]

This view caused great friction between Garvey and Du Bois,[396] with the former accusing Du Bois and the NAACP of promoting "amalgamation or general miscegenation".[397] He rallied against what he called the "race destroying doctrine" of those African Americans who were promulgating racial integration in the U.S., instead, he maintained the view that his UNIA stood for "the pride and purity of race. We believe that the white race should uphold its racial pride and perpetuate itself, and we also believe that the black race should do likewise. We believe that there is room enough in the world for the various race groups to grow and develop by themselves without seeking to destroy the Creator's plan by the constant introduction of mongrel types."[388] Arguing that Garvey "imitated white supremacist ideas at random", the scholar John L. Graves commented that "racism permeated nearly every iota of his ideology", with Garveyism representing "a gospel of hate for whites".[398]

Garvey's belief in racial separatism, his advocacy of the migration of African Americans to Africa, and his opposition to miscegenation endeared him to the KKK, which supported many of the same policies.[399][387] Garvey was willing to collaborate with the KKK in order to achieve his aims, and it was willing to work with him because his approach effectively acknowledged its belief that the U.S. should only be a country for white people and campaigns for advanced rights for African Americans who are living within the U.S. should be abandoned.[400] Garvey called for collaboration between black and white separatists, stating that they shared common goals: "the purification of the races, their autonomous separation and the unbridled freedom of self-development and self-expression. Those who are against this are enemies of both races, and rebels against morality, nature and God."[401] In his view, the KKK and other far-right white groups were "better friends" of black people "than all other groups of hypocritical whites put together" because they were honest about their desires and intentions.[238]

Pan-Africanism

Garvey was a Pan-Africanist,[402] and an African nationalist.[403] In Jamaica, he and his supporters were heavily influenced by the pan-Africanist teachings of Dr Love and Alexander Bedward.[404] In the wake of the First World War, Garvey called for the formation of "a United Africa for the Africans of the World".[405] The UNIA promoted the view that Africa was the natural homeland of the African diaspora.[406] While he was imprisoned, he penned an editorial for the *Negro World* titled "African Fundamentalism", in which he called for "the founding of a racial empire whose only natural, spiritual and political aims shall be God and Africa, at home and abroad."[407]

Garvey supported the Back-to-Africa movement, which had been influenced by Edward Wilmot Blyden, who migrated to Liberia in 1850.[408] However, Garvey did not believe that all African Americans should migrate to Africa. Instead, he believed that an elite group, namely those African Americans who were of the purest African blood, should do so. The rest of the African-American population, he believed, should remain in the United States, where it would become extinct within fifty years.[400]

A proponent of the Back-to-Africa movement, Garvey called for a vanguard of educated and skilled African Americans to travel to West Africa, a journey which would be facilitated by his Black Star Line.[409] Garvey stated that "The majority of us may remain here, but we must send our scientists, our mechanics and our artisans and let them build railroads, let them build the great educational and other

institutions necessary", after which other members of the African diaspora could join them.[409] He was aware that the majority of African Americans would not want to move to Africa until it had the more modern comforts that they had become accustomed to in the U.S.[409] Through the UNIA, he discussed plans for a migration to Liberia, but these plans came to nothing and his hope to move African Americans to West Africa ultimately failed.[410]

> Wheresoever I go, whether it is England, France or Germany, I am told, "This is a white man's country." Wheresoever I travel throughout the United States of America, I am made to understand that I am a "nigger". If the Englishman claims England as his native habitat, and the Frenchman claims France, the time has come for 400 million Negroes to claim Africa as their native land... If you believe that the Negro should have a place in the sun; if you believe that Africa should be one vast empire, controlled by the Negro, then arise.
>
> — Garvey, August 1920[411]

In the 1920s, Garvey referred to his desire for a "big black republic" in Africa.[412] Garvey's envisioned Africa was to be a one-party state in which the president could have "absolute authority" to appoint "all of his lieutenants from cabinet ministers, governors of States and Territories, administrators and judges to minor offices".[393] According to the scholar of African-American studies Wilson S. Moses, the future African state which Garvey envisioned was "authoritarian, elitist, collectivist, racist, and capitalistic",[393] suggesting that it would have resembled the later Haitian government of François Duvalier.[413] Garvey told the historian J. A. Rogers that he and his followers were "the first fascists", adding that "Mussolini copied Fascism from me, but the Negro reactionaries sabotaged it".[414]

Garvey never visited Africa himself,[415] and he did not speak any African language.[416] He knew very little about the continent's varied customs, languages, religions, and traditional social structures,[417] and his critics frequently believed that his views of the continent were based on romanticism and ignorance.[418] It has been suggested that the European colonial authorities would not have given Garvey permission to visit colonies where he would be calling for decolonization.[408]

For instance, the Jamaican writer and poet Claude McKay noted that Garvey "talks of Africa as if it were a little island in the Caribbean Sea."[418] Garvey believed in negative stereotypes about Africa which portrayed it as a backward continent that was in need of the civilizing influence of Western, Christian states.[419] Among his stated aims, he wanted "to assist in civilizing the backward tribes of Africa" and he also wanted "to promote a conscientious Christian worship among" them.[419] His belief that Africans would ultimately be liberated by the efforts of the African diaspora which was living outside the continent has been considered condescending.[420]

Moses stated that instead of being based on respect for indigenous African cultures, Garvey's views of an ideal united Africa were based on an "imperial model" of the kind which was promoted by western powers.[421] When he extolled the glories of Africa, Garvey cited the ancient Egyptians and Ethiopians who had built empires and monumental architectural structures, which he cited as evidence of civilization, rather than the smaller-scale societies which lived on other parts of the continent.[422] In doing so, he followed the lead of white academics of that era, who were similarly ignorant of most of African history and who focused nearly exclusively on ancient Egypt. Moses thought that Garvey "had more affinity for the pomp and tinsel of European imperialism than he did for black African tribal life".[422] Similarly, the writer Richard Hart noted that Garvey was "much attracted by the glamour of the

British nobility", an attraction which was reflected when he honored prominent supporters by giving them such British-derived titles as "Lords", "Ladies", and "Knights".[423] Garvey's head was not turned, however, by the scholarly authority of Harvard University professor George Reisner whose opinion Garvey challenged on the pages of *The Negro World*.[374]

Economic views

> We must prepare now by organizing ourselves all over the world, by building businesses, stores and factories to sustain our people and free ourselves.
>
> — Marcus Garvey[424]

Garvey believed in economic independence for the African diaspora and through the UNIA, he attempted to achieve it by forming ventures like the Black Star Line and the Negro Factories Corporation.[425] In Garvey's opinion, "without commerce and industry, a people perish economically. The Negro is perishing because he has no economic system".[391] In his view, European-American employers would always favor European-American employees, so to gain more security, African Americans needed to form their own businesses.[401] In his words, "the Negro[...] must become independent of white capital and white employers if he wants salvation."[426] He believed that financial independence for the African-American community would ensure greater protection from discrimination,[391] and provide the foundation for social justice.[427]

Economically, Garvey supported capitalism,[428] stating that "capitalism is necessary to the progress of the world, and those who unreasonably and wantonly oppose it or fight against it are enemies of human advancement."[393] In the U.S., Garvey promoted a capitalistic ethos for the economic development of the African-American community,[429] advocating black capitalism.[430] His emphasis on capitalist ventures meant, according to Grant, that Garvey "was making a straight pitch to the petit-bourgeois capitalist instinct of the majority of black folk."[165]

He admired Booker T. Washington's economic endeavours but criticized his focus on individualism: Garvey believed that African-American interests would best be advanced if businesses included collective decision-making and group profit-sharing.[429] His advocacy of capitalistic wealth distribution was a more equitable view of capitalism than the view of capitalism which was then prevalent in the U.S.;[431] he believed that some restrictions should be imposed on individuals and businesses in order to prevent them from acquiring too much wealth, in his view, no individual should be allowed to control more than one million dollars and no company should be allowed to control more than five million dollars.[393] While he was living in Harlem, he envisioned the formation of a global network of black people who would trade among themselves, believing that his Black Star Line would contribute to the achievement of this aim.[432]

There is no evidence to support the view that Garvey was ever sympathetic to socialism.[433] While he was living in the U.S., he strongly opposed attempts to recruit African Americans into the trade union movement by socialist and communist groups,[434] and he urged African Americans not to support the Communist Party.[435] This led to heavy scrutiny from communist group leaders and figureheads such as Grace Campbell, among others. He believed that the communist movement did not serve the interests of African Americans because it was a white person's creation.[435] He stated that communism was "a dangerous theory of economic or political reformation because it seeks to put government in the hands of an ignorant white mass who have not been able to destroy their natural prejudices towards Negroes and

other non-white people. While it may be a good thing for them, it will be a bad thing for the Negroes who will fall under the government of the most ignorant, prejudiced class of the white race."[435] In response, the Communist International characterised Garveyism as a reactionary bourgeois philosophy.[401]

Black Christianity

Grant noted that "Garveyism would always remain a secular movement with a strong under-tow of religion".[437] Garvey envisioned a form of Christianity which would specifically be designed for black African people,[423] a sort of black religion.[422] Reflecting his own view of religion, he wanted this black-centric Christianity to be as close to Catholicism as possible.[436]

> Whilst our God has no color, yet it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles, and since the white people have seen their God through white spectacles, we have only now started out (late though it be) to see our God through our own spectacles.
>
> — Garvey, on viewing God as black, 1923[436]

Even so, he attended the foundation ceremony of the African Orthodox Church in Chicago in 1921.[438] According to Graves, this Church preached "the orthodox Christian tradition with emphasis on racism",[439] and Cronon suggested that Garvey promoted "racist ideas about religion".[440]

Garvey emphasised the idea of black people worshipping a God who was also depicted as black.[436] In his words, "If the white man has the idea of a white God, let him worship his God as he desires. Since the white people have seen their God through white spectacles, we have only now started out to see our God through our own spectacles[...] we shall worship Him through the spectacles of Ethiopia."[396] He called for black people to worship images of Jesus of Nazareth and the Virgin Mary that depicted these figures as black Africans.[423] In doing so, he did not make use of pre-existing forms of black-dominated religions. Garvey had little experience with them, because he had attended a white-run Wesleyan congregation when he was a child, and later, he converted to Catholicism.[441]

Personality and personal life

Physically, Garvey was short and stocky.[442] He suffered from asthma,[443] and was prone to lung infections;[127] and throughout his adult life, he was affected by bouts of pneumonia.[444] Tony Martin called Garvey a "restless young man",[445] while Grant thought that Garvey had a "naïve but determined personality" in his early years.[446] Grant noted that Garvey "possessed a single-mindedness of purpose that left no room for the kind of spectacular failure that was always a possibility."[127]

He was an eloquent orator,[447] with Cronon suggesting that his "peculiar gift of oratory" stemmed from "a combination of bombast and stirring heroics".[448] Grant described Garvey's public speeches as "strange and eclectic – part evangelical […] partly formal King's English, and part lilting Caribbean speechifying".[449] Garvey enjoyed arguing with people,[24] and he wanted to be seen as a learned man;[450] he read widely, particularly in history.[451]

Cronon suggested that "Garvey's florid style of writing and speaking, his fondness for appearing in a richly colored cap and gown, and his use of the honorary degree initials "D.C.L." after his name were crude attempts to compensate" for his lack of formal academic qualifications.[450] Grant thought that

Garvey was an "extraordinary salesman who'd developed a philosophy where punters weren't just buying into a business but were placing a down payment on future black redemption."[452] Even his enemies acknowledged that he was a skilled organiser and promoter.[453]

Garvey in a military uniform as the "Provisional President of Africa" during a parade on the opening day of the annual Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World at Lenox Avenue in Harlem, New York City, 1922

For Grant, Garvey was "a man of grand, purposeful gestures".[75] He thought that the black nationalist leader was an "ascetic" who had "conservative tastes".[454] Garvey was a teetotaller who believed that alcohol consumption was morally reprehensible;[189] he collected antique ceramics and enjoyed going around antique shops and flea markets and searching for items to add to his collection.[455] He placed value on courtesy and respect, discouraging his supporters from being loutish.[456]

Garvey enjoyed dressing up in military costumes,[457] and he also adored regal pomp and ceremony;[423] he believed that pageantry would stir the black masses out of their apathy, despite the accusations of buffoonery which were made by members of the African-American intelligentsia.[423] Grant noted that Garvey had a "tendency to overstate his achievements",[443] but Cronon thought that Garvey tended to surround himself with sycophants rather than more competent advisors.[458] In 1947, the Jamaican historian J. A. Rogers included Garvey in his book, the *World's Great Men of Colour*, where he noted that "had [Garvey] ever come to power, he would have been another Robespierre", resorting to violence and terror to enforce his ideas.[459]

Garvey was a Catholic.[460] In 1919, he married Amy Ashwood in a Catholic ceremony,[187] but they separated after three months.[192] The New York court did not grant Garvey a divorce, but later, he obtained a divorce in Jackson County, Missouri.[193] Ashwood contested the legitimacy of this divorce, and for the rest of her life, she claimed that she was Garvey's legitimate spouse.[193] He married secondly to Amy Jacques Garvey, and they had two sons. His first son, Marcus Garvey III (1930 – 8 December 2020), became an electrical engineer and served as the seventh president-general of the UNIA-ACL.[461] His second son, Julius Garvey, (born 1933) became a cardiovascular surgeon.[462]

Reception and legacy

A polarizing figure,[463] Garvey was both revered and reviled.[75] Grant noted that views on him largely divided between two camps, one camp portrayed him as a charlatan and the other camp portrayed him as a saint;[366] similarly, Cronon noted that Garvey was varyingly perceived as a "strident demagogue or a dedicated prophet, a martyred visionary or a fabulous con man".[464] Martin noted that by the time Garvey returned to Jamaica in the 1920s, he was "just about the best known Black

> Garvey has invariably been described as the Black Moses of his race, a group psychologist and an idealist planner, an iconoclast, an egotist, a zealot, a charlatan and a buffoon. He has also been portrayed as flamboyant, dynamic, bombastic, defiant, ruthless, a dreamer and a fool. Regardless of what history will write about him, and his personal shortcomings notwithstanding, Marcus

man in the whole world".[465] The size and scope of the UNIA has also attracted attention; Mark Christian described Garvey as the leader of "the largest Black mass movement in modern history",[466] and John Henrik Clarke termed it "the first Black mass protest crusade in the history of the United States".[467] Garvey's ideas influenced many black people who never became paying members of the UNIA,[468] with Graves noting that "more than anything else, Garvey gave Negroes self-assertion and self-reliance."[469]

> Garvey was undoubtedly the peerless champion of his race. He was a bulwark for the world-wide organization of people of African descent.
>
> — Milfred C. Fierce in *The Black Scholar*, 1972[424]

In Jamaica, Garvey is considered a national hero.[470] In 1969, Jamaica's government posthumously conferred the Order of the National Hero upon him.[471] The scholar of African-American studies Molefi Kete Asante included Garvey on his 2002 list of 100 Greatest African Americans,[472] and in 2008, the American writer Ta-Nehisi Coates described Garvey as the "patron saint" of the black nationalist movement.[473] Grant thought that Garvey, along with Du Bois, deserved to be seen as the "father of Pan-Africanism",[363] and the Nigerian historian B. Steiner Ifekwe called Garvey "one of the greatest Pan-African leaders of the time".[474] Garvey has received praise from people who believe that he was a "race patriot",[475] and many African Americans believe that he encouraged black people to develop a sense of self-respect and pride.[476] While he was living in the U.S., Garvey was frequently referred to—sometimes sarcastically—as the "Negro Moses", implying that like the eponymous Old Testament figure, he would lead his people out of the oppressive situation which they were living in.[252]

In 1955, Cronon stated that while Garvey "achieved little in the way of permanent improvement" for black people, he "awakened fires of Negro nationalism that have yet to be extinguished".[448] In Cronon's view, Garvey was important because he gave African-descended peoples a new feeling of collective pride and a sense of individual worth.[477] Hart believed that Garvey's importance lay in the fact that he stirred millions of people who were otherwise apathetic into action. In this way, Hart believed that Garvey had helped lay the groundwork for the U.S. civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s, even though that movement's call for racial integration and equality within the U.S. ran contrary to Garvey's belief in racial separation and his advocacy of migration to Africa.[478]

> Garvey chiefly attracted attention because he put into powerful ringing phrases the secret thoughts of the Negro world. He told his listeners what they wanted to hear—that a black skin was not a badge of shame but rather a glorious symbol of national greatness. He promised a Negro nation in the African homeland that would be the marvel of the modern world. He pointed to Negro triumphs in the past and described in glowing syllables the glories of the future. When Garvey spoke of the greatness of the race, Negroes everywhere could forget for a moment the shame of discrimination and the horrors of lynching.

Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, wrote in his autobiography that of all the works of literature which he had studied, the book that inspired him more than any other book was *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey, or Africa for the Africans*.[479] Nkrumah went on to name Ghana's national shipping line the "Black Star Line", and there is a Black Star Square in Accra, and the Ghanaian flag also contains a black star. Ghana's national football team is also nicknamed the Black Stars.[479]

While he was living in the U.S., Garvey faced strong opposition from many prominent figures in the African-American community as well as from leading progressive and left-wing

> — Edmund David Cronon, one of Garvey's biographers, 1955[448]

organisations.[388] He was also unpopular within elite sections of the African-American community, in part perhaps out of envy of his successes in attracting the support of the black masses, and in part out of concern that he was leading their community astray.[480] Critics regarded him as an idealist,[481] and he was sometimes regarded as "an egotist, a zealot, a charlatan and a buffoon".[424] Garvey obtained a reputation for failing to pay his debts,[482] and his detractors accused him of dishonesty.[482]

Critics like Du Bois often mocked Garvey for his outfits and the grandiose titles which he gave to himself;[483] in their view, he was embarrassingly pretentious.[75] According to Grant, many members of the established African-American middle-class were "perplexed and embarrassed" by Garvey, who thought that the African-American working class should turn to their leadership rather than his.[409] Concerns were also raised about his violent language because the people who raised them believed that it was inciting many Garveyites to carry out violent acts against Garvey's critics.[484]

During his lifetime, some African Americans wondered if he really understood the racial issues which were present in U.S. society because he was a foreigner,[485] and later African-American leaders frequently held the view that Garvey had failed to adequately address anti-black racism in his thought.[389] Grant noted that in the years after Garvey's death, his life was primarily presented by his political opponents.[457] Writing for *The Black Scholar* in 1972, the scholar of African-American studies Wilson S. Moses expressed concern about the "uncritical adulation" of Garvey within African-American political circles. In Moses' opinion, this adulation led to "red baiting" and "divisive rhetoric" about being "Blacker-than-thou".[486] Moses argued that it was wrong for people to regard Garvey as a "man of the people" because he had a petty bourgeoise background and as a result, he had "enjoyed cultural, economic, and educational advantages which few of his black contemporaries" had enjoyed.[10]

US President Joe Biden issued a full and unconditional pardon to Garvey on 19 January 2025.[487]

Influence on political movements

In the late 1920s, Garvey had some ties to the French black movement, especially the group of the Comité de Défense de la Race Noire and the editor of its journal, Maurice Satineau. As the group was somewhat divided between a larger group of colonial reformists and a smaller group of representants of the Négritude, there was strong concern by moderate members about Garvey as they were afraid of his radical nationalist approach, resulting in a cut of the ties.[329]

In the Colony of Jamaica, Garvey was largely forgotten in the years after his death, but interest in him was revived by the Rastafari religious movement.[488] Jacques wrote a book about her late husband, *Garvey and Garveyism*, and after finding that no publishers were interested in it she self-published the volume in 1963.[488] In 1962, when Jamaica became independent, the government hailed Garvey as a hero. In 1969, he was posthumously conferred with the Order of the National Hero by the Jamaican government.[471] In 1975 the reggae artist Burning Spear released the album *Marcus Garvey*.[488]

Interest in Garvey's ideas would also be revived in the 1960s through the growth of independent states across Africa and the emergence of the Black Power movement in the United States.[489] Mark Christian suggested that Garveyism gave an important psychological boost to African leaders campaigning for

independence from European colonial rule,[490] while Claudius Fergus proposed that it played an important role in encouraging Africans to see the African diaspora as an "integral constituent of their own political destiny."[491]

Executive Grant of Clemency

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.
President of the United States of America

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING:

I HEREBY GRANT full and unconditional pardons to the following named persons for those offenses against the United States as contained in their respective petitions to the Department of Justice:

DARRYL CHAMBERS
MARCUS MOSIAH GARVEY (POSTHUMOUS)
RAVIDATH RAGBIR
DON LEONARD SCOTT, JR.
KEMBA SMITH PRADIA

I HEREBY FURTHER DESIGNATE, direct, and empower the Pardon Attorney, as my representative, to sign each grant of clemency to the persons named herein. The Pardon Attorney shall declare that her action is the act of the President, being performed at my direction.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and caused the seal of the Department of Justice to be affixed.

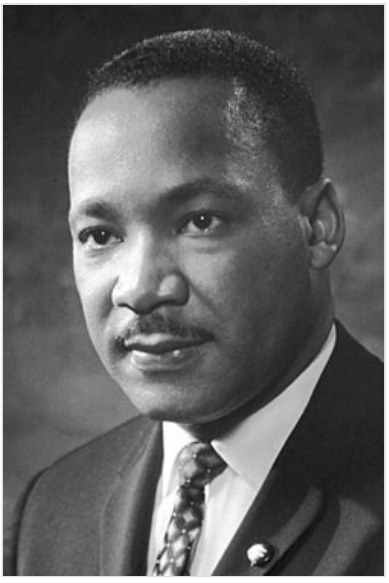
Done at the City of Washington this 19th day of January in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five and of the Independence of the United States the Two Hundred and Forty-Ninth.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.
President

Posthumous pardon granted by President Joe Biden on 19 January 2025

In his autobiography, Kwame Nkrumah, the prominent Pan-Africanist activist who became Ghana's first president, acknowledged Garvey's influence on him.[488] The flag that Ghana adopted when it became independent adopted the colours of UNIA (See: Pan-African colours).[363] In November 1964, Garvey's body was removed from West Kensal Green Cemetery and taken to Jamaica. There, it lay in state in Kingston's Catholic Cathedral before a motorcade took it to King George VI Memorial Park, where it was re-buried.[366]

During a trip to Jamaica, Martin Luther King Jr. and his wife Coretta Scott King visited Garvey's shrine on 20 June 1965 and laid a wreath.[492] In a speech he told the audience that Garvey "was the first man of color to lead and develop a mass movement. He was the first man to give millions of Negroes a sense of dignity and destiny on a mass scale and level. And he was the first man to make the Negro feel that he was somebody."[493] The Vietnamese Communist revolutionary Ho Chi Minh said that Garvey and Korean nationalists shaped his political outlook during his stay in America.[494] Thandeka K. Chapman believed that Garveyism contributed to the formation of the multicultural education movement during the 1960s.[495] Chapman believed that both "Garveyism and multicultural education share the desire to see students of color learning and achieving academic success",[496] and both allotted significant attention to generating racial pride.[497]



Martin Luther King Jr. in 1964

Influence on religious movements

Garvey never regarded himself as a religious visionary but he was perceived as such by some of his followers.[498] Various Bedwardites for example regarded him as the reincarnation of Moses.[498] The Moorish Science Temple of America regarded Garvey as a prophet akin to John the Baptist in relation to their prophet Noble Drew Ali, whom they regarded as a Jesus figure.[499] Garvey's ideas were a significant influence on the Nation of Islam, a religious group for African Americans established in the U.S. in 1930.[500]

Garvey and Garveyism was a key influence on Rastafari, a new religious movement that appeared in 1930 Jamaica.[501] According to the scholar of religion Maboula Soumahoro, Rastafari "emerged from the socio-political ferment inaugurated by Marcus Garvey",[502] while for the sociologist Ernest Cashmore, Garvey was the "most important" precursor of the Rastafari movement.[503] Rastafari does not

promote all of the views that Garvey espoused, nevertheless, it shares many of them.[504] Garvey knew of the Rastas from his time in Jamaica during the 1930s but his view of them, according to the scholar Barry Chevannes, "bordered on scorn".[505]

According to Chevannes, Garvey would have regarded the Rastas' belief in the divinity of Haile Selassie as blasphemy.[506] Many Rastas regard Garvey as a prophet,[507] believing that he prophesied the crowning of Haile Selassie in a manner which was similar to how John the Baptist prophesied the coming of Jesus Christ.[508] Many legends and tales are told about him within Jamaica's Rasta community.[509] Many attribute him with supernatural attributes, for instance there is a tale told about him—and also independently told about the pioneering Rasta Leonard Howell—that Garvey miraculously knew that his bath had been poisoned and refused to get into it.[510] Other stories among Jamaica's Rastas hold that Garvey never really died and remained alive, perhaps living in Africa.[511] Some Rastas also organise meetings, known as Nyabinghi Issemblies, to mark Garvey's birthday.[512]

Memorials

Garvey's birthplace, 32 Market Street, St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica, has a marker signifying it as a site of importance in the nation's history.[513] His likeness was on the 20-dollar coin and 25-cent coin of the Jamaican dollar.[514] In 2012 the Jamaican government declared 17 August as Marcus Garvey Day. The Governor General's proclamation stated "from here on every year this time, all of us here in Jamaica will be called to mind to remember this outstanding National Hero and what he has done for us as a people, and our children will call this to mind also on this day" and went on to say "to proclaim and make known that the 17th Day of August in each year shall be designated as Marcus Garvey Day and shall so be observed."[515]

Statue of Garvey on Harris Promenade in San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago

The Brownsville neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York City, is home to Marcus Garvey Village, whose construction was completed in 1976.[516] This building complex is home to the first energy storage microgrid at an affordable housing property in the country. It will use the energy storage system to cut electricity costs, improve grid reliability, and provide backup power during extended outages.[517]

In the 1980s, Garvey's two sons launched a campaign requesting that the U.S. government issue a pardon for their father. In this they had the support of Harlem-based U.S. congressman Charles Rangel.[366] In 2006, Jamaican Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller tasked various Jamaican lawyers with investigating how they could assist this campaign.[366] The Obama administration declined to pardon Garvey in 2011, writing that its policy was not to consider requests for posthumous pardons.[518]

President Joe Biden posthumously pardoned Marcus Garvey on January 19, 2025, his final full day in office. This action was the culmination of a decades-long campaign by Garvey's family, historians, and civil rights advocates to exonerate him. The pardon was supported by members of Congress, including the Congressional Black Caucus, who emphasized that the charges against Garvey were fabricated to discredit and silence him as a civil rights leader. President Biden's decision was seen as a significant step in acknowledging and rectifying historical injustices faced by Black leaders. [519]

There have been several proposals to make a biopic of Garvey's life. Those mentioned in connection with the role of Garvey have included the Jamaican-born actor Kevin Navayne[520][521] and the British-born actor of Jamaican descent Delroy Lindo.[522][523]

Marcus Garvey appears in Jason Overstreet's *The Strivers' Row Spy*,[524][525] a 2016 historical novel about the Harlem Renaissance. The novel also includes as characters W. E. B. Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, and Adam Clayton Powell, among other historically significant figures.[526]

The 2021 documentary film *African Redemption: The Life and Legacy of Marcus Garvey*, directed by Roy T. Anderson, was made with the collaboration of Julius Garvey.[527][528][529]

In 2023, the short film *Mosiah* became the first narrative film released about Marcus Garvey. The film was shot and directed by Jirard. The script was co-written by the lead actor, Samuel Lee Fudge and Jirard.[530][531][532][533][534]

Garvey is briefly portrayed in composer Michael R. Jackson's Tony Award Best Musical *A Strange Loop*.[535]

See also

Jamaica portal

United States portal

Biography portal

- Garveyism
- African-American literature
- *The Black King* (film)
- Controversial friendship with E. S. Cox
- Double-duty dollar
- *Marcus Garvey: Look for me in the Whirlwind*
- Right of return
- Marcus Garvey Prize for Human Rights

References

Footnotes

1. "Order of National Hero – Jamaica Information Service" (https://jis.gov.jm/information/awards/order-of-national-hero/). *jis.gov.jm*. Retrieved 18 June 2024.
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Bible

The **Bible**[b] is a collection of religious texts that are central to Christianity and Judaism, and esteemed in other Abrahamic religions such as Islam. The Bible is an anthology (a compilation of texts of a variety of forms) originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Koine Greek. The texts include instructions, stories, poetry, prophecies, and other genres. The collection of materials accepted as part of the Bible by a particular religious tradition or community is called a biblical canon. Believers generally consider it to be a product of divine inspiration, but the way they understand what that means and interpret the text varies.

Bible	
The Gutenberg Bible, published in the mid-15th century by Johannes Gutenberg, is the first published Bible.	
Information	
Religion	Christianity Judaism
Language	Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek
Period	*See Dating the Bible*
Books	Jewish Hebrew Bible: 24 books[a] Protestant canon (Luther's): 66 books Latin Catholic canon: 73 books Eastern and Oriental Orthodox canon: 76 books *See Biblical canon*
Full text	
Bible at English Wikisource	

The religious texts were compiled by different religious communities into various official collections. The earliest contained the first five books of the Bible, called the Torah in Hebrew and the Pentateuch (meaning 'five books') in Greek. The second-oldest part was a collection of narrative histories and prophecies (the Nevi'im). The third collection, the Ketuvim, contains psalms, proverbs, and narrative histories. *Tanakh* (Hebrew: תָּנָ״ךְ, romanized: *Tanaḵ*) is an alternate term for the Hebrew Bible, which is composed of the first letters of the three components comprising scriptures written originally in Hebrew: the Torah ('Teaching'), the Nevi'im ('Prophets'), and the Ketuvim ('Writings'). The Masoretic Text is the medieval version of the Tanakh—written in Hebrew and Aramaic—that is considered the authoritative text of the Hebrew Bible by modern Rabbinic Judaism. The Septuagint is a Koine Greek translation of the Tanakh from the third and second centuries BCE; it largely overlaps with the Hebrew Bible.

Christianity began as an outgrowth of Second Temple Judaism, using the Septuagint as the basis of the Old Testament. The early Church continued the Jewish tradition of writing and incorporating what it saw as inspired, authoritative religious books. The gospels, which are narratives about the life and teachings of Jesus, along with the Pauline epistles, and other texts quickly coalesced into the New Testament. The oldest parts of the Bible may be as early as c. 1200 BCE, while the New Testament had mostly formed by 4th century CE.

With estimated total sales of over five billion copies, the Christian Bible is the best-selling publication of all time. The Bible has had a profound influence both on Western culture and history and on cultures around the globe. The study of it through biblical criticism has also indirectly impacted culture and history. The Bible is currently translated or is being translated into about half of the world's languages.

Some view biblical texts as morally problematic, historically inaccurate, or corrupted by time; others find it a useful historical source for certain peoples and events or a source of ethical teachings.

Etymology

The term *Bible* can refer to the Hebrew Bible, which corresponds to the Christian Old Testament, or the Christian Bible, which in addition to the Old Testament contains the New Testament.[1]

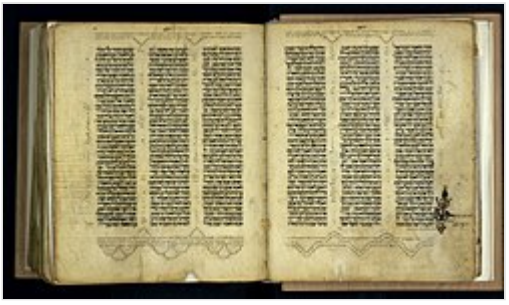
The English word *Bible* is derived from Koinē Greek: τὰ βιβλία, romanized: *ta biblia*, meaning 'the books' (singular βιβλίον, *biblion*).[2] The word βιβλίον itself had the literal meaning of 'scroll' and came to be used as the ordinary word for *book*.[3] It is the diminutive of βύβλος *byblos*, 'Egyptian papyrus', possibly so called from the name of the Phoenician seaport Byblos (also known as Gebal) from whence Egyptian papyrus was exported to Greece.[4]

The Greek *ta biblia* was "an expression Hellenistic Jews used to describe their sacred books".[5] The biblical scholar F. F. Bruce notes that John Chrysostom appears to be the first writer (in his *Homilies on Matthew*, delivered between 386 and 388 CE) to use the Greek phrase *ta biblia* ('the books') to describe both the Old and New Testaments together.[6]

Latin *biblia sacra* 'holy books' translates Greek τὰ βιβλία τὰ ἅγια (*tà biblía tà hágia*, 'the holy books').[7] Medieval Latin *biblia* is short for *biblia sacra* 'holy book'. It gradually came to be regarded as a feminine singular noun (*biblia*, gen. *bibliae*) in medieval Latin, and so the word was loaned as singular into the vernaculars of Western Europe.[8]

Development and history

The Bible is not a single book; it is a collection of books whose complex development is not completely understood. The oldest books began as songs and stories orally transmitted from generation to generation. Scholars of the twenty-first century are only in the beginning stages of exploring "the interface between writing, performance, memorization, and the aural dimension" of the texts. Current indications are that writing and orality were not separate as much as ancient writing was learned in communal oral performance.[9] The Bible was written and compiled by many people, who many scholars say are mostly unknown, from a variety of disparate cultures and backgrounds.[10]



The Book of Genesis in a c. 1300 Hebrew Bible

British biblical scholar John K. Riches wrote:[11]

> [T]he biblical texts were produced over a period in which the living conditions of the writers – political, cultural, economic, and ecological – varied enormously. There are texts which reflect a nomadic existence, texts from people with an established monarchy and Temple cult, texts from exile, texts born out of fierce oppression by foreign rulers, courtly texts, texts from wandering charismatic preachers, texts from those who give themselves the airs of sophisticated Hellenistic writers. It is a time-span which encompasses the compositions of Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Sophocles, Caesar, Cicero, and Catullus. It is a period which sees the rise and fall of the Assyrian empire (twelfth to seventh century) and of the Persian empire (sixth to fourth century), Alexander's campaigns (336–326), the rise of Rome and its domination of the Mediterranean (fourth century to the founding of the Principate, 27 BCE), the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple (70 CE), and the extension of Roman rule to parts of Scotland (84 CE).

The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa[a]), one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, is the oldest complete copy of the Book of Isaiah.

The books of the Bible were initially written and copied by hand on papyrus scrolls.[12] No originals have survived. The age of the original composition of the texts is, therefore, difficult to determine and heavily debated. Using a combined linguistic and historiographical approach, Hendel and Joosten date the oldest parts of the Hebrew Bible (the Song of Deborah in Judges 5 and the Samson story of Judges 16 and 1 Samuel) to having been composed in the premonarchial early Iron Age (c. 1200 BCE).[13] The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in the caves of Qumran in 1947, are copies that can be dated to between 250 BCE and 100 CE. They are the oldest existing copies of the books of the Hebrew Bible of any length that are not fragments.[14]

The earliest manuscripts were probably written in paleo-Hebrew, a kind of cuneiform pictograph similar to other pictographs of the same period.[15] The exile to Babylon most likely prompted the shift to square script (Aramaic) in the fifth to third centuries BCE.[16] From the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Hebrew Bible was written with spaces between words to aid reading.[17] By the eighth century CE, the Masoretes added vowel signs.[18] Levites or scribes maintained the texts, and some texts were always treated as more authoritative than others.[19] Scribes preserved and changed the texts by changing the script, updating archaic forms, and making corrections. These Hebrew texts were copied with great care.[20]

Considered to be scriptures (sacred, authoritative religious texts), the books were compiled by different religious communities into various biblical canons (official collections of scriptures).[21] The earliest compilation, containing the first five books of the Bible and called the Torah (meaning "law", "instruction", or "teaching") or Pentateuch ("five books"), was accepted as Jewish canon by the fifth century BCE. A second collection of narrative histories and prophesies, called the Nevi'im ("prophets"),

was canonized in the third century BCE. A third collection called the Ketuvim ("writings"), containing psalms, proverbs, and narrative histories, was canonized sometime between the second century BCE and the second century CE.[22] These three collections were written mostly in Biblical Hebrew, with some parts in Aramaic, which together form the Hebrew Bible or "TaNaKh" (an abbreviation of "Torah", "Nevi'im", and "Ketuvim").[23]

Hebrew Bible

There are three major historical versions of the Hebrew Bible: the Septuagint, the Masoretic Text, and the Samaritan Pentateuch (which contains only the first five books). They are related but do not share the same paths of development. The Septuagint, or the LXX, is a translation of the Hebrew scriptures and some related texts into Koine Greek and is believed to have been carried out by approximately seventy or seventy-two scribes and elders who were Hellenic Jews,[24] begun in Alexandria in the late third century BCE and completed by 132 BCE.[25][26][c] Probably commissioned by Ptolemy II Philadelphus, King of Egypt, it addressed the need of the primarily Greek-speaking Jews of the Graeco-Roman diaspora.[25][27] Existing complete copies of the Septuagint date from the third to the fifth centuries CE, with fragments dating back to the second century BCE.[28] Revision of its text began as far back as the first century BCE.[29] Fragments of the Septuagint were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls; portions of its text are also found on existing papyrus from Egypt dating to the second and first centuries BCE and to the first century CE.[29]:5

The Masoretes began developing what would become the authoritative Hebrew and Aramaic text of the 24 books of the Hebrew Bible in Rabbinic Judaism near the end of the Talmudic period (c. 300–c. 500 CE), but the actual date is difficult to determine.[30][31][32] In the sixth and seventh centuries, three Jewish communities contributed systems for writing the precise letter-text, with its vocalization and accentuation known as the *mas'sora* (from which we derive the term "masoretic").[30] These early Masoretic scholars were based primarily in the Galilean cities of Tiberias and Jerusalem and in Babylonia (modern Iraq). Those living in the Jewish community of Tiberias in ancient Galilee (c. 750–950) made scribal copies of the Hebrew Bible texts without a standard text, such as the Babylonian tradition had, to work from. The canonical pronunciation of the Hebrew Bible (called Tiberian Hebrew) that they developed, and many of the notes they made, therefore, differed from the Babylonian.[33] These differences were resolved into a standard text called the Masoretic text in the ninth century.[34] The oldest complete copy still in existence is the Leningrad Codex dating to c. 1000 CE.[35]

The Samaritan Pentateuch is a version of the Torah maintained by the Samaritan community since antiquity, which European scholars rediscovered in the 17th century; its oldest existing copies date to c. 1100 CE.[36] Samaritans include only the Pentateuch (Torah) in their biblical canon.[37] They do not recognize divine authorship or inspiration in any other book in the Jewish Tanakh.[d] A Samaritan Book of Joshua partly based upon the Tanakh's Book of Joshua exists, but Samaritans regard it as a non-canonical secular historical chronicle.[38]

The first codex form of the Hebrew Bible was produced in the seventh century. The codex is the forerunner of the modern book. Popularized by early Christians, it was made by folding a single sheet of papyrus in half, forming "pages". Assembling multiples of these folded pages together created a "book" that was more easily accessible and more portable than scrolls. In 1488, the first complete printed press version of the Hebrew Bible was produced.[39]

New Testament

During the rise of Christianity in the first century CE, new scriptures were written in Koine Greek. Christians eventually called these new scriptures the "New Testament" and began referring to the Septuagint as the "Old Testament".[41] The New Testament has been preserved in more manuscripts than any other ancient work.[42][43] Most early Christian copyists were not trained scribes.[44] Many copies of the gospels and Paul's letters were made by individual Christians over a relatively short period of time, very soon after the originals were written.[45] There is evidence in the Synoptic Gospels, in the writings of the early Church Fathers, from Marcion, and in the Didache that Christian documents were in circulation before the end of the first century.[46][47] Paul's letters were circulated during his lifetime, and his death is thought to have occurred before 68 during Nero's reign.[48][49] Early Christians transported these writings around the Empire, translating them into Old Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Latin, and other languages.[50]

Paul the Apostle depicted in *Saint Paul Writing His Epistles*, a c. 1619 portrait by Valentin de Boulogne

The Rylands fragment P52 verso, 125–175 CE, is the oldest existing fragment of New Testament papyrus, including phrases from the 18th chapter of the Gospel of John.[40]

New Testament scholar Bart Ehrman explains how these multiple texts later became grouped by scholars into categories:

> During the early centuries of the church, Christian texts were copied in whatever location they were written or taken to. Since texts were copied locally, it is no surprise that different localities developed different kinds of textual tradition. That is to say, the manuscripts in Rome had many of the same errors, because they were for the most part "in-house" documents, copied from one another; they were not influenced much by manuscripts being copied in Palestine; and those in Palestine took on their own characteristics, which were not the same as those found in a place like Alexandria, Egypt. Moreover, in the early centuries of the church, some locales had better scribes than others. Modern scholars have come to recognize that the scribes in Alexandria – which was a major intellectual center in the ancient world – were particularly scrupulous, even in these early centuries, and that there, in Alexandria, a very pure form of the text of the early Christian writings was preserved, decade after decade, by dedicated and relatively skilled Christian scribes.[51]

These differing histories produced what modern scholars refer to as recognizable "text types". The four most commonly recognized are Alexandrian, Western, Caesarean, and Byzantine.[52]

The list of books included in the Catholic Bible was established as canon by the Council of Rome in 382, followed by those of Hippo in 393 and Carthage in 397. Between 385 and 405 CE, the early Christian church translated its canon into Vulgar Latin (the common Latin spoken by ordinary people), a translation known as the Vulgate.[53] Since then, Catholic Christians have held ecumenical councils to standardize their biblical canon. The Council of Trent (1545–63), held by the Catholic Church in response to the Protestant Reformation, authorized the Vulgate as its official Latin translation of the Bible.[54] A number of biblical canons have since evolved. Christian biblical canons range from the 73 books of the Catholic Church canon and the 66-book canon of most Protestant denominations to the 81 books of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church canon, among others.[55] Judaism has long accepted a single authoritative text, whereas Christianity has never had an official version, instead having many different manuscript traditions.[56]

Variants

All biblical texts were treated with reverence and care by those who copied them, yet there are transmission errors, called variants, in all biblical manuscripts.[57][58] A variant is any deviation between two texts. Textual critic Daniel B. Wallace explains, "Each deviation counts as one variant, regardless of how many MSS [manuscripts] attest to it."[59] Hebrew scholar Emanuel Tov says the term is not evaluative; it is a recognition that the paths of development of different texts have separated.[60]

Medieval handwritten manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible were considered extremely precise: the most authoritative documents from which to copy other texts.[61] Even so, Hebrew Bible scholar David Carr asserts that Hebrew texts still contain some variants.[62] The majority of all variants are accidental, such as spelling errors, but some changes were intentional.[63] In the Hebrew text, "memory variants" are generally accidental differences evidenced by such things as the shift in word order found in 1 Chronicles 17:24 and 2 Samuel 10:9 and 13. Variants also include the substitution of lexical equivalents, semantic and grammar differences, and larger scale shifts in order, with some major revisions of the Masoretic texts that must have been intentional.[64]

Intentional changes in New Testament texts were made to improve grammar, eliminate discrepancies, harmonize parallel passages, combine and simplify multiple variant readings into one, and for theological reasons.[63][65] Old Testament scholar Bruce K. Waltke observes that one variant for every ten words was noted in the recent critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, leaving 90% of the Hebrew text without variation. The fourth edition of the United Bible Society's *Greek New Testament* notes variants affecting about 500 out of 6900 words, or about 7% of the text.[66]

Content and themes

Themes

The narratives, laws, wisdom sayings, parables, and unique genres of the Bible provide opportunity for discussion on most topics of concern to human beings: The role of women,[67]:203 sex,[68] children, marriage,[69] neighbours,[70]:24 friends, the nature of authority and the sharing of power,[71]:45–48 animals, trees and nature,[72]:xi money and economics,[73]:77 work, relationships,[74] sorrow and despair and the nature of joy, among others.[75] Philosopher and ethicist Jaco Gericke adds: "The meaning of

good and evil, the nature of right and wrong, criteria for moral discernment, valid sources of morality, the origin and acquisition of moral beliefs, the ontological status of moral norms, moral authority, cultural pluralism, [as well as] axiological and aesthetic assumptions about the nature of value and beauty. These are all implicit in the texts."[76]

Creation of Light by Gustave Doré.

However, discerning the themes of some biblical texts can be problematic.[77] Much of the Bible is in narrative form and in general, biblical narrative refrains from any kind of direct instruction, and in some texts the author's intent is not easy to decipher.[78] It is left to the reader to determine good and bad, right and wrong, and the path to understanding and practice is rarely straightforward.[79] God is sometimes portrayed as having a role in the plot, but more often there is little about God's reaction to events, and no mention at all of approval or disapproval of what the characters have done or failed to do.[80] The writer makes no comment, and the reader is left to infer what they will.[80] Jewish philosophers Shalom Carmy and David Shatz explain that the Bible "often juxtaposes contradictory ideas, without explanation or apology".[81]

The Hebrew Bible contains assumptions about the nature of knowledge, belief, truth, interpretation, understanding and cognitive processes.[82] Ethicist Michael V. Fox writes that the primary axiom of the book of Proverbs is that "the exercise of the human mind is the necessary and sufficient condition of right and successful behavior in all reaches of life".[83] The Bible teaches the nature of valid arguments, the nature and power of language, and its relation to reality.[76] According to Alan Mittleman, professor of Jewish philosophy, the Bible provides patterns of moral reasoning that focus on conduct and character.[84][85]

In the biblical metaphysic, humans have free will, but it is a relative and restricted freedom.[86] Beach says that Christian *voluntarism* points to the *will* as the core of the self, and that within human nature, "the core of who we are is defined by what we love".[87] Natural law is in the Wisdom literature, the Prophets, Romans 1, Acts 17, and the book of Amos (Amos 1:3–2:5), where nations other than Israel are held accountable for their ethical decisions even though they do not know the Hebrew god.[88] Political theorist Michael Walzer finds politics in the Hebrew Bible in covenant, law, and prophecy, which constitute an early form of *almost* democratic political ethics.[89] Key elements in biblical criminal justice begin with the belief in God as the source of justice and the judge of all, including those administering justice on earth.[90]

Carmy and Shatz say the Bible "depicts the character of God, presents an account of creation, posits a metaphysics of divine providence and divine intervention, suggests a basis for morality, discusses many features of human nature, and frequently poses the notorious conundrum of how God can allow evil."[91]

Hebrew Bible

The authoritative Hebrew Bible is taken from the masoretic text (called the Leningrad Codex) which dates from 1008. The Hebrew Bible can therefore sometimes be referred to as the Masoretic Text.[92]

The Hebrew Bible is also known by the name Tanakh (Hebrew: תנ"ך). This reflects the threefold division of the Hebrew scriptures, Torah ("Teaching"), Nevi'im ("Prophets") and Ketuvim ("Writings") by using the first letters of each word.[93] It is not until the Babylonian Talmud (c. 550 BCE) that a listing of the contents of these three divisions of scripture are found.[94]

The Tanakh was mainly written in Biblical Hebrew, with some small portions (Ezra 4:8–6:18 and 7:12–26, Jeremiah 10:11, Daniel 2:4–7:28)[95] written in Biblical Aramaic, a language which had become the *lingua franca* for much of the Semitic world.[96]

Torah

The Torah (תּוֹרָה) is also known as the "Five Books of Moses" or the Pentateuch, meaning "five scroll-cases".[97] Traditionally these books were considered to have been dictated to Moses by God himself.[98][99] Since the 17th century, scholars have viewed the original sources as being the product of multiple anonymous authors while also allowing the possibility that Moses first assembled the separate sources.[100][101] There are a variety of hypotheses regarding when and how the Torah was composed,[102] but there is a general consensus that it took its final form during the reign of the Persian Achaemenid Empire (probably 450–350 BCE),[103][104] or perhaps in the early Hellenistic period (333–164 BCE).[105]

A Torah scroll recovered from Glockengasse Synagogue in Cologne

The Hebrew names of the books are derived from the first words in the respective texts. The Torah consists of the following five books:

- Genesis, *Bereshith* (בראשית)
- Exodus, *Shemot* (שמות)
- Leviticus, *Vayikra* (ויקרא)
- Numbers, *Bamidbar* (במדבר)
- Deuteronomy, *Devarim* (דברים)

The first eleven chapters of Genesis provide accounts of the creation (or ordering) of the world and the history of God's early relationship with humanity. The remaining thirty-nine chapters of Genesis provide an account of God's covenant with the biblical patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (also called Israel) and Jacob's children, the "Children of Israel", especially Joseph. It tells of how God commanded Abraham to leave his family and home in the city of Ur, eventually to settle in the land of Canaan, and how the Children of Israel later moved to Egypt.

The remaining four books of the Torah tell the story of Moses, who lived hundreds of years after the patriarchs. He leads the Children of Israel from slavery in ancient Egypt to the renewal of their covenant with God at Mount Sinai and their wanderings in the desert until a new generation was ready to enter the land of Canaan. The Torah ends with the death of Moses.[106]

The commandments in the Torah provide the basis for Jewish religious law. Tradition states that there are 613 commandments (*taryag mitzvot*).

Samaritan Inscription containing a portion of the Bible in nine lines of Hebrew text, currently housed in the British Museum in London

Nevi'im

Nevi'im (Hebrew: נְבִיאִים, romanized: *Nəḇīʾīm*, "Prophets") is the second main division of the Tanakh, between the Torah and Ketuvim. It contains two sub-groups, the Former Prophets (*Nevi'im Rishonim* נביאים ראשונים, the narrative books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings) and the Latter Prophets (*Nevi'im Aharonim* נביאים אחרונים, the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets).

The Nevi'im tell a story of the rise of the Hebrew monarchy and its division into two kingdoms, the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah, focusing on conflicts between the Israelites and other nations, and conflicts among Israelites, specifically, struggles between believers in "the LORD God"[107] (Yahweh) and believers in foreign gods,[e][f] and the criticism of unethical and unjust behaviour of Israelite elites and rulers;[g][h][i] in which prophets played a crucial and leading role. It ends with the conquest of the Kingdom of Israel by the Neo-Assyrian Empire, followed by the conquest of the Kingdom of Judah by the neo-Babylonian Empire and the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Former Prophets

The Former Prophets are the books Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. They contain narratives that begin immediately after the death of Moses with the divine appointment of Joshua as his successor, who then leads the people of Israel into the Promised Land, and end with the release from imprisonment of the last king of Judah. Treating Samuel and Kings as single books, they cover:

- Joshua's conquest of the land of Canaan (in the Book of Joshua),
- the struggle of the people to possess the land (in the Book of Judges),
- the people's request to God to give them a king so that they can occupy the land in the face of their enemies (in the Books of Samuel)
- the possession of the land under the divinely appointed kings of the House of David, ending in conquest and foreign exile (Books of Kings)

Latter Prophets

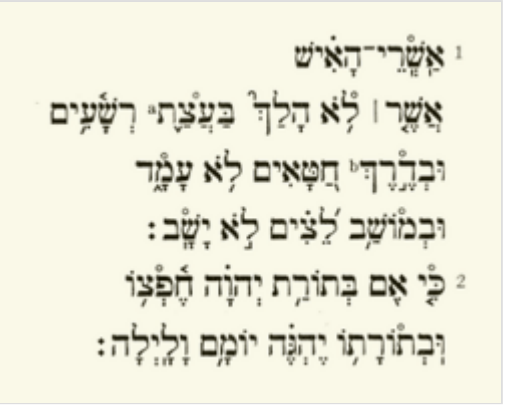
The Latter Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets, counted as a single book.

- Hosea, *Hoshea* (הושע) denounces the worship of gods other than *Yahweh* (God), comparing Israel to a woman being unfaithful to her husband.
- Joel, *Yo'el* (יואל) includes a lament and a promise from God.
- Amos, *Amos* (עמוס) speaks of social justice, providing a basis for natural law by applying it to unbelievers and believers alike.
- Obadiah, *Ovadya* (עבדיה) addresses the judgment of Edom and restoration of Israel.

- Jonah, *Yona* (יונה) tells of a reluctant redemption of Ninevah.
- Micah, *Mikha* (מיכה) reproaches unjust leaders, defends the rights of the poor, and looks forward to world peace.
- Nahum, *Nakhum* (נחום) speaks of the destruction of Nineveh.
- Habakkuk, *Havakuk* (חבקוק) upholds trust in God over Babylon.
- Zephaniah, *Tzefanya* (צפניה) pronounces coming of judgment, survival and triumph of remnant.
- Haggai, *Khagay* (חגי) rebuild Second Temple.
- Zechariah, *Zekharya* (זכריה) God blesses those who repent and are pure.
- Malachi, *Malakhi* (מלאכי) corrects lax religious and social behaviour.

Ketuvim

Ketuvim (in Biblical Hebrew: כְּתוּבִים, romanized: *Kəṯūḇīm* "writings") is the third and final section of the Tanakh. The Ketuvim are believed to have been written under the inspiration of Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit) but with one level less authority than that of prophecy.[108]


1 אַשְׁרֵי־הָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר׀ לֹא הָלַךְ בַּעֲצַת רְשָׁעִים
וּבְדֶרֶךְ חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמָד
וּבְמוֹשַׁב לֵצִים לֹא יָשָׁב׃
2 כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה חֶפְצוֹ
וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יֶהְגֶּה יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה׃

Hebrew text of Psalm 1:1–2

In Masoretic manuscripts (and some printed editions), Psalms, Proverbs and Job are presented in a special two-column form emphasizing their internal parallelism, which was found early in the study of Hebrew poetry. "Stichs" are the lines that make up a verse "the parts of which lie parallel as to form and content".[109] Collectively, these three books are known as *Sifrei Emet* (an acronym of the titles in Hebrew, איוב, משלי, תהלים yields *Emet* אמ"ת, which is also the Hebrew for "truth"). Hebrew cantillation is the manner of chanting ritual readings as they are written and notated in the Masoretic Text of the Bible. Psalms, Job and Proverbs form a group with a "special system" of accenting used only in these three books.[110]

The five scrolls

The five relatively short books of Song of Songs, Book of Ruth, the Book of Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Book of Esther are collectively known as the *Hamesh Megillot*. These are the latest books collected and designated as authoritative in the Jewish canon even though they were not complete until the second century CE.[111]

Other books

The books of Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah[j] and Chronicles share a distinctive style that no other Hebrew literary text, biblical or extra-biblical, shares.[112] They were not written in the normal style of Hebrew of the post-exilic period. The authors of these books must have chosen to write in their own distinctive style for unknown reasons.[113]

- Their narratives all openly describe relatively late events (i.e., the Babylonian captivity and the subsequent restoration of Zion).
- The Talmudic tradition ascribes late authorship to all of them.

- Two of them (Daniel and Ezra) are the only books in the Tanakh with significant portions in Aramaic.

Song of Songs (Das Hohelied Salomos), No. 11 by Egon Tschirch, published in 1923

Book order

The following list presents the books of Ketuvim in the order they appear in most current printed editions.

- *Tehillim* (Psalms) תְּהִלִּים is an anthology of individual Hebrew religious hymns.
- *Mishlei* (Book of Proverbs) מִשְׁלֵי is a "collection of collections" on values, moral behaviour, the meaning of life and right conduct, and its basis in faith.
- *Iyov* (Book of Job) אִיּוֹב is about faith, without understanding or justifying suffering.
- *Shir ha-Shirim* (Song of Songs) or (Song of Solomon) שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים (Passover) is poetry about love and sex.
- *Ruth* (Book of Ruth) רות (Shavuot) tells of the Moabite woman Ruth, who decides to follow the God of the Israelites, and remains loyal to her mother-in-law, who is then rewarded.
- *Eikha* (Lamentations) איכה (Ninth of Av) [Also called *Kinnot* in Hebrew.] is a collection of poetic laments for the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE.
- *Qoheleth* (Ecclesiastes) קהלת (Sukkot) contains wisdom sayings disagreed over by scholars. Is it positive and life-affirming, or deeply pessimistic?
- *Ester* (Book of Esther) אֶסְתֵּר (Purim) tells of a Hebrew woman in Persia who becomes queen and thwarts a genocide of her people.

The Isaiah scroll, part of the Dead Sea Scrolls, contains almost the whole Book of Isaiah and dates from the second century BCE.

- *Dani'el* (Book of Daniel) דָּנִיֵּאל combines prophecy and eschatology (end times) in story of God saving Daniel just as He will save Israel.
- *'Ezra* (Book of Ezra–Book of Nehemiah) עזרא tells of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile.
- *Divrei ha-Yamim* (Chronicles) דברי הימים contains genealogy.

The Jewish textual tradition never finalized the order of the books in Ketuvim. The Babylonian Talmud (Bava Batra 14b–15a) gives their order as Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations of Jeremiah, Daniel, Scroll of Esther, Ezra, Chronicles.[114]

One of the large scale differences between the Babylonian and the Tiberian biblical traditions is the order of the books. Isaiah is placed after Ezekiel in the Babylonian, while Chronicles opens the Ketuvim in the Tiberian, and closes it in the Babylonian.[115]

The Ketuvim is the last of the three portions of the Tanakh to have been accepted as canonical. While the Torah may have been considered canon by Israel as early as the fifth century BCE and the Former and Latter Prophets were canonized by the second century BCE, the Ketuvim was not a fixed canon until the second century CE.[111]

Evidence suggests, however, that the people of Israel were adding what would become the Ketuvim to their holy literature shortly after the canonization of the prophets. As early as 132 BCE references suggest that the Ketuvim was starting to take shape, although it lacked a formal title.[116] *Against Apion*, the writing of Josephus in 95 CE, treated the text of the Hebrew Bible as a closed canon to which "... no one has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable..."[117] For an extended period after 95CE, the divine inspiration of Esther, the Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes was often under scrutiny.[118]

Septuagint

The Septuagint ("the Translation of the Seventy", also called "the LXX"), is a Koine Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible begun in the late third century BCE.

A fragment of a Septuagint: A column of uncial book from 1 Esdras in the *Codex Vaticanus* c. 325–350 CE, the basis of Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's Greek edition and English translation

As the work of translation progressed, the Septuagint expanded: the collection of prophetic writings had various hagiographical works incorporated into it. In addition, some newer books such as the Books of the Maccabees and the Wisdom of Sirach were added. These are among the "apocryphal" books, (books whose authenticity is doubted). The inclusion of these texts, and the claim of some mistranslations, contributed to the Septuagint being seen as a "careless" translation and its eventual rejection as a valid Jewish scriptural text.[119][120][k]

The apocrypha are Jewish literature, mostly of the Second Temple period (c. 550 BCE – 70 CE); they originated in Israel, Syria, Egypt or Persia; were originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek, and attempt to tell of biblical characters and themes.[122] Their provenance is obscure. One older theory of where they came from asserted that an "Alexandrian" canon had been accepted among the Greek-speaking Jews living there, but that theory has since been abandoned.[123] Indications are that they were not accepted when the rest of the Hebrew canon was.[123] It is clear the Apocrypha were used in New Testament times, but "they are never quoted as Scripture."[124] In modern Judaism, none of the apocryphal books are accepted as authentic and are therefore excluded from the canon. However, "the Ethiopian Jews, who are sometimes called Falashas, have an expanded canon, which includes some Apocryphal books".[125]

The rabbis also wanted to distinguish their tradition from the newly emerging tradition of Christianity.[c][l] Finally, the rabbis claimed a divine authority for the Hebrew language, in contrast to Aramaic or Greek – even though these languages were the *lingua franca* of Jews during this period (and Aramaic would eventually be given the status of a sacred language comparable to Hebrew).[m]

Incorporations from Theodotion

The Book of Daniel is preserved in the 12-chapter Masoretic Text and in two longer Greek versions, the original Septuagint version, c. 100 BCE, and the later Theodotion version from c. second century CE. Both Greek texts contain three additions to Daniel: The Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Holy Children; the story of Susannah and the Elders; and the story of Bel and the Dragon. Theodotion's translation was so widely copied in the Early Christian church that its version of the Book of Daniel virtually superseded the Septuagint's. The priest Jerome, in his preface to Daniel (407 CE), records the rejection of the Septuagint version of that book in Christian usage: "I ... wish to emphasize to the reader the fact that it was not according to the Septuagint version but according to the version of Theodotion himself that the churches publicly read Daniel."[126] Jerome's preface also mentions that the *Hexapla* had notations in it, indicating several major differences in content between the Theodotion Daniel and the earlier versions in Greek and Hebrew.

The Translators to the Reader.

The Names and Order of all the Books of the Old and New Testament, with the Number of their Chapters.

The Books of the Old Testament.

The Books called Apocrypha.

The Books of the New Testament.

The contents page in a complete 80 book King James Bible, listing "The Books of the Old Testament", "The Books called Apocrypha", and "The Books of the New Testament".

Theodotion's Daniel is closer to the surviving Hebrew Masoretic Text version, the text which is the basis for most modern translations. Theodotion's Daniel is also the one embodied in the authorized edition of the Septuagint published by Sixtus V in 1587.[127]

Final form

Textual critics are now debating how to reconcile the earlier view of the Septuagint as 'careless' with content from the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran, scrolls discovered at Wadi Murabba'at, Nahal Hever, and those discovered at Masada. These scrolls are 1000–1300 years older than the Leningrad text, dated to 1008 CE, which forms the basis of the Masoretic text.[128] The scrolls have confirmed much of the Masoretic text, but they have also differed from it, and many of those differences agree with the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch or the Greek Old Testament instead.[119]

Copies of some texts later declared apocryphal are also among the Qumran texts.[123] Ancient manuscripts of the book of Sirach, the "Psalms of Joshua", Tobit, and the Epistle of Jeremiah are now known to have existed in a Hebrew version.[129] The Septuagint version of some biblical books, such as the Book of Daniel and Book of Esther, are longer than those in the Jewish canon. In the Septuagint, Jeremiah is shorter than in the Masoretic text, but a shortened Hebrew Jeremiah has been found at Qumran in cave 4.[119] The scrolls of Isaiah, Exodus, Jeremiah, Daniel and Samuel exhibit striking and important textual variants from the Masoretic text.[119] The Septuagint is now seen as a careful translation of a different Hebrew form or recension (revised addition of the text) of certain books, but debate on how best to characterize these varied texts is ongoing.[119]

Pseudepigraphal books

Pseudepigrapha are works whose authorship is wrongly attributed. A written work can be pseudepigraphical and not be a forgery, as forgeries are intentionally deceptive. With pseudepigrapha, authorship has been mistransmitted for any one of a number of reasons.[130] For example, the Gospel of Barnabas claims to be written by Barnabas the companion of the Apostle Paul, but both its manuscripts date from the Middle Ages.

Apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works are not the same. Apocrypha includes all the writings claiming to be sacred that are outside the canon because they are not accepted as authentically being what they claim to be. Pseudepigrapha is a literary category of all writings whether they are canonical or apocryphal. They may or may not be authentic in every sense except a misunderstood authorship.[130]

The term "pseudepigrapha" is commonly used to describe numerous works of Jewish religious literature written from about 300 BCE to 300 CE. Not all of these works are actually pseudepigraphical. (It also refers to books of the New Testament canon whose authorship is questioned.) The Old Testament pseudepigraphal works include the following:[131]

- 3 Maccabees
- 4 Maccabees
- Assumption of Moses
- Ethiopic Book of Enoch (1 Enoch)
- Slavonic Book of Enoch (2 Enoch)
- Hebrew Book of Enoch (3 Enoch) (also known as "The Revelation of Metatron" or "The Book of Rabbi Ishmael the High Priest")
- Book of Jubilees
- Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch (2 Baruch)
- Letter of Aristeas (Letter to Philocrates regarding the translating of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek)
- Life of Adam and Eve
- Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah
- Psalms of Solomon
- Sibylline Oracles
- Greek Apocalypse of Baruch (3 Baruch)
- Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

Book of Enoch

Notable pseudepigraphal works include the Books of Enoch such as 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, which survives only in Old Slavonic, and 3 Enoch, surviving in Hebrew of the c. fifth century – c. sixth century CE. These are ancient Jewish religious works, traditionally ascribed to the prophet Enoch, the great-grandfather of the patriarch Noah. The fragment of Enoch found among the Qumran scrolls attest to it being an ancient work.[132] The older sections (mainly in the Book of the Watchers) are estimated to date from about 300 BCE, and the latest part (Book of Parables) was probably composed at the end of the first century BCE.[133]

Enoch is not part of the biblical canon used by most Jews, apart from Beta Israel. Most Christian denominations and traditions may accept the Books of Enoch as having some historical or theological interest or significance. Part of the Book of Enoch is quoted in the Epistle of Jude and the Book of Hebrews (parts of the New Testament), but Christian denominations generally regard the Books of Enoch as non-canonical.[134] The exceptions to this view are the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church.[132]

The Ethiopian Bible is not based on the Greek Bible, and the Ethiopian Church has a slightly different understanding of canon than other Christian traditions.[135] In Ethiopia, canon does not have the same degree of fixedness, (yet neither is it completely open).[135] Enoch has long been seen there as inspired scripture, but being scriptural and being canon are not always seen the same. The official Ethiopian canon has 81 books, but that number is reached in different ways with various lists of different books, and the book of Enoch is sometimes included and sometimes not.[135] Current evidence confirms Enoch as canonical in both Ethiopia and in Eritrea.[132]

Christian Bible

A Christian Bible is a set of books divided into the Old and New Testament that a Christian denomination has, at some point in their past or present, regarded as divinely inspired scripture by the Holy Spirit.[136] The Early Church primarily used the Septuagint, as it was written in Greek, the common tongue of the day, or they used the Targums among Aramaic speakers. Modern English translations of the Old Testament section of the Christian Bible are based on the Masoretic Text.[35] The Pauline epistles and the gospels were soon added, along with other writings, as the New Testament.[137]

A page from the Gutenberg Bible

Old Testament

The Old Testament has been important to the life of the Christian church from its earliest days. Bible scholar N. T. Wright says "Jesus himself was profoundly shaped by the scriptures."[138] Wright adds that the earliest Christians searched those same Hebrew scriptures in their effort to understand the earthly life of Jesus. They regarded the "holy writings" of the Israelites as necessary and instructive for the Christian, as seen from Paul's words to Timothy (2 Timothy 3:15), as pointing to the Messiah, and as having reached a climactic fulfilment in Jesus generating the "new covenant" prophesied by Jeremiah.[139]

The Protestant Old Testament of the 21st century has a 39-book canon. The number of books (although not the content) varies from the Jewish Tanakh only because of a different method of division. The term "Hebrew scriptures" is often used as being synonymous with the Protestant Old Testament, since the surviving scriptures in Hebrew include only those books.

However, the Roman Catholic Church recognizes 46 books as its Old Testament (45 if Jeremiah and Lamentations are counted as one),[140] and the Eastern Orthodox Churches recognize six additional books. These additions are also included in the Syriac versions of the Bible called the *Peshitta* and the

Ethiopian Bible.[n][o][p]

Because the canon of Scripture is distinct for Jews, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics, and Western Protestants, the contents of each community's Apocrypha are unique, as is its usage of the term. For Jews, none of the apocryphal books are considered canonical. Catholics refer to this collection as "Deuterocanonical books" (second canon) and the Orthodox Church refers to them as "Anagignoskomena" (that which is read).[141][q]

Books included in the Catholic, Orthodox, Greek, and Slavonic Bibles are: Tobit, Judith, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (or Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, the Letter of Jeremiah (also called the Baruch Chapter 6), 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, the Greek Additions to Esther and the Greek Additions to Daniel.[142]

The Greek Orthodox Church, and the Slavonic churches (Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Croatia) also add:[143]

- 3 Maccabees
- 1 Esdras
- Prayer of Manasseh
- Psalm 151

2 Esdras (4 Esdras), which is not included in the Septuagint, does not exist in Greek, though it does exist in Latin. There is also 4 Maccabees which is only accepted as canonical in the Georgian Church. It is in an appendix to the Greek Orthodox Bible, and it is therefore sometimes included in collections of the Apocrypha.[144]

The Syriac Orthodox Church also includes:

- Psalms 151–155
- The Apocalypse of Baruch
- The Letter of Baruch[145]

The Ethiopian Old Testament Canon uses Enoch and Jubilees (that only survived in Ge'ez), 1–3 Meqabyan, Greek Ezra, 2 Esdras, and Psalm 151.[p][n]

The Revised Common Lectionary of the Lutheran Church, Moravian Church, Reformed Churches, Anglican Church and Methodist Church uses the apocryphal books liturgically, with alternative Old Testament readings available.[r] Therefore, editions of the Bible intended for use in the Lutheran Church and Anglican Church include the fourteen books of the Apocrypha, many of which are the deuterocanonical books accepted by the Catholic Church, plus 1 Esdras, 2 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh, which were in the Vulgate appendix.[147]

The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches use most of the books of the Septuagint, while Protestant churches usually do not. After the Protestant Reformation, many Protestant Bibles began to follow the Jewish canon and exclude the additional texts, which came to be called *apocryphal*. The Apocrypha are included under a separate heading in the King James Version of the Bible, the basis for the Revised Standard Version.[148]

The Orthodox Old Testament[149][s]	Greek-based name	Conventional English name

Law		
Γένεσις	Génesis	Genesis
Ἔξοδος	Éxodos	Exodus
Λευϊτικόν	Leuitikón	Leviticus
Ἀριθμοί	Arithmoí	Numbers
Δευτερονόμιον	Deuteronómion	Deuteronomy
History		
Ἰησοῦς Ναυῆ	Iêsous Nauê	Joshua
Κριταί	Kritaí	Judges
Ῥούθ	Roúth	Ruth
Βασιλειῶν Α′[t]	I Basileiōn	I Samuel
Βασιλειῶν Β′	II Basileiōn	II Samuel
Βασιλειῶν Γ′	III Basileiōn	I Kings
Βασιλειῶν Δ′	IV Basileiōn	II Kings
Παραλειπομένων Α′	I Paraleipomenon[u]	I Chronicles
Παραλειπομένων Β′	II Paraleipomenon	II Chronicles
Ἔσδρας Α′	I Esdras	1 Esdras
Ἔσδρας Β′	II Esdras	Ezra–Nehemiah
Τωβίτ[v]	Tōbit	Tobit or Tobias
Ἰουδίθ	Ioudith	Judith
Ἐσθήρ	Esther	Esther with additions
Μακκαβαίων Α′	I Makkabaion	1 Maccabees
Μακκαβαίων Β′	II Makkabaion	2 Maccabees
Μακκαβαίων Γ′	III Makkabaion	3 Maccabees
Wisdom		
Ψαλμοί	Psalmoi	Psalms
Ψαλμός ΡΝΑ′	Psalmos 151	Psalm 151
Προσευχὴ Μανάσση	Proseuchē Manassē	Prayer of Manasseh
Ἰώβ	Iōb	Job
Παροιμίαι	Paroimiai	Proverbs
Ἐκκλησιαστής	Ekklēsiastēs	Ecclesiastes
Ἆσμα Ἀσμάτων	Asma Asmatōn	Song of Solomon or Canticles
Σοφία Σαλομῶντος	Sophia Salomōntos	Wisdom or Wisdom of Solomon
Σοφία Ἰησοῦ Σειράχ	Sophia Iēsou Seirach	Sirach or Ecclesiasticus or Wisdom of Sirach
Ψαλμοί Σαλομῶντος	Psalmoi Salomōntos	Psalms of Solomon[w]
Prophets		
Δώδεκα	**Dōdeka (The Twelve)**	**Minor Prophets**
Ὡσηέ Α′	I Osëe	Hosea
Ἀμώς Β′	II Amōs	Amos
Μιχαίας Γ′	III Michaias	Micah
Ἰωήλ Δ′	IV Ioël	Joel
Ὀβδίου Ε′[x]	V Obdiou	Obadiah
Ἰωνᾶς Ϛ'	VI Ionas	Jonah
Ναούμ Ζ′	VII Naoum	Nahum
Ἀμβακούμ Η′	VIII Ambakoum	Habakkuk
Σοφονίας Θ′	IX Sophonias	Zephaniah
Ἀγγαῖος Ι′	X Angaios	Haggai
Ζαχαρίας ΙΑ′	XI Zacharias	Zachariah
Μαλαχίας ΙΒ′	XII Malachias	Malachi

Ἠσαΐας	Ēsaias	Isaiah
Ἰερεμίας	Hieremias	Jeremiah
Βαρούχ	Barouch	Baruch
Θρῆνοι	Thrēnoi	Lamentations
Ἐπιστολή Ιερεμίου	Epistolē Ieremiou	Letter of Jeremiah
Ἰεζεκιήλ	Iezekiêl	Ezekiel
Δανιήλ	Daniêl	Daniel with additions
Appendix		
Μακκαβαίων Δ' Παράρτημα	IV Makkabaiōn Parartēma	4 Maccabees[y]

New Testament

St. Jerome in His Study, published in 1541 by Marinus van Reymerswaele. Jerome produced a fourth-century Latin edition of the Bible, known as the Vulgate, that became the Catholic Church's official translation.

The New Testament is the name given to the second portion of the Christian Bible. While some scholars assert that Aramaic was the original language of the New Testament,[151] the majority view says it was written in the vernacular form of Koine Greek. Still, there is reason to assert that it is a heavily Semitized Greek: its syntax is like conversational Greek, but its style is largely Semitic.[152][z][aa] Koine Greek was the common language of the western Roman Empire from the Conquests of Alexander the Great (335–323 BCE) until the evolution of Byzantine Greek (c. 600) while Aramaic was the language of Jesus, the Apostles and the ancient Near East.[151][ab][ac][ad] The term "New Testament" came into use in the second century during a controversy over whether the Hebrew Bible should be included with the Christian writings as sacred scripture.[153]

It is generally accepted that the New Testament writers were Jews who took the inspiration of the Old Testament for granted. This is probably stated earliest in 2 Timothy 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God". Scholarship on how and why ancient Jewish–Christians came to create and accept new texts as equal to the established Hebrew texts has taken three forms. First, priest and biblical scholar John Barton writes that ancient Christians probably just continued the Jewish tradition of writing and incorporating what they believed were inspired, authoritative religious books.[154] The second approach separates those various inspired writings based on a concept of "canon" which developed in the second century.[155] The third involves formalizing canon.[156] According to Barton, these differences are only differences in terminology; the ideas are reconciled if they are seen as three stages in the formation of the New Testament.[157]

The first stage was completed remarkably early if one accepts Albert C. Sundberg's view that "canon" and "scripture" are separate things, with "scripture" having been recognized by ancient Christians long before "canon" was.[158] Barton says Theodor Zahn concluded "there was already a Christian canon by the end of the first century", but this is not the canon of later centuries.[159] Accordingly, Sundberg asserts that in the first centuries, there was no criterion for inclusion in the "sacred writings" beyond inspiration, and that no one in the first century had the idea of a closed canon.[160] The gospels were accepted by early believers as handed down from those Apostles who had known Jesus and been taught by him.[161] Later biblical criticism has questioned the authorship and dating of the gospels.

At the end of the second century, it is widely recognized that a Christian canon similar to its modern version was asserted by the church fathers in response to the plethora of writings claiming inspiration that contradicted orthodoxy: (heresy).[162] The third stage of development as the final canon occurred in the fourth century with a series of synods that produced a list of texts of the canon of the Old Testament and the New Testament that are still used today. Most notably the Synod of Hippo in 393 CE and that of *c*. 400. Jerome produced a definitive Latin edition of the Bible (the Vulgate), the canon of which, at the insistence of the Pope, was in accord with the earlier Synods. This process effectively set the New Testament canon.

New Testament books already had considerable authority in the late first and early second centuries.[163] Even in its formative period, most of the books of the New Testament that were seen as scripture were already agreed upon. Linguistics scholar Stanley E. Porter says "evidence from the apocryphal non-Gospel literature is the same as that for the apocryphal Gospels – in other words, that the text of the Greek New Testament was relatively well established and fixed by the time of the second and third centuries".[164] By the time the fourth century Fathers were approving the "canon", they were doing little more than codifying what was already universally accepted.[165]

The New Testament is a collection of 27 books[166] of 4 different genres of Christian literature (Gospels, one account of the Acts of the Apostles, Epistles and an Apocalypse). These books can be grouped into:

The Gospels are narratives of Jesus's last three years of life, his death and resurrection.

- Synoptic Gospels
  - Gospel of Matthew
  - Gospel of Mark
  - Gospel of Luke
- Gospel of John

The narrative literature provides an account and history of the very early Apostolic age.

- Acts of the Apostles

The Pauline epistles are written to individual church groups to address problems, provide encouragement and give instruction.

- Epistle to the Romans
- First Epistle to the Corinthians
- Second Epistle to the Corinthians
- Epistle to the Galatians
- Epistle to the Ephesians
- Epistle to the Philippians
- Epistle to the Colossians
- First Epistle to the Thessalonians
- Second Epistle to the Thessalonians

The pastoral epistles discuss the pastoral oversight of churches, Christian living, doctrine and leadership.

- First Epistle to Timothy
- Second Epistle to Timothy
- Epistle to Titus
- Epistle to Philemon
- Epistle to the Hebrews

The Catholic epistles, also called the general epistles or lesser epistles.

- Epistle of James encourages a lifestyle consistent with faith.
- First Epistle of Peter addresses trial and suffering.

- Second Epistle of Peter more on suffering's purposes, Christology, ethics and eschatology.
- First Epistle of John covers how to discern true Christians: by their ethics, their proclamation of Jesus in the flesh, and by their love.
- Second Epistle of John warns against docetism.
- Third Epistle of John encourage, strengthen and warn.
- Epistle of Jude condemns opponents.

The apocalyptic literature (prophetical)

- Book of Revelation, or the Apocalypse, predicts end time events.

Catholicism, Protestantism, and Eastern Orthodox currently have the same 27-book New Testament Canon. They are ordered differently in the Slavonic tradition, the Syriac tradition and the Ethiopian tradition.[167]

Canon variations

Peshitta

The Peshitta (Classical Syriac: ܦܫܝܛܬܐ *or* ܦܫܝܛܬܐ *pšīṭtā*) is the standard version of the Bible for churches in the Syriac tradition. The consensus within biblical scholarship, although not universal, is that the Old Testament of the Peshitta was translated into Syriac from biblical Hebrew, probably in the 2nd century CE, and that the New Testament of the Peshitta was translated from the Greek.[ae] This New Testament, originally excluding certain disputed books (2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation), had become a standard by the early 5th century. The five excluded books were added in the Harklean Version (616 CE) of Thomas of Harqel.[af][151]

Catholic Church canon

The canon of the Catholic Church was affirmed by the Council of Rome (382), the Synod of Hippo (393), the Council of Carthage (397), the Council of Carthage (419), the Council of Florence (1431–1449) and finally, as an article of faith, by the Council of Trent (1545–1563) establishing the canon consisting of 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament for a total of 73 books in the Catholic Bible.[168][169][ag]

Ethiopian Orthodox canon

The canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is wider than the canons used by most other Christian churches. There are 81 books in the Ethiopian Orthodox Bible.[171] In addition to the books found in the Septuagint accepted by other Orthodox Christians, the Ethiopian Old Testament Canon uses Enoch and Jubilees (ancient Jewish books that only survived in Ge'ez, but are quoted in the New Testament),[142] Greek Ezra and the Apocalypse of Ezra, 3 books of Meqabyan, and Psalm 151 at the end of the Psalter.[p][n] The three books of Meqabyan are not to be confused with the books of Maccabees. The order of the books is somewhat different in that the Ethiopian Old Testament follows the Septuagint order for the Minor Prophets rather than the Jewish order.[171]

New Testament Apocryphal books

The New Testament apocrypha are a number of writings by early professed Christians that give accounts of Jesus and his teachings, the nature of God, or the teachings of his Apostles and of their activities. Some of these writings were cited as Scripture by some early Christians, but since the fifth century a widespread consensus emerged limiting the New Testament to the 27 books of the modern canon.[172][173] Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Western Protestant churches do not view the New Testament apocrypha as part of the inspired Bible.[173] Although some Oriental Orthodox canons to some extent have. The Armenian Apostolic church at times has included the Third Epistle to the Corinthians, but does not always list it with the other 27 canonical New Testament books. The New Testament of the Coptic Bible, adopted by the Egyptian Church, includes the two Epistles of Clement.[174]

Textual history

The original autographs, that is, the original Greek writings and manuscripts written by the original authors of the New Testament, have not survived.[175] But, historically, *copies* of those original autographs exist and were transmitted and preserved in a number of manuscript traditions. The three main textual traditions of the Greek New Testament are sometimes called the Alexandrian text-type (generally minimalist), the Byzantine text-type (generally maximalist), and the Western text-type (occasionally wild). Together they comprise most of the ancient manuscripts. Very early on, Christianity replaced scrolls with codexes, the forerunner of bound books, and by the 3rd century, collections of biblical books began being copied as a set.[176]

Since all ancient texts were written by hand, often by copying from another handwritten text, they are not exactly alike in the manner of printed works. The differences between them are considered generally minor and are called textual variants.[177] A variant is simply any variation between two texts. The majority of variants are accidental, but some are intentional. Intentional changes were made to improve grammar, to eliminate discrepancies, to make Liturgical changes such as the doxology of the Lord's prayer, to harmonize parallel passages or to combine and simplify multiple variant readings into one.[63]

Influence

With a literary tradition spanning two millennia, the Bible is one of the most influential works ever written. From practices of personal hygiene to philosophy and ethics, the Bible has directly and indirectly influenced politics and law, war and peace, sexual morals, marriage and family life, letters and learning, the arts, economics, social justice, medical care and more.[178]

The Christian Bible is the world's most published book, with estimated total sales of over five billion copies.[179] As such, the Bible has had a profound influence, especially in the Western world,[180][181] where the Gutenberg Bible was the first book printed in Europe using movable type.[182] It has contributed to the formation of Western law, art, literature, and education.[183]

Politics and law

The Bible has been used to support and oppose political power. It has inspired revolution and "a reversal of power" because God is so often portrayed as choosing what is "weak and humble...(the stammering Moses, the infant Samuel, Saul from an insignificant family, David confronting Goliath, etc.)....to confound the mighty".[184][185] Biblical texts have been the catalyst for political concepts like democracy, religious toleration and religious freedom.[186]:3 These have, in turn, inspired movements ranging from abolitionism in the 18th and 19th century, to the civil rights movement, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and liberation theology in Latin America. The Bible has been the source of many peace movements and efforts at reconciliation around the world .[187]

The roots of many modern laws can be found in the Bible's teachings on due process, fairness in criminal procedures, and equity in the application of the law.[188] Judges are told not to accept bribes (Deuteronomy 16:19), are required to be impartial to native and stranger alike (Leviticus 24:22; Deuteronomy 27:19), to the needy and the powerful alike (Leviticus 19:15), and to rich and poor alike (Deuteronomy 1:16, 17; Exodus 23:2–6). The right to a fair trial, and fair punishment, are also found in the Bible (Deuteronomy 19:15; Exodus 21:23–25). Those most vulnerable in a patriarchal society – children, women, and strangers – are singled out in the Bible for special protection (Psalm 72:2, 4).[189]:47–48

The Bible has been noted by scholars as a significant influence on the development of nationhood and nationalism, first among ancient Jews and later in Christian societies. For the ancient Jews, it served as "both a national history and a source of law",[190] providing a framework that established shared ancestry, common history, legal codes, and cultural markers that defined Jewish collective identity.[190][191] It has been suggested that the practice of regular public readings of biblical texts during the Second Temple period facilitated the transmission of these identity-forming narratives across the wider Jewish public.[191] Several scholars argue that substantial portions of the Hebrew Bible—particularly the Deuteronomistic History and the Tetrateuch—were composed specifically to establish and reinforce a distinct Israelite ethnic and national identity.[191] Some scholars of nationalism, such as Adrian Hastings, contend that the model of ancient Israel presented in the Hebrew Bible provided the world with the original concept of nationhood, influencing the development of nationalism and European nation-states.[192]

Social responsibility

The philosophical foundation of human rights is in the Bible's teachings of natural law.[193][194] The prophets of the Hebrew Bible repeatedly admonish the people to practice justice, charity, and social responsibility. H. A. Lockton writes that "The Poverty and Justice Bible (The Bible Society (UK), 2008) claims there are more than 2000 verses in the Bible dealing with the justice issues of rich-poor relations, exploitation and oppression".[195] Judaism practised charity and healing the sick but tended to limit these practices to their own people.[196] For Christians, the Old Testament statements are enhanced by multiple verses such as Matthew 10:8, Luke 10:9 and 9:2, and Acts 5:16 that say "heal the sick". Authors Vern and Bonnie Bullough write in *The care of the sick: the emergence of modern nursing*, that this is seen as an aspect of following Jesus's example, since so much of his public ministry focused on healing.[196]

In the process of following this command, monasticism in the third century transformed health care.[197] This produced the first hospital for the poor in Caesarea in the fourth century. The monastic health care system was innovative in its methods, allowing the sick to remain within the monastery as a special class

afforded special benefits; it destigmatized illness, legitimized the deviance from the norm that sickness includes, and formed the basis for future modern concepts of public health care.[198] The biblical practices of feeding and clothing the poor, visiting prisoners, supporting widows and orphan children have had sweeping impact.[199][200][201]

The Bible's emphasis on learning has had formidable influence on believers and western society. For centuries after the fall of the western Roman Empire, all schools in Europe were Bible-based church schools, and outside of monastic settlements, almost no one had the ability to read or write. These schools eventually led to the West's first universities (created by the church) in the Middle Ages which have spread around the world in the modern day.[202] Protestant Reformers wanted all members of the church to be able to read the Bible, so compulsory education for both boys and girls was introduced. Translations of the Bible into local vernacular languages have supported the development of national literatures and the invention of alphabets.[203]

Biblical teachings on sexual morality changed the Roman empire, the millennium that followed, and have continued to influence society.[204] Rome's concept of sexual morality was centered on social and political status, power, and social reproduction (the transmission of social inequality to the next generation). The biblical standard was a "radical notion of individual freedom centered around a libertarian paradigm of complete sexual agency".[205]:10,38 Classicist Kyle Harper describes the change biblical teaching evoked as "a revolution in the rules of behavior, but also in the very image of the human being".[206]:14–18

Literature and the arts

The Bible has directly and indirectly influenced literature: St Augustine's Confessions is widely considered the first autobiography in Western Literature.[207] The *Summa Theologica*, written 1265–1274, is "one of the classics of the history of philosophy and one of the most influential works of Western literature."[208] These both influenced the writings of Dante's epic poetry and his *Divine Comedy*, and in turn, Dante's creation and sacramental theology has contributed to influencing writers such as J. R. R. Tolkien[209] and William Shakespeare.[210]

Salomé, by Henri Regnault (1870)

Many masterpieces of Western art were inspired by biblical themes: from Michelangelo's *David* and *Pietà* sculptures, to Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* and Raphael's various *Madonna* paintings. There are hundreds of examples. Eve, the temptress who disobeys God's commandment, is probably the most widely portrayed figure in art.[211] The Renaissance preferred the sensuous female nude, while the "femme fatale" Delilah from the nineteenth century onward demonstrates how the Bible and art both shape and reflect views of women.[212][213]

The Bible has many rituals of purification which speak of clean and unclean in both literal and metaphorical terms.[214] The biblical toilet etiquette encourages washing after all instances of defecation, hence the invention of the bidet.[215][216]

Criticism

Critics view certain biblical texts to be morally problematic. The Bible neither calls for nor condemns slavery outright, but there are verses that address dealing with it, and these verses have been used to support it, although the Bible has also been used to support abolitionism. Some have written that supersessionism begins in the book of Hebrews where others locate its beginnings in the culture of the fourth century Roman empire.[217]:1 The Bible has been used to support the death penalty, patriarchy, sexual intolerance, the violence of total war, and colonialism.

In the Christian Bible, the violence of war is addressed four ways: pacifism, non-resistance; just war, and preventive war which is sometimes called crusade.[218]:13–37 In the Hebrew Bible, there is *just war* and *preventive war* which includes the Amalekites, Canaanites, Moabites, and the record in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and both books of Kings.[219] John J. Collins, biblical scholar, writes that people throughout history have used these biblical texts to justify violence against their enemies.[220] Anthropologist Leonard B. Glick offers the modern example of Jewish fundamentalists in Israel, such as Shlomo Aviner, a rabbi and prominent theorist of the Gush Emunim movement, who considers the Palestinians to be like biblical Canaanites, and therefore suggests that Israel "must be prepared to destroy" the Palestinians if the Palestinians do not leave the land.[221]

Historian Nur Masalha argues that genocide is inherent in these commandments, and that they have served as inspirational examples of divine support for slaughtering national opponents.[222] However, the "applicability of the term [genocide] to earlier periods of history" is questioned by sociologists Frank Robert Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn.[223] Since most societies of the past endured and practised genocide, it was accepted at that time as "being in the nature of life" because of the "coarseness and brutality" of life; the moral condemnation associated with terms like genocide are products of modern morality.[223]:27 The definition of what constitutes violence has broadened considerably over time.[224]:1–2 The Bible reflects how perceptions of violence changed for its authors.[224]:261

Feminist biblical scholar Phyllis Trible, in her book *Texts of Terror*, tells four Bible stories of suffering in ancient Israel where women are the victims. Tribble describes the Bible as "a mirror" that reflects humans, and human life, in all its "holiness and horror".[225]

John Riches, professor of divinity and biblical criticism at the University of Glasgow, provides the following view of the diverse historical influences of the Bible:

> It has inspired some of the great monuments of human thought, literature, and art; it has equally fuelled some of the worst excesses of human savagery, self-interest, and narrow-mindedness. It has inspired men and women to acts of great service and courage, to fight for liberation and human development; and it has provided the ideological fuel for societies which have enslaved their fellow human beings and reduced them to abject poverty. ... It has, perhaps above all, provided a source of religious and moral norms which have enabled communities to hold together, to care for, and to protect one another; yet precisely this strong sense of belonging has in turn fuelled ethnic, racial, and international tension and conflict. It has, that is to say, been the source of great truth, goodness, and beauty at the same time as it has inspired lies, wickedness, and ugliness.[226]

Interpretation and inspiration

Biblical texts have always required interpretation, and this has given rise to multiple views and approaches according to the interplay between various religions and the book.[227]

A Bible is placed centrally on a Lutheran altar, highlighting its importance

The primary source of Jewish commentary and interpretation of the Hebrew Bible is the Talmud. The Talmud, (which means study and learning), is a summary of ancient oral law and commentary on it.[228] It is the primary source of Jewish Law.[229] Adin Steinsaltz writes that "if the Bible is the cornerstone of Judaism, then the Talmud is the central pillar".[230] Seen as the backbone of Jewish creativity, it is "a conglomerate of law, legend and philosophy, a blend of unique logic and shrewd pragmatism, of history and science, anecdotes and humor" all aimed toward the purpose of studying biblical Torah.[229]

Christians often treat the Bible as a single book, and while Barton says they are "some of the most profound texts humanity has ever produced", liberals and moderates see it as a collection of books that are not perfect.[231] Conservative and fundamentalist Christians see the Bible differently and interpret it differently.[232] Christianity interprets the Bible differently than Judaism does with Islam providing yet another view.[233] How inspiration works and what kind of authority it means the Bible has are different for different traditions.[234]

The Second Epistle to Timothy claims, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16 (https://www.esv.org/2+Timothy+3:16)).[235] Various related but distinguishable views on divine inspiration include:

- the view of the Bible as the inspired word of God: the belief that God, through the Holy Spirit, intervened and influenced the words, message, and collation of the Bible[236]
- the view that the Bible is also infallible, and incapable of error in matters of faith and practice, but not necessarily in historic or scientific matters
- the view that the Bible represents the inerrant word of God, without error in any aspect, spoken by God and written down in its perfect form by humans

Within these broad beliefs many schools of hermeneutics operate. "Bible scholars claim that discussions about the Bible must be put into its context within church history and then into the context of contemporary culture."[139] Fundamentalist Christians are associated with the doctrine of biblical literalism, where the Bible is not only inerrant, but the meaning of the text is clear to the average reader.[237]

Jewish antiquity attests to belief in sacred texts,[238][239] and a similar belief emerges in the earliest of Christian writings. Various texts of the Bible mention divine agency in relation to its writings.[240] In their book *A General Introduction to the Bible*, Norman Geisler and William Nix write: "The process of inspiration is a mystery of the providence of God, but the result of this process is a verbal, plenary, inerrant, and authoritative record."[241] Most evangelical biblical scholars[242][243] associate inspiration with only the original text; for example some American Protestants adhere to the 1978 Chicago Statement

on Biblical Inerrancy which asserted that inspiration applied only to the autographic text of scripture.[244] Among adherents of biblical literalism, a minority, such as followers of the King-James-Only Movement, extend the claim of inerrancy only to a particular version.[245]

Religious significance

Both Judaism and Christianity see the Bible as religiously and intellectually significant.[246] It provides insight into its time and into the composition of the texts, and it represents an important step in the development of thought.[246] It is used in communal worship, recited and memorized, provides personal guidance, a basis for counseling, church doctrine, religious culture (teaching, hymns and worship), and ethical standards.[246][247]:145 According to Barton:

> The Bible is centrally important to both Judaism and Christianity, but not as a holy text out of which entire religious systems can somehow be read. Its contents illuminate the origins of Christianity and Judaism, and provide spiritual classics on which both faiths can draw; but they do not constrain subsequent generations in the way that a written constitution would. They are simply not that kind of thing. They are a repository of writings, both shaping and shaped by the two religions..."[248]

As a result, there are teachings and creeds in Christianity and laws in Judaism that are seen by those religions as derived from the Bible which are not directly in the Bible.[84]

For the Hebrew Bible, canonization is reserved for written texts, while sacralization reaches far back into oral tradition.[249]:80 When sacred stories, such as those that form the narrative base of the first five books of the Bible, were performed, "not a syllable [could] be changed in order to ensure the magical power of the words to 'presentify' the divine".[249]:80 Inflexibility protected the texts from a changing world.[249]:80 When sacred oral texts began the move to written transmission, commentary began being worked in, but once the text was closed by canonization, commentary needed to remain outside. Commentary still had significance. Sacred written texts were thereafter accompanied by commentary, and such commentary was sometimes written and sometimes orally transmitted, as is the case in the Islamic Madrasa and the Jewish Yeshiva.[249]:81 Arguing that Torah has had a definitive role in developing Jewish identity from its earliest days, John J. Collins explains that regardless of genetics or land, it has long been true that one could become Jewish by observing the laws in the Torah, and that remains true in the modern day.[250]

The Christian religion and its sacred book are connected and influence one another, but the significance of the written text has varied throughout history. For Christianity, holiness did not reside in the written text, or in any particular language, it resided in the Christ the text witnessed to. Old Testament scholar David M. Carr writes that this gave early Christianity a more 'flexible' view of the written texts.[251]:279 Wilfred Cantwell Smith points out that "in the Islamic system, the Quran fulfills a function comparable to the role... played by the person of Jesus Christ, while a closer counterpart to Christian scriptures are the Islamic Hadith 'Traditions'."[252]:133 For centuries the written text had less significance than the will of the church as represented by the Pope, since the church saw the text as having been created by the church. One cause of the Reformation was the perceived need to reorient Christianity around its early text as authoritative.[253]:13 Some Protestant churches still focus on the idea of *sola scriptura*, which sees

scripture as the only legitimate religious authority. Some denominations today support the use of the Bible as the only infallible source of Christian teaching. Others, though, advance the concept of *prima scriptura* in contrast, meaning scripture primarily or scripture mainly.[ah][ai]

In the 21st century, attitudes towards the significance of the Bible continue to differ. Roman Catholics, High Church Anglicans, Methodists and Eastern Orthodox Christians stress the harmony and importance of both the Bible and sacred tradition in combination. United Methodists see Scripture as the major factor in Christian doctrine, but they also emphasize the importance of tradition, experience, and reason. Lutherans teach that the Bible is the sole source for Christian doctrine.[254] Muslims view the Bible as an original revelation from God; but the Jews and the Christians corrupted it through falsification and alteration (*Taḥrīf*), and therefore the Quran is revealed by God to the Islamic prophet Muhammad.[255] The Rastafari view the Bible as essential to their religion,[256] while the Unitarian Universalists view it as "one of many important religious texts".[257]

Versions and translations

The original texts of the Tanakh were almost entirely written in Hebrew with about one per cent in Aramaic. The earliest translation of any Bible text is the Septuagint which translated the Hebrew into Greek.[34] As the first translation of any biblical literature, the translation that became the Septuagint was an unparalleled event in the ancient world.[258] This translation was made possible by a common Mediterranean culture where Semitism had been foundational to Greek culture.[259] In the Talmud, Greek is the only language officially allowed for translation.[120] The Targum Onkelos is the Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Bible believed to have been written in the second century CE.[34] These texts attracted the work of various scholars, but a standardized text was not available before the 9th century.[34]

Title page from the first Welsh translation of the Bible, published in 1588, and translated by William Morgan)

There were different ancient versions of the Tanakh in Hebrew. These were copied and edited in three different locations producing slightly varying results. Masoretic scholars in Tiberias in ancient Palestine copied the ancient texts in Tiberian Hebrew. A copy was recovered from the "Cave of Elijah" (the synagogue of Aleppo in the Judean desert) and is therefore referred to as the Aleppo Codex which dates to around 920. This codex, which is over a thousand years old, was originally the oldest codex of the complete Tiberian Hebrew Bible.[260] Babylonian masoretes had also copied the early texts, and the Tiberian and Babylonian were later combined, using the Aleppo Codex and additional writings, to form the Ben-Asher masoretic tradition which is the standardized Hebrew Bible of today. The Aleppo Codex is no longer the oldest complete manuscript because, during riots in 1947, the Aleppo Codex was removed from its location, and about 40% of it was subsequently lost. It must now rely on additional manuscripts, and as a

result, the Aleppo Codex contains the most comprehensive collection of variant readings.[35] The oldest complete version of the Masoretic tradition is the Leningrad Codex from 1008. It is the source for all modern Jewish and Christian translations.[34][260]

An early German translation of the Bible by Martin Luther, whose translation of the text into the vernacular was highly influential in the development of Lutheranism and the Reformation

Levidas writes that, "The Koine Greek New Testament is a non-translated work; most scholars agree on this – despite disagreement on the possibility that some passages may have appeared initially in Aramaic... It is written in the Koine Greek of the first century [CE]".[261] Early Christians translated the New Testament into Old Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Latin, among other languages.[50] The earliest Latin translation was the Old Latin text, or *Vetus Latina*, which, from internal evidence, seems to have been made by several authors over a period of time.[262][263]

Pope Damasus I (366–383) commissioned Jerome to produce a reliable and consistent text by translating the original Greek and Hebrew texts into Latin. This translation became known as the Latin Vulgate Bible, in the 4th century CE (although Jerome expressed in his prologues to most deuterocanonical books that they were non-canonical).[264][265] In 1546, at the Council of Trent, Jerome's Vulgate translation was declared by the Roman Catholic Church to be the only authentic and official Bible in the Latin Church.[266] The Greek-speaking East continued to use the Septuagint translations of the Old Testament, and they had no need to translate the Greek New Testament.[262][263] This contributed to the East-West Schism.[53]

Many ancient translations coincide with the invention of the alphabet and the beginning of vernacular literature in those languages. According to British Academy professor N. Fernández Marcos, these early translations represent "pioneer works of enormous linguistic interest, as they represent the oldest documents we have for the study of these languages and literature".[267]

Translations to English can be traced to the seventh century, Alfred the Great in the 9th century, the *Toledo School of Translators* in the 12th and 13th century, Roger Bacon (1220–1292), an English Franciscan friar of the 13th century, and multiple writers of the Renaissance.[268] The Wycliffite Bible, which is "one of the most significant in the development of a written standard", dates from the late Middle English period.[269] William Tyndale's translation of 1525 is seen by several scholars as having influenced the form of English Christian discourse as well as impacting the development of the English language itself.[270] Martin Luther translated the New Testament into German in 1522, and both Testaments with Apocrypha in 1534, thereby contributing to the multiple wars of the Age of Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Important biblical translations of this period include the Polish *Jakub Wujek Bible* (Biblia Jakuba Wujka) from 1535, and the English King James/Authorized Version (1604–1611).[271] The King James Version was the most widespread English Bible of all time, but it has largely been superseded by modern translations.[54] Some New Testaments verses found to be later additions to the text are not included in modern English translations, despite appearing in older English translations such as the King James Version.

Historically significant translations of the Bible in English

Name	Abbreviation	Published[aj]
Wycliffe Bible	WYC	1382
Tyndale Bible[ak]	TYN	1526[al]
Geneva Bible	GNV	1560
Douay–Rheims Bible	DRB	1610[am]
King James Version	KJV	1611
English Revised Version	RV	1885
Revised Standard Version	RSV	1952
New American Bible	NAB	1970
New International Version	NIV	1978
New King James Version	NKJV	1982
New Revised Standard Version	NRSV	1989
English Standard Version	ESV	2001

Some denominations have additional canonical texts beyond the Bible, including the Standard Works of the Latter Day Saints movement and *Divine Principle* in the Unification Church.

Nearly all modern English translations of the Old Testament are based on a single manuscript, the Leningrad Codex, copied in 1008 or 1009. It is a complete example of the Masoretic Text, and its published edition is used by the majority of scholars. The Aleppo Codex is the basis of the Hebrew University Bible Project in Jerusalem.[35]

Since the Reformation era, Bible translations have been made into the common vernacular of many languages. The Bible continues to be translated to new languages, largely by Christian organizations such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, New Tribes Mission and Bible societies. Lamin Sanneh writes that tracing the impact on the local cultures of translating the Bible into local vernacular language shows it has produced "the movements of indigenization and cultural liberation".[272] "The translated scripture ... has become the benchmark of awakening and renewal".[203]

Bible translations, worldwide (as of September 2024)[273]

Number	Statistic
7,396	Approximate number of languages spoken in the world today
3,526	Number of translations into new languages in progress
1,274	Number of languages with some translated Bible portions
1,726	Number of languages with a translation of the New Testament
756	Number of languages with a full translation of the Bible (Protestant Canon)
3,756	Total number of languages with some Bible translation

Archaeological and historical research

The Tel Dan Stele at the Israel Museum. Highlighted in white: the sequence *B Y T D W D*

Biblical archaeology is a subsection of archaeology that relates to and sheds light upon the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament.[274] It is used to help determine the lifestyle and practices of people living in biblical times.[275] There are a wide range of interpretations in the field of biblical archaeology.[276] One broad division includes biblical maximalism, which generally takes the view that most of the Old Testament or the Hebrew Bible is based on history although it is presented through the religious viewpoint of its time. According to historian Lester L. Grabbe, there are "few, if any" maximalists in mainstream scholarship.[277] It is considered to be the extreme opposite of biblical minimalism which considers the Bible to be a purely post-exilic (5th century BCE and later) composition.[278] According to Mary-Joan Leith, professor of religious studies, many minimalists have ignored evidence for the antiquity of the Hebrew language in the Bible, and few take archaeological evidence into consideration.[279] Most biblical scholars and archaeologists fall somewhere on a spectrum between these two.[280][277]

The biblical account of events of the Exodus from Egypt in the Torah, the migration to the Promised Land, and the period of Judges are sources of heated ongoing debate. There is an absence of evidence for the presence of Israel in Egypt from any Egyptian source, historical or archaeological.[281] Yet, as William Dever points out, these biblical traditions were written long after the events they describe, and they are based in sources now lost and older oral traditions.[282]

The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, ancient non–biblical texts, and archaeology support the Babylonian captivity beginning around 586 BCE.[283] Excavations in southern Judah show a pattern of destruction consistent with the Neo-Assyrian devastation of Judah at the end of the eighth century BCE and 2 Kings 18:13.[284] In 1993, at Tel Dan, archaeologist Avraham Biran unearthed a fragmentary Aramaic inscription, the Tel Dan stele, dated to the late ninth or early eighth century that mentions a "king of Israel" as well as a "house of David" (bet David). This shows David could not be a late sixth-century invention, and implies that Judah's kings traced their lineage back to someone named David.[285] However, there is no current archaeological evidence for the existence of King David and Solomon or the First Temple as far back as the tenth century BCE where the Bible places them.[286]

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, surveys demonstrated that Acts of the Apostles (Acts) scholarship was divided into two traditions, "a conservative (largely British) tradition which had great confidence in the historicity of Acts and a less conservative (largely German) tradition which had very little confidence in the historicity of Acts". Subsequent surveys show that little has changed.[287] Author Thomas E. Phillips writes that "In this two-century-long debate over the historicity of Acts and its underlying traditions, only one assumption seemed to be shared by all: Acts was intended to be read as history".[288] This too is now being debated by scholars as: what genre does Acts actually belong to?[288]

There is a growing consensus, however, that the question of genre is unsolvable and would not, in any case, solve the issue of historicity: "Is Acts history or fiction? In the eyes of most scholars, it is history – but not the kind of history that precludes fiction." says Phillips.[289]

Biblical criticism

Jean Astruc, often called the "father of biblical criticism", at Centre hospitalier universitaire de Toulouse

Biblical criticism refers to the analytical investigation of the Bible as a text, and addresses questions such as history, authorship, dates of composition, and authorial intention. It is not the same as criticism of the Bible, which is an assertion against the Bible being a source of information or ethical guidance, nor is it criticism of possible translation errors.[290]

Biblical criticism made study of the Bible secularized, scholarly, and more democratic, while it also permanently altered the way people understood the Bible.[291] The Bible is no longer thought of solely as a religious artefact, and its interpretation is no longer restricted to the community of believers.[292] Michael Fishbane writes, "There are those who regard the desacralization of the Bible as the fortunate condition for" the development of the modern world.[293] For many, biblical criticism "released a host of threats" to the Christian faith. For others biblical criticism "proved to be a failure, due principally to the assumption that diachronic, linear research could master any and all of the questions and problems attendant on interpretation".[294] Still others believed that biblical criticism, "shorn of its unwarranted arrogance," could be a reliable source of interpretation.[294] Michael Fishbane compares biblical criticism to Job, a prophet who destroyed "self-serving visions for the sake of a more honest crossing from the divine *textus* to the human one".[292] Or as Rogerson says: biblical criticism has been liberating for those who want their faith "intelligently grounded and intellectually honest".[295]

Bible museums

- The Dunham Bible Museum is located at Houston Baptist University in Houston, Texas. It is known for its collection of rare Bibles from around the world and for having many different Bibles of various languages.[296]
- The Museum of the Bible opened in Washington, D.C. in November 2017.[297] The museum states that its intent is to "share the historical relevance and significance of the sacred scriptures in a nonsectarian way", but this has been questioned.[298][299]
- The Bible Museum in St Arnaud, Victoria in Australia opened in 2009.[300]
- There is a Bible Museum at *The Great Passion Play* in Eureka Springs, Arkansas.[301][302]
- The Bible Museum on the Square in Collierville, Tennessee opened in 1997.[303][304]
- Biedenharn Museum and Gardens in Monroe, Louisiana includes a Bible Museum.[305]

Illustrations

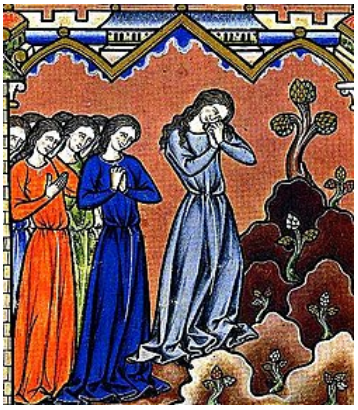
The grandest medieval Bibles were illuminated manuscripts in which the text is supplemented by the addition of decoration, such as decorated initials, borders (marginalia) and miniature illustrations. Up to the 12th century, most manuscripts were produced in monasteries in order to add to the library or after receiving a commission from a wealthy patron. Larger monasteries often contained separate areas for the monks who specialized in the production of manuscripts called a scriptorium, where "separate little rooms were assigned to book copying; they were situated in such a way that each scribe had to himself a window open to the cloister walk."[306] By the 14th century, the cloisters of monks writing in the scriptorium started to employ laybrothers from the urban scriptoria, especially in Paris, Rome and the Netherlands.[307] Demand for manuscripts grew to an extent that the Monastic libraries were unable to meet with the demand, and began employing secular scribes and illuminators.[308] These individuals often lived close to the monastery and, in certain instances, dressed as monks whenever they entered the monastery, but were allowed to leave at the end of the day.[309] A notable example of an illuminated manuscript is the Book of Kells, produced circa the year 800 containing the four Gospels of the New Testament together with various prefatory texts and tables.

The manuscript was "sent to the rubricator, who added (in red or other colours) the titles, headlines, the initials of chapters and sections, the notes and so on; and then – if the book was to be illustrated – it was sent to the illuminator."[310] In the case of manuscripts that were sold commercially, the writing would "undoubtedly have been discussed initially between the patron and the scribe (or the scribe's agent,) but by the time that the written gathering were sent off to the illuminator there was no longer any scope for innovation."[311]

Bible from 1150, from Scriptorium de Chartres, Christ with angels

Blanche of Castile and Louis IX of France Bible, 13th century

Maciejowski Bible, Leaf 37, the 3rd image, Abner (in the centre in green) sends Michal back to David.



Jephthah's daughter laments – Maciejowski Bible (France, c. 1250)

Coloured version of the Whore of Babylon illustration from Martin Luther's 1534 translation of the Bible

An Armenian Bible, 17th century, illuminated by Malnazar

Fleeing Sodom and Gomorrah, Foster Bible, 19th century

Jonah being swallowed by the fish, Kennicott Bible, 1476

Gallery

Bibles

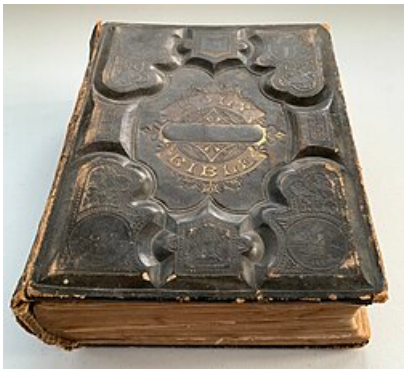
An old Bible from a Greek monastery

The Imperial Bible, or Vienna Coronation Gospels from Wien, Austria, c. 1500

The Kennicott Bible in 1476

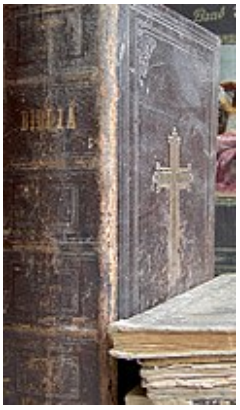
A Baroque Bible

The Bible used by Abraham Lincoln for his oath of office during his first inaugural in 1861



American Civil War-era illustrated Bible

A miniature Bible



An 1866 Victorian Bible

Shelves of the Bizzell Bible Collection at Bizzell Memorial Library

Leonardo da Vinci's *Annunciation* (c. 1472–1475), showing the Virgin Mary reading the Bible

See also

Bible portal

- Additional and alternative scriptures relating to Christianity
- Bible box
- Bible case
- Bible paper
- Biblical software
- Christian theology
- Code of Hammurabi
- Family Bible (book)
- International Bible Contest
- Lectionary – schedule of ceremonial Bible readings which varies by denomination
- List of major biblical figures
- List of nations mentioned in the Bible
- Theodicy and the Bible

- Typology (theology)

Notes

a. This figure counts the Books of Samuel, the Books of Kings, the Twelve Minor Prophets, the Books of Chronicles, and the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah as one book each, as they are counted in Judaism. If these are counted separately, as they are in Christianity, there are 39 books in the Hebrew Bible. Both of these figures exclude the deuterocanonical books.

b. from Koine Greek τὰ βιβλία, *tà biblía*, 'the books'

c. "[...] die griechische Bibelübersetzung, die einem innerjüdischen Bedürfnis entsprang [...] [von den] Rabbinen zuerst gerühmt (.) Später jedoch, als manche ungenaue Übertragung des hebräischen Textes in der Septuaginta und Übersetzungsfehler die Grundlage für hellenistische Irrlehren abgaben, lehte man die Septuaginta ab." Homolka, Jacob & Chorin 1999, pp. 43ff, Bd.3

d. Although a paucity of extant source material makes it impossible to be certain that the earliest Samaritans also rejected the other books of the Tanakh, the 3rd-century church father Origen confirms that the Samaritans in his day "receive[d] the books of Moses alone." Schaff 1885, Chapter XLIX (https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.vi.ix.i.l.html)(Commentary on John 13:26)

e. "Each king is judged either good or bad in black-and-white terms, according to whether or not he "did right" or "did evil" in the sight of the Lord. This evaluation is not reflective of the well-being of the nation, of the king's success or failure in war, or of the moral climate of the times, but rather the state of cultic worship during his reign. Those kings who shun idolatry and enact religious reforms are singled out for praise, and those who encourage pagan practices are denounced." Savran 1987, p. 146 (https://books.google.com/books?id=O4hYlvzWui8C&pg=PA146)

f. "The fight against Baal was initiated by the prophets" Kaufmann 1956a, p. 54

g. "The immediate occasion of the rise of the new prophecy was the political and social ruin caused by the wars with Israel's northerly neighbour, Aram, which continued for more than a century. They raged intensely during the reign of Ahab, and did not end until the time of Jeroboam II (784–744). While the nation as a whole was impoverished, a few – apparently of the royal officialdom – grew wealthy as a result of the national calamity. Many of the people were compelled to sell their houses and lands, with the result that a sharp social cleavage arose: on the one hand a mass of propertyless indigents, on the other a small circle of the rich. A series of disasters struck the nation – drought, famine, plagues, death and captivity (Amos 4: 6–11), but the greatest disaster of all was the social disintegration due to the cleavage between the poor masses and the wealthy, dissolute upper class. The decay affected both Judah and Israel ... High minded men were appalled at this development. Was this the people whom YHWH had brought out of Egypt, to whom He had given the land and a law of justice and right? it seemed as if the land was about to be inherited by the rich, who would squander its substance in drunken revelry. it was this dissolution that brought the prophetic denunciations to white heat." Kaufmann 1956b, pp. 57–58

h. "What manner of man is the prophet? A student of philosophy who runs from the discourses of the great metaphysicians to the orations of the prophets may feel as if he were going from the realm of the sublime to an area of trivialities. Instead of dealing with the timeless issues of being and becoming, of matter and form, of definitions and demonstrations, he is thrown into orations about widows and orphans, about the corruption of judges and affairs of the market place. Instead of showing us a way through the elegant mansions of the mind, the prophets take us to the slums. The world is a proud place, full of beauty, but the prophets are scandalized, and rave as if the whole world were a slum. They make much ado about paltry things, lavishing excessive language upon trifling subjects. What if somewhere in ancient Palestine poor people have not been treated properly by the rich? .... Indeed, the sorts of crimes and even the amount of delinquency that fill the prophets of Israel with dismay do not go beyond that which we regard as normal, as typical ingredients of social dynamics. To us a single act of injustice – cheating in business, exploitation of the poor – is slight; to the prophets, a disaster. To us an injustice is injurious to the welfare of the people; to the prophets it is a deathblow to existence; to us an episode; to them, a catastrophe, a threat to the world." Heschel 2001, pp. 3–4
i. "Samuel is thus a work of national self-criticism. It recognizes that Israel would not have survived, either politically or culturally, without the steadying presence of a dynastic royal house. But it makes both that house and its subjects answerable to firm standards of prophetic justice – not those of cult prophets or professional ecstatics, but of morally upright prophetic leaders in the tradition of Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, and others ..." Rosenberg 1987, p. 141 (https://books.google.com/books?id=O4hYlvzWui8C&pg=PA141)
j. Originally, Ezra and Nehemiah were one book, which were divided in later traditions.
k. According to the Jewish Encyclopedia: "The translation, which shows at times a peculiar ignorance of Hebrew usage, was evidently made from a codex which differed widely in places from the text crystallized by the Masorah."[121]
l. "Two things, however, rendered the Septuagint unwelcome in the long run to the Jews. Its divergence from the accepted text (afterward called the Masoretic) was too evident; and it therefore could not serve as a basis for theological discussion or for homiletic interpretation. This distrust was accentuated by the fact that it had been adopted as Sacred Scripture by the new faith [Christianity] [...] In course of time it came to be the canonical Greek Bible [...] It became part of the Bible of the Christian Church."[121]
m. Mishnah Sotah (7:2–4 and 8:1), among many others, discusses the sacredness of Hebrew, as opposed to Aramaic or Greek. This is comparable to the authority claimed for the original Arabic Koran according to Islamic teaching. As a result of this teaching, translations of the Torah into Koine Greek by early Jewish Rabbis have survived as rare fragments only.
n. Even though they were not placed on the same level as the canonical books, still they were useful for instruction. ... These – and others that total fourteen or fifteen altogether – are the books known as the Apocrypha. Williams 1970, p. 141
o. "English Bibles were patterned after those of the Continental Reformers by having the Apocrypha set off from the rest of the OT. Coverdale (1535) called them "Apocrypha". All English Bibles prior to 1629 contained the Apocrypha. Matthew's Bible (1537), the Great Bible (1539), the Geneva Bible (1560), the Bishop's Bible (1568), and the King James Bible (1611) contained the Apocrypha. Soon after the publication of the KJV, however, the English Bibles began to drop the Apocrypha and eventually they disappeared entirely. The first English Bible to be printed in America (1782–83) lacked the Apocrypha. In 1826 the British and Foreign Bible Society decided to no longer print them. Today the trend is in the opposite direction, and English Bibles with the Apocrypha are becoming more popular again." Ewert 2010, p. 104
p. "Fourteen books and parts of books are considered *Apocryphal* by Protestants. Three of these are recognized by Roman Catholics also as *Apocryphal*."Wells 1911, p. 41

q. the Canon of Trent:

> But if anyone receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately contemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema.
>
> —*Decretum de Canonicis Scripturis*, Council of Trent, 8 April 1546

r. "In all places where a reading from the deuterocanonical books (The Apocrypha) is listed, an alternate reading from the canonical Scriptures has also been provided."[146]
s. The canon of the original Old Greek LXX is disputed. This table reflects the canon of the Old Testament as used currently in Orthodoxy.
t. Βασιλειῶν (Basileiōn) is the genitive plural of Βασιλεῖα (Basileia).
u. That is, *Things set aside* from Ἔσδρας Α′.
v. Also called Τωβείτ or Τωβίθ in some sources.
w. Not in Orthodox Canon, but originally included in the Septuagint.[150]
x. Obdiou is genitive from "The vision *of* Obdias", which opens the book.
y. Originally placed after 3 Maccabees and before Psalms, but placed in an appendix of the Orthodox Canon.
z. "The New Testament was written in Koine Greek, the Greek of daily conversation. The fact that from the first all the New Testament writings were written in Greek is conclusively demonstrated by their citations from the Old Testament ..." Aland & Aland 1995, p. 52
aa. "How came the twenty-seven books of the New Testament to be gathered together and made authoritative Christian scripture? 1. All the New Testament books were originally written in Greek. On the face of it this may surprise us." Hunter 1972, p. 9
ab. "This is the language of the New Testament. By the time of Jesus the Romans had become the dominant military and political force, but the Greek language remained the 'common language' of the eastern Mediterranean and beyond, and Greek ..." Duff & Wenham 2005, p. xxv
ac. "By far the most predominant element in the language of the New Testament is the Greek of common speech which was disseminated in the East by the Macedonian conquest, in the form which it had gradually assumed under the wider development ..." Blass & Thackeray 2008, p. 2 (https://books.google.com/books?id=akD7DwAAQBAJ&pg=PA2)
ad. "In this short overview of the Greek language of the New Testament we will focus on those topics that are of greatest importance for the average reader, that is, those with important ..." Aune 2010, p. 61
ae. "The Peshitta Old Testament was translated directly from the original Hebrew text, and the Peshitta New Testament directly from the original Greek" Brock 1988, p. 13 (https://archive.org/stream/TheBibleInTheSyriacTradition/BrockTheBibleInTheSyriacTradition#page/n7/mode/2up)
af. "Printed editions of the Peshitta frequently contain these books in order to fill the gaps. D. Harklean Version. The Harklean version is connected with the labours of Thomas of Harqel. When thousands were fleeing Khosrou's invading armies, ..." Bromiley 1995, p. 976
ag. The Council of Trent confirmed the identical list/canon of sacred scriptures already anciently approved by the Synod of Hippo (Synod of 393), Council of Carthage, 28 August 397, and Council of Florence, 4 February 1442;[170] – Bull of Union with the Copts *seventh paragraph down*.

ah. "The United Methodists see Scripture as the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine. They emphasize the importance of tradition, experience, and reason for Christian doctrine. Lutherans teach that the Bible is the sole source for Christian doctrine. The truths of Scripture do not need to be authenticated by tradition, human experience, or reason. Scripture is self authenticating and is true in and of itself."[254]

ai. "historically Anglicans have adopted what could be called a prima Scriptura position." Humphrey 2013, p. 16

aj. That is, the first year of a full translation (irrespective of containing the Apocrypha) having been published.

ak. William Tyndale was stopped from translating all the books of the Old Testament due to his arrest in May 1535 and subsequent execution in October 1536.

al. The first complete publication of William Tyndale's New Testament took place in 1526.

am. The Douay–Rheims Bible was published in multiple volumes. The last volume of the Old Testament was published in 1610.

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Kebra Nagast

The **Kebra Nagast** (Ge'ez: ክብረ ነገሥት, *kəbrä nägäśt*), or **The Glory of the Kings**, is a 14th-century[1] national epic of Ethiopia, written in Geʿez by the nebure id Ishaq of Aksum. In its existing form, the text is at least 700 years old and purports to trace the origins of the Solomonic dynasty, a line of Ethiopian Orthodox Christian monarchs who ruled the country until 1974, to the biblical king, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Illustration to the *Kebra Nagast*, between 1965 and 1975

Modern scholarship considers it not to have any historical basis and that its stories were created to legitimize the dynasty's seizure of power in Ethiopia in the 13th century.[2][3][4][5] Nevertheless, many Ethiopian Christians continue to believe it is a historically reliable work.[6]

The text contains an account of how the Queen of Sheba (Queen Makeda of Ethiopia) met king Solomon of Jerusalem and about how the Ark of the Covenant came to Ethiopia with their son Menelik I (Menyelek). It also discusses the conversion via colonialism of Ethiopians from the worship of the Sun, Moon, and stars to that of the "Lord God of Israel". As the Ethiopianist Edward Ullendorff explained in the 1967 Schweich Lectures, "The *Kebra Nagast* is not merely a literary work, but it is the repository of Ethiopian national and religious feelings".[7]

It has been described as “an Abyssinian politico-religious epic” and "medieval-era mythology". Nadia Nurhussein wrote that "The Kebra Nagast gave textual authority to a then newly articulated mythology of Abyssinia’s long imperial history, legitimizing a “Solomonic” dynasty' that claimed to reach back three thousand years earlier to the union of King Solomon and the supposedly Ethiopian Queen of Sheba." It enabled the overthrow of the Zagwe Dynasty.[8]

Summary of contents

The *Kebra Nagast* is divided into 117 chapters, and is clearly a composite work; Ullendorff describes its narrative as "a gigantic conflation of legendary cycles".[9] This account draws much of its material from the Hebrew Bible and the author spends most of these pages recounting tales and relating them to other historical events. The document is presented in the form of a debate by the 318 "orthodox fathers" of the First Council of Nicaea.

Opening (chapters 1–20)

These fathers pose the question, "Of what doth the Glory of Kings consist?" One Gregory answers with a speech (chapters 3–17) which ends with the statement that a copy of the Glory of God was made by Moses and kept in the Ark of the Covenant. After this, the archbishop Dĕmâtĕyôs[a] reads from a book he

had found in the church of "Sophia", which introduces what Hubbard calls "the centerpiece" of this work, the story of Makeda (better known as the Queen of Sheba), King Solomon, Menelik I, and how the Ark came to Ethiopia (chapters 19–94). Although the author of the final redaction identified this Gregory with Gregory Thaumaturgus, who lived in the 3rd century before this Council, the time and the allusion to Gregory's imprisonment for 15 years by the king of Armenia make Gregory the Illuminator a better fit.[b]

The Queen of Sheba and Menelik (chapters 21–95)

Queen Makeda learns from Tamrin, a merchant based in her kingdom, about the wisdom of King Solomon, and travels to Jerusalem to visit him. She is enthralled by his display of learning and knowledge, and declares "From this moment I will not worship the sun, but will worship the Creator of the sun, the God of Israel" (chapter 28). The night before she begins her journey home, Solomon tricks her into sleeping with him, giving her a ring so their child may identify himself to Solomon. Following her departure, Solomon has a dream in which the sun leaves Israel (chapter 30).

On the journey home, she gives birth to Menelik in Bala Zädisareya (chapter 32).

At 22, Menelik travels to Jerusalem through Gaza, seeking Solomon's blessing, and identifies himself to his father with the ring. Overjoyed by this reunion, Solomon tries to convince Menelik to stay and succeed him as king, but Menelik insists on returning to his mother in Ethiopia. King Solomon then settled for sending home with him a company formed from the first-born sons of the elders of his kingdom. This company of young men, upset over leaving Jerusalem, smuggled the Ark of the Covenant from Solomon's Temple and out of the kingdom (chapters 45–48) without Menelik's knowledge. He had asked Solomon only for a single tassel from the tekhelet-coloured travel cloth covering the Ark, and Solomon had given him the entire thing.

During the journey home, Menelik learns the Ark is with him, and Solomon discovers it is gone from his kingdom. The king attempts to pursue Menelik, but through the Ark's mysterious power, his son, with his entire entourage, is miraculously flown home to Ethiopia before Solomon can leave his kingdom. King Solomon then turns to solace from his wife, the daughter of the Pharaoh, and she seduces him into worshiping the idols of her land (chapter 64).

Stories of Kings

After a question from the 318 bishops of the Council, Domitius continues with a paraphrase of Biblical history (chapters 66–83). Specifically, he focuses on the central element of lineage and royal bloodlines that were prevalent then. He discusses the intermixing of the royal families to preserve their power and ensure their bloodline survives. He does this by using each chapter to describe a specific family line, such as discussing the family tree of Constantine (chapters 72-73) or to describe two separate seeds of Shem (chapters 74-75). In chapter 90, we see a heavy emphasis on God's law and the rules he sets forth for his believers to follow, which he presents by choosing the house of Jacob to reign as kings and spread God's message. The author then describes Menelik's arrival at Axum, where he is feasted, and Makeda abdicates the throne in his favour. Menelik then engages in a series of military campaigns with the Ark, and "no man conquered him, on the contrary, whosoever attacked him was conquered" (chapter 94). After chapter 94, the author takes a step back and describes a more global view of what he had been describing in previous chapters.

Prophecies (chapters 96–117)

After praising the king of Ethiopia, the king of Egypt, and the book Domitius was found, which has established not only Ethiopia's possession of the true Ark of the Covenant, but that the Solomonic dynasty is descended from the first-born son of Solomon (chapter 95). Gregory then delivers an extended speech with prophetic elements (chapters 95–112), forming what Hubbard calls a "Patristic collection of Prophecies": "There can be little doubt that chapters 102–115 are written as polemic against, if not an evangel to, the Jews. These chapters seek to prove by Old Testament allegories and proof-texts the Messianic purpose of Jesus, the validity of the Ethiopian forms of worship, and the spiritual supremacy of Ethiopia over Israel".[10] Hubbard further speculates that this selection from the Old Testament might be as old as Frumentius, who had converted the Kingdom of Axum to Christianity.[11]

The *Kebra Nagast* concludes with a final prophecy that the power of Rome will be eclipsed by the power of Ethiopia, and describes how king Kaleb of Axum will subdue the Jews living in Najran, and make his younger son Gabra Masqal his heir (chapter 117).

History

Origins

According to the colophon attached to most of the existing copies, the *Kebra Nagast* originally was written in Coptic, then translated into Arabic in the "year of mercy" 409 (dated to AD 1225),[12] and then into Ge'ez by a team of clerics in Ethiopia—Yəsḥaq, Yəmḥarännä ʾAb, Ḥəzbä-Krəstos, Ǝndrəyas, Filəṗṗos, and Mäḥari ʾAb—during the office of Abuna Abba Giyorgis and at the command of the governor of Enderta Ya'ibika Igzi'. Based on the testimony of this colophon, "Conti Rossini, Littmann, and Cerulli, *inter alios*, have marked off the period 1314 to 1321–1322 for the composition of the book".[1] During the time of the Zagwe dynasty, the chief of Enderta played a major role in supporting the Solomonids along with the chief priest of Aksum by the name of Tekeste Birhane; the two are listed among the most influential dignitires on the side of Yekuno Amlak.[13][14] Other sources put it as a work of the fourteenth century Nebura’ed Yeshaq of Aksum.

The central Solomonic narrative of the text is thought to derive from the Zagwe dynasty, who believed the Axumites were descended from Solomon.[15][16] "Makeda" might have its origins in multiple terms. Sabaean inscriptions mention *mlkt* (ሊሕላ, "queen");[17] furthermore, Sabaean tribes knew the title of *mqtwyt* (ሊቀመሊቅ, "high official"). Alternatively *Makueda*, the personal name of the queen in Ethiopian legend might be interpreted as a popular rendering of the title of *mqtwyt*.[18] Other historians consider parts of the Kebre Negast date to as late as the end of the sixteenth century, when Muslim incursions and contacts with the wider Christian world made the Ethiopian Church concerned with asserting its character and Jewish traditions.[19]

Some historians have been suspicious of the statement on the colophon and have suggested that the authors of the original text itself were Ethiopian scribes.[20] Historian Stuart Munro-Hay stated that there is no record of Ethiopian monarchs claiming descent from Solomon before the 13th century.[20]

Careful study of the text has revealed traces of Arabic, possibly pointing to an Arabic *Vorlage* (prior version), but no clear evidence of a previous Coptic version. Many scholars doubt that a Coptic version ever existed, and that the history of the text goes back no further than the Arabic vorlage.[c] The numerous quotations in the text from the Bible were not translated from this hypothetical Arabic vorlage, but were copied from the Ethiopian translation of the Bible, either directly or from memory, and in their use and interpretation shows the influence of patristic sources such as Gregory of Nyssa.[d]

Old Testament scholar David Allan Hubbard identified Patristic, Qur'anic, Rabbinical and Apocryphal texts as sources for the *Kebra Nagast*.[21] The *Kebra Nagast* itself claims that the original text was found by the Archbishop of Rome (i.e. Constantinople) in the Church of Saint Sophia and that he read the manuscript claimed the world belonged to the Emperor of Rome and the Emperor of Ethiopia.[22] Hubbard details the many sources that the compiler of the *Kebra Nagast* drew on in creating this work. They include not only both Testaments of the Bible (although heavier use is made of the Old Testament than the New), but he detects evidence of Rabbinical sources, and influence from deuterocanonical or apocryphal works (especially the Book of Enoch and Book of Jubilees, both canonical in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and such Syriac works as the *Book of the Cave of Treasures*, and its derivatives the *Book of Adam and Eve* and the *Book of the Bee*).[e] Marcus thus describes it as "a pastiche of legends ... [that] blended local and regional oral traditions and style and substance derived from the Old and New Testaments, various apocryphal texts, Jewish and Islamic commentaries, and Patristic writings".[23]

Early European translations

One of the earliest collections of documents of Ethiopia came through the writings of Francisco Álvares, official envoy which king Manuel I of Portugal, sent to Dawit II of Ethiopia, under Ambassador Dom Rodrigo de Lima. In the papers concerning this mission, Álvares included an account of the Emperor of Ethiopia, and a description in Portuguese of the habits of the Ethiopians, titled *The Prester John of the Indies*, which was printed in 1533.

The Jesuit missionary Pedro Páez included a detailed translation of the *Kebra Nagast* through Menelek's return to Aksum with the Ark of the Covenant in his *História da Ethiópia*.[24] Completed in the early 1620s, the manuscript was not published in Páez's lifetime. However, it provided the foundation for many of the Jesuit accounts of Ethiopia that came after his, including those of Manuel de Almeida and Balthazar Telles.[25]

Additional information on the *Kebra Nagast* was included by the Jesuit priest Manuel de Almeida in his *Historia de Etiopía*. Almeida was sent out as a missionary to Ethiopia, and had abundant opportunity to learn about the *Kebra Nagast* at first hand, owing to his excellent command of the language. His manuscript is a valuable work. His brother, Apollinare, also went out to the country as a missionary and was, along with his two companions, stoned to death in Tigray.

In the first quarter of the 16th century, P.N. Godinho published some traditions about King Solomon and his son Menelik, derived from the *Kebra Nagast*. Further information about the contents of the *Kebra Nagast* was supplied by Baltazar Téllez (1595–1675), the author of the *Historia General de Etiopía Alta* (Coimbra, 1660). The sources of Téllez's work were the histories of Manuel de Almeida, Afonso Mendes and Jerónimo Lobo.

Modern scholarship

It was not until the close of the eighteenth century, when James Bruce of Kinnaird, the famous Scottish explorer, published an account of his travels in search of the sources of the Nile, that information as to the contents of the *Kebra Nagast* came to be generally known among European scholars and theologians.

When Bruce was leaving Gondar, Ras Mikael Sehul, the powerful Inderase (regent) of Emperor Tekle Haymanot II, gave him several of the most valuable Ethiopic manuscripts. Among them was a copy of the *Kebra Nagast*. When the third edition of Bruce's *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile* was published in 1813, a description of the contents of the original manuscript was included. In due course these documents were given to the Bodleian Library (shelfmark Bruce 87).[26]

August Dillmann prepared a summary of the contents of the *Kebra Nagast*, and published its colophon, but no substantial portion of the narrative in the original language was available until F. Praetorius published Chapters 19 through 32 with a Latin translation.[27] Another 35 years passed before the entire text was published, by Carl Bezold, with commentary, in 1905. The first English translation was prepared by E. A. Wallis Budge, and was published in two editions in 1922 and 1932.[f]

Modern scholarly opinion is that there is no historical evidence supporting the legends relating to the claimed origins of the Solomonic dynasty in the *Kebra Negast*. There is no credible basis to the claims that the Aksumite royal house was descended from Solomon (or that any Aksumite king even claimed such an ancestry) or that Yekuno Amlak, the 13th century founder of the dynasty, was descended from the Aksumite royal house. Solomon is dated to the 10th century BCE, hundreds of years before the founding of Aksum.[3] Historian Harold G. Marcus describes the stories of the *Kebra Nagast* as a "pastiche of legends" created to legitimize Yekuno Amlak's seizure of power.[4] David Northrup notes that

> the *Kebra Nagast's* imaginative and emotive account of a line of descent from Solomon and Sheba to the kings of Aksum and the new Solomonic dynasty is highly improbable and unsupported by evidence. It is a myth.[5]

See also

- Fetha Nagast

Notes

a. Identified in ch. 14 as "Archbishop of Rôm" (i.e. Constantinople), and in ch. 94 as of Antioch. This person might be identified with Patriarch Domnus II of Antioch, who was deposed at the Second Council of Ephesus. E. A. Wallis Budge transliterates his name as "Domitius" in his first edition (Budge 1922, p. 14) and "Timotheus" in his second edition (Budge 1932, ch. 14).
b. Hubbard notes that it is "a tendency common in Near Eastern writings to merge people of the same name". (Hubbard 1956, p. 253)
c. Hubbard 1956, for example, claims to have found only one word which points to a Coptic version, p. 370.
d. One example is that in chapters 106–107 all but three passages quoted also appear in Gregory of Nyssa's *Testimonia adversus Judeos*. (Hubbard 1956, p. 39)

e. This is the stated aim of Hubbard's doctoral thesis, "The Literary Sources".
f. This overview is based on Hubbard 1956, pp. 6–8.

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1. Hubbard 1956, p. 352.
2. Foot & Robinson 2012, p. 148-149.
3. Kaplan 2017, p. 111.
4. Marcus 1994, p. 17.
5. Northrup 2017, p. 27.
6. Aka 2024, p. 116.
7. Ullendorff 1968, p. 75.
8. Nurhussein, Nadia (7 June 2022). *Black Land: Imperial Ethiopianism and African America* (https://books.google.com/books?id=uQpUEAAAQBAJ&dq=Kebra+Nagast+++composed+to+legitimise+the+Solomonic+dynasty,&pg=PA7). Princeton University Press. pp. 6–7. ISBN 978-0-691-23462-5. Retrieved 12 December 2022.
9. Ullendorff 1968, p. 141.
10. Hubbard 1956, p. 39.
11. Hubbard 1956, p. 44.
12. Hubbard 1956, p. 358.
13. Tamrat 1977, p. 132, ch. 2, "Ethiopia, the Red Sea and the Horn".
14. Tamrat 1972, p. 73.
15. Trimingham 2013, p. 54 (https://books.google.com/books?id=UfrcAAAAQBAJ&pg=PA54).
16. Trimingham 2013, p. 57 (https://books.google.com/books?id=UfrcAAAAQBAJ&pg=PA57).
17. Maraqten 2008.
18. Jamme 2003, pp. 450–451.
19. Munro-Hay 2006, p. 124–194.
20. Tiruneh, Gizachew (2014). "The *Kebra Nagast*: Can Its Secrets Be Revealed?" (https://www.jstor.org/stable/26554817). *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies*. **8** (1 & 2): 54. JSTOR 26554817 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/26554817).
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22. Budge 1922, p. 16
23. Marcus 1994, p. 17-18.
24. Boavida, Pennec & Ramos 2011, p. 80–89.
25. Boavida, Pennec & Ramos 2011, p. 29.
26. Phillipson 2012, p. 66.
27. Praetorius 1870.

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My Life and Ethiopia's Progress

My Life and Ethiopia's Progress (Amharic:- ሕይወቴና የኢትዮጵያ እርምጃ [*Hiywotenna ye'Ityopp'ya 'Irmijja*]) is the autobiography of Emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie I, written over the course of his life, and published in two volumes in 1973–74.

Creation and publication

The first volume covers 1892–1937, from Haile Selassie's birth until the Second Italo-Ethiopian War. He began writing it while in exile in Bath, England during that war; it covers his life and the administration and modernization of Ethiopia up to that point. The second volume covers 1936–1942, and Ethiopia's occupation by Italy and return to independence. Both volumes were edited extensively by assistant writers after Haile Selassie I's return to Ethiopia. They were published in Ethiopia in 1973 and 1974; English translations were published in 1976 and 1999, respectively.[1][2]

Haile Selassie I wrote with an eye towards the political impact of publication, and addressed questions about the legitimacy of his power and position, and about his flight into exile in 1936. He published the books while he was still in power, shortly before he was deposed in a military coup in 1974.[3] In 1976 it was translated from Amharic into English and annotated by Edward Ullendorff in an Oxford University Press publication.[4]

Quotes

Haile Selassie wrote in the preface:

> "A house built on granite and strong foundations, not even the onslaught of pouring rain, gushing torrents and strong winds will be able to pull down. Some people have written the story of my life representing as truth what in fact derives from ignorance, error or envy; but they cannot shake the truth from its place, even if they attempt to make others believe it."

See also

- Ethiopian historiography

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The Promised Key

The Promised Key, sometimes known as ***The Promise Key***, is a 1935 Rastafari movement tract by Jamaican preacher Leonard Howell, written under Howell's Hindu pen name G. G. Maragh (for *Gong Guru*).[1][2][3]

Content

The tract bears some close similarities to an earlier (1926) writing by Fitz Balintine Pettersburg, the *Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy*, but omitting much of the stream of consciousness language, long opaque abbreviations, and repetition, and some content from the *Holy Piby*.

Some lines of *The Promised Key* were taken verbatim from the *Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy*; for example, the slogan "Gross beauty is the Queen in hell" may be found in both works, as part of a general condemnation of western aesthetics.

Most significantly, the identities of "King Alpha and Queen Omega" were changed from Fitz Balintine Pettersburg and his wife, as in the Royal Parchment Scroll, to Emperor Haile Selassie and Empress Menen Asfaw. This was one of the key innovations of the Howellites, and is today an article of faith of Rastafari.

History

In 1933, Howell started to preach that Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia (*Ras Tafari*) was the Messiah, that black people were the chosen people, and would soon be repatriated to Ethiopia. He soon attracted the attention of the colonial authorities, and was arrested in December 1934 for sedition. In March 1935 he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, during which time he apparently wrote *The Promised Key*.

The pamphlet was published 1935 by the Harding Commercial Printery, Kingston with a cover featuring two crossed keys and the name of the pamphlet's putative patron, "Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Editor of the African Morning Post, Accra, Gold Coast." Nnamdi Azikiwe was the editor of that newspaper at that period, but whether he had encouraged the pamphlet in any way or this was a dedication is not known.[4]

After he was released from imprisonment he published a newspaper called *The People's Voice*. In 1954, his commune was raided and much literature, including copies of *The Promised Key*, were burned. Howell was found dead under suspicious circumstances in February 1981.

See also

- Livity (spiritual concept)

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Holy Piby

The ***Holy Piby***, also known as the Black Man's Bible, is a text written by an Anguillan, Robert Athlyi Rogers (d. 1931), for the use of an Afrocentric religion in the West Indies founded by Rogers in the 1920s, known as the Afro-Athlican Constructive Gaathly.[1] The theology outlined in this work saw Ethiopians (in the classical sense of all Africans) as the chosen people of God. The church preached self-reliance and self-determination for Africans, using the Piby as its guiding document.

Content

The *Holy Piby* is made up of four books. The first, entitled "The First Book of Athlyi Called Athlyi", has only two chapters. The next, "The Second Book of Athlyi Called Aggregation", is the largest, with fifteen chapters, the seventh of which identifies Marcus Garvey[2] as one of three apostles of God. The "Third Book of Athlyi Named The Facts of the Apostles" presents two prominent members of the UNIA-ACL, Robert Lincoln Poston[3] and Henrietta Vinton Davis,[4] as the other apostles in the Holy Trinity. The title of the last book is "The Fourth Book of Athlyi Called Precaution". That book is followed by a series of catechism-style questions and answers wherein Garvey, Davis and Poston are proclaimed to be the saviors of the "down trodden children of Ethiopia".

History

Rastafari movement

Together with the *Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy* by Fitz Balintine Pettersburg and Leonard P. Howell's *The Promise Key*, the *Holy Piby* is today recognized as a root document of Rastafari thought.[5] While not strictly speaking a "Rastafari text", it was certainly a primary source of influence to many in the Rastafari movement, who see Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, as the second coming of Christ. Some Rastafari see Emperor Haile Selassie I as Christ in His Kingly Character as written in the Book of Revelation, Chapter 5 and regard Marcus Mosia Garvey as a prophet.

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Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy

The Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy is a text from Jamaica, written during the 1920s by a proto-Rastafari preacher, Fitz Balintine Pettersburg. The *Royal Parchment Scroll* is today recognized as one of the root documents of Rastafari thought, along with *The Holy Piby* and Leonard P. Howell's *The Promise Key*, which itself made considerable use of content from Pettersburg's work.[1]

See also

- Black supremacy

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Further reading

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Bobo Ashanti

The **Bobo Ashanti** (also variously called **Bobo Shanti** and **Bobo Shanty**), also known as the **Ethiopian African Black International Congress** (**E.A.B.I.C.**), is a religious group originating in Bull Bay near Kingston, Jamaica.[1]

The Bobo Ashanti are one of the strictest Mansions of Rastafari. They cover their dreadlocks with bright turbans and wear long robes and can usually be distinguished from other Rastafari members because of this.[2] While some Nyabinghi and Twelve Tribe of Israel Rastas drink wine and are either vegetarians or omnivores (eating plants, animals, and fungi), the Bobo Ashanti are all strictly ital and stick to the biblical restrictions regarding their vow; they also add extra restrictions to their diet, e.g. they do not eat mangoes or sugarcane. Twice each week and on the first Sunday of every month, the Bobos fast. Almost all songs and tributes within the community end with the phrase "Holy Emmanuel I Selassie I Jah I Rastafari." "I" symbolizes unity.[3] Bobo Ashanti do smoke marijuana like the other mansions of Rastafari, but do not do so in public because it is a sacred practice to be done at times of worship.[2] Even though it is the "holy herb", production is not allowed in the Bobo Shanti commune as marijuana used to be illegal in Jamaica, although it is now legal for use by Rastafari.[1]

Origin

The *Bobo Ashanti* ("Bobo" meaning "wrap" or "tie" from the *Twi* word **Abotire** meaning *crown* the verb **abo** - to tie *singular*; **bobo** *plural*);[4] and "Ashanti" in reference to the Ashanti people of Ghana, whom most Jamaicans have descent from),[1] were founded by Emmanuel Charles Edwards in 1958 during the period known as the "groundation", where many protests took place calling for repatriation of African descendants and slaves to Kingston. Emmanuel Charles Edwards was the leader of the protests who was to be called King when he was badly beaten by authorities for his action. After this event, he formed the mansion of Bobo Ashanti as a separatist movement from those who did not strictly follow the principles of Rastafari.[1] He established the first Bobo Ashanti community in Kingston, which then settled in Bull Bay, where most of the members live today.[5] The Bobo Ashanti consider their mansion to be the "Priesthood Order" of Rastafari, as they hold the most radical theology and offer theological training and accreditation. Those who become priests, prophets, or Empresses are to abide by EABIC principles in their home country. The community in Bull Bay is very tight knit and a place of refuge for poor people, as it offers free shelter, food, and education.[1]

Prince Emmanuel is called "Dada" by his followers, which was a name taken from Idi Amin, who was called Idi Amin Dada. Emmanuel is also seen by the Bobos as part of a triad - together with Marcus Garvey and Haile Selassie I, where Selassie is regarded as King, Garvey as prophet, and Emmanuel as high priest.[6] Marcus Garvey is praised by the Rastafarians for his call for pan-Africanism, which looks to unite Africans all over the world and achieve gender, social, and economic equality. In his Farewell Speech in 1916, Garvey announced the future crowning of a Black King, the spot which Haile Selassie filled as the leader of the Black Nation and Messiah. He is considered the reincarnation of the King Alpha, and Empress Menen is considered the reincarnation of Queen Omega.[1]

Gender hierarchy

Bobo Ashanti women hold a traditional yet nuanced social role.[7] Similar to traditional religious and cultural standards, men are in charge of work outside the home and the financials, while the woman is to maintain the home life and children. The respective titles of a woman and man in a relationship are "Empress" and "King", "Kingman", or "head".[8] Women must cover their legs, arms, and hair with a turban. Men in the Bobo Ashanti community are considered Priests as they conduct religious services and gatherings.[9]

Bobo Ashanti in pop culture

The genre of Reggae arose in the 1960s as a form of cultural expression and communication for Rastafarians in Jamaica, especially through the Nyabinghi mansion of Rastafari thanks to the Nyabinghi drums. Reggae grew as a powerful tool to inspire change in society concerning racism and liberalism, a central theme in Rastafari.[10] Unlike other Rastafari groups, the Bobo Ashanti are against Reggae music, claiming it is satanic.[11] Despite this, beginning in the mid-1990s, many reggae artists have emerged from the Bobo Ashanti; the most well known among them are Sizzla, Capleton, Anthony B, Lutan Fyah, Turbulence, Ras Shiloh. These artists' actual affiliation with the Bobo community and religiosity is unclear, as some speculate their Bobo Ashanti identity is used more as a defining characteristic and fashion statement. For example, Sizzla highlights the dreads worn by Bobo Ashanti in one of his songs with lyrics: "Bun fire pon men weh have locks and still nah go Rastaman Tabernacle... you see dem in the clubs and you see dem in the pubs, and they never ever step beneath the Tabernacle roof", suggesting disconnect with faith but still maintaining culture. Capleton embraces the Bobo Ashanti's religiosity and resistance to Westernized dress and fashion appearance in his music, with lyrics like, "Call Bobo Ashanti from the hill top, Separate the wolf from the sheep flock." The "sheep flock" here being Bobo Ashanti and other pure Rastafarians and the "wolf" being "fake" Rastas who are still eating animal flesh, and also other meat eaters. For decades, Rasta singers have sung songs about "wolves in sheep clothing". Dennis Brown, Fred Locks, Big Youth, John Holt, Sugar Minott, and others. Wolves are flesh-eating predators, but by contrast, sheep are gentle vegans, living under the protection of their shepherd. Rastas liken themselves to sheep, living under the protection of Jah Rastafari, the Good Shepherd. Their wooly hair matted into locks is like the fleece of a sheep. Sizzla often refers to those Rastas who grow locks but have not renounced the eating of animal flesh (as per Numbers Chapter 6), as "wolf under wool".[12]

Other artists such as Beenie Man commend the work of Emmanuel, but do not necessarily favor the splitting of the Rastafari religion into branches, with lines like, "Now Emmanuel dead, everything tumble down, The Hill divided in a three, separated bu three sons." On the other hand, there is a trend for young Bobo artists to be heroes or defendants of the Bobo Ashanti community. Artists like Capleton remain true to the Bobo Ashanti spirit and make statements like, "We, a di whole a we deh inna Selassie family, but Jah."[13]

The conservative and strict nature of the Bobo Ashanti is sometimes compared to that of Islamic fundamentalism by the Rastas from more moderate and less strict mansions. Artists such as Midnite and Lutan Fyah have even gone as far as to call Bobos "the Jamaican Taliban", as both artists have used the term "Bobo Shanti Taliban" in their music.[14] The metaphor also alludes to the attire and turbans worn by

Bobos, even though they are different in color and style. Bobo Ashanti artist Junior Reid expresses these ideas in his music, claiming immigration would ask him questions about where he was at the time of the bombing and people mistaking him for an Arab.[15]

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Nyabinghi (Mansion of Rastafari)

Nyabingi is one of the oldest denominations, or "Orders", of the Rastafari movement.

Probably the largest Rastafari group, the House of Nyabingi is an aggregate of more traditional and militant Rastas who seek to retain the movement close to the way in which it existed during the 1940s.[1] They stress the idea that Haile Selassie was Jah and the second coming of Jesus.[1]

It was founded by Rastafari elders such as Ras Boanerges, Bredda Authur and others.

The name was supposedly taken from a legendary Rwandan, Ugandan, or Tanzanian woman whose name is said to mean "she who possesses many things". This woman's name later inspired the Nyabingi rebellion movement that began in Uganda. Some people think this name was later taken by some members of the Rastafari movement and was used to create a current frame of thought.

This name, Niyabingi, was actually mainly attributed to the prisoners across the continent of Africa and later groups of people in Jamaica (mainly from Pinnacle, the Rastafarian camp of Leonard P. Howell) who were going on hunger strikes and rebelling against the short Italian occupation of Ethiopia and the exile of Haile Selassie during the Scramble for Africa after the Berlin Conference.

After Selassie came back to Ethiopia, the prisoners were freed but their diet voluntarily consisted of little to no meat. They were internationally revered as warrior monks similar to the Levites of the Tanakh; adopting some of the same lifestyle choices (e.g., not cutting their hair).

Later, the Rastafarian mansion of Niyabingi was officially established, and shortly followed by 12 tribes of Israel Mansion.

Some people say the meaning attributed by the Rastas at the name Nyabingi is "death and judgment to all black and white oppressors".

The Nyabingi order is one of the most widespread currents of Rastafari thought worldwide.

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Twelve Tribes of Israel (Rastafari)

The **Twelve Tribes of Israel** is a Rastafari religious group and one of the Mansions of Rastafari. Its headquarters is on Hope Road in Kingston, Jamaica.[1] The group was formed in 1968 by Vernon Carrington, who was known to the organisation as "Prophet Gad".[1] The twelve tribes have been described as the Rastafari mansion closest in beliefs to Christianity or Messianic Judaism. Members follow the teaching of reading the Bible (the Scofield Reference Bible, King James Version) a chapter a day from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22, a practice encouraged by Carrington. It is the most liberal of the Rastafarian orders and members are free to worship in a church or building of their choosing.

Beliefs

The Twelve Tribes of Israel teach salvation through the *Messiyah* Jesus Christ, whom they refer to as either Yahshua or by the Amharic name *Iyesus Kirisitos*. It is perhaps the Rastafari mansion closest in beliefs to Christianity or Messianic Judaism.

Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, is seen as a divinely anointed king in the lineage of Kings David and Solomon (Selassie's house being called the Solomonic dynasty). While he is considered a representation of "Christ in His Kingly Character", he is not seen as an incarnation of the *Messiyah*, nor as Jah Himself, but rather as an emissary of Jah and representative of the everlasting Davidic covenant, which is to be fulfilled by Christ upon his return.

Some members of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, like other Rastafarians, reject the consumption of alcohol, refrain from cutting their hair, and avoid the dead and anything having to do with death, as a part of the Nazirite vows. They also keep the Sabbath, and follow Ital dietary laws.

There is no doctrine however which forces them to do so: so some members choose to cut their hair, drink alcohol or eat meat; which they are free to do.

Organization and practices

Members are grouped into Twelve Tribes, modelled after the Twelve Tribes of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, and Benjamin. Each member belongs to a tribe, which is determined by Gregorian birth month, though beginning in April in rough alignment with the Jewish calendar. Each tribe is represented by a color, a part of the body, and a character trait, often called a "faculty". Although the twelve representations apply to male and female alike, Dinah, though not considered a tribe, is representative of the feminine.

Members of this order are not required to be turbaned; however, they do wear red, gold, and green banners at meetings, during prayer and Bible readings as a holy garment. The Twelve Tribes of Israel functions internationally and has headquarters in various countries. Members work towards repatriation to Africa, mainly Ethiopia (Shashamane)

Bob Marley was a notable member.[1] Other artists associated with the group include Sangie Davis, Fred Locks, Little Roy, and Pablove Black.[1] The group had an association with the Jah Love sound system in the 1970s.[1]

The headquarters of the Twelve Tribes of Israel organisation in Shashamane, Ethiopia

See also

- Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

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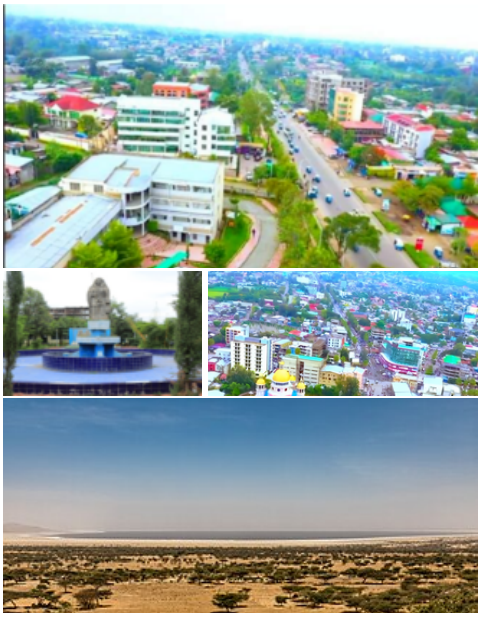
Shashamane

Shashamane (Oromo: *Shaashamannee*, Amharic: ሻሸመኔ) is a city in southern Ethiopia. Located in the Oromia Region with a 2007 Census population of 100,454, but with an estimated 208,368 inhabitants in mid 2022;[2] the town is known for its Rastafarian community. A couple of years ago, the current town administration made a determined move to speed up the development of the town and answer the questions of the residents and is one of the fast urbanizing urban centers in Oromia Regional State and has seventeen (17) sub-cities. Namely Abosto, Alelu, Arada, Awasho, Dida boqe, Bulchana, Burqa Gudina, Kuyera, Awasho Dhenqu, Aleche Harebate, Edola burqa, Alelu Ilu, Bute filicha, Kerara filicha, Ilala Qorke, Meja Dema, and Bulchana Deneba. The resort of Wondo Genet lies near Shashamane, as does the Senkele Wildlife Sanctuary.

Shashemene
Shaashamannee (in Oromo)

City



From top, left to right: Main road of Shashemene; Black Lion Museum; fruits produced in Shashemene, and Abijatta-Shalla National Park

Nickname: Shashe
Motto: Best Business Center

Location within Ethiopia
Coordinates: 7°12′N 38°36′E

Country	Ethiopia
Region	Oromia
Zone	West Arsi
Area	
• **Total**	17.19 km^2 (6.64 sq mi)
Population (2007)[1]	
• **Total**	407,000

History

Following the end of the Italian invasion in 1941 and Emperor Haile Selassie's return to the throne, he made plans to grant 500 acres of fertile land to black refugees in 1948 in response to racism in the United States.[3]

Haile Selassie formed the first Ethiopian World Federation (EWF) in Harlem, New York and prepared a series of events to bond with African Americans for the Ethiopian culture before announcing The Land Grants. While one of the female members of the EWF was visiting Jamaica she leaked the information about the Land Grant with the people of Jamaica. The Land Grants were specifically intended for African Americans in return for intervening in favor of the royal family during the second world war.[4] Once information about the possibility of immigration to Ethiopia spread many made plans to immigrate, divisions of the EWF began appearing internationally to take advantage of the Land Grants Haile Selassie left for African Americans.[5] The official letter confirming the "Land Grant" of 1948 was submitted to the members and executives of the Ethiopian World Federation in New York City in 1955.

The first West Indian family and Federation members were James Piper and his wife Helen who arrived that same year as the first Land Grant administrators, returning to make a permanent settlement in 1955 on behalf of the federation. Haile Selassie visited Jamaica one time in an effort to get the natives to focus on uplifting their communities before visiting Ethiopia. By the time he left, the entire community was certain that Haile Selassie was the second coming of Jesus. He encouraged them to take care of the land that they had already been given in their own country. Haile

• **Estimate** (mid 2022)[2] • **Density**	408,368 24,000/km^2 (61,000/sq mi)
Time zone	UTC+3 (EAT)
Climate	Cwb

Selassie left specific instructions with the U.S. and Africa pertaining to the Land Grant. African Americans were fed-up, after having fought in two world wars and were still denied land and civil rights in America. They had a very hard time trying to stabilize their families, their citizenship, their equal rights all while figuring out their nationality while America was repairing itself for desegregation. They were promised that the land would be there when they were tired of fighting for civil rights and equality in the United States. Meanwhile, the Rastafarian community in Jamaica was growing and many were planning immigration.[6][7]

Twelve Tribes of Israel headquarters in Shashemane

The first Rastafarian that settled in Ethiopia, Gladstone Robinson, was also an official delegate of a division of the EWF that went to Shashamane on behalf of the organization in June 1964, followed by Papa Noel Dyer, who hitchhiked from England to Ethiopia, eventually arriving in September 1965. Mr. Robinson would later be appointed as the Land Grant administrator by a Division of The Federation executive council in 1967 thus replacing Mr. Piper and his wife in Ethiopia.[8]

It was within a couple of years that Rastafari immigration began, with the population swelling past 2,000 at one point. It was reported in 2004 that their numbers had dwindled from more than 2,000 to fewer than 300 according to a recent CNN interview with Robinson and other Rastafari settlers.[9]

Jamaican settlers petitioned Emperor Haile Selassie for Ethiopian citizenship and other benefits several times. Once the Jamaican settlers began having children and inviting more people to the African Americans' soil, they began asking for more. They eventually grew suspicious of the belief that Haile Selassie was the second coming of Jesus. A few weeks later, the *Jamaican Daily Gleaner* reported that EWF members in Jamaica left for Ethiopia on 5 September to develop the settlement with no money or support from their original country.

After leaders of both Jamaican political parties, Hugh Shearer and Michael Manley, each paid visits to the community in September 1969, Haile Selassie himself again visited and, according to EWF number 37 leader Mortimer Planno, cautioned them against bringing Jamaican politics to Ethiopia. The following year, the Imperial Court ordered ten hectares apiece to be parceled out to twelve "pioneer" Rastafari settlers, as reported in *The Gleaner* on 5 September 1970.[10]

According to the EWF, Haile Selassie again paid a visit on 1 October 1970, asking to speak to the then land grant administrator, James Piper, who was not a Rastafari. Piper declined to appear, claiming it was his Sabbath. This resulted in a change in administration at the settlement. It is reported that due to this and other incidents, Robinson replaced the Pipers as administrators the land prior to the Derg revolution.

Because of the "anti-organization" sentiments of many Rastas of that day, the federation's official authority was compromised. Many created other organizations, entities and groups in attempts to further deal with their own ways and means of repatriation. For example, one of the Rasta settlers, Clifton Baugh, was a main representative for the Rasta community in palace discussions on the land grant with minister *Ato* Tesfi, and Baugh also continually delivered the first fruits of their produce to the palace in Addis right up until 1974 when stopped by the Derg Revolution.[11]

When Haile Selassie I was assassinated in 1975, the new government of Mengistu Haile Mariam confiscated by the state due to the new governments Communist policy on privatization in which citizens were not allowed to own land.

In January 2005, there were reports in the media that Bob Marley's remains were to be exhumed and reburied at Shashemane. His wife Rita Marley described Ethiopia as his spiritual home, provoking controversy in Jamaica, where his remains still lie. The following month, thousands of fans gathered in Shashamane for a month of celebrations for what would have been Marley's 60th birthday. Rita Marley did not perform in Shashemane, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi created a new ethnic federalist parliament which further complicated things in the region. Tribal conflicts soon

erupted and the history of Shashamane was undermined by the socialist administration of the Tigray People's Liberation Front. Although TPLF had claimed to be socialist during its fight against the Derg regime, it abandoned it when it seized power.

In January 2007, the settlers organized an exhibition and a bazaar in the city. It was also reported recently prior to the Ethiopian millennium that various pro-Ethiopian World Federation groups, consisting of indigenous Ethiopians and Rastafari, have given support to one of many five-year plans proposed for sustainable development of Shashemane, Ethiopia.[12]

Demographics

The 2007 national census reported a total population for this town of 100,454, of whom 50,654 were men and 49,800 were women. A plurality of the inhabitants practiced Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, with 43.44% of the population reporting they observed this belief, while 31.15% of the population said they were Muslim, 23.53% of the population were Protestant, and 1.3% were Catholic.[13]

The 1994 national census reported the town had a total population of 52,080, 25,426 of whom were males and 26,654 were females.[14] It had an estimated 208,368 inhabitants in mid 2022. There are four rivers (Laftu, Melka Oda, Gogeti and Essa) that flow through the town towards Lake Shala. Dhedhaba is another major river that serves as a natural boundary between Shashemene and Arsi Negele.[2]

Sport

Shashemene City is football club who plays in Ethiopian Higher League now promoted into the Ethiopian Premier league (2024)

Culture

In media

In 2016, Shashamane, a documentary film about Shashamane and its relationship to repatriation, was released.[15]

Cuisine

The cuisine of Shashamane is heavily vegetarian because of the influence of the Rastafarian population.[16]

Climate

Climate data for Shashamane (Kuyera), elevation 2,010 m (6,590 ft), (1971–2000)													
Month	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Year**
Mean daily maximum °C (°F)	25.0 (77.0)	25.0 (77.0)	25.8 (78.4)	25.6 (78.1)	25.1 (77.2)	23.9 (75.0)	21.9 (71.4)	23.1 (73.6)	22.7 (72.9)	24.0 (75.2)	24.2 (75.6)	24.9 (76.8)	24.3 (75.7)
Mean daily minimum °C (°F)	8.1 (46.6)	10.2 (50.4)	11.4 (52.5)	12.8 (55.0)	11.8 (53.2)	11.2 (52.2)	11.5 (52.7)	11.3 (52.3)	11.8 (53.2)	10.4 (50.7)	8.2 (46.8)	6.9 (44.4)	10.5 (50.8)
Average precipitation mm (inches)	32.0 (1.26)	79.0 (3.11)	72.0 (2.83)	101.0 (3.98)	91.0 (3.58)	96.0 (3.78)	152.0 (5.98)	126.0 (4.96)	137.0 (5.39)	63.0 (2.48)	31.0 (1.22)	3.0 (0.12)	983 (38.69)
Average relative humidity (%)	57	54	59	63	74	75	78	77	77	71	58	52	66
Source: FAO[17]													

See also

Africa portal

- Jamaicans in Ethiopia

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Grounation Day

Grounation Day (April 21) is the most important Rastafari holy day; it is celebrated in honor of Haile Selassie's 1966 visit to Jamaica.

Visit of Selassie to Jamaica

Selassie had already met with several Rastafarian elders in Addis Ababa and had allowed Rastafari and other people of African descent to settle on his personal land in Shashamane.

Selassie visited Jamaica on Thursday, April 21, 1966. Some 100,000 Rastafari from all over Jamaica descended on Palisadoes Airport in Kingston,[1] having heard that the man whom they considered to be God was coming to visit them. They waited at the airport playing drums and smoking large quantities of marijuana.[1] The Rastafari celebrate Selassie's visit to Jamaica on April 21.[2]

When Selassie's Ethiopian Airlines flight landed at the airport at 1:30 pm, the crowd surrounded his plane on the tarmac. The day had been overcast and stormy. After about half an hour, the door swung open, and the emperor appeared at the top of the mobile steps. A deafening tumult was heard from the crowd, who beat calabash drums, lit firecrackers, waved signs, and sounded Abeng horns of the Maroons.[3] All protocol was abandoned as the crowd surged past security onto the red carpet for the reception. Selassie waved from the steps, and some interpreters claimed he shed tears, though this is debated. He returned to the plane and remained out of sight for several minutes. Jamaican authorities then requested Mortimer Planno, a Rastafari leader, to assist the emperor's descent.[4] When Planno reemerged, he announced to the crowd: "The Emperor has instructed me to tell you to be calm. Step back and let the Emperor land."[5] After Planno escorted the African monarch down the steps, journalists were puzzled by Selassie's refusal to walk on the red carpet on the way to his limousine (hence *grounation*, Iyaric equivalent of *foundation*, "uplifted" with the sound of the word *ground* in the sense of "making contact with the soil"). He was then driven to the King's House, the residence of Governor-General Clifford Campbell.[6]

As a result of Planno's actions, the Jamaican authorities were asked to ensure that Rastafari representatives were present at all state functions attended by the ruler,[7][8] and Rastafari elders, including Planno and probably Joseph Hibbert, also obtained a private audience with the emperor.[9] He reportedly told them that they should not immigrate to Ethiopia until they had first liberated the people of Jamaica. This dictum came to be known as "liberation before repatriation". At a dinner held at the King's House, Rastafarians claimed that acting Jamaican prime minister Donald Sangster had stamped his foot at Lulu, Haile Selassie's pet chihuahua, who, they swore, had responded with the roar of a lion.[10]

Defying expectations of the Jamaican authorities,[11] Selassie never rebuked the Rastafari for their belief in him as the Messiah. Instead, he presented the movement's elders with gold medallions bearing the Ethiopian seal—the only recipients of such an honour on this visit.[10][12] Meanwhile, he presented some of the Jamaican politicians, including Sangster, with miniature coffin-shaped cigarette boxes.[6]

Impact

Rita Marley, Bob Marley's wife, converted to the Rastafari faith after seeing Haile Selassie in his motorcade en route to the King's House. She claimed, in interviews and in her book *No Woman No Cry*, that she had seen a *stigma* on Haile Selassie's hand as he waved to the crowd, and was instantly convinced of his divinity.[13]

For years afterward, Planno, who became a spiritual guru of Bob Marley, would give out enlarged photographs of himself with the Emperor on the steps of the aeroplane.[14]

The great significance of this event in the development of the Rastafari religion is that, having been outcasts in society, its adherents gained a measure of respectability for the first time.[15][16][17] With Rasta having become acceptable, reggae music became commercially viable, leading in turn to the further global spread of Rastafari.

Haile Selassie is thought to have encouraged the Rastafari elders to learn about the Ethiopian Orthodox faith while in Jamaica, and in 1970, he dispatched Archbishop Laike Mandefro to establish a mission in Jamaica. Mandefro was formally invited by Joseph Hibbert, one of the original founders of the Rastafari Movement, to teach the Rasta community, and in 1971 Mandefro named Hibbert as a "Spiritual Organizer". During this time, Mandefro pointedly refused calls to demand that the Rastafari renounce their faith in Haile Selassie's divinity, and some 2,000 Rastas accordingly received Orthodox baptisms.[18]

Because of Haile Selassie's visit, April 21 is celebrated as Grounation Day. The "Abu Ye! Abu Ye Abu ye! Abu ye!" chant is an element of Grounation Day festivities.

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Rastafari

Rastafari is an Abrahamic religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s. It is classified as both a new religious movement and a social movement by scholars of religion. There is no central authority in control of the movement and much diversity exists among practitioners, who are known as Rastafari, Rastafarians, or Rastas.

Rastafari often claim the flag of the Ethiopian Royal Standard as was used during Haile Selassie's reign. It combines the conquering lion of Judah, symbol of the Ethiopian monarchy, with red, gold, and green.

Rastafari beliefs are based on an interpretation of the Bible. Central to the religion is a monotheistic belief in a single God, referred to as Jah, who partially resides within each individual. Rastas accord key importance to Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia between 1930 and 1974, who is regarded variously as the Second Coming of Jesus, Jah incarnate, or a human prophet. Rastafari is Afrocentric and focuses attention on the African diaspora, which it believes is oppressed within Western society, or "Babylon". Many Rastas call for this diaspora's resettlement in Africa, a continent they consider the Promised Land, or "Zion". Rastas refer to their practices as "livity", which includes adhering to Ital dietary requirements, wearing their hair in dreadlocks, and following patriarchal gender roles. Communal meetings are known as "groundations", and are typified by music, chanting, discussions, and the smoking of cannabis, the latter regarded as a sacrament with beneficial properties.

Rastafari originated among impoverished and socially disenfranchised Afro-Jamaican communities in 1930s Jamaica. Its Afrocentric ideology was largely a reaction against Jamaica's then-dominant British colonial culture. It was influenced by both Ethiopianism and the Back-to-Africa movement promoted by black nationalist figures such as Marcus Garvey. The religion developed after several Protestant Christian clergymen, most notably Leonard Howell, proclaimed that Haile Selassie's crowning as Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930 fulfilled a Biblical prophecy. By the 1950s, Rastafari's countercultural stance had brought the movement into conflict with wider Jamaican society, including violent clashes with law enforcement. Early Rastafari often espoused black supremacy as a form of opposition to white supremacy, but this has gradually become less common since the 1970s. In the 1960s and 1970s, it gained increased respectability within Jamaica and greater visibility abroad through the popularity of Rastafari-inspired reggae musicians, most notably Bob Marley. Enthusiasm for Rastafari declined in the 1980s, following the deaths of Haile Selassie and Marley, but the movement survived and has a presence in many parts of the world.

The Rastafari movement is decentralised and organised on a largely sectarian basis. There are several denominations, or "Mansions of Rastafari", the most prominent of which are the Nyahbinghi, Bobo Ashanti, and the Twelve Tribes of Israel, each offering a different interpretation of Rastafari belief. There are an estimated 700,000 to one million Rastafari across the world. The largest population is in Jamaica,

although small communities can be found in most of the world's major population centres. Most Rastafari are of black African descent, and some groups accept only black members, but non-black groups have also emerged.

Definition

Rastafari has been described as a religion,[1] meeting many of the proposed definitions for what constitutes a religion,[2] and is legally recognised as such in various countries.[3] Some scholars of religion have labelled it an Abrahamic religion,[4] while other scholars have also classified it as a new religious movement,[5] a sect,[6] a cult,[7] and a revitalisation movement.[8] Having arisen in Jamaica, it has been described as an Afro-Jamaican religion,[9] and more broadly an Afro-Caribbean religion.[10]

Two Rastafas in Zeerust, South Africa; they are wearing and selling items that display their commitment to the religion

Although Rastafari focuses on Africa as a source of identity, it is a product of creolisation processes in the Americas,[11] described by the Hispanic studies scholars Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert as "a Creole religion, rooted in African, European, and Indian practices and beliefs".[12] The scholar Ennis B. Edmonds also suggested that Rastafari was "emerging" as a world religion, not because of the number of its adherents, but because of its global spread.[13] Many Rastas nevertheless reject descriptions of Rastafari as a religion, instead referring to it as a "way of life",[14] a "philosophy",[15] or a "spirituality".[16]

Emphasising its political stance, particularly in support of African nationalism and pan-Africanism, some academics have characterised Rastafari as a political movement,[17] a "politico-religious" movement,[18] or a protest movement.[19] It has alternatively been labelled a social movement,[20] or more specifically as a new social movement,[8] and a cultural movement.[21] Many Rastas or Rastafarians—as practitioners are known—nevertheless dislike the labelling of Rastafari as a "movement".[22] In 1989, a British Industrial Tribunal concluded that, for the purposes of the Race Relations Act 1976, Rastafarians could be considered an ethnic group because they have a long, shared heritage which distinguished them from other groups, their own cultural traditions, a common language, and a common religion.[23]

Rastafari has continuously changed and developed,[24] with significant doctrinal variation existing among practitioners depending on the group to which they belong.[25] It is not a unified movement,[26] and there has never been a single leader followed by all Rastafari.[27] It is thus difficult to make broad generalisations about the movement without obscuring the complexities within it.[28] The scholar of religion Darren J. N. Middleton suggested that it was appropriate to speak of "a plethora of *Rasta spiritualities*" rather than a single phenomenon.[29]

The term "Rastafari" derives from "Ras Tafari Makonnen", the pre-regnal title of Haile Selassie, the former Ethiopian emperor who occupies a central role in Rasta belief. The term "Ras" means a duke or prince in the Ethiopian Semitic languages; "Tafari Makonnen" was Selassie's personal name.[30] It is unknown why the early Rastas adopted this form of Haile Selassie's name as the basis of the term for

their religion.[31] As well as being the religion's name, "Rastafari" is also used for the religion's practitioners themselves.[32] Many commentators—including some academic sources[33] and some practitioners[34]—refer to the movement as "Rastafarianism".[35] However, the term is disparaged by many Rastafari, who believe that the use of *-ism* implies religious doctrine and institutional organisation, things they wish to avoid.[36]

Beliefs

Rastas refer to the totality of their religion's ideas and beliefs as "Rastalogy".[37] Edmonds described Rastafari as having "a fairly cohesive worldview";[37] however, the scholar Ernest Cashmore thought that its beliefs were "fluid and open to interpretation".[38] Within the movement, attempts to summarise Rastafari belief have never been accorded the status of a catechism or creed.[39] Rastas place great emphasis on the idea that personal experience and intuitive understanding should be used to determine the truth or validity of a particular belief or practice.[40] No Rasta, therefore, has the authority to declare which beliefs and practices are orthodox and which are heterodox.[39] The conviction that Rastafari has no dogma "is so strong that it has itself become something of a dogma", according to the sociologist of religion Peter B. Clarke.[41]

The Liberty Bell Temple in Los Angeles

Some Rastas consider themselves Christian,[42] and the religion has been deeply influenced by both Christian and Jewish thought;[43] the scholar Michael Barnett called Rastafari "an Afrocentralized blend of Christianity and Judaism".[44] Like Christianity, Rastafari treats the Bible as a holy book occupying a central place in its belief system,[45] with Rastas often adopting a literalist interpretation of its contents.[46] Rastas regard the Bible as an authentic account of early black African history and of their place as God's favoured people.[41] They believe the Bible to be key to understanding both the past and the present and for predicting the future,[41] while also regarding it as a source book from which they can form and explain their beliefs and practices.[47] Rastas commonly perceive the final book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation, as the most important part, because they see its contents as having particular significance for the world's present situation.[48]

Contrary to scholarly understandings of how the Bible was compiled, Rastas commonly believe it was originally written on stone in the Ethiopian language of Amharic.[49] They also believe that the Bible's true meaning has been warped, both through mistranslation into other languages and by deliberate manipulation by those seeking to deny black Africans their history.[50] They also regard it as cryptographic, meaning that it has many hidden meanings.[51] They believe that its true teachings can be revealed through intuition and meditation on the "book within" which allows them to commune with God.[41] Because of what they regard as the corruption of the Bible, Rastas also turn to other sources that they believe shed light on African history, including Leonard Howell's 1935 work *The Promised Key*, Robert Athlyi Rogers' 1924 book *Holy Piby*, and Fitz Balintine Pettersburg's 1920s work, the *Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy*.[52] Many Rastas also treat the *Kebra Nagast*, a 14th-century Ethiopian text, as a source through which to interpret the Bible.[53]

Jah and Jesus Christ

Rastas are monotheists, worshipping a singular God whom they call Jah. The term "Jah" is a shortened version of "Jehovah", the name of God in English translations of the Old Testament.[54] Rastas believe in the immanence of Jah,[55] who is inherent within each individual.[56] This belief is reflected in the aphorism, often cited by Rastas, that "God is man and man is God",[57] and Rastas speak of "knowing" Jah, rather than simply "believing" in him.[58] In seeking to narrow the distance between humanity and divinity, Rastafari embraces mysticism.[8] This idea of connecting to a singular divine force within differs from the forms of spirit possession found in other African diaspora religions, such as Kumina and Convince, where external spirits are invited into the body.[59]

Jesus is an important figure in Rastafari.[60] However, practitioners reject the traditional Christian view of Jesus, and they also reject the depiction of him as a white European.[61] They believe Jesus was a black African, and that the white Jesus was a false god.[62] Many Rastas regard Christianity as the creation of the white man;[63] they treat it with suspicion out of the view that the oppressors (white Europeans) and the oppressed (black Africans) cannot share the same God.[64] Some Rastas take the view that the God worshipped by most white Christians is actually the Devil,[65] and a recurring claim among Rastas is that the Pope is Satan or the Antichrist.[66] Rastas therefore often view Christian preachers as deceivers[65] and regard Christianity as being guilty of furthering the oppression of the African diaspora,[67] frequently referring to it as having perpetrated "mental enslavement".[68]

Haile Selassie

From its origins, Rastafari was intrinsically linked with Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974.[69] He remains the central figure in Rastafari ideology,[70] and although all Rastas hold him in esteem, precise interpretations of his identity differ.[71] Understandings of how Haile Selassie relates to Jesus vary among Rastas.[72] Many, although not all, believe that the Ethiopian monarch was the Second Coming of Jesus,[73] legitimising this by reference to their interpretation of the nineteenth chapter of the Book of Revelation.[60] By viewing Haile Selassie as Jesus, these Rastas also regard him as the messiah prophesied in the Old Testament,[74] the manifestation of God in human form,[71] and "the living God".[75] Some perceive him as part of a Trinity, alongside God as Creator and the Holy Spirit, the latter referred to as "the Breath within the temple".[76] Rastas who view Haile Selassie as Jesus argue that both were descendants from the royal line of the Biblical king David,[60] while Rastas also emphasise the fact that the Makonnen dynasty, of which Haile Selassie was a member, claimed descent from the Biblical figures Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.[77]

Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Ethiopia between 1930 and 1974. He is of central importance to Rastas, many of whom regard him as the Second Coming of Jesus and thus God incarnate in human form.

Other Rastas see Selassie as embodying Jesus' teachings and essence but reject the idea that he was the literal reincarnation of Jesus.[78] Members of the Twelve Tribes of Israel denomination, for instance, reject the idea that Selassie was the Second Coming, arguing that this event has yet to occur.[57] From this perspective, Selassie is perceived as a messenger or emissary of God rather than a manifestation of God himself.[79] Rastas holding to this view sometimes regard the deification of Haile Selassie as naïve or ignorant,[80] in some cases thinking it as dangerous to worship a human being as God.[81] There are various Rastas who went from believing that Haile Selassie was both God incarnate and the Second Coming of Jesus to seeing him as something distinct.[82]

On being crowned, Haile Selassie was given the title of "King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah".[83] Rastas use this title for Haile Selassie alongside others, such as "Almighty God", "Judge and Avenger", "King Alpha and Queen Omega", "Returned Messiah", "Elect of God", and "Elect of Himself".[84] Rastas also view Haile Selassie as a symbol of their positive affirmation of Africa as a source of spiritual and cultural heritage.[85]

While he was emperor, many Jamaican Rastas professed the belief that Haile Selassie would never die.[86] The 1974 overthrow of Haile Selassie by the military Derg and his subsequent death in 1975 resulted in a crisis of faith for many practitioners.[87] Some left the movement altogether.[88] Others remained, and developed new strategies for dealing with the news. Some Rastas believed that Selassie did not really die and that claims to the contrary were Western misinformation.[89] To bolster their argument, they pointed to the fact that no corpse had been produced; in reality, Haile Selassie's body had been buried beneath his palace, remaining undiscovered there until 1992.[90] Another perspective within Rastafari acknowledged that Haile Selassie's body had perished, but claimed that his inner essence survived as a spiritual force.[91] A third response within the Rastafari community was that Selassie's death was inconsequential as he had only been a "personification" of Jah rather than Jah himself.[92]

During his life, Selassie described himself as a devout Christian.[93] In a 1967 interview, Selassie was asked about the Rasta belief that he was the Second Coming of Jesus, to which he responded: "I have heard of this idea. I also met certain Rastafarians. I told them clearly that I am a man, that I am mortal, and that I will be replaced by the oncoming generation, and that they should never make a mistake in assuming or pretending that a human being is emanated from a deity."[94] His grandson Ermias Sahle Selassie has said that there is "no doubt that Haile Selassie did not encourage the Rastafari movement".[95] Critics of Rastafari have used this as evidence that Rasta theological beliefs are incorrect,[96] although some Rastas take Selassie's denials as evidence that he was indeed the incarnation of God, based on their reading of the Gospel of Luke.[a][97]

Afrocentrism and race

According to Clarke, Rastafari is "concerned above all else with black consciousness, with rediscovering the identity, personal and racial, of black people".[98] The movement began among Afro-Jamaicans who wanted to reject the British colonial culture that dominated Jamaica and replace it with a new identity based on a reclamation of their African heritage.[85] Accordingly it decenters Europe and whiteness and emphasises Africa and blackness,[99] seeking to purge from its followers any belief in the inferiority of black people and the superiority of white people.[100] Rastafari is therefore Afrocentric,[101] equating blackness with the African continent,[64] and endorsing Pan-Africanism.[102]

Practitioners of Rastafari identify themselves with the ancient Israelites—God's chosen people in the Old Testament—and believe that black Africans broadly or Rastas more specifically are either the descendants or the reincarnations of this ancient people.[103] This is similar to beliefs in Judaism,[104] although many Rastas believe that contemporary Jews' status as the descendants of the ancient Israelites is a false claim.[105] Rastas typically believe that black Africans are God's chosen people, meaning that they made a covenant with him and thus have a special responsibility.[106] Rastafari espouses the view that this, the true identity of black Africans, has been lost and needs to be reclaimed.[107]

The eastern African nation of Ethiopia is given great prominence in Rasta doctrine.

There is no uniform Rasta view on race.[104] Black supremacy was a theme early in the movement, with the belief in a distinctly black African race that was superior to other racial groups.[108] This has opened the religion to accusations of racism.[109] While some Rastas still hold such beliefs, black supremacy has waned in the movement since at least the 1970s, and non-black Rastas are now widely accepted.[110] Some Rastas cite a 1963 speech by Haile Selassie in support of racial acceptance.[111] Some sects maintains that white Europeans can never be legitimate Rastas but others believe an "African" identity is not inherently linked to black skin but whether an individual displays an African "attitude" or "spirit".[112]

Exile in Babylon

Rastafari teaches that the black African diaspora are exiles living in "Babylon", a term which it applies to Western society.[113] For Rastas, European colonialism and global capitalism are regarded as manifestations of Babylon,[114] while police and soldiers are viewed as its agents.[115] The term "Babylon" is adopted because of its Biblical associations. In the Old Testament, Babylon is the Mesopotamian city where the Israelites were held captive, exiled from their homeland, between 597 and 538 BCE;[116] Rastas compare the exile of the Israelites in Mesopotamia to the exile of the African diaspora outside Africa.[117] Rastas perceive the exile of the black African diaspora in Babylon as an experience of great suffering,[118] with the term "suffering" having a significant place in Rasta discourse.[119]

Rastas view Babylon as being responsible for both the Atlantic slave trade, which removed enslaved Africans from their continent, and ongoing poverty in the African diaspora.[120] Rastas believe Biblical scripture explains the Atlantic slave trade,[121] and that the enslavement, exile, and exploitation of black Africans was punishment for failing to live up to their status as Jah's chosen people.[122] Many Rastas, adopting a Pan-Africanist ethos, have criticised the division of Africa into nation-states, regarding this as a Babylonian development,[123] and are often hostile to capitalist resource extraction from the continent.[124] Rastas seek to delegitimise and destroy Babylon, something often conveyed in the Rasta aphorism "Chant down Babylon".[120] Rastas often expect the white-dominated society to dismiss their beliefs as false, and when this happens they see it as confirmation of the correctness of their faith.[125]

Return to Zion

Rastas view Zion as an ideal to which they aspire.[120] As with "Babylon", this term comes from the Bible, where it refers to an idealised Jerusalem.[120] Rastas use "Zion" either for Ethiopia specifically or for Africa more broadly.[126] Many Rastas use the term "Ethiopia" as a synonym for Africa, following its usage in English translations of the Bible.[127] Rastas in Ghana, for instance, describe themselves as already living within "Ethiopia".[128] Other Rastas apply the term "Zion" to Jamaica or they use it to describe a state of mind.[117] Rastas believe that Africa, as the Promised Land, will allow them to escape the domination and degradation they experience in Babylon.[129]

A map of Ethiopia, sometimes called "Zion" by Rastas

During the first three decades of the Rastafari movement, it placed strong emphasis on the need for the African diaspora to be repatriated to Africa.[129] To this end, various Rastas lobbied the Jamaican government and United Nations to oversee this resettlement process.[129][130] Other Rastas organised their own transportation to the African continent.[129] Critics of the movement have argued that the migration of the entire African diaspora to Africa is implausible, particularly as no African country would welcome this.[96]

By the movement's fourth decade, the desire for physical repatriation to Africa had declined among Rastas,[131] a change influenced by observation of the 1983–1985 famine in Ethiopia.[132] Rather, many Rastas saw the idea of returning to Africa in a metaphorical sense, entailing the restoration of their pride and self-confidence as people of black African descent.[133] The term "liberation before repatriation" began to be used within the movement.[134] Some Rastas seek to transform Western society so that they may more comfortably live within it rather than seeking to move to Africa.[135] There are nevertheless many Rastas who continue to emphasise the need for physical resettlement of the African diaspora in Africa.[131]

Salvation and paradise

Rastafari is a millenarian movement,[136] espousing the idea that the present age will come to an apocalyptic end.[137] Many practitioners believe that on this Day of Judgment, Babylon will be overthrown,[138] with Rastas being the chosen few who survive the upheaval.[139] With Babylon destroyed, Rastas believe that humanity will enter a "new age",[140] a millennium of peace, justice, and happiness in which the righteous shall live in Africa.[141] In the 1980s, many Rastas believed that the Day of Judgment would happen around the year 2000.[142] A view then common in the Rasta community was that the world's white people would wipe themselves out through nuclear war,[143] with black Africans then ruling the world, something that they argued was prophesied in the Book of Daniel.[b][143]

Death and reincarnation

Rasta views on death vary.[144] Traditionally, many Rastas believed in the possibility of eternal life.[145] In the 1980s, scholar of religion Leonard E. Barrett observed Jamaican Rastas who believed that practitioners who died had not been faithful to Jah.[146] He suggested that this attitude stemmed from the

large numbers of young people in the movement, who had thus seen very few Rastas die.[147] Another common Rasta view is that those who are righteous may undergo reincarnation.[148]

Rastas have traditionally avoided death and funerals,[149] meaning that many were given Christian funerals by their relatives.[150] This attitude to death is less common among more recent or moderate strands of Rastafari, with many considering death a natural part of life.[144] Unlike other African diaspora religions, Rastas typically avoid ancestor veneration.[151]

Morality, ethics, and gender roles

Most Rastas share a pair of fundamental moral principles known as the "two great commandments": love of God and love of neighbour.[152] Many Rastas believe that to determine whether they should undertake a certain act or not, they should consult the presence of Jah within themselves.[153]

A Rasta in Barbados, wearing a rastacap decorated in the Rastafari colours: green, gold, red and black

Rastafari emphasises the idea of "living naturally".[154] As an extension of this view, Africa is considered the natural abode of black Africans—a continent where they can live according to African culture and tradition, and be themselves on a physical, emotional, and intellectual level.[112] Practitioners believe that Westerners and Babylon have detached themselves from nature through technological development and thus have become debilitated, slothful, and decadent.[155] Some Rastas also believe they should adhere to African laws rather than the laws of Babylon, potentially putting them at odds with the law of the countries in which they currently live.[156] In emphasising this Afrocentric approach, Rastafari expresses overtones of black nationalism.[157]

The scholar Maureen Warner-Lewis observed that Rastafari combined a "radical, even revolutionary" stance on socio-political issues, particularly regarding race, with a "profoundly traditional" approach on other issues.[158] Rastas typically look critically upon modern capitalism,[153] instead favouring small-scale, pre-industrial and agricultural societies.[159] Some Rastas have promoted activism for socio-political reform, while others believe in awaiting change that will be brought about through divine intervention.[160] In Jamaica, Rastas typically do not vote,[161] dismissing politics as "politricks",[162] and rarely involve themselves in political parties or unions.[163] The Rasta tendency to believe that socio-political change is inevitable opens the religion up to the criticism from the political left that it discourages attempts to alter the status quo.[164] Other Rastas do engage in political activism; the Ghanaian Rasta singer-songwriter Rocky Dawuni for instance was involved in campaigns promoting democratic elections,[165] while in Grenada, many Rastas joined the People's Revolutionary Government formed in 1979.[166]

Gender roles

Rasta discourse has traditionally presented women as morally weak, susceptible to deception by evil,[167] and impure while menstruating,[168] citing the Book of Leviticus and the writings of Paul the Apostle.[169] By contrast, Rastafari often espouses the belief that black men in the African diaspora have

been emasculated by Babylon and that their manhood must therefore be restored.[170] As a result, Rastafari often affirms patriarchal principles,[171] including the idea that women should submit to male leadership.[172] External observers—including scholars such as Cashmore and Edmonds[173]—have claimed that Rastafari accords women an inferior position to men.[135] Cashmore suggests Rastafari women accept this subordinate position and regard it as their duty to obey their men.[174] The academic Maureen Rowe suggested that women were willing to join the religion despite its restrictions because they valued the life of structure and discipline it provided.[175] Attitudes to women within Rastafari have changed since the 1970s, however, with a growing "womanist" movement, and increasing numbers of women in leadership positions at local and international levels.[176]

The Rasta Shop, a store selling items associated with Rastafari in the U.S. state of Oregon

Rasta women usually wear clothing that covers their head and hides their body contours.[177] Trousers are usually avoided,[178] with long skirts preferred.[179] Women are expected to cover their head while praying,[180] and in some Rasta groups this is expected of them whenever in public.[181] According to traditional Rasta discourse, this dress code is necessary to prevent the sexual objectification of women by men in Babylon.[182] Rasta men do not usually have such a dress code.[183] Some Rasta women have challenged gender norms by wearing their hair uncovered in public and donning trousers.[184]

Although men and women took part alongside each other in early Rasta rituals, from the late 1940s and 1950s the Rasta community increasingly encouraged gender segregation for ceremonies.[185] This was based on the belief that women's menstruation made them impure and that their presence at the ceremonies would distract male participants.[185]

Sexuality

As it existed in Jamaica, Rastafari did not promote monogamy.[186] Though it is not especially common, Rasta men are permitted to engage in polygamy,[187] while women are expected to reserve their sexual activity for one male partner.[188] Common-law marriage is the norm,[189] although many Rastas are legally married.[190] Rasta men refer to their female partners as "queens",[191] "empresses",[184] or "lionesses",[192] while the males in these relationships are known as "kingmen".[193] Rastafari places great importance on family life and the raising of children,[194] with reproduction being encouraged.[195] Traditionally, the religion emphasised the place of men in child-rearing, associating this with the recovery of African manhood.[196] Women would often work, sometimes while the man raised the children at home.[197]

Rastafari regards procreation as the purpose of sex, and thus oral and anal sex are usually forbidden.[198] Both contraception and abortion are usually censured,[199] and a common claim in Rasta discourse is that these were inventions of Babylon to decrease the black African birth-rate.[200] Rastas typically express hostile attitudes to homosexuality, regarding homosexuals as evil and unnatural;[201] this attitude derives from references to same-sex sexual activity in the Bible.[46] Cashmore reported that Rastas typically saw

the growing acceptance of birth control and homosexuality in the 1970s and 1980s as evidence of the degeneration of Babylon and proof of its approaching demise.[202] LGBTQ+ Rastas may conceal their sexual orientation because of these attitudes.[203]

Practices

Rastas refer to their cultural and religious practices as "livity".[204] Rastafari does not place emphasis on hierarchical structures.[153] It has no professional priesthood,[37] with Rastas believing that there is no need for a priest to act as mediator between the worshipper and Jah.[205] It nevertheless has "elders", an honorific title bestowed upon those with a good reputation among the community.[206] Although respected figures, they do not necessarily have administrative functions or responsibilities.[206] When they do oversee ritual meetings, they are often responsible for helping to interpret current events in terms of Biblical scripture.[207] Elders often communicate with each other through a network to plan movement events and form strategies.[206]

Grounding

The term "grounding" is used among Rastas to refer to the establishment of relationships between like-minded practitioners.[208] Groundings often take place in a commune or yard, and are presided over by an elder.[197] The elder is charged with keeping discipline and can ban individuals from attending.[206] The number of participants can range from a handful to several hundred.[197] Activities that take place at groundings include the playing of drums, chanting, the singing of hymns, and the recitation of poetry.[209] Cannabis, known as ganja, is often smoked.[209] Most groundings contain only men, although some Rasta women have established their own all-female grounding circles.[210]

A group of Rastas in Liberia celebrating Marcus Garvey's birthday

One of the central activities at groundings is "reasoning".[211] This is a discussion among assembled Rastas about the religion's principles and their relevance to current events.[212] These discussions are supposed to be non-combative, although attendees can point out the fallacies in any arguments presented.[213] Those assembled inform each other about the revelations that they have received through meditation and dream.[197] Each contributor is supposed to push the boundaries of understanding until the entire group has gained greater insight into the topic under discussion.[214] In meeting together with like-minded individuals, reasoning helps Rastas to reassure one another of the correctness of their beliefs.[96] Rastafari meetings are opened and closed with prayers. These involve supplication to Jah for the vulnerable and needy, calls for the destruction of the Rastas' enemies, and closing statements of adoration.[215]

> Princes shall come out of Egypt, Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hand unto God. Oh thou God of Ethiopia, thou God of divine majesty, thy spirit come within our hearts to dwell in the parts of

The largest groundings were known as "groundations" or "grounations" in the 1950s, although they were subsequently re-termed "Nyabinghi Issemblies".[216] The term "Nyabinghi" is adopted from the name of a

> righteousness. That the hungry be fed, the sick nourished, the aged protected, and the infant cared for. Teach us love and loyalty as it is in Zion.
>
> — Opening passage of a common Rasta prayer[215]

mythical African queen.[217] Nyabinghi Issemblies are often held on dates associated with Ethiopia and Haile Selassie.[218] These include Ethiopian Christmas (7 January), the day on which Haile Selassie visited Jamaica (21 April), Selassie's birthday (23 July), Ethiopian New Year (11 September), and Selassie's coronation day (2 November).[218] Some Rastas also organise Nyabinghi Issemblies to mark Jamaica's Emancipation Day (1 August) and Marcus Garvey's birthday (17 August).[218]

Nyabinghi Issemblies typically take place in rural areas, being situated in the open air or in temporary structures—known as "temples" or "tabernacles"—specifically constructed for the purpose.[219] Any elder seeking to sponsor a Nyabinghi Issembly must have approval from other elders and requires the adequate resources to organise such an event.[220] The assembly usually lasts between three and seven days.[219] During the daytime, attendees engage in food preparation, ganja smoking, and reasoning, while at night they focus on drumming and dancing around bonfires.[219] Nyabinghi Issemblies often attract Rastas from a wide area, including from different countries.[219] They establish and maintain a sense of solidarity among the Rasta community and cultivate a feeling of collective belonging.[219] Unlike in many other religions, rites of passage play no role in Rastafari;[221] on death, various Rastas have been given Christian funerals by their relatives, as there are no established Rasta funeral rites.[150]

Use of cannabis

The principal ritual of Rastafari is the smoking of ganja, also known as marijuana or cannabis.[222] Among the names that Rastas give to the plant are *callie*, *Iley*, "the herb", "the holy herb", "the grass", and "the weed".[223] Cannabis is usually smoked during groundings,[197] although some practitioners also smoke it informally in other contexts.[224] Some Rastas smoke cannabis very frequently, something other practitioners regard as excessive.[225] Many practitioners alternatively consume cannabis in a tea, as a spice in cooking, and as an ingredient in medicine.[226] Not all Rastas use cannabis;[227] many abstainers explain that they have already achieved a higher level of consciousness and thus do not require it.[228]

In Rastafari, cannabis is considered a sacrament.[229] Rastas argue that the use of ganja is promoted in the Bible, specifically in Genesis,[c] Psalms,[d] and Revelation.[e][230] They regard it as having healing properties,[231] eulogise it for inducing feelings of "peace and love",[232] and claim that it cultivates a form of personal introspection that allows the smokers to discover their inner divinity.[233] Some Rastas believe that cannabis smoke serves as an incense that counteracts immoral practices in society.[203]

Rastas typically smoke cannabis in the form of a large, hand-rolled cigarette known as a spliff.[234] This is often rolled together while a prayer is offered to Jah; the spliff is lit and smoked only when the prayer is completed.[235] At other times, cannabis is smoked in a water pipe referred to as a chalice: styles include kutchies, chillums, and steamers.[235] The pipe is passed in a counter-clockwise direction around the assembled circle of Rastas.[235]

There are various options that might explain how cannabis smoking came to be part of Rastafari. By the 8th century, Arab traders had introduced cannabis to Central and Southern Africa.[236] In the 19th century, enslaved Bakongo people arrived in Jamaica, where they established the religion of Kumina. In Kumina, cannabis was smoked during religious ceremonies in the belief that it facilitated possession by ancestral

A flowering cannabis plant; the smoking of which is considered a Biblically sanctioned sacrament by Rastas

spirits.[208] The religion was largely practiced in south-east Jamaica's Saint Thomas Parish, where a prominent early Rasta, Leonard Howell, lived while he was developing many of Rastafari's beliefs and practices; it may have been through Kumina that cannabis became part of Rastafari.[208] A second possible source was the use of cannabis in Hindu rituals.[237] Hindu migrants arrived in Jamaica as indentured servants from British India between 1834 and 1917, and brought cannabis with them.[208] A Jamaican Hindu priest, Laloo, was one of Howell's spiritual advisors, and may have influenced his adoption of ganja.[208] The adoption of cannabis may also have been influenced by the widespread medicinal and recreational use of cannabis among Afro-Jamaicans in the early 20th century.[208] Early Rastafarians may have taken an element of Jamaican culture which they associated with their peasant past and the rejection of capitalism and sanctified it by according it Biblical correlates.[238]

In many countries—including Jamaica[239]—cannabis is illegal and by using it, Rastas protest the rules and regulations of Babylon.[240] In the United States, for example, thousands of practitioners have been arrested because of their possession of the drug.[241] Rastas have also advocated for the legalisation of cannabis in those jurisdictions where it is illegal;[242] in 2015, Jamaica decriminalized personal possession of marijuana up to two ounces and legalized it for medicinal and scientific purposes.[243] In 2019, Barbados legalised Rastafari use of cannabis within religious settings and pledged 60 acres (24 ha) of land for Rastafari to grow it.[244][245]

Music

Rastafari music developed at reasoning sessions,[246] where drumming, chanting, and dancing are all present.[247] Rasta music is performed to praise and commune with Jah,[248] and to reaffirm the rejection of Babylon.[248] Rastas believe that their music has healing properties, with the ability to cure colds, fevers, and headaches.[248] Many of these songs are sung to the tune of older Christian hymns,[249] but others are original Rasta creations.[248]

The bass-line of Rasta music is provided by the akete, a three-drum set, which is accompanied by percussion instruments like rattles and tambourines.[247] A syncopated rhythm is then provided by the fundeh drum.[247] In addition, a batá drum improvises over the rhythm.[247] The different components of the music are regarded as displaying different symbolism; the bassline symbolises blows against Babylon, while the lighter beats denote hope for the future.[247]

A Rasta playing a batá drum

As Rastafari developed, popular music became its chief communicative medium.[250] During the 1960s, ska was a popular musical style in Jamaica, and although its protests against social and political conditions were mild, it gave early expression to Rasta socio-political ideology.[251] Particularly prominent in the connection between Rastafari and ska were the musicians Count Ossie and Don Drummond.[252] Ossie was a drummer who believed that black people needed to develop their own style of music;[253] he was heavily influenced by Burru, an Afro-Jamaican drumming style.[254] Ossie subsequently popularised this new Rastafari ritual music by playing at various groundings and groundations around Jamaica,[254] with songs like "Another Moses" and "Babylon Gone" reflecting Rasta influence.[255] Rasta themes also appeared in Drummond's work, with songs such as "Reincarnation" and "Tribute to Marcus Garvey".[255]

1968 saw the development of reggae in Jamaica, a musical style typified by slower, heavier rhythms than ska and the increased use of Jamaican Patois.[256] Like calypso, reggae was a medium for social commentary,[257] although it demonstrated a wider use of radical political and Rasta themes than were previously present in Jamaican popular music.[256] Reggae artists incorporated Rasta ritual rhythms, and also adopted Rasta chants, language, motifs, and social critiques.[258] Songs like The Wailers' "African Herbsman" and Peter Tosh's "Legalize It" referenced cannabis use,[259] while tracks like The Melodians' "Rivers of Babylon" and Junior Byles' "Beat Down Babylon" referenced Rasta beliefs in Babylon.[260] Reggae gained widespread international popularity during the mid-1970s,[261] coming to be viewed by black people in many different countries as music of the oppressed.[262] Many Rastas grew critical of reggae, believing that it had commercialised their religion.[263] Although reggae contains much Rastafari symbolism,[6] and the two are widely associated,[264] the connection is often exaggerated by non-Rastas.[265] Most Rastas do not listen to reggae music,[265] and reggae has also been utilised by other religious groups, such as Protestant Evangelicals.[266] Out of reggae came dub music; dub artists often employ Rastafari terminology, even when not Rastas themselves.[267]

Language and symbolism

Rastas typically regard words as having an intrinsic power,[268] seeking to avoid language that contributes to servility, self-degradation, and the objectification of the person.[269] Practitioners therefore often use their own form of language, known commonly as "dread talk",[270] "Iyaric",[271] and "Rasta talk".[272] Developed in Jamaica during the 1940s,[273] this use of language fosters group identity and cultivates particular values.[274] Adherents believe that by formulating their own language they are launching an ideological attack on the integrity of the English language, which they view as a tool of Babylon.[275] The use of this language helps Rastas distinguish and separate themselves from non-Rastas,[276] for whom—according to Barrett—Rasta rhetoric can be "meaningless babbling".[277] However, Rasta terms have also filtered into wider Jamaican speech patterns.[278]

Rastas make wide use of the pronoun "I".[279] This denotes the Rasta view that the self is divine,[280] and reminds each Rasta that they are not a slave and have value, worth, and dignity as a human being.[281] For instance, Rastas use "I" in place of "me", "I and I" in place of "we", "I-ceive" in place of "receive", "I-sire" in place of "desire", "I-rate" in place of "create", and "I-men" in place of "Amen".[274] Rastas refer to this process as "InI Consciousness" or "Isciousness".[90] Rastas typically refer to Haile Selassie as "Haile Selassie I", thus indicating their belief in his divinity.[281] Rastas also typically believe that the phonetics of a word should be linked to its meaning.[268] For instance, Rastas often use the word "downpression" in place of "oppression" because oppression bears *down* on people rather than lifting them *up*, with "up" being phonetically akin to "opp-".[282] Similarly, they often favour "livicate" over

Rastas regularly use the three colours of the Ethiopian flag for their movement, although they often add black to this tricolour, symbolising the black skin of the African people

"dedicate" because "ded-" is phonetically akin to the word "dead".[283] In the early decades of the religion's development, Rastas often said "Peace and Love" as a greeting, although the use of this declined as Rastafari matured.[284]

Rastas often make use of the colours red, black, green, and gold.[285] Red, gold, and green were used in the Ethiopian flag, while, prior to the development of Rastafari, the Jamaican black nationalist activist Marcus Garvey had used red, green, and black as the colours for the Pan-African flag representing his United Negro Improvement Association.[286] According to Garvey, the red symbolised the blood of martyrs, the black symbolised the skin of Africans, and the green represented the vegetation of the land, an interpretation endorsed by some Rastas.[287] The colour gold is often included alongside Garvey's three colours; it has been adopted from the Jamaican flag,[288] and is often interpreted as symbolising the minerals and raw materials which constitute Africa's wealth.[289] Rastas often paint these colours onto their buildings, vehicles, kiosks, and other items,[285] or display them on their clothing, helping to distinguish Rastas from non-Rastas and allowing adherents to recognise their co-religionists.[290] As well as being used by Rastas, the colour set has also been adopted by Pan-Africanists more broadly, who use it to display their identification with Afrocentricity;[289] for this reason it was adopted on the flags of many post-independence African states.[285] Rastas often accompany the use of these three or four colours with the image of the Lion of Judah, also adopted from the Ethiopian flag and symbolizing Haile Selassie.[285]

Diet

Rastas seek to produce food "naturally",[291] eating what they call ital, or "natural" food.[292] This is often grown organically,[293] and locally.[268] Most Rastas adhere to the dietary laws outlined in the Book of Leviticus, and thus avoid eating pork or crustaceans.[294] Other Rastas remain vegetarian,[295] or vegan,[296] a practice stemming from their interpretation of Leviticus.[f][297] Many also avoid the addition of additives, including sugar and salt, to their food.[298] Rasta dietary practices have been ridiculed by non-Rastas; in Ghana for example, where food traditionally includes a high meat content, the Rastas' emphasis on vegetable produce has led to the joke that they "eat like sheep and goats".[299] In Jamaica, Rasta practitioners have commercialised ital food, for instance by selling fruit juices prepared according to Rasta custom.[300]

An ital breakfast; ackee, plantain, boiled food, breadfruit, and mango-pineapple juice

Rastafarians typically avoid food produced by non-Rastas or from unknown sources.[301] Rasta men refuse to eat food prepared by a woman while she is menstruating,[302] and some will avoid food prepared by a woman at any time.[303] Rastas also generally avoid alcohol,[304] cigarettes,[305] and hard drugs such as heroin and cocaine,[232] presenting these substances as unnatural and dirty and contrasting

them with cannabis.[241] Rastas also often avoid mainstream scientific medicine and will reject surgery, injections, or blood transfusions.[306] Instead they utilise herbal medicine for healing, especially teas and poultices, with cannabis often used as an ingredient.[307]

Appearance

A man with dreadlocks in São Paulo, Brazil

Rastas use their physical appearance as a means of visually demarcating themselves from non-Rastas.[107] Male practitioners will often grow long beards,[308] and many Rastas prefer to wear African styles of clothing, such as dashikis, rather than styles that originated in Western countries.[309] However, it is the formation of hair into dreadlocks that is one of the most recognisable Rasta symbols.[310] Rastas believe that dreadlocks are promoted in the Bible, specifically in the Book of Numbers,[g][311] and regard them as a symbol of strength linked to the hair of the Biblical figure of Samson.[312] They argue that their dreadlocks mark a covenant that they have made with Jah,[313] and reflect their commitment to the idea of 'naturalness'.[314] They also perceive the wearing of dreads as a symbolic rejection of Babylon and a refusal to conform to its norms regarding grooming aesthetics.[315] Rastas are often critical of black people who straighten their hair, believing that it is an attempt to imitate white European hair and thus reflects alienation from a person's African identity.[314] Sometimes this dreadlocked hair is then shaped and styled, often inspired by a lion's mane symbolising Haile Selassie, who is regarded as "the Conquering Lion of Judah".[316]

Rastas differ on whether they regard dreadlocks as compulsory for practicing the religion.[25] Some Rastas do not wear their hair in dreadlocks; within the religion they are often termed "cleanface" Rastas,[317] with those wearing dreadlocked hair often called "locksmen".[318] Some Rastas have also joined the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Christian organisation to which Haile Selassie belonged, and these individuals are forbidden from putting their hair in dreadlocks by the Church.[319] In reference to Rasta hairstyles, Rastas often refer to non-Rastas as "baldheads",[320] or "combsome",[321] while those who are new to Rastafari and who have only just started to grow their hair into dreads are termed "nubbies".[317] Members of the Bobo Ashanti sect of Rastas conceal their dreadlocks within turbans,[322] while some Rastas tuck their dreads under a rastacap or tam headdress, usually coloured green, red, black, and yellow.[323] Dreadlocks and Rastafari-inspired clothing have also been worn for aesthetic reasons by non-Rastas.[324] For instance, many reggae musicians who do not adhere to the Rastafari religion wear their hair in dreads.[265]

From the beginning of the Rastafari movement in the 1930s, adherents typically grew beards and tall hair, perhaps in imitation of Haile Selassie.[131] The wearing of hair as dreadlocks then emerged as a Rasta practice in the 1940s;[131] there were debates within the movement as to whether dreadlocks should be worn or not, with proponents of the style becoming dominant.[325] There are various claims as to how this practice was adopted.[131] One claim is that it was adopted in imitation of certain African nations, such as the Maasai, Somalis, or Oromo, or that it was inspired by the hairstyles worn by some of those involved in the anti-colonialist Mau Mau Uprising in Kenya.[131] An alternative explanation is that it was inspired by the hairstyles of the Hindu sadhus.[326]

A Rasta man wearing a rastacap in Jamaica

The wearing of dreadlocks has contributed to negative views of Rastafari among non-Rastas, many of whom regard it as wild and unattractive.[327] Dreadlocks remain socially stigmatised in many societies; in Ghana for example, they are often associated with the homeless and mentally ill, with such associations of marginality extending onto Ghanaian Rastas.[328] In Jamaica during the mid-20th century, teachers and police officers used to forcibly cut off the dreads of Rastas.[329] In various countries, Rastas have since won legal battles ensuring their right to wear dreadlocks: in 2020, for instance, the High Court of Malawi ruled that all public schools must allow their students to wear dreadlocks.[330] The decision is to be enforced before the 30th of June 2023 or schools will be in breach of the country's constitution.[331]

History

Rastafari developed out of the legacy of the Atlantic slave trade, in which over ten million enslaved Africans were transported to the Americas between the 16th and 19th centuries.[332] Under 700,000 of these slaves were settled in the British colony of Jamaica.[332] The British government abolished slavery in the Caribbean island in 1834,[333] although racial prejudice remained prevalent across Jamaican society.[334]

Ethiopianism, Back to Africa, and Marcus Garvey

Rastafari owed much to intellectual frameworks arising in the 19th and early 20th centuries.[335] One key influence on Rastafari was Christian Revivalism,[336] with the Great Revival of 1860–61 drawing many Afro-Jamaicans to join churches.[337] Increasing numbers of Pentecostal missionaries from the United States arrived in Jamaica during the early 20th century, climaxing in the 1920s.[338]

Marcus Garvey, a prominent black nationalist theorist who heavily influenced Rastafari and is regarded as a prophet by many Rastas

Further contributing significantly to Rastafari's development were Ethiopianism and the Back to Africa ethos, both traditions with 18th-century roots.[339] In the 19th century, there were growing calls for the African diaspora located in Western Europe and the Americas to be resettled in Africa,[339] with some of this diaspora establishing colonies in Sierra Leone and Liberia.[339] Based in Liberia, the black Christian preacher Edward Wilmot Blyden began promoting African pride and the preservation of African tradition, customs, and institutions.[340] Also spreading throughout Africa was Ethiopianism, a movement that accorded special status to the east African nation of Ethiopia because it was mentioned in various Biblical passages.[341] For adherents of Ethiopianism, "Ethiopia" was regarded as a synonym of Africa as a whole.[342]

Of significant influence on Rastafari was the Jamaican activist Marcus Garvey, who spent much of his adult life in the US and Britain. Garvey supported the idea of global racial separatism and called for part of the African diaspora to relocate to Africa.[343] His ideas faced opposition from civil rights activists like W. E. B. Du Bois who supported racial integration,[344] and as a mass movement, Garveyism declined in the Great Depression of the 1930s.[344] A rumour later spread that in 1916, Garvey had called on his supporters to "look to Africa" for the crowning of a black king; this quote was never verified.[345] However, in August 1930, Garvey's play, *Coronation of an African King*, was performed in Kingston. Its plot revolved around the crowning of the fictional Prince Cudjoe of Sudan, although it anticipated the crowning of Haile Selassie later that year.[346] Rastas hold Garvey in great esteem,[117] with many regarding him as a prophet.[347] Garvey knew of Rastafari, but took a largely negative view of the religion;[348] he also became a critic of Haile Selassie,[349] calling him "a great coward" who rules a "country where black men are chained and flogged".[83]

Haile Selassie and the early Rastas: 1930–1949

Haile Selassie was crowned Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930, becoming the first sovereign monarch crowned in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1891 and first Christian one since 1889. A number of Jamaica's Christian clergymen claimed that Selassie's coronation was evidence that he was the black messiah that they believed was prophesied in the Book of Revelation,[h] the Book of Daniel,[i] and Psalms.[j][350] Over the following years, several street preachers—most notably Leonard Howell, Archibald Dunkley, Robert Hinds, and Joseph Hibbert—began claiming that Haile Selassie was the returned Jesus.[351] They first did so in Kingston, and soon the message spread throughout 1930s Jamaica,[352] especially among poor communities who were hit particularly hard by the Great Depression.[163] Clarke stated that "to all intents and purposes this was the beginning" of the Rastafari movement.[353]

Howell was the early movement's "leading figure".[31] He preached that black Africans were superior to white Europeans and that Afro-Jamaicans should owe their allegiance to Haile Selassie rather than to King George V. The island's colonial authorities arrested him and charged him with sedition in 1934, resulting in a two-year imprisonment.[354] Following his release, Howell established the Ethiopian Salvation Society and in 1939 formed a Rasta community, known as Pinnacle, in Saint Catherine Parish.[355] Jamaica's police feared that Howell was plotting an armed rebellion and raided Pinnacle repeatedly. Pinnacle ultimately closed in 1954 and Howell was committed to a mental hospital.[356]

Emperor Haile Selassie in 1942, a year after he re-took control of Ethiopia

In 1936, Italy invaded and occupied Ethiopia, and Haile Selassie went into exile. The invasion brought international condemnation and led to growing sympathy for the Ethiopian cause.[357] In 1937, Selassie created the Ethiopian World Federation, which established a branch in Jamaica later that decade.[358] In 1941, Allied forces drove the Italians out of Ethiopia and Selassie returned to reclaim his throne. Many Rastas interpreted this as the fulfilment of a prophecy made in the Book of Revelation.[k][357]

Growing visibility: 1950–1969

Rastafari's main appeal was among Jamaica's lower classes.[357] For its first thirty years, Rastafari was in a conflictual relationship with the Jamaican authorities.[359] Jamaica's Rastas expressed contempt for many aspects of the island's society, viewing the government, police, bureaucracy, professional classes, and established churches as instruments of Babylon.[160] Relations between practitioners and the police were strained, with Rastas often being arrested for cannabis possession.[360] During the 1950s the movement grew rapidly in Jamaica and also spread to other Caribbean islands, the United States, and the United Kingdom.[357]

In the 1940s and 1950s, a more militant brand of Rastafari emerged.[361] The vanguard of this was the House of Youth Black Faith, a group largely based in West Kingston.[362] Backlash against the Rastas grew after a practitioner allegedly killed a woman in 1957.[160] In March 1958, the first Rastafarian Universal Convention was held in Back-o-Wall, Kingston.[363] Following the event, militant Rastas unsuccessfully tried to capture the city in the name of Haile Selassie.[364] Later that year they tried again in Spanish Town.[160] The increasing militancy of some Rastas resulted in growing alarm;[160] according to Cashmore, the Rastas became "folk devils" in Jamaican society.[365]

In 1959, the self-declared prophet and founder of the African Reform Church, Claudius Henry, sold thousands of tickets to Afro-Jamaicans, including many Rastas, for passage on a ship that he claimed would take them to Africa. The ship never arrived and Henry was charged with fraud. In 1960 he was sentenced to six years imprisonment for conspiring to overthrow the government.[366] Henry's son was accused of being part of a paramilitary cell and executed, confirming public fears about Rasta violence.[367] One of the most prominent clashes between Rastas and law enforcement was the Coral Gardens incident of 1963, in which an initial skirmish between police and Rastas resulted in several deaths and led to a larger roundup of practitioners.[368] Clamping down on the Rasta movement, in 1964 the island's government implemented tougher laws surrounding cannabis use.[369]

At the invitation of its government, Haile Selassie visited Jamaica for the first time on 21 April 1966, with thousands of Rastas assembled to meet him at the airport.[370] Over the course of the 1960s, Jamaica's Rasta community underwent a process of routinisation,[371] with the late 1960s witnessing the launch of the first official Rastafarian newspaper, the Rastafarian Movement Association's *Rasta Voice*.[372] The decade also saw Rastafari develop in increasingly complex ways,[373] as it did when some Rastas began to reinterpret the idea that salvation required a physical return to Africa, instead interpreting salvation as coming through a process of mental decolonisation that embraced African approaches to life.[373]

Whereas its membership had previously derived predominantly from poorer sectors of society, in the 1960s Rastafari began attracting support from more privileged groups like students and professional musicians.[374] The foremost group emphasising this approach was the Twelve Tribes of Israel, whose members came to be known as "Uptown Rastas".[375] Many Rastas came under the influence of the Guyanese black nationalist academic Walter Rodney, who lectured to their community in 1968 before publishing his thoughts as the pamphlet *Groundings*.[376] Like Rodney, many Jamaican Rastas were influenced by the U.S.-based Black Power movement,[377] and after that movement declined, Rastafari filled the vacuum it left for many black youth.[378]

International spread and decline: 1970–present

In the mid-1970s, reggae's international popularity exploded.[261] The most successful reggae artist, Bob Marley, played a major role in introducing Rastafari themes to audiences across the world.[379] Reggae's popularity led to a growth in "pseudo-Rastafarians", individuals who listened to reggae and wore Rasta clothing but did not share its belief system.[380] Many Rastas were angered by this, believing it commercialised their religion.[263]

Reggae musician Bob Marley did much to raise international awareness of the Rastafari movement in the 1970s.

Through reggae, Rasta musicians became increasingly important in Jamaica's political life during the 1970s.[381] To bolster his popularity with the electorate, Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley employed Rasta imagery and courted support from Marley and other reggae musicians.[382] Manley described Rastas as a "beautiful and remarkable people"[327] and carried a cane which he claimed was a gift from Haile Selassie.[383] Following Manley's example, Jamaican political parties increasingly employed Rasta language, symbols, and reggae references in their campaigns,[384] while Rasta symbols became increasingly mainstream in Jamaican society.[385] This helped to confer greater legitimacy on Rastafari,[386] with reggae and Rasta imagery being increasingly presented as a core part of Jamaica's cultural heritage for the growing tourist industry.[387] In the 1980s, a Rasta, Barbara Makeda Blake Hannah, became a senator in the Jamaican Parliament.[388]

Enthusiasm for Rastafari was likely dampened by the death of Haile Selassie in 1975 and that of Marley in 1981.[389] During the 1980s, the number of Rastas in Jamaica declined,[390] with Pentecostal and other Charismatic Christian groups proving more successful at attracting young recruits.[391] Several prominent Rastas converted to Christianity,[391] and two of those who did so—Judy Mowatt and Tommy Cowan—maintained that Marley had converted to Christianity, in the form of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, during his final days.[392] The significance of Rastafari messages in reggae also declined with the growing popularity of dancehall, a Jamaican musical genre that typically foregrounded lyrical themes of hyper-masculinity, violence, and sexual activity rather than religious symbolism.[393]

The mid-1990s saw a revival of Rastafari-focused reggae associated with musicians like Anthony B, Buju Banton, Luciano, Sizzla, and Capleton.[393] From the 1990s, Jamaica also witnessed the growth of organised political activity within the Rasta community, seen for instance through campaigns for the legalisation of cannabis and the creation of political parties like the Jamaican Alliance Movement and the Imperial Ethiopian World Federation Incorporated Political Party, none of which attained more than minimal electoral support.[394] In 1995, the Rastafari Centralization Organization was established in Jamaica as an attempt to organise the Rastafari community.[395]

Organisation

Rastafari is not a homogeneous movement and has no single administrative structure,[396] nor any single leader.[397] A majority of Rastas avoid centralised and hierarchical structures because they do not want to replicate the structures of Babylon and because their religion's ultra-individualistic ethos places emphasis on inner divinity.[398] The structure of most Rastafari groups is less like that of Christian denominations and is instead akin to the cellular structure of other African diasporic traditions like Haitian Vodou, Cuban Santería, and Jamaica's Revival Zion.[396] Since the 1970s, there have been attempts to unify all Rastas, namely through the establishment of the Rastafari Movement Association, which sought political mobilisation.[399] In 1982, the first international assembly of Rastafari groups took place in Toronto, Canada.[399] This and subsequent international conferences, assemblies, and workshops have helped to cement global networks and cultivate an international community of Rastas.[400]

Mansions of Rastafari

Sub-divisions of Rastafari are often referred to as "houses" or "mansions", in keeping with a passage from the Gospel of John (14:2): as translated in the King James Bible, Jesus states, "In my father's house are many mansions".[401] The three most prominent branches are the House of Nyabinghi, the Bobo Ashanti, and the Twelve Tribes of Israel, although other important groups include the Church of Haile Selassie I, Inc., and the Fulfilled Rastafari.[401] By fragmenting into different houses without any single leader, Rastafari became more resilient amid opposition from Jamaica's government during the early decades of the movement.[402]

A stylised Rastafari motif, depicting the Lion of Judah

Probably the largest Rastafari group, the House of Nyabinghi is an aggregate of more traditional and militant Rastas who seek to keep the movement close to the way in which it existed during the 1940s.[401] They stress the idea that Haile Selassie was Jah and the reincarnation of Jesus.[401] The wearing of dreadlocks is regarded as indispensable and patriarchal gender roles are strongly emphasised.[401] According to Cashmore, writing in 1983, they are "vehemently anti-white".[403] Nyabinghi Rastas refuse to compromise with Babylon and are often critical of reggae musicians like Marley for collaborating with the commercial music industry.[404]

The Bobo Ashanti sect was founded in Jamaica by Emanuel Charles Edwards through the establishment of his Ethiopia Africa Black International Congress (EABIC) in 1958.[405] The group established a commune in Bull Bay, where they were led by Edwards until his death in 1994.[406] The group hold to a highly rigid ethos,[407] and are influenced by Mosaic Law.[130][408] Edwards advocated the idea of a new trinity, with Haile Selassie as the living God, himself as the Christ, and Garvey as the prophet.[409] Male members are divided into two categories: the "priests" who conduct religious services and the "prophets" who take part in reasoning sessions.[407] It places greater restrictions on women than most other forms of Rastafari;[410] women are regarded as impure because of menstruation and childbirth and so are not permitted to cook for men.[407] The group teaches that black Africans are God's chosen people and are

superior to white Europeans,[411] with members often refusing to associate with white people.[412] By the opening decades of the twenty-first century, the Bobo Ashanti have become more welcoming of outsiders, even those who are menstruating.[413] Bobo Ashanti Rastas are recognisable by their long, flowing robes and turbans.[414]

The headquarters of the Twelve Tribes of Israel group in Shashemene, Ethiopia

The Twelve Tribes of Israel group was founded in 1968 in Kingston by Vernon Carrington.[415] He proclaimed himself the reincarnation of the Old Testament prophet Gad and his followers call him "Prophet Gad", "Brother Gad", or "Gadman".[416] It is commonly regarded as the most liberal form of Rastafari and the closest to Christianity.[57] Practitioners are often dubbed "Christian Rastas" because they believe Jesus is the only saviour; Haile Selassie is accorded importance, but is not viewed as the second coming of Jesus.[417] The group divides its members into twelve groups according to which Hebrew calendar month they were born in; each month is associated with a particular colour, body part, and mental function.[418] Maintaining dreadlocks and an Ital diet are considered commendable but not essential,[419] while adherents are called upon to read a chapter of the Bible each day.[420] Membership is open to individuals of any racial background.[421]

The Twelve Tribes peaked in popularity during the 1970s, when it attracted artists, musicians, and many middle-class followers—Marley among them[422]—resulting in the terms "middle-class Rastas" and "uptown Rastas" being applied to members of the group.[423] Carrington died in 2005, since which time the Twelve Tribes of Israel have been led by an executive council.[423] The council includes an equal number of men and women.[424] As of 2010, it was recorded as being the largest of the centralised Rasta groups.[72] It remains headquartered in Kingston, although it has followers outside Jamaica;[425] the group was responsible for establishing the Rasta community in Shashamane, Ethiopia.[426]

The Church of Haile Selassie, Inc., was founded by Abuna Foxe and operated much like a mainstream Christian church, with a hierarchy of functionaries, weekly services, and Sunday schools.[427] In adopting this broad approach, the Church seeks to develop Rastafari's respectability in wider society.[399] Fulfilled Rastafari is a multi-ethnic movement that has spread in popularity during the 21st century, in large part through the Internet.[399] The Fulfilled Rastafari group accept Haile Selassie's statements that he was a man and that he was a devout Christian, and so place emphasis on worshipping Jesus through the example set forth by Haile Selassie.[399] The wearing of dreadlocks and the adherence to an ital diet are considered issues up to the individual.[399]

Demographics

As of 2012, there were an estimated 700,000 to 1,000,000 Rastas worldwide.[428] They can be found in many different regions, including most of the world's major population centres.[428] Rastafari's influence on wider society has been

> Born in the ghettos of Kingston, Jamaica, the Rastafarian movement has captured the imagination of thousands of black youth, and some white youth, throughout Jamaica, the Caribbean,

more substantial than its numerical size,[429] particularly in fostering a racial, political, and cultural consciousness among the African diaspora and Africans themselves.[428] Men dominate Rastafari.[430] In its early years, most of its followers were men, and the women who did adhere to it tended to remain in the background.[430] This picture of Rastafari's demographics has been confirmed by ethnographic studies conducted in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.[431]

> Britain, France, and other countries in Western Europe and North America. It is also to be found in smaller numbers in parts of Africa—for example, in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Senegal—and in Australia and New Zealand, particularly among the Maori.
>
> — Sociologist of religion Peter B. Clarke, 1986[98]

The Rasta message resonates with many people who feel marginalised and alienated by the values and institutions of their society.[432] Internationally, it has proved most popular among the poor and among marginalised youth.[433] In valorising Africa and blackness, Rastafari provides a positive identity for youth in the African diaspora by allowing them to psychologically reject their social stigmatisation.[432] It then provides these disaffected people with the discursive stance from which they can challenge capitalism and consumerism, providing them with symbols of resistance and defiance.[432] Cashmore expressed the view that "whenever there are black people who sense an injust disparity between their own material conditions and those of the whites who surround them and tend to control major social institutions, the Rasta messages have relevance."[434]

Conversion and deconversion

Rastafari is a non-missionary religion.[435] However, elders from Jamaica often go "trodding" to instruct new converts in the fundamentals of the religion.[436] On researching English Rastas during the 1970s, Cashmore noted that they had not converted instantaneously, but rather had undergone "a process of drift" through which they gradually adopted Rasta beliefs and practices, resulting in their ultimate acceptance of Haile Selassie's central importance.[437] Based on his research in West Africa, Neil J. Savishinsky found that many of those who converted to Rastafari came to the religion through their pre-existing use of marijuana as a recreational drug.[438]

Rastas often claim that—rather than converting to the religion—they were actually always a Rasta and that their embrace of its beliefs was merely the realisation of this.[439] There is no formal ritual carried out to mark an individual's entry into the Rastafari movement,[440] although once they do join an individual often changes their name, with many including the prefix "Ras".[53] Rastas regard themselves as an exclusive and elite community, membership of which is restricted to those who have the "insight" to recognise Haile Selassie's importance.[441] Practitioners thus often regard themselves as the "enlightened ones" who have "seen the light".[442] Many of them see no point in establishing good relations with non-Rastas, believing that the latter will never accept Rastafari doctrine as truth.[443]

Some Rastas have left the religion. Clarke noted that among British Rastas, some returned to Pentecostalism and other forms of Christianity, while others embraced Islam or no religion.[444] Some English ex-Rastas described disillusionment when the societal transformation promised by Rastafari failed to appear, while others felt that while Rastafari would be appropriate for agrarian communities in Africa and the Caribbean, it was not suited to industrialised British society.[444] Others experienced disillusionment after developing the view that Haile Selassie had been an oppressive leader of the

Ethiopian people.[444] Cashmore found that some British Rastas who had more militant views left the religion after finding its focus on reasoning and music insufficient for the struggle against white domination and racism.[445]

Regional spread

Although it remains most concentrated in the Caribbean,[446] Rastafari has spread to many areas of the world and adapted into many localised variants.[447] It has spread primarily in Anglophone regions and countries, largely because reggae music has primarily been produced in the English language.[433] It is thus most commonly found in the Anglophone Caribbean, United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, and Anglophone parts of Africa.[448]

Jamaica and the Americas

Barrett described Rastafari as "the largest, most identifiable, indigenous movement in Jamaica."[6] In the mid-1980s, there were approximately 70,000 members and sympathisers of Rastafari in Jamaica.[449] The majority were male, working-class, former Christians aged between 18 and 40.[449] In the 2011 Jamaican census, 29,026 individuals identified as Rastas.[450] Jamaica's Rastas were initially entirely from the Afro-Jamaican majority,[451] and although Afro-Jamaicans are still the majority, Rastafari has also gained members from the island's Chinese, Indian, Afro-Chinese, Afro-Jewish, mulatto, and white minorities.[452] Until 1965, the vast majority were from the lower classes, although it has since attracted many middle-class members; by the 1980s, there were Jamaican Rastas working as lawyers and university professors.[453] Jamaica is often valorised by Rastas as the fountain-head of their faith, and many Rastas living elsewhere travel to the island on pilgrimage.[454]

A practitioner of Rastafari in Jamaica

Both through travel between the islands,[455] and through reggae's popularity,[456] Rastafari spread across the eastern Caribbean during the 1970s. Here, its ideas complemented the anti-colonial and Afrocentric views prevalent in countries like Trinidad, Grenada, Dominica, and St Vincent.[457] In these countries, the early Rastas often engaged in cultural and political movements to a greater extent than their Jamaican counterparts had.[458] Various Rastas were involved in Grenada's 1979 New Jewel Movement and were given positions in the Grenadine government until it was overthrown and replaced following the U.S. invasion of 1983.[459] Although Fidel Castro's Marxist–Leninist government generally discouraged foreign influences, Rastafari was introduced to Cuba alongside reggae in the 1970s.[460] Foreign Rastas studying in Cuba during the 1990s connected with its reggae scene and helped to further ground it in Rasta beliefs.[461] In Cuba, most Rastas have been male and from the Afro-Cuban population.[462]

Rastafari was introduced to the United States and Canada with the migration of Jamaicans to continental North America in the 1960s and 1970s.[463] American police were often suspicious of Rastas and regarded Rastafari as a criminal sub-culture.[464] Rastafari also attracted converts from within several Native American communities[447] and picked up some support from white members of the hippie subculture, which was then in decline.[465] In Latin America, small communities of Rastas have also established in Brazil, Panama, and Nicaragua.[448]

Africa

Some Rastas in the African diaspora have followed through with their beliefs about resettlement in Africa, with Ghana and Nigeria being particularly favoured.[466] In West Africa, Rastafari has spread largely through the popularity of reggae,[467] gaining a larger presence in Anglophone areas than their Francophone counterparts.[468]

Caribbean Rastas arrived in Ghana during the 1960s, encouraged by its first post-independence president, Kwame Nkrumah, while some native Ghanaians also converted to the religion.[469] The largest congregation of Rastas has been in southern parts of Ghana, around Accra, Tema, and the Cape Coast,[124] although Rasta communities also exist in the Muslim-majority area of northern Ghana.[470] Middleton suggests that Rasta migrants' dreadlocks resembled the hairstyles of the native fetish priests, which may have assisted the presentation of these Rastas as having authentic African roots in Ghanaian society.[471] However, Alhassan has noted that prejudice against people wearing dreadlocks was present among at least some Ghanaians in 2008.[472] Ghanaian Rastas have also complained of social ostracism and prosecution for cannabis possession, while non-Rastas in Ghana often consider them to be "drop-outs", "too Western", and "not African enough".[473] Conversely, Alhassan noted an increased acceptance of dreadlocks by 2017, with notable Ghanaians such as Lordina Mahama and Ursula Owusu-Ekuful wearing their hair in this style. This has reportedly coincided with increased interest in Rastafari in Ghana. Alhassan suggests Ghanaians "trod the path" to Rastafari to "affirm their African identity" and engage in Pan-African anti-colonial politics, "despite adverse social consequences".[472]

A smaller number of Rastas are found in Muslim-majority countries of West Africa, such as Gambia and Senegal.[474] One West African group that wear dreadlocks are the Baye Faal, a Mouride sect in Senegambia, some of whose practitioners have started calling themselves "Rastas" in reference to their visual similarity to Rastafari.[475] The popularity of dreadlocks and marijuana among the Baye Faal may have been spread in large part through access to Rasta-influenced reggae in the 1970s.[476] A small community of Rastas also appeared in Burkina Faso.[477]

A Rasta street vendor in South Africa's Eastern Cape

In the 1960s, a Rasta settlement was established in Shashamane, Ethiopia, on land made available by Haile Selassie's Ethiopian World Federation.[478] The community faced many problems; 500 acres were confiscated by the Marxist government of Mengistu Haile Mariam.[478] There were also conflicts with local Ethiopians, who largely regarded the incoming Rastas, and their Ethiopian-born children, as foreigners.[478] The Shashamane community peaked at a population of 2,000, although subsequently declined to around 200.[478]

By the early 1990s, a Rasta community existed in Nairobi, Kenya, whose approach to the religion was informed both by reggae and by traditional Kikuyu religion.[479] Rastafari groups have also appeared in Zimbabwe,[480] Malawi[481] and in South Africa;[482] in 2008, there were at least 12,000 Rastas in the country.[483] At an African Union/Caribbean Diaspora conference in South Africa in 2005, a statement was released characterising Rastafari as a force for integration of Africa and the African diaspora.[484]

Europe

The English Rasta Benjamin Zephaniah was a well-known poet.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Rastas were among the thousands of Caribbean migrants who settled in the United Kingdom,[485] leading to small groups appearing in areas of London such as Brixton[486] and Notting Hill in the 1950s.[463] By the late 1960s, Rastafari had attracted converts from the second generation of British Caribbean people,[463] spreading beyond London to cities like Birmingham, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, and Bristol.[487] Its spread was aided by the gang structures that had been cultivated among black British youth by the rudeboy subculture,[488] and gained increasing attention in the 1970s through reggae's popularity.[489] According to the 2001 United Kingdom Census there are about 5000 Rastafari living in England and Wales.[490] Clarke described Rastafari as a small but "extremely influential" component of black British life.[449]

Rastafari also established itself in various continental European countries, among them the Netherlands, Germany,[491] Portugal, Ukraine,[492][493] and France, gaining a particular foothold among black migrant populations but also attracting white converts.[494] In France for instance it established a presence in two cities with substantial black populations, Paris and Bordeaux,[495] while in the Netherlands, it attracted converts within the Surinamese migrant community.[496]

Australasia and Asia

Rastafari attracted membership from within the Maori population of New Zealand,[497] and the Aboriginal population of Australia.[496] Rastafari has also established a presence in Japan,[498] including a small rural community of Rasta musicians in Yoshino.[499] Japanese Rastafari emerged from the 1960s counterculture and focuses on issues such as rural communities, colonialism, imperialism, capitalism and the environment.[500] Rastafari is also established in Israel, primarily among those highlighting similarities between Judaism and Rastafari.[501]

See also

- List of Rastafarians

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External links

- Rastafarianism (https://wrldrels.org/2016/10/08/rastafarianism/) profile at the World Religion and Spirituality Project (WRSP)
- Rastafari (https://web.archive.org/web/20060829153306/http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/rast.html) profile at the Religious Movements Homepage (University of Virginia)

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Leonard Howell

Leonard Percival Howell (16 June 1898 – 23 January 1981), also known as **The Gong**[1] or **G. G. Maragh** (for *Gangun Guru*), was a Jamaican religious figure. According to his biographer Hélène Lee,[2] Howell was born into an Anglican family. He was one of the first preachers of the Rastafari movement (along with Joseph Hibbert and Archibald Dunkley), and is known by many as **The First Rasta**.

Born in May Crawle River on 16 June 1898,[3] Howell left Jamaica as a youth, traveling to many places, including Panama and New York, and returned in 1932. He began preaching in 1933 about what he considered the symbolic portent for the African diaspora—the crowning of Ras Tafari Makonnen as Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia. His preaching asserted that Haile Selassie was the "Messiah returned to earth", and he published a book called *The Promised Key*. Although this resulted in his being arrested, tried for sedition, and imprisoned for two years, the Rastafari movement grew.[4]

Over the following years, Howell came into conflict with all the establishment authorities in Jamaica: the planters, the trade unions, established churches, police, and colonial authorities. Howell was seen as a threat largely due to the anti-colonial message of the Rastafarian movement, which he was perpetuating along with the sermons promoting the idea of a positive black racial identity. Local ruling elites were uneasy with Howell’s popular call for black people to take a stand. Colonial authorities hoped to quell Howell’s growing movement early so as to snuff out support early on.[5]

As his following grew, the threat of Howell's core beliefs in the power of black people to overcome white oppression, and his movement, expanded to become an international concern given his strong messages of black liberation and Pan-Africanism that resonated with blacks across the globe. He formed a town or commune called Pinnacle in Saint Catherine Parish that became famous as a place for Rastafari. This movement prospered, and today the Rastafari faith exists worldwide. Unlike many Rastafari, Howell never wore dreadlocks.

Leonard Howell died in Kingston, Jamaica, on 23 January 1981 after suffering a vicious attack months earlier where he was slashed in the face and beaten badly at the age of 83 in Tredegar Park, St. Catherine not far from Pinnacle.[6]

Although Leonard P. Howell suffered much abuse for the foundation of Rastafari, his legacy as a perceived true hero and leader in anti-colonialism took root throughout Jamaica and the Caribbean and eventually globally. Ironically, the same government who sought his continual persecution has in 2022 awarded L.P. Howell or 'Gong' with an Order of Distinction.

Early life

Howell was born on 16 June 1898 in May Crawle village in the Bull Head mountain district of upper Clarendon in Jamaica. He was the eldest of a family of 10 children. Charles Theophilus Howell, his father, worked as peasant cultivator and tailor. Clementina Bennett, his mother, worked as an agricultural labourer.

During the First World War, Howell worked as a seaman and served as part of a Jamaican contingent sent to Panama. Before temporarily settling in Panama in 1918, he travelled back and forth between New York City and Panama several times. While in New York he became a member of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) after being confronted with his identity as a black man in Harlem for the first time and meeting Garvey, the revolutionary UNIA leader, in person.[7]

Howell lived abroad for a total of some twenty years in his early life, during which time he was arrested and jailed for his involvement with the UNIA because the organization's pro-black messages were viewed as threatening. After migrating to Panama and the United States, he eventually returned home in December 1932 at the age of 34 after being deported from the US.[7] He was deported because of his involvement with the UNIA, which was perceived as threatening by the US government, due to the organization's messages of black power and anti-colonialism. Upon returning to his homeland, he decided to leave his family home and spread the word about Rastafari. This decision to break away from his home was due to a conflict between Howell and his family, presumably because of his controversial belief in the divine nature of Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia.[8]

Personal life

Howell married Tethen Bent, whose grave in Pinnacle is said to have been desecrated.[9] Howell's eldest son is named Monty Howell[10] Very little information is available about Tethen Bent (who is a descendant of several south St. Elizabeth families, including the Bents, Elliotts, Parchments, Powells, Ebanks, among others), their marriage or other children of Leonard Howell.

Rastafari evangelism

Howell's first public articulation of the divinity of Haile Selassie occurred in January 1933. This first open deification, which proclaimed the Emperor of Ethiopia to be the incarnation of God, took place at "Redemption Ground" in Kingston but was not successful in gaining converts.[7]

In February 1933, Howell relocated his meeting to a south-eastern parish of St. Thomas and two months later, on 18 April, he addressed about two hundred people at a meeting in Trinity Ville, St. Thomas. During this meeting, police were present to monitor and control the event, which they deemed to be of a "seditious nature". Despite concerns, authorities chose not to press charges against Howell so as not to draw additional attention to his movement and decided instead to closely monitor him.

According to Howell and his followers, Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia was the "Black Messiah" – an incarnation of God predicted by biblical prophecy. Howell believed that the grand coronation of Haile Selassie (who was widely traditionally claimed to be the descendant of King David, King Solomon, and the Queen of Sheba, in part due to the medieval Ethiopian text Kebra Nagast), was the realization of a prophecy. The grandness of the emperor's ascension to power appeared to validate Howell's imperative claim.[7]

Howell's teachings often began with background information about the people, land, and sovereignty of Ethiopia as an unchanged land populated by original, primitive Christian people who were under direct rule of a king who was a direct descendant of King David. He idealized Ethiopia in his preaching, calling the country a land with unmatched people and a perfect language, the sole uncorrupted language on

Earth. Howell emphasized the coming of a new civilization based upon and founded in the glory and power of Haile Selassie, the "Supreme Black King". He instructed his followers to adore the Ethiopian emperor as the supreme God over all of humanity. In Howell's view, it was through Ethiopia that the truths of good character, social order, manhood and womanhood were preserved and were unfolding for all to see. Howell preached that Ethiopian culture was re-emerging to overtake hegemonic Anglo-Saxon forces that had kept Africans enslaved.[11]

Core values, leadership, and social network

Among his followers, Howell preferred being called Gangunguru Maragh or G.G. Maragh to distinguish his ritual, mystical personality from his secular identity. Howell's ritual name is thought to be a combination of three Hindi words – gyan (wisdom), gun (virtue or talent), and guru (teacher). In Hindi, Maragh means "great kings" or "king of kings".[7] Howell used this name as a pseudonym when he published *The Promised Key*.

During a meeting at Port Mortant, St. Thomas, in September 1933, it is recorded that Howell held a meeting that began with the singing of hymns. Then, Howell reportedly taunted clergymen of other religious denominations at the gathering and discouraged people from attending church because "ministers were liars".[12] He also spoke critically of slavery, claiming that "the White man stole Africa from the Africans, and that Black people should think that Africa is their home, not Jamaica".[12]

Howell's message of praise for Emperor Haile Selassie also came with an open call for black supremacy as a way to combat colonialism and reject oppression by whites. At times, Howell would ask his congregants to join together and sing "God Save the King" – the king being Haile Selassie.[13] Howell's central doctrine acted as a force against white colonial ideology due to his placement of blackness as morally superior to whiteness, as is explained in his widely read publication, *The Promised Key*.

Howell is remembered as being a charismatic and authoritarian leader who sincerely cared about the wellbeing of his followers. In 1939, Howell founded the Ethiopian Salvation Society (ESS) (http://lphfoundation.org/the-ethiopian-salvation-society/) whose objective was to use collective savings to better its members. A secondary purpose of the ESS was to help spread the good news about salvation and Christianity and underscore the value of self-help and good citizenship. These secondary purposes were expressly stated so as to shield the organization from suspicion that it was promoting sedition. Nevertheless, in 1940 the Jamaican governor responded to pressure from the colonial secretary and the labour leadership by officially banning a meeting of the ESS due to the resentment the organization was creating as well as its internationalization.[14]

In addition to his leadership role in the ESS, Howell served as a role model and father figure for the growing Rastafarian community. His audacious, generous personality, combined with his well-travelled background, made early Rastafarians particularly receptive to his messages. Howell brought "the hope of a new generation, one which was inspired by the magnificence of the new Ethiopian emperor."[7]

To expand Howell's Rastafarian network, he formed relationships with other black groups such as the Afro-Athlican Constructive Gaathly and the UNIA. Additionally he collaborated closely with other icons of the Rastafarian movement such as Marcus Garvey and George Padmore, a Trinidadian journalist.[15]

Howell's appeal for identification with Africa was in opposition to concurrent movements in Jamaica promoting a Jamaican creole nationalism. Howell positioned himself as an opponent of the labour nationalists Bustamante and Manley who had gained a substantial following among the working class. Howell preached to both the working class and the peasantry in Jamaica, attempting to unite disenfranchised black people to overcome colonial oppression.[14] Jamaica's independence in 1962 (which nevertheless maintained social, political and economic ties between Jamaica and Great Britain) was largely a disappointment for Howell, who had called for the complete severance of relations with Britain.

Trials and punishments

In January 1934, Howell and Robert Hinds, another pioneer of the Rastafari movement, were arrested and charged with sedition due to their gatherings and speeches at a meeting of 300 people at Seaforth, St Thomas, on 10 December 1933.[7]

Howell was put on trial for sedition on 13 March 1934, and pleaded not guilty to openly expressing hatred and contempt for the Jamaican government and the King in addition to disturbing public peace on the island. Howell defended himself in court, using a photograph of Haile Selassie as evidence. During this historic trial, Howell is remembered as being the first person to declare that Haile Selassie was "the Messiah returned to earth". Ultimately he was sentenced to two years in jail for sedition by the Jamaican chief justice, Robert William Lyall-Grant.[7]

Later, in 1938, Howell was sent to a mental asylum in Kingston called the Bellevue Asylum after being certified as insane for the inflammatory statements he published in his book *The Promised Key*. In this publication, which was released while Howell was still incarcerated, he labelled the Roman Catholic Pope as "Satan the Devil" and created the impression that war was being declared against colonialism and white supremacy – which Howell asserted should be replaced with "Black supremacy". Furthermore, he openly objected to locally created religious systems like Revivalism and Obeah, a Jamaican folk practice. Although small, the book was powerful and very popular to the dismay of the Jamaican government.[16]

As one of the most charismatic and outspoken of Rastafarian leaders, Howell was incarcerated at notably higher rates than other pioneers of the Rastafarian movement, such as Joseph Nathaniel Hibbert and Hinds.[7] Described as "the most persecuted Rastafarian to date", Howell suffered considerably under constant state surveillance because of his Rastafarian teachings.[7] Especially threatening to the powers that be was his prophetic call for people to destroy the legitimacy of "international white supremacy", a message that caused people to reconsider their identity, agency and socio-political mobilization in Jamaica and elsewhere.[17]

Creation of Pinnacle Community

Following his release from prison for his teachings and denunciation of colonial rule, Howell created the first Rastafarian village in Jamaica at Sligoville, St. Catherine in 1940. The settlement was called "Pinnacle" due to its high hilltop elevation and was symbolically located in the first free village established to house former slaves in Jamaica.[14] Pinnacle was one of the country’s first self-sustaining communities, its community members were able to meet their needs without dependence on outside

resources. Some refer to Pinnacle as a commune, in which Howell's form of socialism was practiced.[18] Soon after its foundation, other similar Rastafarian communities were established across the country.[19] Pinnacle was especially known for the cultivation of ganja (marijuana) that has religious significance for Rastafarians. In efforts to shut down Howell and his followers, police raided Howell's community of Pinnacle multiple times and labeled the community a "communist experiment" in 1941. Just one year after the creation of the settlement, government forces infiltrated and arrested many of Howell's followers. After escaping immediate arrest, Howell was eventually arrested and tried once again for sedition and consequently was faced with two more years behind bars. Upon his release in 1943, he returned to Pinnacle once again.[20] Howell hired guards and brought in watch dogs to protect Pinnacle from future attacks.

The police raided Pinnacle several more times in the 1950s. In 1954, militia invaded the community and almost completely destroyed the village. Even after this mass destruction, settlers returned, though the settlement was never restored to its previous thriving state. During a final raid in 1958, the police cleared out the remaining residents completely. Despite its ultimate destruction, the impact of the settlement made it legendary among other settlements around the country, who were observed to have been "miniature Pinnacles".[4]

Alleged disappearance and ongoing legacy

Some claim that Howell disappeared from public sight between 1958 and 1960, completely dropping out of his role as a Rastafarian leader. Accounts that he was neither heard from nor interacted with between this period and his death in 1981 have been challenged by historians who examined his life, however.[14] Even after the final major raid of Pinnacle and Howell's confinement in a mental asylum, he reportedly continued in his leadership of the Pinnacle community and as a Rastafari foundational role model, as evidenced by his role as a defendant in several cases at the Home Circuit Court, Kingston, regarding disputes about his ownership of Pinnacle.

Today Howell is remembered as a pioneer of the Rastafarian movement. Additionally, in honour of his values and persistent fight against colonial authority, he is seen as a leader of Pan-Africanism. To fight for his remembrance, the Leonard P. Howell Foundation was created to "perpetuate and honor the memory of Leonard P. Howell."[21] The Foundation calls for the restoration of a portion of the Pinnacle Property so that it can become a UNESCO world heritage site, an international Rastafarian worship and research center, and a monument in tribute to the vision and leadership of Leonard Percival Howell.[21]

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Joseph Hibbert

Joseph Nathaniel Hibbert (1894 – September 18, 1986)[1] was, along with Leonard Howell, Archibald Dunkley, and Robert Hinds, one of the first preachers of the Rastafari movement in Jamaica following the coronation of Ras Tafari as Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia on 2 November 1930.

In about 1911, at the age of 18, he moved to Costa Rica where he spent 20 years at farm work, also becoming a member of the Ancient Order of Ethiopia masonic lodge. His background at this time had been with the Ethiopian Baptist Church, founded in Jamaica by the 18th century Baptist preacher George Lisle. Hibbert returned to Jamaica in 1931, starting his ministry, "Ethiopian Coptic Faith", to teach that the newly crowned Haile Selassie was divine, in St. Andrew Parish, in a district called Benoah. He reached this conclusion independently, having studied the Ethiopic translation of the Bible. Somewhat later, he transferred his ministry to Kingston, where he found that another street preacher named Leonard P. Howell was already teaching many similar doctrines. Like Howell and Dunkley, Hibbert was subjected to arrest and imprisonment by authorities, and he was also a founding member of the Local Charter 37 of the Ethiopian World Federation.

Hibbert was probably among the Rastafari elders, including Mortimer Planno, who were given the honour of meeting with Haile Selassie I on his historic 1966 visit to Jamaica. In 1970, Hibbert formally invited the Archbishop Laike Mandefro, whom Haile Selassie had sent to Jamaica as emissary of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, to teach Rastafarians about the Orthodox Faith, and in about 1971, Mandefro named Hibbert as a "Spiritual Organizer".[2]

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Archibald Dunkley

Henry Archibald Dunkley was, along with Leonard Howell, Joseph Hibbert, and Robert Hinds, one of the first preachers of the Rastafari movement in Jamaica following the coronation of Ras Tafari as Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia on 2 November 1930.

Dunkley had spent much time away from Jamaica, as a seaman employed by the United Fruit Company, and he returned to Port Antonio, Jamaica on 8 December 1930, where he switched professions, becoming a street preacher. His studies of the Bible had convinced him that the newly crowned Haile Selassie was the returned Messiah, and that *Rastafari* was a name of God. By 1933, he had relocated to Kingston, where the King of Kings Ethiopian Mission was founded. Following Howell's December 1933 imprisonment for sedition, Dunkley too was imprisoned briefly by the authorities a number of times in 1934 and 1935 on charges of "disorderly conduct". In August 1938, he became one of the foundation members of the first Jamaican local chapter of the Ethiopian World Federation, Local 17, which however became dormant soon afterwards, to be replaced by the more permanent Local 31.

Although not as much is known of his life as that of Howell (the most outspoken founder of Rastafari), Dunkley was reported as still alive in 1991.[1]

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Mortimer Planno

Mortimo St George Planno, (6 September 1929 – 5 March 2006[1]) was a Jamaican Rastafari elder, drummer and a follower of the back-to-Africa movement founded in the 1910s by Marcus Garvey. He is best known as the Rasta teacher and friend of Bob Marley, and as the man who commanded the respect of a chaotic crowd during the arrival of Emperor Haile Selassie on his visit to Jamaica in 1966. He is referred to by other Rastas as a teacher and a leader within the context of the faith, given his life's work.

Early years

He was born in Cuba, the youngest of four children. His mother was Jamaican and she took the family back to Jamaica when Planno was still a young boy in the early 1930s. His father was Cuban and his given name was Mortimo, not Mortimer.

Rastafari activism

He became a prominent Rastafari teacher in Kingston, Jamaica in the 1950s and helped found the Rastafari Movement Association as well as the Local Charter 37 of the Ethiopian World Federation. He also instigated the first "Universal Grounation of the Rastafari", a drumming and chanting ceremony held in the slum of Back-O-Wall in March 1958.

1961 visit to Ethiopia

After repeated harassment by the authorities and ostracism by the Christian public, Planno and his colleagues approached the University College of the West Indies to request an official study of the Rastafari movement, in an effort to establish a better relationship with the wider Jamaican society. The in-depth study led to Planno and two other prominent Rastas' being sent on a "fact-finding mission" to Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and other African countries in 1961. During the trip, Planno met Haile Selassie in person in Ethiopia.

The Jamaican government had decided to send a delegation of both officials and Rastafari leaders to Addis Ababa to meet Emperor Haile Selassie. Planno, Douglas Aiken Mack, and Fillmore Alvaranga were the three in the Rasta delegation. Their *Minority Report* of the mission differs in several significant aspects from that of the non-Rastafarian delegates,[2] e.g.:

- 16 April 1961: "Later in the afternoon the Rases were invited to visit His Holiness Abuna Basilios, the Archbishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church at his residence. The other delegates came along too. We discussed H.I.M. Emperor Haile Selassie, being the returned Messiah. His Holiness the Abuna told us at the conclusion of the discussion that the Bible can be interpreted that way. We had tea and honey with him."
- 21 April 1961: "The Mission was granted audience with H.I.M. Emperor Haile Selassie I at the Imperial Palace, Addis-Ababa. We were introduced to H.I.M., by the Minister of the

> Imperial Guard. Emperor Haile Selassie I welcomed the delegation warmly. Speaking Amharic which was interpreted by the Minister of the Imperial Guard, H.I.M. told us that he knew the black people of the West and particularly Jamaica were blood brothers to the Ethiopians and he knew that slaves were sent from Ethiopia to Jamaica. He said we should send the right people. The Emperor said Ethiopia was large enough to hold all the people of Afrikan descent living outside Afrika and he would send a delegation to the West Indies. Dr. Leslie told H.I.M. that Jamaica had plenty of sugar cane factories making sugar and rum. H.I.M. replied that in Ethiopia there was a refinery making sugar but not rum. H.I.M. thanked the delegation and presented each of us with a gold medal."
>
> > "All the rest of the delegation left His presence except the three Rastafarian Brethren (Bros. Fil, Mack, Planno, as we had presents for H.I.M.). Alvaranga presented H.I.M. with a wood-carved map of Afrika with a portrait of the Emperor on one side of the wooden case. The Emperor then spoke in English for the first time to us. He said, "That's Afrika. Is it from the Rastafari Brethren?" (That showed that he knew us before). We said "Yes". Brother Mack presented photographs of the Rastafari Brethren in Jamaica. H.I.M. said again in English, "Photographs; thank you". Mack also gave H.I.M. a painting of Errol Flynn's island in Jamaica (i.e. Navy Island, off the mainland of Port Antonio). Brother Planno gave H.I.M. a woven scarf in red, gold and green. H.I.M. said "Is it you that wove it". He said "Yes". He said "Thank you again". We also gave H.I.M. a photograph of a widow and six children—her husband, a Rastafari Brethren, was shot and killed by the Police in Jamaica. H.I.M. asked us to who was taking care of them now. We told H.I.M. that we took the case to Jamaica's Premier but left the island before it was settled. The Emperor said that he would do what he could to help. We then took leave."

The full story of the 1961 Jamaican delegation in Ethiopia is told in Dr. Giulia Bonacci's book *Exodus, Heirs and Pioneers, Rastafari Return to Ethiopia* (University of the West Indies Press, 2015).

Bob Marley and the Wailers

On 21 April 1966, the Ethiopian Emperor, His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, seen as the Messiah by Rastafarians, landed at Kingston airport for an official visit. Thousands of Rastas smoked ganja in their chalice pipes and surrounded the airplane in adoration after surging past the barriers. Emperor Selassie remained onboard his plane for nearly an hour; some accounts state that the Emperor was struck with fear, while others say he was hiding his tears. It was Mortimo Planno who went up the gangplank and urged Selassie to appear before the ecstatic Rastafarian crowd. Photographs of the Emperor and Planno going down the gangplank appeared in the local press, securing the Rastafarian leader a lasting legendary status. Bob Marley was off the island that day, but fellow Wailers band members Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, Rita Marley and Constantine "Vision" Walker were there and actually saw Haile Selassie driving to the city standing on his car.

Bob Marley and other members of the group already knew Planno quite well. The Rastafarian elder lived in the same neighborhood as the vocal group on 35 Fifth Street in West Kingston's Trench Town ghetto, where he kept a library of books on Black Power and Ethiopian history. Planno grew closer to the Wailers throughout 1965. Upon his return from Delaware in late 1966, Marley began an association with him that would last for a couple of years, eventually leading Planno to becoming Marley's manager and producer for a few months. On 8 June 1968, Bob Marley recorded his first openly Rastafarian song, "Selassie is the Chapel", backed by Rastafarian nyabinghi ritual drum ensemble Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus, with Rita Marley and Peter Tosh on harmony vocals. "Selassie is the Chapel" had lyrics adapted by Planno from Sonny Til and the Orioles' 1953 #1 R&B hit song "Crying in the Chapel", which was written by

country music singer Artie Glenn (his son Darrell had recorded the original version in 1953) and was also a hit song for Elvis Presley in 1968. The melody was based on the original song, but the nyabinghi arrangement was somewhat different. The recording session at JBC Studio was financed by Planno. He also recorded a Rasta prayer himself, using some Amharic words as well as quoting the Bible. He was also backed by Ras Michael's group, and this recording was issued on the B-side of this rare record as "A Little Prayer". These two rare, vintage tracks were briefly reissued in 2003 by reggae historian Bruno Blum on the Bob Marley four-CD set *Rebel* (JAD Records).

Planno was later involved in the One Love Peace Concert, an event headlined by Marley in 1978.

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- Mortimer Planno Obituary – The Independent U.K. (https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/mortimer-planno-6102816.html)

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Vernon Carrington

Vernon Carrington (November 1, 1936 – March 22, 2005), also known as the prophet **Gad**, founded the Twelve Tribes of Israel branch of the Rastafari movement in 1968.[1]

Carrington was born in Kingston, Jamaica.[2]

To his many followers across Jamaica and the world he was known as the Prophet Gad. Members of the Twelve Tribes of Israel view Carrington as a prophet who began the repatriation of Rastafari to Africa, the homeland. He was a member of The Ethiopian World Federation, founded by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. Carrington's branch (charter 15) became The Twelve Tribes Of Israel, setting up at 83 Hope Road, Jamaica.

Carrington also played in a jam band back home. The band was called "The Twelve Vibes of Israel". It was reported that his band would practice for days at a time with soothsayer lyrics and Rastafarian rhythm.

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Charles Edwards (Rastafari)

Charles Edwards (1915–1994), known as "**King Emmanuel Charles**" by his followers, was the founder and leader of the "Ethiopia Africa Black International Congress, True Church of Divine Salvation (E.A.B.I.C.)". Charles is regarded to have established the "Churchical Order of Melchizedek" which governs this Congress functioning as Church and State. On March 1, 1958, the E.A.B.I.C was formed, now headquartered in Bull Bay, Jamaica. This group of Rastafari soon became known as Bobo Ashanti, adopting their name from the Ashanti tribe in Ghana. It is common knowledge that most Jamaicans descend from the Asante(Ashanti).[1] Charles taught that the African diaspora scattered across the Earth and predominantly in the west are the descendants of the Israelites and his followers acknowledge him as the "Black Moses" in this dispensation to return all slave descendants to their original homeland, Ethiopia. For this reason this Congress was formed and Church developed agitating for the "Freedom, Redemption and International Repatriation" of his people. Charles fought relentlessly for the rights of his people and soon became publicly respected and given the titles 'Black Christ in Flesh'.[1] He is held by the Bobo Ashanti to be a member of their Holy Trinity. Charles taught that "God dwelleth in flesh" and the celestial trinity of God manifested in flesh upon Earth is fulfilled in the capacity of "Prophet, Priest and King". The "triune" positions of the Bobo Ashanti trinity are as follows: Marcus Garvey as the "Prophet", Emmanuel Charles as "Priest", and Haile Selassie as "King".

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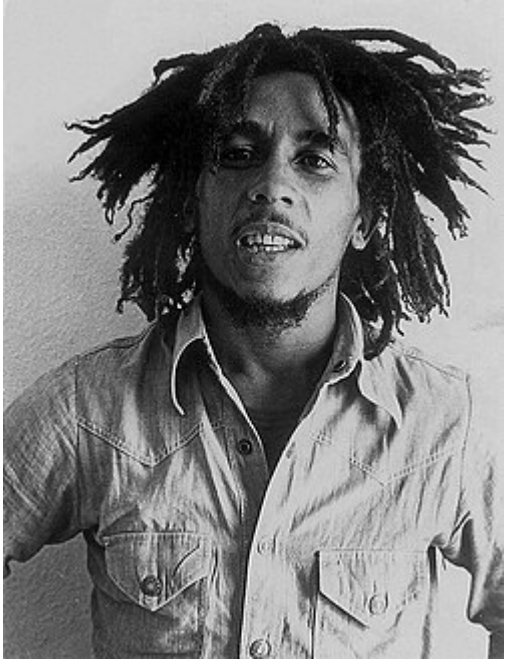
Bob Marley

Robert Nesta Marley OM (6 February 1945 – 11 May 1981) was a Jamaican singer, songwriter, and guitarist. Considered one of the pioneers of reggae, he fused elements of reggae, ska and rocksteady and was renowned for his distinctive vocal and songwriting style.[2][3] Marley increased the visibility of Jamaican music worldwide and became a global figure in popular culture.[4][5] He became known as a Rastafarian icon, and he infused his music with a sense of spirituality.[6] Marley is also considered a global symbol of Jamaican music and culture and identity and was controversial in his outspoken support for democratic social reforms.[7][8] Marley also supported the legalisation of cannabis and advocated for Pan-Africanism.[9]

Born in Nine Mile, Jamaica, Marley began his career in 1963, after forming the group Teenagers with Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer, which became the Wailers. In 1965, they released their debut studio album, *The Wailing Wailers*, which included the single "One Love", a reworking of "People Get Ready". It was popular worldwide and established the group as a rising figure in reggae.[10] The Wailers released 11 more studio albums, and after signing to Island Records, changed their name to Bob Marley and the Wailers. While initially employing louder instrumentation and singing, they began engaging in rhythmic-based song construction in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which coincided with Marley's conversion to Rastafari. Around this time, Marley relocated to London, and the group embodied their musical shift with the release of the album *The Best of The Wailers* (1971).[11]

Bob Marley and the Wailers began to gain international attention after signing to Island and touring in support of the albums *Catch a Fire* and *Burnin'* (both 1973). Following their disbandment a year later, Marley carried on under the band's name.[12] The album *Natty Dread* (1974) received positive reviews. In 1975,

The Honourable
Bob Marley
OM



Marley in 1976

Born	Robert Nesta Marley 6 February 1945 Nine Mile, Saint Ann, Colony of Jamaica
Died	11 May 1981 (aged 36) Miami, Florida, US
Resting place	Bob Marley Mausoleum, Nine Mile, Saint Ann Parish, Jamaica
Other names	Berhane Selassie · Skip · Tuff Gong
Occupations	Singer · songwriter · guitarist
Years active	1962–1980
Spouse	Rita Marley (m. 1966)
Children	11, including: Sharon · Cedella · David "Ziggy" · Stephen · Rohan · Julian · Ky-Mani · Damian

following the global popularity of Eric Clapton's version of Marley's "I Shot the Sheriff",[13] Marley had his international breakthrough with his first hit outside Jamaica, a live version of "No Woman, No Cry", from the *Live!* album.[14] This was followed by his breakthrough album in the United States, *Rastaman Vibration* (1976), which reached the Top 50 of the Billboard Soul Charts.[15] A few months later, Marley survived an assassination attempt at his home in Jamaica, which was believed to be politically motivated.[16] He permanently relocated to London, where he recorded the album *Exodus*, which incorporated elements of blues, soul, and British rock and had commercial and critical success. In 1977, Marley was diagnosed with acral lentiginous melanoma; he died in May 1981, shortly after baptism into the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Fans around the world expressed their grief, and he received a state funeral in Jamaica.

Parent(s)	Norval Sinclair Marley (father) Cedella Booker (mother)
Relatives	Skip Marley (grandson) YG Marley (grandson) Nico Marley (grandson) Jo Mersa Marley (grandson) Bambaata Marley (grandson) Selah Marley (granddaughter)
Musical career	
Genres	Reggae · ska · rocksteady · folk[1]
Instruments	Vocals · guitar
Labels	Beverley's · Studio One · JAD · Wail'n Soul'm · Upsetter · Tuff Gong · Island
Formerly of	The Wailers
Website	bobmarley.com (http://bobmarley.com)

The greatest hits album *Legend* was released in 1984 and became the best-selling reggae album of all time.[17] Marley also ranks as one of the best-selling music artists of all time, with estimated sales of more than 75 million records worldwide.[18] He was posthumously honoured by his country Jamaica soon after his death with a designated Order of Merit. In 1994, Marley was posthumously inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. *Rolling Stone* ranked him No. 11 on its list of the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time.[19] and No. 98 on its list of the 200 Greatest Singers of All Time.[20] His other achievements include a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and induction into the Black Music & Entertainment Walk of Fame.

Early life

The residence on a farm in Nine Mile, Jamaica, where Marley was born on 6 February 1945, is now a tourist attraction.

Marley was born on 6 February 1945 at the farm of his maternal grandfather in Nine Mile, Saint Ann Parish, Colony of Jamaica, to Norval Sinclair Marley and Cedella Malcolm.[21] Norval was a white Jamaican born in Clarendon Parish, and whose cousins claimed that the Marley surname had Syrian-Jewish origins. This is however not conclusive and speculative and was refuted by Marley's biographer.[22][23][24][25] Norval went by the moniker "Captain", despite only having been a private in the British Army.[26] At the time of his marriage to Cedella Malcolm, an Afro-Jamaican then 18 years old, Norval was supervising a subdivision of land for war veteran housing, and he was about

64 years old at the time of Bob Marley's birth.[24][26][27] Norval, who provided little financial support for his wife and child and rarely saw them,[24] died when Marley was 10 years old.[28]

Some sources state that Marley's birth name was Nesta Robert Marley, with a story that when Marley was still a boy, a Jamaican passport official reversed his first and middle names because Nesta sounded like a girl's name.[29][30]

Marley's maternal grandfather, Omariah, known as a Myal, was an early musical influence on Marley.[24] Marley began to play music with Neville Livingston, later known as Bunny Wailer, while at Stepney Primary and Junior High School in Nine Mile, where they were childhood friends.[31][32][33]

At age 12, Marley left Nine Mile with his mother and moved to the Trenchtown section of Kingston. Marley's mother and Thadeus Livingston, Bunny Wailer's father, had a daughter together named Claudette Pearl,[34] who was a younger sister to both Bob and Bunny. With Marley and Livingston living together in the same house in Trenchtown, their musical explorations deepened to include the new ska music and the latest R&B from United States radio stations whose broadcasts reached Jamaica.[35] Marley formed a vocal group with Bunny Wailer and Peter Tosh. The line-up was known variously as the Teenagers, the Wailing Rudeboys, the Wailing Wailers, and finally just the Wailers. Joe Higgs, who was part of the successful vocal act Higgs and Wilson, lived nearby and encouraged Marley.[36] Marley and the others did not play any instruments at this time and were more interested in being a vocal harmony group. Higgs helped them develop their vocal harmonies and began teaching Marley guitar.[37][38]

Marley's mother later married Edward Booker, a civil servant from the United States, giving Marley two half-brothers: Richard and Anthony.[39][40]

Career

1962–1972: Early years

In February 1962, Marley recorded four songs, "Judge Not", "One Cup of Coffee", "Do You Still Love Me?" and "Terror", at Federal Studios for local music producer Leslie Kong.[41] Three of the songs were released on Beverley's with "One Cup of Coffee" being released under the pseudonym Bobby Martell.[42]

Marley's flat at 34 Ridgmount Gardens in London, where he lived in 1972

In 1963, Bob Marley, Bunny Wailer, Peter Tosh, Junior Braithwaite, Beverley Kelso, and Cherry Smith were called the Teenagers. They later changed the name to the Wailing Rudeboys, then to the Wailing Wailers, at which point they were discovered by record producer Coxsone Dodd, and finally to the Wailers. Their single "Simmer Down" for the Coxsone label became a Jamaican No. 1 in February 1964 selling an estimated 70,000 copies.[43] The Wailers, now regularly recording for Studio One, found themselves working with established Jamaican

musicians such as Ernest Ranglin (arranger "It Hurts To Be Alone"),[44] the keyboardist Jackie Mittoo and saxophonist Roland Alphonso. By 1966, Braithwaite, Kelso, and Smith had left the Wailers, leaving the core trio of Bob Marley, Bunny Wailer, and Peter Tosh.[45]

In 1966, Marley married Rita Anderson, and moved near his mother's residence in Wilmington, Delaware, in the United States for a short time, during which he worked as a DuPont lab assistant, and on the assembly line and as a fork lift operator at a Chrysler plant in nearby Newark, under the alias Donald Marley.[46][47]

Though raised Catholic, Marley became interested in Rastafari beliefs in the 1960s, when away from his mother's influence.[48] After returning to Jamaica, Marley formally converted to Rastafari and began to grow dreadlocks.

After a financial disagreement with Dodd, Marley and his band teamed up with Lee "Scratch" Perry and his studio band, the Upsetters. Although the alliance lasted less than a year, they recorded what many consider the Wailers' finest work. Marley and Perry split after a dispute regarding the assignment of recording rights, but they would continue to work together.[49]

1969 brought another change to Jamaican popular music, where the beat slowed down even further. The new beat was a slow, steady, ticking rhythm that was first heard on the Maytals song "Do the Reggay". Marley approached producer Leslie Kong, who was regarded as one of the major developers of the reggae sound. For the recordings, Kong combined the Wailers with his studio musicians called Beverley's All-Stars, which consisted of bassists Lloyd Parks and Jackie Jackson, drummer Paul Douglas, keyboardists Gladstone Anderson and Winston Wright, and guitarists Rad Bryan, Lynn Taitt, and Hux Brown.[50] As David Moskowitz writes, "The tracks recorded in this session illustrated the Wailers' earliest efforts in the new reggae style. Gone are the ska trumpets and saxophones of the earlier songs, with instrumental breaks now being played by the electric guitar." The songs recorded would be released as the album *The Best of The Wailers*, including tracks "Soul Shakedown Party", "Stop That Train", "Caution", "Go Tell it on the Mountain", "Soon Come", "Can't You See", "Soul Captives", "Cheer Up", "Back Out" and "Do It Twice".[50]

Between 1968 and 1972, Bob and Rita Marley, Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer re-cut some old tracks with JAD Records in Kingston and London in an attempt to commercialise the Wailers' sound. Bunny later asserted that those songs "should never be released on an album... they were just demos for record companies to listen to". In 1968, Bob and Rita visited songwriter Jimmy Norman at his apartment in the Bronx. Norman had written the extended lyrics for "Time Is on My Side" (recorded by Irma Thomas and the Rolling Stones) and had also written for Johnny Nash and Jimi Hendrix.[51] A three-day jam session with Norman and others, including Norman's co-writer Al Pyfrom, resulted in a 24-minute tape of Marley performing several of his own and Norman-Pyfrom's compositions. According to reggae archivist Roger Steffens, this tape is rare in that it was influenced by pop rather than reggae, as part of an effort to break Marley into the US charts.[51] According to an article in *The New York Times*, Marley experimented on the tape with various sounds, adopting a doo-wop style on "Stay With Me" and "the slow love song style of 1960s artists" on "Splish for My Splash".[51] He lived in Ridgmount Gardens, Bloomsbury, during 1972.[52]

1972–1974: Move to Island Records

In 1972, Bob Marley signed with CBS Records in London and embarked on a UK tour with soul singer Johnny Nash.[53] While in London the Wailers asked their road manager Brent Clarke to introduce them to Chris Blackwell, who had licensed some of their Coxsone releases for his Island Records. The Wailers intended to discuss the royalties associated with these releases; instead, the meeting resulted in the offer of an advance of £4,000 (approx. £26,000 today) to record an album.[54] Since Jimmy Cliff, Island's top reggae star, had recently left the label, Blackwell was primed for a replacement. In Marley, Blackwell recognised the elements needed to snare the rock audience: "I was dealing with rock music, which was really rebel music. I felt that would really be the way to break Jamaican music. But you needed someone who could be that image. When Bob walked in he really was that image."[55] The Wailers returned to Jamaica to record at Harry J's in Kingston, which resulted in the album *Catch a Fire*.

Primarily recorded on an eight-track, *Catch a Fire* marked the first time a reggae band had access to a state-of-the-art studio and were accorded the same care as their rock 'n' roll peers.[55] Blackwell desired to create "more of a drifting, hypnotic-type feel than a reggae rhythm",[56] and restructured Marley's mixes and arrangements. Marley travelled to London to supervise Blackwell's overdubbing of the album at Island Studios, which included tempering the mix from the bass-heavy sound of Jamaican music and omitting two tracks.[55]

The Wailers' first album for Island, *Catch a Fire*, was released worldwide in April 1973, packaged like a rock record with a unique Zippo lighter lift-top. Initially selling 14,000 units, it received a positive critical reception.[55] It was followed later that year by the album *Burnin'*, which included the song "I Shot the Sheriff". Eric Clapton was given the album by his guitarist George Terry in the hope that he would enjoy it.[57] Clapton was impressed and chose to record a cover version of "I Shot the Sheriff", which became his first US hit since "Layla" two years earlier and reached number 1 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 on 14 September 1974.[58] Many Jamaicans were not keen on the new reggae sound on *Catch a Fire*, but the Trenchtown style of *Burnin* found fans across both reggae and rock audiences.[55]

During this period, Blackwell gifted his Kingston residence and company headquarters at 56 Hope Road (then known as Island House) to Marley. Housing Tuff Gong Studios, the property became not only Marley's office but also his home.[55]

The Wailers disbanded in 1974, with each of the three main members pursuing a solo career.

1974–1976: Line-up changes and Assault

Despite the break-up, Marley continued recording as "Bob Marley & The Wailers". His new backing band included brothers Carlton and Aston "Family Man" Barrett on drums and bass respectively, Junior Marvin and Al Anderson on lead guitar, Tyrone Downie and Earl "Wya" Lindo on keyboards, and Alvin "Seeco" Patterson on percussion. The "I Threes", consisting of Judy Mowatt, Marcia Griffiths, and Marley's wife, Rita, provided backing vocals. In 1975, Marley had his international breakthrough with his first hit outside Jamaica with a live version of "No Woman, No Cry", from the *Live!* album.[14] This was followed by his breakthrough album in the United States, *Rastaman Vibration* (1976), which reached the Top 50 of the Billboard Soul Charts.[15]

On 3 December 1976, two days before "Smile Jamaica", a free concert organised by Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley in an attempt to ease tension between two warring political groups, Bob Marley, Rita, and manager Don Taylor were wounded in an assault by unknown gunmen inside Marley's home. Taylor and Rita sustained serious injuries but later made full recoveries. Marley sustained minor wounds in the chest and arm.[59] The attempt on his life was believed to have been politically motivated, as many felt that Smile Jamaica was actually a support rally for Manley. Nonetheless, the concert proceeded, and an injured Marley performed as scheduled, two days after the attempt. The members of the group Zap Pow played as Bob Marley's backup band before a festival crowd of 80,000 while members of The Wailers were still missing or in hiding.[60][61]

1976–1979: Relocation to England

Marley left Jamaica at the end of 1976, and after a month-long "recovery and writing" sojourn at the site of Chris Blackwell's Compass Point Studios in Nassau, Bahamas, arrived in England, where he spent two years in self-imposed exile.

On four successive nights, from 1-4 June 1977, he played with the Wailers at the *Rainbow Theatre* in London.[62] The concert highlights were recorded in the BBC documentary *Bob Marley: Live at the Rainbow 1977*.[63]

Whilst in England, he recorded the albums *Exodus* and *Kaya*. *Exodus* stayed on the British album charts for 56 consecutive weeks. It included four UK hit singles: "Exodus", "Waiting in Vain", "Jamming", and "One Love" (which interpolates Curtis Mayfield's hit, "People Get Ready"). During his time in London, Marley was arrested and convicted of possession of a small quantity of cannabis.[64] In 1978, Marley returned to Jamaica and performed at another political concert, the One Love Peace Concert, again in an effort to calm warring parties. Near the end of the performance, by Marley's request, Michael Manley (leader of then-ruling People's National Party) and his political rival Edward Seaga (leader of the opposing Jamaica Labour Party) joined each other on stage and shook hands.[65]

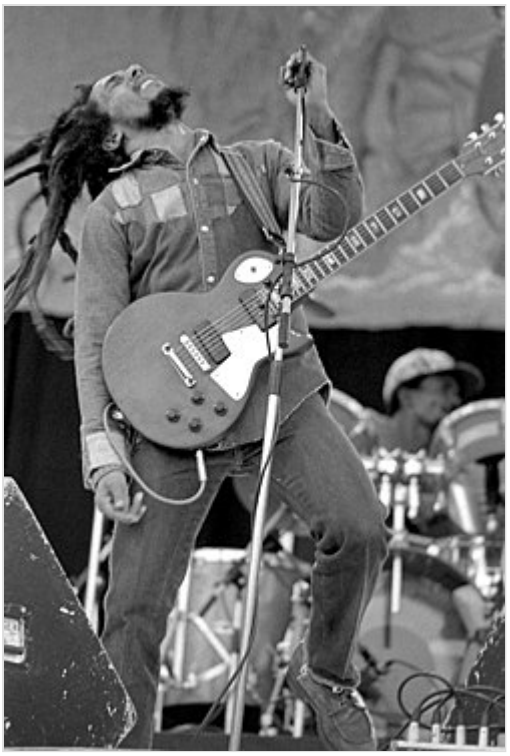
Under the name Bob Marley and the Wailers, 11 albums were released, four live albums and seven studio albums. The releases included *Babylon by Bus*, a double live album with 13 tracks, was released in 1978 and received critical acclaim. This album, and specifically the final track "Jamming", with the audience in a frenzy, captured the intensity of Marley's live performances.[66]

1979–1980: Later years

Survival, a defiant and politically charged album, was released in 1979. Tracks such as "Zimbabwe", "Africa Unite", "Wake Up and Live" and "Survival" reflected Marley's support for the struggles of Africans. His appearance at the Amandla Festival in Boston in July 1979 showed his strong opposition to South African apartheid, which he already had shown in his song "War" in 1976.

In early 1980, Marley was invited to perform at a 17 April celebration of Zimbabwe's Independence Day.[68]

> "Marley wasn't singing about how peace could come easily to the World but rather how hell on Earth comes too easily to too many. His songs were his memories; he had lived with the wretched, he had seen the downpressers and those whom they pressed down."



Marley performing in Ireland in July 1980

> – Mikal Gilmore, *Rolling Stone*[67]:61

Uprising (1980) was Marley's final studio album and the last album that was released during his lifetime. It is one of his most religious productions, as it includes "Redemption Song" and "Forever Loving Jah".[69]

Confrontation, released posthumously in 1983, contained unreleased material recorded during Marley's lifetime, including the hit "Buffalo Soldier" and new mixes of singles previously only available in Jamaica.[70]

Personal life

Religion and beliefs

Haile Selassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974, was one of Marley's inspirations.

Marley was a longtime member of the Rastafari movement, whose culture was a key element in the development of reggae. He became an ardent proponent of Rastafari, taking its music out of the socially deprived areas of Jamaica and onto the international music scene.[71] As part of being a Rastafarian, Marley felt that Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia was an incarnation of God or "Jah".[72] However, later in life, he ended up converting to Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity and was baptised by Archbishop Abuna Yesehaq in the presence of his wife Rita Marley and their children, with the name of Berhane Selassie, on 4 November 1980, shortly before his death.[73][74]

During the time that he was a Rastafarian, Marley supported the legalisation of cannabis or "ganja", which Rastafarians believe is an aid to meditation.[75] Marley began to use cannabis when he converted to the Rastafari faith from Catholicism in 1966. Marley was arrested in 1968 after being caught with cannabis but continued to use marijuana in accordance with his religious beliefs. Of his marijuana usage, Marley said, "When you smoke herb, herb reveal yourself to you. All the wickedness you do, the herb reveal itself to yourself, your conscience, show up yourself clear, because herb make you meditate. Is only a natural t'ing and it grow like a tree."[76] Marley saw marijuana usage as a vital factor in religious growth and connection with Jah, and as a way to philosophise and become wiser.[77]

Marley was a Pan-Africanist and believed in the unity of African people worldwide. His beliefs were rooted in his Rastafari religious beliefs.[78] Marley was substantially inspired by Marcus Garvey and had anti-imperialist and pan-Africanist themes in many of his songs, such as "Zimbabwe", "Exodus", "Survival", "Blackman Redemption" and "Redemption Song". The lattermost draws influence from a

1937 speech given by Marcus Garvey in Nova Scotia.[79] Marley held that independence of African countries from European domination was a victory for all those in the African diaspora. In the song "Africa Unite", he sings of a desire for all peoples of the African diaspora to come together and fight against "Babylon"; similarly, in the song "Zimbabwe", Marley marks the liberation of the whole continent of Africa, and evokes calls for unity between all Africans, both within and outside Africa.[80]

Family

Marley married Alfarita Constantia "Rita" Anderson in Kingston, Jamaica, on 10 February 1966.[81] He had many children: three were born to his wife Rita, and two additional children were adopted from Rita's previous relationships as his own, and they have the Marley name. The official Bob Marley website acknowledges 11 children.

Those listed on the official site are:[82]

1. Sharon, born 23 November 1964, daughter of Rita from a previous relationship, but then adopted by Marley after his marriage with Rita
2. Cedella, born 23 August 1967, to Rita
3. David "Ziggy", born 17 October 1968, to Rita
4. Stephen, born 20 April 1972, to Rita
5. Robert "Robbie", born 16 May 1972, to Pat Williams
6. Rohan, born 19 May 1972, to Janet Hunt
7. Karen Marley, born 1973, to Janet Bowen
8. Stephanie Marley, born 17 August 1974 to Rita and Owen "Ital Tacky" Stewart, a former Jamaican soccer player. Nonetheless, Bob adopted Stephanie as one of his own which entitled her to his estate.[83]
9. Julian, born 4 June 1975, to Lucy Pounder
10. Ky-Mani, born 26 February 1976, to Anita Belnavis
11. Damian, born 21 July 1978, to Cindy Breakspeare

Other sites have noted additional individuals who claim to be family members,[84] as noted below:

- Makeda was born on 30 May 1981, to Yvette Crichton, after Marley's death.[85] Meredith Dixon's book lists her as Marley's child, but she is not listed as such on the Bob Marley official website.
- Various websites, for example,[86] also list Imani Carole, born 22 May 1963, to Cheryl Murray; but she does not appear on the official Bob Marley website.[85]

Marley also has several notable grandchildren, including musicians Skip Marley and YG Marley, American football player Nico Marley, model Selah Marley, and filmmaker Donisha Prendergast.[87]

Association football

Aside from music, association football played a major role throughout Marley's life.[88] As well as playing the game, in parking lots, fields, and even inside recording studios, Marley followed the Brazilian club Santos and its star player Pelé growing up[88] and was also a supporter of English football club Tottenham Hotspur and Argentine midfielder Ossie Ardiles, who played for the club for a decade beginning in 1978.[89]

Marley surrounded himself with people from the sport, and in the 1970s, made the Jamaican international footballer Allan "Skill" Cole his tour manager.[88] Marley told a journalist, "If you want to get to know me, you will have to play football against me and the Wailers."[88]

Automobiles

Two of the cars that Marley owned were BMWs, a 1602 and then an E3 2500. He purchased these because of the name. Marley said BMW stood for Bob Marley and the Wailers.[90]

Illness

In July 1977, Marley was diagnosed with a type of malignant melanoma under the nail of his right big toe.[91] Contrary to urban legend, this lesion was not primarily caused by an injury during a football match that year but was instead a symptom of already-existing cancer.[92] Marley had to see two doctors before a biopsy was done, which confirmed acral lentiginous melanoma. Unlike other melanomas, which usually appear on skin exposed to the sun, acral lentiginous melanoma occurs in places that are easy to miss, such as the soles of the feet, or under toenails. Although it is the most common melanoma in people with dark skin, it is not widely recognised and was not mentioned in the most popular medical textbook of the time.[93]

Marley rejected his doctors' advice to have his toe amputated, which would have hindered Marley's performing career, citing his religious beliefs. Instead, the nail and nail bed were removed, and a skin graft was taken from his thigh to cover the area.[94][95] Despite his illness, Marley continued touring and was in the process of scheduling a 1980 world tour.[96]

The album *Uprising* was released in May 1980. The band completed a major tour of Europe, where it played its biggest concert to 100,000 people at San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy. Marley's last ever outdoor concert was played on 6 July 1980 at Dalymount Park in Dublin.[97] After the tour, Marley went to the United States, where he performed two shows at Madison Square Garden in New York City as part of the Uprising Tour.[98] On 21 September 1980, Marley collapsed while jogging in Central Park and was taken to the hospital, where it was found that his cancer had spread to his brain, lungs, and liver.[99] Marley's last concert took place two days later at the Stanley Theater (now The Benedum Center For The Performing Arts) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.[100] The only known photographs from the show were included in Kevin Macdonald's 2012 documentary film *Marley*.[101]

Shortly after, Marley's health deteriorated as his cancer had spread throughout his body. The rest of the tour was cancelled, and Marley sought treatment at the Josef Issels' clinic in Rottach-Egern, Bavaria, Germany, where he underwent an alternative cancer treatment called Issels treatment, partly based on avoidance of certain foods, fluids, and other substances.[102]

Death

After eight months of the alternative treatment failing to effectively treat his advancing cancer, Marley boarded a plane for his home in Jamaica.[103] During the flight, his vital functions worsened. After landing in Miami, Florida, Marley was taken to Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, later renamed University of

Miami Hospital, for urgent medical attention, where he died on 11 May 1981, at the age of 36, due to the spread of melanoma to his lungs and brain. Marley's final words to his son Ziggy were: "On your way up, take me up. On your way down, don't let me down."[104]

On 21 May 1981, Marley was given a state funeral in Jamaica that combined elements of Ethiopian Orthodoxy[105][106] and Rastafari tradition.[107] He was buried in a chapel near his birthplace in Nine Mile; Marley's casket contained his red Gibson Les Paul guitar, a Bible opened at Psalm 23, and a stalk of cannabis placed there by his widow Rita Marley.[108] Jamaican Prime Minister Edward Seaga delivered the final funeral eulogy to Marley, saying:

> His voice was an omnipresent cry in our electronic world. His sharp features, majestic looks, and prancing style a vivid etching on the landscape of our minds. Bob Marley was never seen. He was an experience which left an indelible imprint with each encounter. Such a man cannot be erased from the mind. He is part of the collective consciousness of the nation.[67]:58

Legacy

Awards and honours

A wax sculpture of Marley at Madame Tussauds in London

- 1976: *Rolling Stone* magazine's "Band of the Year"
- June 1978: Awarded the Peace Medal of the Third World from the United Nations[67]:5
- February 1981: Awarded the Jamaican Order of Merit, then the nation's third-highest honour[109]
- March 1994: Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- 1999: "Album of the Century" for *Exodus* by *Time* magazine[110]
- February 2001: A star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
- February 2001: Awarded Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.[111]
- 2004: *Rolling Stone* ranked him 11th on their list of the "100 Greatest Artists of All Time"[19]
  - Among the first inductees into the UK Music Hall of Fame
  - "One Love" named song of the millennium by BBC
  - Voted one of the greatest lyricists of all time by a BBC poll[112]
- 2006: A blue plaque at his first UK residence in Ridgmount Gardens in London, dedicated to him by the Nubian Jak Community Trust and supported by the Mayor of London[113][114][115]
- 2010: *Catch a Fire* inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame (Reggae Album)[116]
- 2022: Inducted into the Black Music & Entertainment Walk of Fame[117]

Other tributes

A statue was inaugurated, next to the national stadium on Arthur Wint Drive in Kingston to commemorate Marley.[118] In 2006, the New York City Department of Education co-named a portion of Church Avenue from Remsen Avenue to East 98th Street in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn as "Bob Marley Boulevard".[119][120] In 2008, a statue of Marley was inaugurated in Banatski Sokolac, Serbia.[121]

Bob Marley statue in Kingston, Jamaica

Internationally, Marley's message also continues to reverberate among various indigenous communities. For instance, members of the Native American Hopi and Havasupai tribes revere his work.[67] There are also many tributes to Marley throughout India, including restaurants, hotels, and cultural festivals.[122][123]

Marley evolved into a global symbol, which has been endlessly merchandised through a variety of media. Despite this, author Dave Thompson lamented what he perceived to be the pacification of Marley that came with his commercialisation, stating:

> Bob Marley ranks among both the most popular and the most misunderstood figures in modern culture ... That the machine has utterly emasculated Marley is beyond doubt. Gone from the public record is the ghetto kid who dreamed of Che Guevara and the Black Panthers, and pinned their posters up in the Wailers Soul Shack record store; who believed in freedom; and the fighting which it necessitated, and dressed the part on an early album sleeve; whose heroes were James Brown and Muhammad Ali; whose God was Ras Tafari and whose sacrament was marijuana. Instead, the Bob Marley who surveys his kingdom today is smiling benevolence, a shining sun, a waving palm tree, and a string of hits which tumble out of polite radio like candy from a gumball machine. Of course it has assured his immortality. But it has also demeaned him beyond recognition. Bob Marley was worth far more.[124]

Marley's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame

Marley is discussed in the 2007 action thriller *I Am Legend*, where the protagonist named his daughter after him. Marley's music is also used in the film.[125][126]

Depictions in popular culture

Several film adaptations of Marley's life have been made. For instance, a feature-length documentary about his life, *Rebel Music*, won various awards at the Grammys. With contributions from Rita, The Wailers, and Marley's lovers and children, it also tells much of the story in his own words.[127] In February 2008, director Martin Scorsese announced his intention to produce a documentary movie on Marley. The film was set to be released on 6 February 2010, on what would have been Marley's 65th birthday.[128] However, Scorsese dropped out due to scheduling problems. He was replaced by Jonathan Demme,[129] who dropped out due to creative differences with producer Steve Bing during the beginning of editing. Kevin Macdonald replaced Demme[130] and the film, *Marley*, was released on 20 April 2012.[131] In 2011, ex-girlfriend and filmmaker Esther Anderson, along with Gian Godoy, made the documentary *Bob Marley: The Making of a Legend*, which premiered at the Edinburgh International Film Festival.[132]

In October 2015, Jamaican author Marlon James's novel, *A Brief History of Seven Killings*, a fictional account of the attempted assassination of Marley, won the 2015 Man Booker Prize at a ceremony in London.[133]

In February 2020, *Get Up, Stand Up! The Bob Marley Musical* was announced by writer Lee Hall and director Dominic Cooke, starring Arinzé Kene as Bob Marley. It was premiered at London's Lyric Theatre on 20 October 2021, after being postponed from its original February premiere due to the COVID-19 pandemic.[134][135]

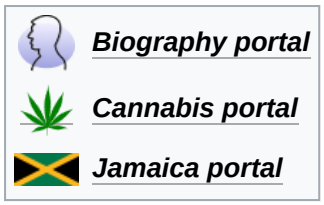
Bob Marley: One Love, an American biographical drama musical film directed by Reinaldo Marcus Green and starring Kingsley Ben-Adir as Marley, was released in the United States on 14 February 2024.[136]

Discography

Studio albums

- *The Wailing Wailers* (1965)
- *Soul Rebels* (1970)
- *Soul Revolution Part II* (1971)
- *The Best of the Wailers* (1971)
- *Catch a Fire* (1973)
- *Burnin'* (1973)
- *Natty Dread* (1974)
- *Rastaman Vibration* (1976)
- *Exodus* (1977)[137]
- *Kaya* (1978)
- *Survival* (1979)
- *Uprising* (1980)
- *Confrontation* (1983)

See also



- *Desis bobmarleyi* – an underwater spider species named in honour of Marley
- Fabian Marley
- List of peace activists
- Outline of Bob Marley

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Midnite (band)

Midnite was a roots reggae band from St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, which started playing in 1989.[1]

The band's music follows in tradition with the roots reggae bands of 1970s Jamaica. The lyrical portions of Midnite's compositions are characterized as the "chant and call" style which gives their music a spiritually intense and an overtly Rastafari movement feel. The lyrics are centrally focused on the plights of the oppressed, the inherent faults of the current political, economic and social settings on a global scale, and the redemption available to mankind through a life dedicated to Jah.

In 2015, the band reformed around co-founder Vaughn Benjamin as Akae Beka without bassist Ron Benjamin. Ras Elyments took Ron Benjamin's position on Bass. Suren “SoulJah” Fenton replaced Ras L on keys. The reasons for the reformation have been stated as due to "life changes, convictions and revelations". Stated on the band website was "due to a medical emergency the tour is postponed". Members of the band themselves won't even say during the recent Akae Beka Coronation Tour in November 2015. '.[2] Akae Beka's first performance took place in Denver, Colorado on July 17, 2015 in honor of Nelson Mandela Day.[3]

Midnite	
Background information	
Origin	St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands
Genres	Reggae
Years active	1989–2015
Labels	Rastafaria, I Grade Records
Members	Vaughn Benjamin Ron Benjamin Christian Molina Edmund Fieulleteau Edwin Byron Ras L
Past members	Tuff Lion, Dion Hopkins, Abijah Hicks, Philip Merchant, Kenny
Website	www.akaebeka.com (http://www.akaebeka.com/)

History

The band was started by Benjamin brothers Vaughn (vocals) and Ron (keyboard, but later switched to bass) circa 1989 according to an interview with one of the former Midnite drummer Ambrose "Amby" Connor by Midnight Raver. Vaughn and Ron invited Joseph Straws, Jr. to be their bassist and Dion "Bosie" Hopkins was the original drummer. The rhythm section was original as was all of Midnite's music—no covers or already created rhythms. The brothers were raised in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, the sons of Antiguan musician Ronnie Benjamin, Sr. Vaughn Benjamin cites Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, The Abyssinians, and bassist Flabba Holt as his earliest influences.[4]

> "Bob Marley has had a big impact. And the drum and the bass from like Flabba Holt. Sometimes I listen to the bass man alone or the drummer alone."[4]

The group's debut album ***Unpolished*** was released exclusively in Namibia in December 1997. The album would not see a proper U.S. release until the Rastafaria label released it wide in 2001. They recorded ***Ras Mek Peace (Before Reverb and Without Delay)*** while living in Washington, D.C. during the mid-90s, and it was released in November 1999.[5] The album was named so, because it was reportedly recorded live in one room, straight to two-track analog tape. It was mastered without the use of compression or corrective equalization.[6] ***Ras Mek Peace (Before Reverb and Without Delay)*** is recorded using no mixing board, no filtering, no compression, no equalization, no noise reduction, multitracking or overdubbing, giving it a raw sound. The album was recorded using only two-tracks at Mapleshade in Upper Marlboro, MD with studio engineer and owner Pierre Sprey whose recording style is summed up in the phrase he had printed to green Mapleshade T-shirts to promote the studio: *NO Mixing Board, NO Overdubs, NO Noise Reduction, NO Compression, NO Multitracks, NO Reverb, NO EQ, Nothing BUT The Excitement of Live Music, MUSIC WITHOUT COMPROMISE.*[7]

Later, they returned home to St. Croix in the late '90s to play with local musicians and record at their music studio, Afrikan Roots Lab.

Midnite frequently collaborates with new artists and has played as the back-up band on a number of Afrikan Roots Lab artists' releases, such as Dezarie's ***Fya*** and ***Gracious Mama Africa*** and Ikahba's *Trodding to Zion (http://www.ireggae.com/troddintozion.htm)*.

In September 2011, Midnite released their first professionally produced music video for their song "Mongst I&I".[8] The video features members of the band in casual settings and depicts the Rastafarian culture in Frederiksted, United States Virgin Islands (referred to as "Freedom City," St. Croix), and Kingston, Jamaica.

Singer Vaughn Benjamin featured on Tribal Seeds' 2014 album ***Representing***.[9]

The band was featured in the 2014 documentary film *Escape To St Croix*.[10]

Vaughn Benjamin died in Port St. Lucie, Florida, on November 4, 2019, at the age of 50.[11]

Critical acclaim

In its Top 50 Reggae Albums of the 2K list, reggae news and information website Midnight Raver ranked Midnite's *Jubilees of Zion* as the best album of the new millennium and *Beauty for Ashes* as the third best.[12] In its review of Akae Beka's *Homage to the Land*, Midnight Raver referred to Midnite as "the most revered, influential and prolific reggae act in two decades."[13]

Discography

- 1997 - Unpolished
- 1999 - Ras Mek Peace
- 2000 - Jubilees Of Zion
- 2002 - Seek Knowledge Before Vengeance
- 2003 - Intense Pressure (dub)
- 2004 - Scheme A Things

- 2004 - Ainshant Maps
- 2008 - Live 94117
- 2010 - What Makes A King ?
- 2011 - Anthology
- 2013 - Lion Out Of Zion

Midnite & I Grade collaboration

- 2001 - Nemozian Rasta
- 2002 - Assini
- 2003 - Vijan
- 2005 - Let Live
- 2006 - Jah Grid
- 2007 - Rule The Time
- 2011 - Kings Bell
- 2014 - Beauty For Ashes
- 2014 - Ride Tru

Midnite & Branch I collaboration

- 2003 - Cipheraw
- 2003 - Geoman
- 2003 - He Is Jah
- 2004 - Project III

Midnite & Mystic Vision collaboration

- 2006 - Current
- 2006 - New 1000

Midnite & Ras L collaboration

- 2004 - Full Cup
- 2006 - Thru & True

Midnite & Groundbreaking collaboration

- 2007 - Aneed

Midnite & Lion Tribe/Fifthson collaboration

- 2007 - Suns Of Atom
- 2008 - Standing Ground
- 2010 - Momentum
- 2011 - Standing Ground Dub
- 2012 - In Awe
- 2013 - Be Strong

Midnite & Desmond Williams collaboration

- 2008 - Kayamagan

Midnite & Rastar collaboration

- 2007 - Better World Rasta
- 2008 - Supplication To H.I.M.
- 2009 - To Mene
- 2009 - Ina Now
- 2011 - Treasure
- 2011 - The Way
- 2012 - Children Of Jah
- 2013 - Children Of Jah Dubs
- 2014 - Better World Rasta Live Dubs

Midnite & Higher Bound Prod collaboration

- 2007 - Bless Go Roun
- 2010 - Ark A Law (Lion I)
- 2013 - Free Indeed

Midnite & Iaahden Sounds collaboration

- 2014 - Stand The Test

Midnite & Lustre Kings collaboration

- 2007 - Infinite Quality
- 2008 - Infinite Dub

Midnite & Natural Vibes collaboration

- 2008 - Maschaana

Midnite & Youssoupha Sidibe collaboration

- 2008 - For All

Midnite & Various artists collaboration

- 2002 - Weep Not
- 2008 - New Name
- 2008 - Gather The Remnant
- 2009 - Defender Of The Faith
- 2009 - Kings Of Kush
- 2009 - Frontline Souljah

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External links

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Peter Tosh

Winston Hubert McIntosh OM GCOT (19 October[1] 1944 – 11 September 1987), professionally known as **Peter Tosh**, was a Jamaican reggae musician. Along with Bob Marley and Bunny Wailer, he was one of the core members of the band the Wailers (1963–1976), after which he established himself as a successful solo artist and a promoter of Rastafari. He was murdered in 1987 during a home invasion.

The Honourable
Peter Tosh
OM GCOT

Tosh (left) on the Bush Doctor tour in 1978

Background information	
Birth name	Winston Hubert McIntosh
Also known as	Stepping Razor
Born	19 October 1944 Grange Hill, Jamaica
Died	11 September 1987 (aged 42) Kingston, Jamaica
Genres	Reggae · ska · rocksteady
Occupations	Musician · singer · songwriter
Instruments	Guitar · vocals · keyboards · melodica · percussion · drums · violin
Years active	1961–1987
Labels	Intel-Diplo, JAD Records
Website	petertosh.com (https://petertosh.com/)

Early life

Tosh was born Winston Hubert McIntosh on 19 October 1944 in Westmoreland, the westernmost parish of Jamaica. He was abandoned by his parents and "shuffled among relatives".[2] When McIntosh was fifteen, his aunt died and he moved to Trenchtown in Kingston, Jamaica. He was educated in Bluefields up to age 17, then moved to Kingston to live with his aunt. He began an apprenticeship as a welder.[3]

He first learned guitar after watching a man in the country play a song that captivated him. He watched the man play the same song for half a day, memorizing everything his fingers were doing. He then picked up the guitar and played the song back to the man. The man then asked McIntosh who had taught him to play; McIntosh told him that he had.[4] During the early 1960s, as an aspiring musician, Tosh went to vocal teacher Joe Higgs, who gave free music lessons to young people. Through his contact with Higgs, Tosh met Robert Nesta Marley (Bob Marley) and Neville O'Reilly Livingston (Bunny Wailer).[5] He then changed his name to Peter Tosh and the trio started singing together in 1962. Higgs taught the trio to harmonise and while developing their music, they would often play on the street corners of Trenchtown.

Music career

By 1964, Tosh, Marley, and Bunny had formed the Wailing Wailers, with falsetto singer Junior Braithwaite, and backup singers Beverley Kelso and Cherry Smith. Initially, Tosh was the only one in the group who could play musical instruments. According to Bunny Wailer, Tosh was critical to the band because he was a self-taught guitarist and keyboardist, and thus became an inspiration for the other band members to learn to play. The Wailing Wailers had a major ska hit with their first single, "Simmer Down", and recorded several more successful singles before Braithwaite, Kelso and Smith left the band in late 1965. Marley spent much of 1966 in Delaware in the United States with his mother, Cedella (née Malcolm) Marley-Booker, and for a brief time was working at a nearby Chrysler factory. He returned to Jamaica in early 1967 with a renewed interest in music and a new spirituality. Tosh and Bunny were already Rastafarians when Marley returned from the US, and the three became very involved with the Rastafari faith. Soon afterwards, they renamed the musical group the Wailers. Tosh would explain later that they chose the name Wailers because to "wail" means to mourn or to, as he put it, "...express one's feelings vocally". He also claims that he was the beginning of the group, and that it was he who first taught Bob Marley the guitar. Also according to Bunny Wailer, the early Wailers learned to play instruments from Tosh.[6]

During the mid-1960s Tosh, along with Bob Marley and Bunny Wailer, were introduced to Danny Sims and Johnny Nash, who signed the three artists to an exclusive recording contract on Sims' and Nash's JAD Records label[7] as well as an exclusive publishing agreement through Sims' music publishing company, Cayman Music. Rejecting the up-tempo dance of ska, the band slowed their music to a rocksteady pace, and infused their lyrics with political and social messages inspired by their new-found faith. The Wailers composed several songs for the American-born singer Nash before teaming with producer Lee "Scratch" Perry to record some of the earliest well-known reggae songs, including "Soul Rebel", "Duppy Conqueror", and "Small Axe". The collaboration had given birth to reggae music and in 1970 bassist Aston "Family Man" Barrett and his brother, drummer Carlton Barrett, joined the group. They recorded the album *The Best of The Wailers*, which was produced by Leslie Kong and released in 1971.[8]

In 1972, Danny Sims assigned the balance of the JAD Records recording contract with the band to Chris Blackwell and Island Records company[7] and released their debut, *Catch a Fire*, in 1973, following it with *Burnin'* the same year. The Wailers had moved from many producers after 1970 and there were instances where producers would record rehearsal sessions that Tosh did and release them in England under the name "Peter Touch".

In 1973, Tosh was driving home with his girlfriend Evonne when his car was hit by another car driving on the wrong side of the road. The accident killed Evonne and severely fractured Tosh's skull.

After Island Records president Chris Blackwell refused to issue his solo album in 1974, Tosh and Bunny Wailer left the Wailers, citing the unfair treatment they received from Blackwell, to whom Tosh often referred with a derogatory play on Blackwell's surname, 'Whiteworst'.[9] Tosh had written or co-written many of the Wailers' hit songs such as "Get Up, Stand Up", "400 Years", and "No Sympathy". Tosh went on to start a solo career, releasing albums with CBS Records and Rolling Stones Records.

Solo career

Tosh performing with Robbie Shakespeare in 1978

Tosh's debut solo album, *Legalize It*, was recorded in 1975–6 at Treasure Isle. It was released in June 1976 on CBS Records. The title track soon became popular among endorsers of cannabis legalization, reggae music lovers and Rastafari all over the world, and was a favourite at Tosh's concerts. Also in 1976, Tosh organised a backing band, Word, Sound and Power, who were to accompany him on tour for the next few years, and many of whom performed on his albums of this period. Tosh's second album, *Equal Rights*, released in 1977. It featured his recording of a song co-written with Marley, "Get Up, Stand Up", and a cover of "Stepping Razor" that would also appear on the soundtrack to the film *Rockers*.

In 1978, the Rolling Stones' record label, Rolling Stones Records, contracted with Tosh, on which the album *Bush Doctor* was released, introducing Tosh to a larger audience. The album featured Rolling Stones frontmen Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, and the lead single – a cover version of the Temptations song "Don't Look Back" – was performed as a duet with Jagger. In April, Tosh performed at the Jamaican One Love Peace Concert of 1978. Tosh lit a marijuana spliff and lectured about legalising cannabis, lambasting attending dignitaries Michael Manley and Edward Seaga for their failure to enact such legislation. According to *The Gleaner*, Tosh became regular target for the police after the concert.[3] In September, he was arrested by police at Half-Way Tree square; on grounds of smoking marijuana and attacking a police officer. He report being beaten severely while in police custody - resulting in a broken hand and head injuries requiring stitches.[10]

Mystic Man (1979), and *Wanted Dread and Alive* (1981) followed, both released on Rolling Stones Records. Tosh tried to gain some mainstream success while keeping his militant views, but was only moderately successful, especially when compared to Marley's achievements.

In 1984, after the release of 1983's album *Mama Africa*, Tosh went into self-imposed exile, seeking the spiritual advice of traditional medicine men in Africa, and trying to free himself from recording agreements that distributed his records in South Africa. Tosh had been at odds for several years with his label, EMI, over a perceived lack of promotion for his music.[11]

Tosh also participated in the international opposition to South African apartheid by appearing at anti-apartheid concerts and by conveying his opinion in various songs like "Apartheid" (1977, re-recorded 1987), "Equal Rights" (1977), "Fight On" (1979), and "Not Gonna Give It Up" (1983). In 1987, Peter Tosh seemed to be having a career revival. He was awarded a Grammy Award for Best Reggae Performance in 1987 for *No Nuclear War*, his last record.[12]

Personal life

Religion

Along with Bob Marley and Bunny Wailer during the late 1960s, Peter Tosh became a devotee of Rastafari.[13] One of the beliefs of the Rastas is that Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Ethiopia, was either an embodiment of God or a messenger of God, leading the three friends to be baptized in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.[14]

Unicycling

At some point after his departure from the Wailers, Tosh developed an interest in unicycles and became a unicycle rider, being able to ride forwards and backwards and hop. He often amused his audiences by riding onto the stage on his unicycle for his shows.[15][16]

Family

Tosh's girlfriend Evonne was killed in a car crash in 1973. Tosh was in a relationship with his wife Marlene Brown for about five years from 1982, she was 21 at the start of the relationship.[17] Tosh had ten children including Andrew (1967), Jawara (mother Melody Cunningham),[18] Aldrina and youngest Niambe.[19][20]

Murder

On 11 September 1987, after Tosh returned to his home in Jamaica, a three-man gang came to his house on motorcycles demanding money.[21][22] Tosh replied that he did not have any with him, but the gang did not believe him. They remained at his residence for several hours and tortured Tosh in an attempt to extort money from him. Over the hours, as various associates of Tosh arrived to visit him, they were also taken hostage by the gunmen. The gunmen included chief thug Dennis "Leppo" Lobban, a man whom Tosh had previously befriended and tried to help find work after Lobban's release from a lengthy jail sentence.[21]

Tosh said he did not have any money in the house, after which Lobban and the fellow gunmen began opening fire in a reckless manner. Tosh was shot twice in the head and killed. Herbalist Wilton "Doc" Brown and disc jockey Jeff 'Free I' Dixon also died as a result of wounds sustained during the robbery. Several others in the house were wounded, including Tosh's common law wife Andrea Marlene Brown, Free I's wife Yvonne ("Joy"), Tosh's drummer Carlton "Santa" Davis, and musician Michael Robinson.[23][24]

According to Police Commissioner Herman Ricketts, Lobban surrendered and two other men were interrogated but not publicly named.[25] Lobban pled innocent during his trial, telling the court he had been drinking with friends. The trial was held in a closed court due to the involvement of illegal firearms. Lobban was ultimately found guilty by a jury of eight women and four men and sentenced to death by hanging.[26]

In 1995, Lobban's sentence was commuted and he remained in jail.[27] Another suspect was acquitted due to insufficient evidence.[28] The other two gunmen were never identified by name.

Instruments

In 1983, at the Los Angeles stop on Tosh's *Mama Africa* tour, a local musician named Bruno Coon went to the hotel at which Tosh was staying, claiming to have a gift for him. The gift was a custom-built guitar in the shape of an M16 rifle. Tosh accepted the gift personally.[29] The guitar was subsequently lost by the airlines when the tour went to Europe but was recovered when Tosh's public relations agent placed an article about its loss in *Der Spiegel*. Tosh went on to perform on stage with the guitar.[30]

The promoters of the Flashpoint Film Festival announced in 2006 that Tosh's common-law wife Andrea "Marlene" Brown would auction it on eBay.[31] Tosh's sons, Andrew Tosh, and Jawara McIntosh, prevented the sale, claiming ownership of the guitar.[32] In 2011 Andrew Tosh said that the guitar was in the custody of a close friend, awaiting the opening of a museum dedicated to Peter Tosh.[33]

Legacy

In 1979, a 1964 photograph of Tosh in sunglasses and a suit, also featuring Bob Marley and the Wailers, was the inspiration for the logo of 2 Tone Records. The label released albums from ska bands such as The Specials. The logo featured a stylized man in a suit based on the photo of Tosh, although the figure was called "Walt Jabsco".[34] The logo in turn was the inspiration for a character in a Webdings font designed by Vincent Connare in 1997 ("Man in Business Suit Levitating emoji" in the Emoji system).[35] Connare changed the design to face forward and floating.[36] Tosh's children Andrew Tosh and Niambe McIntosh both praised the emoji in a 2021 BBC interview, with Andrew stating that "[Peter Tosh] wanted [people] to dance to their own (political) awakening".[37]

In 1993, *Stepping Razor: Red X* was released, a documentary film chronicling Tosh's life, music and untimely death.[38] It was directed by Canadian filmmaker Nicholas Campbell, produced by Wayne Jobson and based upon a series of spoken-word recordings made by Peter Tosh himself.[39][40] The film was released on DVD in 2002.[41]

A monument to Tosh is maintained by his family near Negril, Jamaica, which is open to the public. His birthday is celebrated there annually with live reggae music.[42]

In October 2012, Tosh was posthumously awarded Jamaica's fourth[43] highest honour, the Order of Merit.[44]

In 2015, Tosh's daughter – the administrator of the Peter Tosh Estate – deemed that April 20 should be celebrated as International Peter Tosh Day, in honour of his "philosophy of responsible cannabis consumption for medicinal and spiritual health benefits".[45][46]

A square on Trafalgar Road in Kingston, Jamaica, was renamed Peter Tosh Square. The square is home to the Peter Tosh Museum, opened on Peter Tosh's 72nd birthday on 19 October 2016.[47][48][49] Among the artifacts on display is Tosh's M16 guitar. There was a benefit concert for the grand opening, on the 22nd, featuring Chronixx, Luciano and Andrew Tosh.[50]

The annual Peter Tosh Gala Awards event was inaugurated in 2017.[51]

In October 2019, a commemorative blue plaque dedicated by the Nubian Jak Community Trust honoring Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Bunny Wailer was placed at the former site of Basing Street Studios in London, where *Catch a Fire* and *Burnin'* were completed.[52]

In 2023, he was posthumously bestowed with the Order of the Companions of O. R. Tambo.[53]

"Man in Business Suit Levitating emoji" based on 2 Tone Records logo, based on photo of Tosh.

Discography

Studio albums

List of albums, with selected chart positions

Title	Album details	Peak chart positions				Certifications
		US [54]	US R&B/HH	AUS [55]	UK [56]	
Legalize It	▪ Released: June 1976 ▪ Label: Columbia Records, Island Records, Intel-Diplo ▪ Format: Vinyl, Cassette	199	—	—	54	▪ RIAA: Platinum[57]
Equal Rights	▪ Released: 1977 ▪ Label: Columbia Records, Intel-Diplo, Rolling Stones Records, EMI Music Distribution ▪ Format: Vinyl, Cassette	146	—	—	—	▪ RIAA: Gold[57]
Bush Doctor	▪ Released: December 9, 1978 ▪ Label: Rolling Stones Records, EMI ▪ Format: Vinyl, Cassette	104	—	34	—	▪ NVPI: Gold[58]
Mystic Man	▪ Released: 1979 ▪ Label: Rolling Stones Records, EMI ▪ Format: Vinyl, Cassette	123	—	72	—	
Wanted Dread & Alive	▪ Released: 1981 ▪ Label: Rolling Stones Records, EMI, Capitol ▪ Format:	91	40	—	—	
Mama Africa	▪ Released: 1983 ▪ Label: Rolling Stones Records, EMI ▪ Format:	59	49	47	—	
No Nuclear War	▪ Released: 1987 ▪ Label: EMI ▪ Format:	—	—	—	—	
"—" denotes a recording that did not chart or was not released in that territory.						

Live albums

- *Captured Live* (1984)

- *Live at the One Love Peace Concert* (JAD) (2000)[59]
- *Live & Dangerous: Boston 1976* (2001)
- *Live at the Jamaica World Music Festival 1982* (JAD) (2002)[59]
- *Complete Captured Live* (2002)
- *Live at My Father's Place 1978* (2014)

Compilations

Listed are compilations containing material previously unreleased outside of Jamaica.

- *The Toughest* (Capitol) (1988)
- *Honorary Citizen* (1997)
- *Scrolls of the Prophet: The Best of Peter Tosh* (1999)
- *Arise Black Man* (1999)
- *Black Dignity (Early Works of the Stepping Razor)* (2001)
- *I Am That I Am* (JAD) (2001)[60]
- *The Best of Peter Tosh 1977–1987* (2003)
- *Can't Blame the Youth* (JAD) (2004)[60]
- *Black Dignity* (2004)
- *Talking Revolution* (2005)
- *The Ultimate Peter Tosh Experience* (2009)

Appears on

- The Wailing Wailers (1965)
- *Negril* (Eric Gale, 1975)
- *Rastafari Dub*[61] (Ras Michael & The Sons of Negus, 1975)
- *Blackheart Man* (Bunny Wailer, 1976)
- *Word Sound and Power* (Chris Hinze, 1980)

See also

- List of Rastafarians
- List of reggae musicians

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Judaism and Rastafari

Aside from a mutual belief in the Old Testament, Judaism and Rastafari closely align in essence, tradition, and heritage, as both are Abrahamic religions. However, the philosophy behind many customs is what truly differentiates the two religions. There are stark differences in some core beliefs in regards to the messianic prophecies, apprehensions behind traditions, and even dietary restrictions. However, they are more similar rather than different on a vast spectrum of ideas, values and ethics.

Messianic prophecies

A primary comparison to make between Rastafari and Judaism is that both religions believe that there will be a coming of the Messiah, although they do not agree on who that Messiah is or will be. In the Jewish religion "The Messiah will indeed be a king from the house of David who will gather the scattered of Israel together, but the order of the world will not be radically changed by his coming."[1]

This is in contrast to Nyabinghi and Bobo Ashanti belief, in which they believe Jesus, in the form of Haile Selassie, the emperor of Ethiopia from 1930–1974, is their Messiah; and the Twelve Tribes of Israel, who believe that Selassie was simply a divinely-appointed monarch and Jesus himself is the Messiah (or *Messiyah*). Many Rastafari belief Haile Selassie's lineage can be traced back to King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, and is thusly known as the Solomonic dynasty.[2] The perspective on the coming of the Messiah in Judaism are akin to that of Rastafari in that, "The Messiah will indeed be a king from the house of David who will gather the scattered of Israel together, but the order of the world will not be radically changed by his coming."[1] In addition to the belief that all Jewish people across the globe will become docile to the teachings of the Torah, is the prophecy of world peace and order.

The root of the Rastafari Messianic belief came from Marcus Garvey's prophecy in which he states "Look to Africa where a black king shall be crowned, he shall be the Redeemer."[2] The rise of Halie Selassie's reign came promptly after Marcus Garvey's remarks, validating his prophecy and granting Selassie with the divine title of "God of the Black race"[2] among some Rastafari.

Jewish vs. Rastafari laws

Since both Rastafari and Jews use the Old Testament as their holy scripture, they both follow more or less the same principles, ideals, values and ethics as one another. However, interpretations of laws in the Old Testament varies between the two groups. An example of a law both Rastafari and Jews follow would be the restriction of any alterations to the hair. It is said in Leviticus 19:27: "Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard", in Leviticus 21:5: "They shall not make any baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in the flesh" and in Numbers 6:5, "All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he spareth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow."[3] This explains the long sideburns and beards of religious Jews as well as the dreadlocks associated with observant Rastafari.

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Persecution of Rastafari

Persecution of members of the Rastafari movement, an Abrahamic religion founded in Jamaica in the early 1930s among Afro-Jamaican communities, has been fairly continuous through out the religions development. Nowadays it is particularly concerning their spiritual use of cannabis and discrimination related to spiritual hair styles mainly dreadlocks.

The Formation of Rastafari

There was a growing grassroots movement in Jamaica that combined ethiopianism, a belief that black people in the new world will be rescued by God as his chosen people, with faith healing and revival churches. Laws like the Obeah Act of 1898, which made it Illegal to use or pretend to use supernatural powers or knowledge, [1] and the Medical Law of 1908, which created a council to regulate medical practice in Jamaica,[2] were used to disrupt these movements and redirect medical and religious authority back to the state. One of the most prominent figures of this period was Alexander Bedward, a faith healer and self-proclaimed profit. He was eventually locked up in a asylum for his religious claims. [3]

Official Rastafarian Persecution

The first Rastafari to appear in a court was Leonard Howell in Jamaica in 1934 who was charged with sedition for refusing to accept George V of the United Kingdom as his King, instead insisting that he was only loyal to Haile Selassie and the Ethiopian Empire. He was found guilty and sentenced to several years in prison.[4]

By the 1950s, Rastafari's message of pride and unity had unnerved the ruling class of Jamaica. In 1954, the Pinnacle commune was destroyed by Jamaican authorities.

In 1963, following a violent confrontation between Rastafarians and Jamaican police forces at a gas station, the Jamaican government issued the police and military an order to "bring in all Rastas, dead or alive", resulting in mass arrests, with many of those arrested tortured or killed in what would be known as the Coral Gardens incident.[5]

Attitudes began to change when Haile Selassie I visited Jamaica in April 1966.

According to many Rastas, the illegality of cannabis in many nations is evidence of persecution of Rastafari. They are not surprised that it is illegal, seeing it as a powerful substance that opens people's minds to the truth – something the Babylon system, they reason, clearly does not want.[6] They contrast it to alcohol and other drugs, which they feel destroy the mind.[7]

In 1998, Attorney General of the United States Janet Reno gave a legal opinion[8] that Rastafari do not have the religious right to smoke marijuana in violation of the United States' drug laws. The position is the same in the United Kingdom, where, in the Court of Appeal case of *R v Taylor*,[9] it was held that the

UK's prohibition on cannabis use did not contravene the right to freedom of religion conferred under the European Convention on Human Rights.

On January 2, 1991, at an international airport in his homeland of Guam, Ras Iyah Ben Makahna (Benny Guerrero) was arrested for possession and importation of marijuana and seeds. He was charged with importation of a controlled substance. The case was heard by the US 9th Circuit Court November 2001, and in May 2002 the court had decided that the practice of Rastafari sanctions the smoking of marijuana, but nowhere does the religion sanction the importation of marijuana. Guerrero's lawyer Graham Boyd pointed out that the court's ruling was "equivalent to saying wine is a necessary sacrament for some Christians but you have to grow your own grapes."[10]

Modern Updates

In July 2008, however, the Italian Supreme Court ruled that Rastafari may be allowed to possess greater amounts of cannabis legally, owing to its use by them as a sacrament.[11]

In 2009, Rasta Doug Darrell was arrested after a National Guard helicopter flying over his New Hampshire home found he was growing 15 marijuana plants in his backyard. In a subsequent trial in September 2012, Darrell was found "not guilty" by twelve jurors exercising the right of jury nullification.[12]

Sacramental use of cannabis in celebration of the Rastafari faith became legal in Jamaica on April 15, 2015.

A viral video posted in 2018, showed a high school wrestler, Andrew Johnson, having his dread locks cut in order to compete in a wrestling match. This gained national attention and began a civil rights investigation into the referee, Alan Maloney, who had been previously accused of using racial slurs against a black referee.[13]

See also

- Emperor of Ethiopia
- History of Ethiopia
- History of Jamaica

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Rastafari movement in the United States

The **Rastafari movement in the United States** echoes the Rastafari religious movement, which began in Jamaica and Ethiopia during the 1930s. Marcus Garvey, born in Jamaica, was influenced by the Ethiopian king Haile Selassie. Jamaican Rastafaris began emigrating to the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, and established communities throughout the country.

Background

The name *Rastafari* derives from *Ras Tafari*, the title (ras) and first name of Haile Selassie (Täfäri Mäkonnän) before his coronation. In Amharic, *ras* ("head") is an Ethiopian title equivalent to prince or chief; the given name *Täfäri* (*teferi*) means "one who is revered". Rastafari originated in Jamaica and Ethiopia. *Jah* is a name of God, a shortened form of Yahweh. Most Rastafaris see Haile Selassie as *Jah* or *Jah Rastafari*, an incarnation of God. Rastafari includes the spiritual use of cannabis and the rejection of a society of materialism, oppression, and sensual pleasures it calls "Babylon". Rastas assert that Zion (Ethiopia) is a land promised to them by Jah. "Babylon" is considered to have been rebelling against "Earth's Rightful Ruler" (Jah) since the days of the biblical king Nimrod. The lion is a symbol of Rastafari because it appears on the flag used in Haile Selassie's Ethiopia.

Marcus Garvey

Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican activist, spoke about creating an African state for displaced Africans; this idea influenced many Black people. According to Garvey, Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was the only remaining African monarch with Biblical ancestry. Working-class Jamaicans viewed Garvey as a prophet and the reincarnation of John the Baptist; when Ras Täfäri of Ethiopia was crowned emperor in 1930, many proclaimed Haile Selassie as Jah (God).

Although the movement has had cultural, social, and political effects on Ethiopia and Jamaica, little scholarly research has been done on its effects in the United States. A number of Rastafari see the country as the heart of evil in the world, but many Jamaican Rastafari made the United States their new home during the 1960s and 1970s. The Rastafari movement played a role in shaping local U.S. society and culture, seen in Garvey's accomplishments, the effects of Rastafari community-building, and riddim and reggae music.

Universal Negro Improvement Association

Garvey tried to organize Black people worldwide, to give them an influential voice in society with overwhelming numbers. He established the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). After failed attempts to create a following in Jamaica, Garvey relocated the UNIA to upper Manhattan's Harlem neighborhood. By 1920, he had over 2,000,000 members in over 1,000 local UNIA chapters.

The association had the goal of establishing Black political and economic independence. Garvey initially came to the U.S. to preach Black nationalism through the back-to-Africa movement. Displaced Africans would return to the land of their ancestors, where they would create a prosperous African state and make the continent a world power. In 1924, with the financial assistance of UNIA members, Garvey sought to purchase one million acres (4000 km^2) of land from Liberia. This land would be the place of repatriation about which Garvey had spoken for nearly two decades. Elevan days after Garvey agreed to purchase the land, however, Firestone Tires (with the aid of the U.S. government) bought the land instead.

Negro Factories Corporation

Established on January 20, 1920, the Negro Factories Corporation (an offshoot of the UNIA) sought to create factories which would employ only Black people and produce commodities sold only to Black consumers. Garvey envisioned an all-Black economy which could supply Black consumers around the globe, and advocated independent Black grocery stores, restaurants, laundromats, tailor shops, millinery stores, and publishing houses. The Negro Factories Corporation gave Black people initiative, hope, and the secular identity required to prosper in American society.[1][2]

Black Star Line

Garvey announced the creation of the Black Star Line on June 23, 1919 to correlate with the back-to-Africa movement as a shipping company which would link Black communities in the U.S., Jamaica, Canada, Central America, and Africa. It was intended to transport Black labored goods, including raw materials and manufactured items, to Black consumers around the world. Garvey had to raise $500,000 to purchase the company's first ship, and sold stock only to Black people. Over 15,000 people saw the S.S. Frederick Douglass set sail on its first trip to Jamaica. The company folded in 1922, with net losses estimated at over $1,000,000.

Community-building

Jamaican Rastafaris began to immigrate to the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. Small, local, homogeneous communities sprang up in Philadelphia, Boston, Hartford, Miami, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Houston, and (most notably) New York City, where six Rastafari communities exist in its five boroughs. The most influential of the city's communities are in the Crown Heights and Bedford-Stuyvesant sections of Brooklyn. Local Rastafari communities generally consist of community centers, schools, tabernacles, and Rasta cultural stores.

See also

- Jamaican Americans
- Jamaican diaspora

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Chalice (pipe)

A **chalice**, also known as a **wisdom chalice** or **chillum chalice**, is a type of cannabis smoking pipe used most often by members of the Jamaican Rastafari movement. It is a type of water pipe used for smoking.

Chalice

Design

It is a type of water pipe with a hose or drawtube for inhaling; the water cools and filters the smoke. The hose provides additional airspace for cooling. A screen embedded in the crater protects against drawing in burning particles to clog the interior. The marijuana is finely cut and placed on top of a clay cone, called "kutchie".[1]

Spiritual practice

The word *chalice* (along other permutations such as *chalwa*, *chali*, etc.) is often used to refer to marijuana itself, which certain Rastafari consider to be of specific religious importance as they believe it is a gift from Jah.[1] The term "lick the chalice" refers to Rasta communing with Jah.[2][3] A group of practitioners gather in a communal meeting, known as "groundations," a prayer is said, and the chalice lit and passed counter-clockwise among the group.[4]

A bong-like chillum equipped with a water filtration chamber is sometimes referred to as a **chalice**, based on a quote from the Biblical book of Deuteronomy.[5] Thanks and praises are offered to Jah before smoking the chillum.[6]

See also

- Chillum (pipe)

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Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

The **Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church** (Amharic: የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን, romanized: *Yä-ityopp'ya ortodoks täwahədo betä krəstiyan*)[1] is the largest of the Oriental Orthodox Churches. One of the few Christian churches in Africa originating before European colonization of the continent,[5] the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church dates back to the Christianization of the Kingdom of Aksum in 330,[6] and has between 36 million and 51 million adherents in Ethiopia.[2][3][4] It is a founding member of the World Council of Churches.[7] The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is in communion with the other Oriental Orthodox churches (the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, and the Syriac Orthodox Church).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church had been administratively part of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria from the first half of the 4th century until 1959, when it was granted autocephaly with its own patriarch by Pope Cyril VI of Alexandria, Pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church.[8]

Tewahedo (Ge'ez: ተዋሕዶ *täwaḥədo*) is a Geʿez word meaning "united as one." This word refers to the Oriental Orthodox belief in Miaphysitism, meaning one perfectly unified nature of Christ; i.e., a complete union of the divine and human natures into one nature is self-evident to accomplish the divine salvation of mankind, as opposed to the "two natures of Christ" belief commonly held by the Latin and Eastern Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, and most other Protestant churches. The Oriental Orthodox Churches adhere to a miaphysite Christological view followed by Cyril of Alexandria, the leading protagonist in the Christological debates of the 4th

Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን[1]

Yä-ityopp'ya ortodoks täwahədo betäkrəstyan

Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa, the seat of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Abbreviation	EOTC
Classification	Eastern Christianity
Orientation	Oriental Orthodoxy
Scripture	Orthodox Tewahedo Bible
Theology	Miaphysitism
Polity	Episcopal
Patriarch	Mathias
Region	Ethiopia and Ethiopian diaspora
Language	Geʿez, Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, Gurage
Liturgy	Alexandrian
Headquarters	Holy Trinity Cathedral, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Founder	Frumentius according to Ethiopian Orthodox tradition
Origin	4th century Kingdom of Aksum
Independence	1959, from Coptic Orthodox Church
Separations	American synod-in-exile (1991–2018) Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church (1991)

	Tigrayan Orthodox Tewahedo Church (2021)
Members	36 million[2][3]–51 million[4] in Ethiopia
Other name(s)	*Ethiopian Orthodox Church*

and 5th centuries, who advocated "mia physis tou Theo logou sesarkōmenē", or "one (mia) nature of the Word of God incarnate" (μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη) and a hypostatic union (ἕνωσις καθ' ὑπόστασιν, *henōsis kath hypostasis*).[9][10] The distinction of this stance was that the incarnate Christ has one nature, but that one nature is of the two natures, divine and human, and retains all the characteristics of both after the union.

Miaphysitism holds that in the one person of Jesus Christ, divinity and humanity are united in one (μία, *mia*) nature (φύσις - "physis") without separation, without confusion, without alteration and without mixing where Christ is consubstantial with God the Father.[11] Around 500 bishops within the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem refused to accept the dyophysitism (two natures) doctrine decreed by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, an incident that resulted in the second major split in the main body of the Catholic-Orthodox Church in the Roman Empire.[12]

Name

Tewahedo (Ge'ez: ተዋሕዶ *täwaḥədo*) is a Geʿez word meaning "being made one" or "unified" (see also the Arabic word Tawhid). This word refers to the Oriental Orthodox belief in the one composite unified nature of Christ; i.e., a belief that a complete, natural union of the divine and human natures into one is self-evident to accomplish the divine salvation of humankind. This is in contrast to the "two natures of Christ" belief (unmixed, but unseparated divine and human natures, called the hypostatic union) which is held by the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The Oriental Orthodox Churches are known as "non-Chalcedonian", and, sometimes by outsiders as "monophysite" (meaning "One Single Nature", in allusion to Jesus Christ). However, these churches themselves describe their Christology as miaphysite,[13][14] meaning "one united nature" about Jesus (the Greek equivalent of "Tewahedo").

History

Origins

John Chrysostom speaks of the "Ethiopians present in Jerusalem" as being able to understand the preaching of Peter in Acts, 2:38.[15] Possible missions of some of the Apostles in the lands now called Ethiopia is also reported as early as the 4th century. Socrates of Constantinople includes Ethiopia in his list as one of the regions preached by Matthew the Apostle,[16] where a specific mention of "Ethiopia south of the Caspian Sea" can be confirmed in some traditions such as the Roman Catholic Church among others.[17] Ethiopian Church tradition tells that Bartholomew accompanied Matthew in a mission which lasted for at least three months.[15] Paintings depicting these missions can be seen in the Church of St. Matthew found in the Province of Pisa, in northern Italy portrayed by Francesco Trevisan (1650–1740) and Marco Benefial (1688–1764).[18]

The earliest account of an Ethiopian converted to the faith in the New Testament books is a royal official baptized by Philip the Evangelist (distinct from Philip the Apostle), one of the seven deacons (Acts, 8:26–27):

> Then the angel of the Lord said to Philip, Start out and go south to the road that leads down from Jerusalem to Gaza. So he set out and was on his way when he caught sight of an Ethiopian. This man was a eunuch, a high official of the Kandake (Candace) Queen of Ethiopia in charge of all her treasure. (Acts, 8:26–27)

Ethiopian Orthodox icon depicting Saint George, the Crucifixion, and the Virgin Mary

The passage continues by describing how Philip helped the Ethiopian treasurer understand a passage from the Book of Isaiah that the Ethiopian was reading. After Philip interpreted the passage as prophecy referring to Jesus Christ, the Ethiopian requested that Philip baptize him, and Philip did so. The Ethiopic version of this verse reads "Hendeke" (ህንደኬ); Queen Gersamot Hendeke VII was the Queen of Ethiopia from c. 42 to 52. Where the possibility of gospel missions by the Ethiopian eunuch cannot be directly inferred from the Books of the New Testament, Irenaeus of Lyons around 180 AD writes that "Simon Backos" preached the good news in his homeland outlining also the theme of his preaching as being the coming in flesh of God that "was preached to you all before."[19] The same kind of witness is shared by 3rd and 4th century writers such as Eusebius of Caesarea[20] and Origen of Alexandria.[15]

Coin of King Ezana, under whom Early Christianity became the established church of the Kingdom of Aksum

Early Christianity became the established church of the Ethiopian Axumite Kingdom under king Ezana in the 4th century when priesthood and the sacraments were brought for the first time through a Syrian Greek named Frumentius, known by the local population in Ethiopia as "Selama, Kesaté Birhan" ("Father of Peace, Revealer of Light"). As a youth, Frumentius had been shipwrecked with his brother Aedesius on the Eritrean coast. The brothers managed to be brought to the royal court, where they rose to positions of influence and baptized Emperor Ezana. Frumentius is also believed to have established the first monastery in Ethiopia, named Dabba Selama after him. In 2016, archaeologists excavated a 4th-century AD basilica (radio-carbon dated) in northeastern Ethiopia at a site called Beta Samati. This is the earliest known physical evidence of a church in sub-Saharan Africa.[5]

Middle Ages

Union with the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria continued after the Arab conquest of Egypt. Abu Saleh records in the 12th century that the patriarch always sent letters twice a year to the kings of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and Nubia, until Al Hakim stopped the practice. Cyril, 67th patriarch, sent Severus as bishop, with orders to put down polygamy and to enforce the observance of canonical consecration for all churches. These examples show the close relations of the two churches throughout the Middle Ages.[21] In 1439, in the reign of Zara Yaqob, a religious discussion between Giyorgis and a French visitor led to the dispatch of an embassy from Ethiopia to the Vatican.[21][22]

Late 17th century portrait of Giyorgis by Baselyos

Jesuit interim

The period of Jesuit influence, which broke the connection with Egypt, began a new chapter in church history. The initiative in Roman Catholic missions to Ethiopia was taken not by Rome, but by Portugal, in the course of a conflict with the Muslim Ottoman Empire and the Sultanate of Adal for the command of the trade route to India via the Red Sea.[23]

In 1507, Mateus, or Matthew, an Armenian, had been sent as an Ethiopian envoy to Portugal. In 1520, an embassy under Dom Rodrigo de Lima landed in Ethiopia. An interesting account of the Portuguese mission, which lasted for several years, was written by Francisco Álvares, its chaplain.[24]

Later, Ignatius Loyola wished to take up the task of conversion, but was forbidden to do so. Instead, the pope sent out João Nunes Barreto as patriarch of the East Indies, with Andrés de Oviedo as bishop; and from Goa envoys went to Ethiopia, followed by Oviedo himself, to secure the king's adherence to Rome. After repeated failures some measure of success was achieved under Emperor Susenyos I, but not until 1624 did the Emperor make formal submission to the pope.[24] Susenyos made Roman Catholicism the official state religion but was met with heavy resistance by his subjects and by the authorities of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and eventually had to abdicate in 1632 in favour of his son, Fasilides, who promptly restored Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity as the state religion. He then in 1633 expelled the Jesuits, and in 1665 Fasilides ordered that all Jesuit books (the Books of the Franks) be burned.

Influence on the Reformation

David Daniels has suggested that the Ethiopian Church has had a stronger impact on the Reformation than most scholars acknowledge. For Martin Luther, who spearheaded the Reformation, Daniels says "the Ethiopian Church conferred legitimacy on Luther's emerging Protestant vision of a church outside the authority of the Roman Catholic papacy" as it was "an ancient church with direct ties to the apostles".[25] According to Daniels, Martin Luther saw that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church practiced elements of faith including "communion under both kinds, vernacular Scriptures, and married clergy" and these practices became customary in the Lutheran churches. The Ethiopian church also rejected papal supremacy, purgatory and indulgences, which the Lutherans disagreed with, and thus for Luther, the Ethiopian church was the "true forerunner of Protestantism".[25] Luther believed that the Ethiopian church kept true apostolic practices which the Lutherans would adopt through reading the scriptures.[26]

Icon of Samuel of Waldebba, a 15th-century Ethiopian monk and ascetic of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church

In 1534, a cleric of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Michael the Deacon, met with Martin Luther and affirmed the Augsburg Confession, saying "This is a good creed, that is, faith".[27][25] In addition, Martin Luther stated that the Lutheran Mass agreed with that used by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.[25] As a result, Luther invited the Ethiopian church and Michael to full fellowship.[25][28]

Recent history

Engraving of Abuna Salama III, head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (1841–1867)

In more modern times, the Ethiopian Church has experienced a series of developments. The 19th century witnessed the publication of an Amharic translation of the Bible. Largely the work of Abu Rumi over ten years in Cairo, this version, with some changes, held sway until Emperor Haile Selassie ordered a new translation which appeared in 1960/1.[29] Haile Selassie also played a prominent role in further reforms of the church, which included encouraging the distribution of Abu Rumi's translation throughout Ethiopia,[30] as well as his promotion of improved education of clergy, a significant step in the Emperor's effort being the founding of the Theological College of the Holy Trinity Church in December 1944.[31] A third development came after Haile Selassie's restoration to Ethiopia, when he issued, on 30 November, Decree Number 2 of 1942, a new law reforming the church. The primary objectives of this decree were to put the finances of the church in order, to create a central fund for its activities, and to set forth requirements for the appointment of clergy—which had been fairly lax until then.[32]

The Coptic and Ethiopian churches reached an agreement on 13 July 1948, that led to autocephaly for the Ethiopian Church. Five bishops were immediately consecrated by the Coptic Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of All Africa, empowered to elect a new patriarch for their church, and the successor to Qerellos IV would have the power to consecrate new bishops.[33] This promotion was completed when Coptic Orthodox Pope Joseph II consecrated an Ethiopian-born Archbishop, Abuna Basilios, 14 January 1951. Then in 1959, Pope Cyril VI of Alexandria crowned Basilios as the first Patriarch of Ethiopia.

An Ethiopian Orthodox priest displays the processional crosses.

Basilios died in 1970, and was succeeded that year by Tewophilos. With the fall of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church was disestablished as the state church. The new Marxist government began nationalizing property (including land) owned by the church. Tewophilos was arrested in 1976 by the Marxist Derg military junta, and secretly executed in 1979. The government ordered the church to elect a new Patriarch, and Takla Haymanot was enthroned. The Coptic Orthodox Church refused to recognize the election and enthronement of Tekle Haymanot on the grounds that the Synod of the Ethiopian Church had not removed Tewophilos and that the government had not publicly acknowledged his death, and he was thus still the legitimate Patriarch of Ethiopia. Formal relations between the two churches were halted, although they remained in communion with each other. Formal relations between the two churches resumed on July 13, 2007.[34]

Tekla Haymanot proved to be much less accommodating to the Derg regime than it had expected, and so when the patriarch died in 1988, a new patriarch with closer ties to the regime was sought. The Archbishop of Gondar, a member of the Derg-era Ethiopian Parliament, was elected and enthroned as Abuna Merkorios. Following the fall of the Derg regime in 1991, and the coming to power of the EPRDF government, Merkorios abdicated under public pressure. The church then elected a new Patriarch, Paulos, in 1992 who was recognized by the Coptic Orthodox Pope of Alexandria. The former Merkorios then fled abroad, and announced from exile that his abdication had been made under duress and thus he was still the legitimate Patriarch of Ethiopia. Several bishops also went into exile and formed a break-away alternate synod.[35] The Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church was granted autocephaly from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church on 28 September 1993 following ratification by Coptic church Patriarch Shenouda III, but the two remain in full communion. This split drew criticism from those that saw it as a disintegration of Ethiopia's spiritual heritage.[36]

There are many Ethiopian Orthodox churches located throughout the United States and other countries to which Ethiopians have migrated (Archbishop Yesehaq 1997).

Patriarch Paulos died on 16 August 2012. On 28 February 2013, a college of electors assembled in Addis Ababa and elected Mathias to be the 6th Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.[37]

On 25 July 2018, delegates from the Patriarchate in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and those in the United States, declared reunification in Washington, D.C. Declaring the end of a 26-year-old schism, the church announced that it acknowledges two Patriarchs, Merkorios, Fourth Patriarch of Ethiopia and Mathias I, Sixth Patriarch and Catholicos of Ethiopia, Archbishop of Axum and Ichege of the See of Saint Taklehaimanot.[38] After the reunification of the church fathers Abune Merkorios,the fourth Patriarch of Ethiopia died on 3 March 2022.[39]

On 22 January 2023, an attempt to overthrow Abune Mathias was failed following a secret formation of new 26-made bishop Synod led by Abune Sawiros in Oromia Region diocese, such as in Haro Beale Wold Church in Woliso, and nine bishops of diocese outside the region. The Patriarchate called it an

"illegal appointment", where Abune Mathias decried it as "great event that has targeted the church".[40][41] After not apologising for the illegal ordination, three Archbishops were excommunicated by the Holy Synod on 26 January.[42] On 31 January 2023, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed convened a discussion surrounding the incident where he responded that he was ready to resolve the conflict. The speech led backlash from the Holy Synod and accused his government of meddling in the Church in reference to separation of church and state in the Article 11 of the FDRE Constitution.[43][44]

On 4 February, three people were reportedly killed in Shashemene by the Oromia Special Forces. According Tewahedo Media Center (TMC), two Orthodox youth were killed and four others were injured by the Oromo Special Forces. Abune Henok, Archbishop of Addis Ababa Diocese described it as "shameful and heart-wrenching".[45] In response to grievance, numerous celebrities expressed their solidarity to the Church via social media and other platforms and donned black clothing during three-days Fast of Nineveh.[46][47] On 9 February, the government imposed restrictions on social sites targeted to Facebook, Messenger, Telegram and TikTok.[48][49] On the next day, the delegation of Synod held an urgent meeting with Abiy at his office, which resulted in condemnation of the proclaimed Oromia Synod from Abiy.[50] On 12 February, a nationwide protest was postponed. Abune Petros, the Secretary of the Holy Synod announced that the demonstration would be postponed following peaceful talks with the Prime Minister and a government agreement to solve the problem.[51] On 15 February, the Church reached an agreement with the illegally ordinated synod.[52] The government lifted the internet ban after five months on 17 July.[53]

Traditions

Inside Debre Sema'it village rock church

The faith and practice of Orthodox Ethiopian Christians include elements from Miaphysite Christianity as it has developed in Ethiopia over the centuries. Christian beliefs include belief in God (in Geʿez / Amharic, *'Egziabeher*, lit. "Lord of the Universe"), veneration of the Virgin Mary, the angels, and the saints, besides others. According to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church itself, there are no non-Christian elements in the religion other than those from the Old Testament, or *Həggä 'Orät* (ሕገ ኦሪት), to which are added those from the New Testament, or *Həggä Wongel* (ሕገ ወንጌል).[54] A hierarchy of *K'ədusan* ቅዱሳን (angelic messengers and saints) conveys the prayers of the faithful to God and carries out the divine will, so when an Ethiopian Christian is in difficulty, he or she appeals to them as well as to God. In more formal and regular rituals, priests communicate on behalf of the community, and only priests may enter the inner sanctum of the usually circular or octagonal church where the tabot ("ark") dedicated to the church's patron saint is housed.[55] On important religious holidays, the tabot is carried on the head of a priest and escorted in procession outside the church. It is the tabot, not the church, which is consecrated. At many services, most parish members remain in the outer ring, where debteras sing hymns and dance.[56]

The Eucharist is given only to those who feel pure, have fasted regularly, and have, in general, properly conducted themselves.[55] In practice, communion is mainly limited to young children and the elderly; those who are at a sexually active age or who have sexual desires generally do not receive the Eucharist.

Worshipers receiving communion may enter the middle ring of the church to do so.[55]

The Ethiopian Orthodox church is Trinitarian,[57] maintaining the Orthodox teaching, formalised at the council of Nicea, that God is united in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This concept is known as *səllase* (ሥላሴ), Geʿez for "Trinity".

Daily services constitute only a small part of an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian's religious observance. Several holy days require prolonged services, singing and dancing, and feasting.

Priests and deacons conducting a church liturgy service at Debre Meheret Kedus Michael Ethiopian Orthodox Cathedral, Washington, DC, US

Fast days

An important religious requirement, however, is the keeping of fast days, during which adherents abstain from consuming meat and animal products, and refrain from sexual activity.[55][58][59] The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has 250 fasting days, 180 of which are obligatory for laypeople, not just monks and priests, when vegan food is eaten by the faithful. During the 40-day Advent fast, only one vegan meal is allowed per day.[60]

Mid-20th century processional cross from the Amhara Region, typically carried on long poles in Ethiopian Orthodox religious processions

1. Fast for Hudadi or Abiye Tsome [ሁዳዴ/ዓብይ ጾም] (Great Lent), 55 days prior to Easter (*Fasika*).[61][62] This fast is divided into three separate periods: Tsome Hirkal (ጾመ ህርቃል), eight days commemorating Heraclius; Tsome Arba (ጾመ አርባ), forty days of Lent; and Tsome Himamat (ጾመ ሕማማት), seven days commemorating Holy Week.[61][62][63]
2. Fast of the Apostles, 10–40 days, which the Apostles kept after they had received the Holy Spirit. It begins after Pentecost.
3. The fast Tsome Dihnet (ጾመ ድህነት), which is on Wednesdays in commemoration of the plot organized to kill Jesus Christ by Caiaphas and the members of the house of the high priest and Fridays in commemoration of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (starts on Wednesday after Pentecost and spans up to Easter, in other words all Wednesdays and Fridays except during 50 days after Easter).[55]
4. The fast of Dormition, 16 days.
5. The fast preceding Christmas, 40 days (Advent). It begins with Sibket on 15th Hedar and ends on Christmas Eve with the feast of Gena and the 29th of Tahsas and 28th if the year is preceded by leap year.
6. The Fast of Nineveh, commemorating the preaching of Jonah. It comes on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the third week before Lent.
7. The *gahad* of Timkat (Epiphany), fast on the eve of Epiphany.

In addition to standard holy days, most Christians observe many saints' days. A man might give a small feast on his personal saint's day. The local voluntary association (called the *maheber*) connected with each church honours its patron saint with a special service and a feast two or three times a year.[56]

Monasticism

An Ethiopian Orthodox ceremony at Fasilides' Bath in Gondar, Ethiopia, celebrating *Timkat* (Epiphany)

Exorcism

Priests intervene and perform exorcisms on behalf of those believed to be afflicted by demons or *buda*. According to a 2010 Pew Research Center study, 74% of Christians in Ethiopia report having experienced or witnessed an exorcism.[64] Demon-possessed persons are brought to a church or prayer meeting.[65] Often, when an ill person has not responded to modern medical treatment, the affliction is attributed to demons.[65] Unusual or especially perverse deeds, particularly when performed in public, are symptomatic of a demoniac.[65] Superhuman strength—such as breaking one's bindings, as described in the New Testament accounts—along with glossolalia are observed in the afflicted.[65] Amsalu Geleta, in a modern case study, relates elements that are common to Ethiopian Christian exorcisms:

Inda Abba Hadera holy water in Inda Sillasie

> It includes singing praise and victory songs, reading from the Scripture, prayer and confronting the spirit in the name of Jesus. Dialogue with the spirit is another important part of the exorcism ceremony. It helps the counsellor (exorcist) to know how the spirit was operating in the life of the demoniac. The signs and events mentioned by the spirit are affirmed by the victim after deliverance.[65]

The exorcism is not always successful, and Geleta notes another instance in which the usual methods were unsuccessful, and the demons apparently left the subject at a later time. In any event, "in all cases the spirit is commanded in no other name than the name of Jesus."[65]

Biblical canon

The Old Testament Books:

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy
6. Joshua
7. Judges
8. Ruth

9. 1st & 2nd Samuel
10. 1st & 2nd Kings
11. 1st Chronicles
12. 2nd Chronicles (incl. Prayer of Manasseh)
13. Jubilees
14. Enoch
15. 1st & 2nd Esdras
16. 3rd Esdras & Ezra Sutuel
17. Tobit
18. Judith
19. Esther (with additions)
20. 1st Meqabyan*
21. 2nd & 3rd Meqabyan
22. Josippon
23. Job
24. Psalms (incl. Psalm 151)
25. Proverbs
26. Reproof
27. Ecclesiastes
28. Song of Solomon
29. Wisdom of Solomon
30. Ecclesiasticus
31. Isaiah
32. Jeremiah (incl. Lamentations, 1st Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, & 4th Baruch)
33. Ezekiel
34. Daniel (with additions, incl. Susanna & Bel and the Dragon)
35. Hosea
36. Joel
37. Amos
38. Obadiah
39. Jonah
40. Micah
41. Nahum
42. Habakkuk
43. Zephaniah
44. Haggai
45. Zechariah
46. Malachi

The New Testament Books:

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John
5. Acts

6. Romans
7. 1st Corinthians
8. 2nd Corinthians
9. Galatians
10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
13. 1st Thessalonians
14. 2nd Thessalonians
15. 1st Timothy
16. 2nd Timothy
17. Titus
18. Philemon
19. Hebrews
20. James
21. 1st Peter
22. 2nd Peter
23. 1st John
24. 2nd John
25. 3rd John
26. Jude
27. Revelation
28. 1st Sinodos
29. 2nd Sinodos
30. 3rd Sinodos
31. 4th Sinodos
32. 1st Covenant
33. 2nd Covenant
34. Ethiopic Clement
35. Didascalia

Language

The divine services of the Ethiopian Church are celebrated in Geʿez, which has been the liturgical language of the church at least since the arrival of the Nine Saints (Pantelewon, Gerima (Isaac, or Yeshaq), Aftse, Guba, Alef, Yem'ata, Liqanos, and Sehma), who are believed to have fled persecution by the Byzantine Empire after the Council of Chalcedon (451).[66] The Greek Septuagint was the version of the Old Testament originally translated into Ge'ez, but later revisions show clear evidence of the use of Hebrew, Syriac and Arabic sources. The first translation into a modern vernacular was done in the 19th century by a man usually known as Abu Rumi (died 1819). Later, Haile Selassie sponsored Amharic translations of the Ge'ez Scriptures during his reign (1930–1974): one in 1935 before World War II and one afterwards (1960–1961).[67] Sermons today are usually delivered in the local language.

Architecture

There are many monolithic (rock-hewn) churches in Ethiopia, most famously eleven churches at Lalibela. Besides these, two main types of architecture are found—one basilican, the other native. The Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion at Axum is an example of the basilican design, though the early basilicas are nearly all in ruin. These examples show the influence of the architects who, in the 6th century, built the basilicas at Sanʿāʾ and elsewhere in the Arabian Peninsula. There are two forms of native churches: one oblong, traditionally found in Tigray; the other circular, traditionally found in Amhara and Shewa (though either style may be found elsewhere). In both forms, the sanctuary is square and stands clear in the centre, and the arrangements are based on Jewish tradition. Walls and ceilings are adorned with frescoes. A courtyard, circular or rectangular, surrounds the body of the church. Modern Ethiopian churches may incorporate the basilican or native styles and use contemporary construction techniques and materials. In rural areas, the church and outer court are often thatched, with mud-built walls. The church buildings are typically surrounded by a forested area, acting as a reservoir of biodiversity in otherwise de-forested parts of the country.[68][69][24]

Drawing of the Virgin Mary 'with her beloved son' in pencil and ink, from a manuscript copy of Weddasé Māryām, c. 1875

Ethiopian Orthodox celebration of Meskel (Geʿez for "cross")

Ark of the Covenant

The Ethiopian Church claims that one of its churches, Our Lady Mary of Zion, is host to the original Ark of the Covenant that Moses carried with the Israelites during the Exodus. Only one priest is allowed into the building where the Ark is located, ostensibly due to biblical warnings of danger. As a result, international scholars doubt that the original Ark is truly there.

The Church of Saint George, a monolithic church in Lalibela

Throughout Ethiopia, Orthodox churches are not considered churches until the local bishop gives them a *tabot*, a replica of the original Ark of the Covenant.[70][71] The *tabot* is at least six inches (15 cm) square, and it is made of either alabaster, marble, or wood (see acacia). It is always kept in ornate coverings on the altar.[70] Only priests are allowed to see or touch the *tabot*.[71][72] In an elaborate procession, the *tabot* is carried around the outside of the church amid joyful song on the feast day of that particular church's namesake.[70] On the great Feast of T'imk'et, known as Epiphany or Theophany in Europe, a group of churches send their *tabot* to celebrate the occasion at a common location where a pool of water or a river is to be found.[73]

Similarities to Judaism and Islam

The Chapel of the Tablet at the Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion is said to house the original Ark of the Covenant.

The Ethiopian Church places a heavier emphasis on Old Testament teachings than one might find in other churches. Women are prohibited from entering the church temple during menstruation;[74] they are also expected to cover their hair with a large scarf (or *shash*) while in church, as described in 1 Corinthians, chapter 11. As with Orthodox synagogues, men and women sit separately in the Ethiopian church, with men on the left and women on the right (when facing the altar).[75] Mandated hair coverings for women and separation of the sexes in churches is uncommon in other Christian traditions; but this is the case in some sects of Islam and Judaism.[76]

The Ethiopian Church, Jerusalem

Before praying, the Ethiopian Orthodox remove their shoes in order to acknowledge that one is offering prayer before a holy God.[77] Ethiopian Orthodox worshippers remove their shoes when entering a church temple,[75] in accordance with Exodus 3:5 (in which Moses, while viewing the burning bush, was commanded to remove his shoes while standing on holy ground). Furthermore, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is known to observe the seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday, or the lesser Sabbath), in addition to the Lord's Day (Sunday, or the Christian Sabbath),[78] recognizing both to be holy days of joy, prayer, and contemplation, although more emphasis, because of the Resurrection of Christ, is laid upon Sunday. While the Ethiopian Church is known for this practice, it is neither an innovation nor unique to it,[79] deriving from the Apostolic Constitutions and the Apostolic Canons[80][81] the former of which without the Apostolic Canons included is in the church's 81-book canon as the *Didascalia*. The nature of the Sabbath only became a doctrinal dispute in the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria in the centuries leading up to the issue being rectified by Ewostatewos.[82] The emperor Gelawdewos in his *Confession*, an apologia of traditional beliefs and practices says "we do not honour it as the Jews do... but we so honour it that we celebrate thereon the Eucharist and have love-feasts, even as our Fathers the Apostles have taught us in the Didascalia".[83]

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church calls for male circumcision, with near-universal prevalence among Orthodox men in Ethiopia.[84][85][86][87] The Ethiopian Orthodox practice circumcision as a rite of passage, and they circumcise their sons "anywhere from the first week of life to the first few year".[88]

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church prescribes several kinds of hand washing and traditionally follow rituals that are similar to Jewish netilat yadayim, for example after leaving the latrine, lavatory or bathhouse, or before prayer, or after eating a meal.[89] The Ethiopian Orthodox Church observes days of ritual purification.[90][91] People who are ritually unclean may approach the church but are not permitted to enter it; they instead stand near the church door and pray during the liturgy.[92]

Rugare Rukuni and Erna Oliver identify the Nine Saints as Jewish Christians, and attribute the Judaic character of Ethiopian Christianity, in part, to their influence.[93]:6,8

Debtera

A debtera is an itinerant lay man trained by the Ethiopian Church to function principally as a scribe or cantor, equivalent to minor orders. These men may act as deacons or exorcists, and the role of folk healer is commonly undertaken as well. Folklore and legends ascribe the role of magician to the debtera as well.[94]

A painting of performing debteras

Music

The music of Ethiopian Orthodox Church traced back to Saint Yared, who composed Zema or "chant", which divided into three modes: Geʿez (ordinary days), Ezel (fast days and Lent) and Araray (principal feasts).[95] It is important to Ethiopian liturgy and divided into fourteen Anaphoras, the normal use being of the Twelve Apostles. In ancient times, there were six Anaphoras used by many monasteries.[96]

Ethiopian Orthodox priests dancing during 2015 Timkat celebration

Patriarch-Catholicoi, archbishops and bishops

Patriarch-Catholicos

Since 1959, when the church was granted autocephaly by Cyril VI, Pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, an Ethiopian Patriarch-Catholicos of Eritrea also carrying the title of Abuna is the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The Abuna is officially known as *Patriarch and Catholicos of Ethiopia, Archbishop of Axum and Ichege of the See of Saint Taklahaimanot*. The incumbent head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is Mathias who acceded to this position on 28 February 2013.

Archbishops and bishops

Ethiopia:

- Mathias, Patriarch and Head of all Archbishops of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Canada:

- Demetrios, archbishop of Eastern Canada
- Mekarios, Archbishop of Western Canada [97]

Middle East:

- Dimetros, Archbishop of the United Arab Emirates and its surrounding areas
- Kewestos, Archbishop of Jerusalem[98]

South America:

- Thaddaeus, archbishop of the Caribbean and Latin America

United States:

- Fanuel, archbishop of Washington, D.C.[99]
- Petros, archbishop of New York and its surrounding areas. [100]

- Philipos, archbishop of Pennsylvania and Head of Eyesus Church in Baltimore
- Yaekob, archbishop of Georgia and its surrounding areas (Southeastern States)
- Natnael, archbishop of Minnesota and its surrounding areas.
- Natnael, archbishop of Colorado and surrounding areas
- Selama, archbishop of Ohio
- Sawiros, archbishop of Texas
- Michael, archbishop of Northern California
- Barnabas, archbishop of Southern California

Western Europe:

- Yosef, Archbishop of Europe, in Rome.

Australia & New Zealand:

- Lukas, Archbishop of Australia & New Zealand

Eparchies

The current eparchies of the church include:[101]

- Awassa (Sidama)
- Axum
- Ambo
- Arsi
- Assosa
- Afar
- Bale Gobe
- Wollega
- North Wollo
- South Wollo (Dessie)
- Gambela
- West Gojjam (Bahr Dar)
- East Gojjam (Debre Markos)
- North Gondar
- South Gondar (Debre Tabor)
- Jerusalem
- Illubabor
- Jigjiga
- Jimma
- Kembata
- Methara
- Mizan Teferi (Kaffa)
- Negele-Borena
- Ogaden (Somali Region)
- Omo
- Selalya
- East Tigray
- West Tigray
- Central Tigray (Me'kele)
- South Tigray

- Khartoum and Nubia
- Shewa (Adama)
- North Shoa (Debre Berhan)
- Washington, D.C., and surrounding areas
- Eastern Canada
- Western Canada
- Trinidad and Latin America
- Port-au-Prince, Haiti Caribbean Islands Area

See also

Christianity portal

Ethiopia portal

Africa portal

- Abuna
- Biblical law in Christianity
- Christianity and Judaism
- Christian observances of Jewish holidays
- Christianity in Ethiopia
- Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church
- Ethiopian Catholic Church
- Ethiopian chant
- Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Exile
- List of abunas of Ethiopia
- List of calendar of saints in the Orthodox Tewahedo
- Oriental Orthodox Church
- Mahibere Kidusan

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External links

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Ites, Gold and Green

In Rastafari, "Ites, gold and green" (often written as Ice, Gold and Green), refers to the colours associated with the Rastafari movement. The colours ites (red), gold (yellow) and green hold symbolic significance for Rastafarians and represent different aspects of their beliefs and identity.

Ites

In Jamaican Patois the pronunciation of the letter "H" can vary due to dialects, many Jamaican dialects omit or pronounce the "H" sound less prominently than other English dialects, and is embraced as part of the Jamaican linguistic identity. *Ites* is a dialect pronunciation of 'heights', for example, 'Iya Ites' (or 'Iyaites') refers to 'higher heights'.[1]

Additionally, *Ites*, in Jamaican slang, may refer to the colour red in Rastafari.[2] Red is also associated with the Lion of Judah and the bloodshed and sacrifices endured by the African people throughout slavery and colonialism.[3] The symbolism of the colour red can vary among different individuals and Rastafarian groups, and interpretations of colours can have personal or cultural variations.

Gold

Gold (or yellow) represents the wealth and prosperity of Africa, as well as the spiritual and material wealth that Rastafarians aim to achieve. It symbolizes the richness of the African heritage, including their history, culture, and the achievements of African people.

Green

Green represents the natural beauty of Ethiopia, which is highly revered in Rastafari. Moreover, green signifies the lushness and hope of the Earth namely that of the Promised Land of Ethiopia. Green also symbolizes growth, life, and the environment.

In music

- Johnny Clarke - *Ites Green & Gold* (1976)
- Al Campbell - *Ites Gold & Green* (2000)
- Kelissa - *Ites, Green and Gold* (2016)
- Naram - *Ites, Green & Gold* (ft General Jah Mikey) (2018)
- Rob Syemonne - *Ice Gold n Green* (2019)
- Sistah Jahia - *Ice Gold and Green* (2022)

See also

Jamaica portal

Languages portal

- English-based creole languages
- Jamaican English
- Rastafarian vocabulary

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Rastacap

Rastafari in Barbados wearing a rastacap

The **rastacap** or tam is a tall (depending on the user's hair length), round, crocheted cap. It is most commonly associated with the pat as a way for Rastafari (Rastas) and others with dreadlocks to tuck their hair away, but may be worn for religious reasons by Rastafari. It is sometimes erroneously referred to as a "Tam", a different kind of cap loosely ancestral to the rastacap. Other Caribbean terms for the rastacap include: rastafar (sometimes with a silent -*r*), toppa, toppah, and simply cap or hat.

In construction, the rastacap is similar to the tuque, but much larger. Most commonly crocheted, the hat can also be knit, woven, sewn, or constructed in a number of other ways. Examples with sun-cured palm leaves woven into the hat exist; this yields a semi-rigid design which a skilled islander can form rapidly. Rastacaps range in size and shape, as well as uses. People with dreadlocks and non-dreaded people alike wear rastacaps for fashion, convenience, religion, socio-political statement, and a number of other reasons. Some Rastas also wear rastacaps and other forms of headdress as a religious headcovering.

See also

- List of hat styles

References

External links

- Media related to Rastacaps at Wikimedia Commons

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Roots reggae

Roots reggae is a subgenre of reggae that deals with the everyday lives and aspirations of Africans and those in the African Diaspora, including the spiritual side of Rastafari, black liberation, revolution and the honouring of God, called Jah by Rastafarians.[1] It is identified with the life of the ghetto sufferer,[2] and the rural poor. Lyrical themes include spirituality and religion, struggles by artists, poverty, black pride, social issues, resistance to fascism, capitalism, corrupt government and racial oppression. A spiritual repatriation to Africa is a common theme in roots reggae.

Roots reggae	
Stylistic origins	Riddim · reggae · ska · rocksteady · Nyabinghi
Cultural origins	Jamaica
Derivative forms	Dub
Other topics	
Rastafari · Haile Selassie	

History

The increasing influence of the Rastafari movement after the visit of Haile Selassie to Jamaica in 1966 played a major part in the development of roots reggae, with spiritual themes becoming more common in reggae lyrics in the late 1960s.[1] Important early roots reggae releases included Winston Holness's "Blood & Fire" (1970) and Yabby You's "Conquering Lion" (1972).[1] Political unrest also played its part, with the 1972 election campaign of Michael Manley targeting the support of Jamaica's ghetto communities.[1] Increasing violence associated with the opposing political parties was also a common lyrical theme, with tracks such as Junior Murvin's "Police & Thieves" and Culture's "Two Sevens Clash".[1]

The heyday of roots reggae is usually considered the latter half of the 1970s – with artists such as The Abyssinians, Johnny Clarke, Cornell Campbell, Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Burning Spear, Dennis Brown, Max Romeo, Horace Andy, Hugh Mundell, and Lincoln Thompson, and groups like Black Uhuru, Steel Pulse, Israel Vibration, The Gladiators and Culture – teaming up with producers such as Lee 'Scratch' Perry, Bunny Lee, Joseph Hoo Kim and Coxsone Dodd. The Sound system (Jamaican) was of unequalled importance in spreading reggae and dub, with the diaspora represented by leading sound system operators such as Jah Shaka, who, in turn, went on to profoundly influence many in Britain and the world, influencing early punk rock musicians in London, as well as definitively shaping later bass dominated genres such as Jungle music and Drum and bass. The experimental pioneering of such producers within often-restricted technological parameters gave birth to dub, and is seen by some music historians as one of the earliest (albeit analogue) contributions to modern dance music production techniques.

Roots reggae became popular in Europe in the 1970s, especially among left-wing white youths in Western Europe.[3] The Wailers' popularity in Europe opened the door for other artists, and roots reggae artists became popular with punk rock fans.[1] When Jamaicans turned to dancehall, a lot of black, white and mixed roots reggae bands were formed in Europe.[1] Later on roots reggae made its way into the

United States with the migration of Jamaicans to New York. This took place with the reforms made to American immigration laws in the early 1960s. Along with localised traditions and food, reggae music was inevitably brought as well, contributing to the New York City soundscape, such as the development of hip hop.[4]

While roots reggae was largely overtaken in popularity in Jamaica by dancehall, several artists from the original era, such as Culture, Burning Spear, and Israel Vibration continued to produce roots reggae, and artists like Beres Hammond and Freddie McGregor continued the use of roots reggae, as a musical style and thematically, through the 1980s. In the 1990s younger Jamaican artists became interested in the Rastafari movement and began incorporating roots themes into their music. Most notable among the new generation of "conscious" artists was Garnett Silk, whose positive spiritual message and consistent use of roots and rocksteady riddims gave him cross generational appeal with Caribbean audiences. While other notable dancehall stars like Capleton and Buju Banton became devout Rastas and changed their musical direction as a result.[1] Other modern roots artists and bands also emerged at this time, including Luciano, Junior Kelly, Morgan Heritage, Anthony B, and Sizzla.[2]

Africa as myth

Similar to the oversimplification and limitations of the terminology *middle passage*, the roots reggae displays Africa as a mythical paradise that functions primarily as a motivating symbol, imagined origin, and semantic center. "More so even than earlier sounds, roots reggae always seemed to invite itself directly to Africa, brazenly insisting upon itself as the continent's primary echo, if not recursive mirror". The mythical Africa articulated in roots reggae is shaped by desire, nostalgia and trauma under the pressure of local Caribbean politics. While an imagined Africa is used as an inspiration for resistance and revolution against "Babylon" (corrupted capitalist colonial culture), Africa's actual complexity and contradictions are not investigated.[5]

Roots reggae vs. traditional reggae

Traditional reggae and roots reggae, a subgenre that evolved from traditional reggae, while sharing a common Jamaican heritage, exhibit distinct characteristics that set them apart. Traditional reggae encompasses diverse themes, including love, everyday life, and dancehall culture, whereas roots reggae tends to focus its lyrics on social consciousness.[2] Traditional reggae rhythms vary widely, featuring both upbeat and slower tunes. In contrast, roots reggae is marked by a deliberate one-drop rhythm and a slower tempo. Rooted in a deep social and political consciousness, its lyrics often tackle issues of poverty, oppression, and spirituality, influenced by the Rastafarian movement.[6] Musically, roots reggae maintains a specific sonic identity, characterised by deep basslines, skanking guitar patterns, and the inclusion of horns.[1] While these distinctions exist, the lines between reggae and roots reggae can be flexible, and the two genres share a significant overlap within the broader reggae musical landscape.

See also

- List of roots reggae artists

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External links

- Roots-Archives – Searchable database of Jamaican Roots Reggae albums from 1970 to 1985 (https://web.archive.org/web/20061107034802/http://www.roots-archives.com/)
- Strictly Vibes : Roots Vinyl Database (http://www.strictly-vibes.com)

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