



---

# WAS JESUS A JEW?

---



*FREDRICO HOLMES*  
*Jesusministries.co.uk*

All the materials available at "Jesusministries.co.uk" can be used, printed, reprinted, and passed on for teaching and or studying purposes. "Freely you have received, and so freely give" (Matthew 10:8)

## Was Jesus a Jew?

This might be a controversial question and as such it will have a controversial answer, but to understand the answer to this question, we need to first understand what it means to be a Jew.

A Jew is a person who practices the religion of Judaism or Abrahamic religion with the Torah as its foundation. This is however contrary to the teachings given in most Western Churches, and subliminally implied in the world of politics, which directly either teach or imply that Judaism is almost a nationality or in many extreme cases as a race, which has taken momentum during the past few decades.

Judaism is the same as Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism merely a religion that anyone can convert into and or practice, it's not a bloodline. (I don't include Christianity in the list as it cannot be a religion if it's understood the right way otherwise it would be in the list).

However the early people to whom Torah was given, who practiced and started this religion were the children of Abraham, which is where the confusion arises as to whether or not it's a bloodline tradition and culture, which has been passed down from generation to generation or it's simply just another religion.

You might have heard of such fallacies for instance the following, which is quoted below from Judaism 101 website "[www.jewfaq.org](http://www.jewfaq.org)" :

*"A Jew is any person whose mother was a Jew or any person who has gone through the formal process of conversion to Judaism.*

*It is important to note that being a Jew has nothing to do with what you believe or what you do. A person born to non-Jewish parents who has not undergone the formal process of conversion but who believes everything that Orthodox Jews believe and observes every law and custom of Judaism is still a non-Jew, even in the eyes of the most liberal movements of Judaism, and a person born to a Jewish mother who is an atheist and never practices the Jewish religion is still a Jew, even in the eyes of the ultra-Orthodox. In this sense, Judaism is more like a nationality than like other religions, and being Jewish is like a citizenship."*

They go on further claiming that this has been long established, and then they stress the following:

*"Once a person has converted to Judaism, he is not referred to by any special term; he is as much a Jew as anyone born Jewish."*

It seems then obvious that these people are more hung up on their traditions rather than following God as Jesus Himself also pointed it out to them in His time on Earth to which we'll come back later.

Judaism is not the only religion relying on their ancestry bloodline, and assuming their faith as a heritage, something you can be born into, and also think of themselves somehow especial or righteous because of their forefather Abraham, ironically Islam is also another religion, which is also wrongly assumed at birth as an inherited faith or righteousness that has been again ironically passed down from Abraham generation after generation, which is also more considered like a nationality rather than a religion, a big mistake. Furthermore, it might just put it in perspective if you knew that

majority of the Muslim world think of all the Western countries including their governments and nations as Christians, but we know that this cannot be any further than the truth.

Jesus Christ, however observed all the laws of Judaism (**Matthew 5:17** "**Don't think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I didn't come to destroy, but to fulfill**"), yet He never relied on or boasted about His ancestry bloodline, He even humbled Himself by referring to Himself as "the son of man" rather the son of God, and didn't agree with the teachers of the law who considered themselves "Children of Abraham", He called them hypocrites in many occasions for observing their traditions rather than following God.

**Mark 7:6-13** World English Bible (WEB)

*"**6 He answered them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,***

*'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.<sup>7</sup> But they worship me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'<sup>[a]</sup><sup>8</sup> "For you set aside the commandment of God, and hold tightly to the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and you do many other such things."<sup>9</sup> He said to them, "Full well do you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. <sup>10</sup> For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,'<sup>[b]</sup> and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him be put to death.'<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>11</sup> But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban<sup>[d]</sup>, that is to say, given to God";' <sup>12</sup> then you no longer allow him to do anything for his father or his mother, <sup>13</sup> making void the word of God by your tradition, which you have handed down. You do many things like this.'"*

This is not all, it gets much clearer and much better when we see how John the Baptist answers this same argument, which seems not to be a new claim, but rather an old one that has existed since then, in the following scripture:

**Matthew 3: 7-9** World English Bible (WEB)

*"<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism,<sup>[a]</sup> he said to them, "**You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** <sup>8</sup> Therefore produce fruit worthy of repentance! <sup>9</sup> **Don't think to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I tell you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.**"*

Jesus Christ, Himself reiterated this even clearer in the following passage of scripture:

**John 8: 30-47** World English Bible (WEB)

***30 As he spoke these things, many believed in him. 31 Jesus therefore said to those Jews who had believed him, "If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples. 32 You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."**<sup>[a]</sup> **33 They answered him, "We are Abraham's offspring,<sup>[b]</sup> and have never been in bondage to anyone. How do you say, 'You will be made free'?"***

**34 Jesus answered them, "Most certainly I tell you, everyone who commits sin is the bondservant of sin. 35 A bondservant doesn't live in the house forever. A son remains forever. 36 If therefore the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. 37 I know that you are Abraham's offspring,[c] yet you seek to kill me, because my word finds no place in you. 38 I say the things which I have seen with my Father; and you also do the things which you have seen with your father." 39 They answered him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God. Abraham didn't do this. 41 You do the works of your father."**

**They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father, God."**

**42 Therefore Jesus said to them, "If God were your father, you would love me, for I came out and have come from God. For I haven't come of myself, but he sent me. 43 Why don't you understand my speech? Because you can't hear my word. 44 You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and doesn't stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks on his own; for he is a liar, and his father. 45 But because I tell the truth, you don't believe me. 46 Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? 47 He who is of God hears the words of God. For this cause you don't hear, because you are not of God."**

It can be seen how Jesus is first acknowledging that they were genetically children of Abraham in verse 37, but He explains further that because they wanted to do the desires of their father namely the devil, He considers them as children of the devil in verse 44 of the same passage.

Therefore as explained above, to further elaborated the argument in this way that majority of the Jews by their own admission believe that they are Jews because this is something that has either been passed down to them from their parents or via a ritual process of conversion. In either cases, being a Jew seems to be like a citizenship that anyone can acquire by their own deeds, which are mainly of traditional value, and in neither cases, do they ever consider it as a race, whereas this has somehow magically been ingrained into our Western society and particularly in the mainstream Church and politics as if Jewishness is a race, what the Jews themselves even don't claim.

If Jewishness was a race, then it could never be obtained by any acts or even rituals, but we saw earlier that even Orthodox Jews believe you can go through certain process to convert to Judaism, and as they said in their statement: "Once a person has converted to Judaism, he is not referred to by any special term; he is as much a Jew as anyone born Jewish", which makes it a religion, just like any other religion.

Whether a tradition, faith, citizenship, nationality, or even a race, we saw how John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ very plainly rejected the notion of ever being able to inherit or even acquire righteousness by heritage or observing rituals.

Apostle Paul also writes in **Ephesians 2: 8-9** "**for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, that no one would boast**".

God Himself had even stronger words in the old testament for the self-righteous Jews who thought the same as many do today out of either ignorance or by the way of bringing up culture.

In **Ezekiel 16:45** God refers to Israelites (Children of Israel) in this way:

***"You are the daughter of your mother, who loathes her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and their children: your mother was a Hittite, and your father an Amorite."***

Which totally refutes the idea of a unique, pure and or holy race.

One of the main arguments Jews bring forth to prove that they were not the same as the other nationalities in their country and that they were a especial people is the fact that God refers to the other people as "strangers" or "at times "Righteous Strangers", which they interpret as either pagans or converted Jews respectively, whereas this is exactly where first of all, the idea of Jewishness as a race is completely put to death as you cannot acquire a certain race, and secondly when you read the contents of those passages, you will soon see that to God what matters is righteousness, not where their roots are from, and that Jews or none Jews are alike in His eyes, the only thing that matters to Him is if they follow Him or not, this is all a spiritual matter more than anything else. God even speaks to them that way, because He knows how Jews think of themselves, so He makes sure that they understand by speaking their language that they are no different. He uses this language in the Old Testament whenever He wants to punish or save both Jews and none Jews alike.

It is also worth mentioning that God refers to the Jews as strangers in numerous occasions when they are in other lands, and there are plenty of scriptures for that, which proves that the term "Stranger" or "Foreigner" is not to be interpreted as unrighteousness or righteousness for that matter, but simply what the word means.

As we saw Apostle Paul also is trying to clarify this myth and misunderstanding amongst people that it's by grace that you can be saved, and not by your deeds. He later comes back to the issue again in the following passage when he is making it clear even to the self-righteous Jews that there's no foreigners in God's sight, and that what matters to God is the obedience to Him, not your ancestry, rituals, or citizenship.

**Ephesians 2:11-22** World English Bible (WEB)

***"<sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that once you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "uncircumcision" by that which is called "circumcision", (in the flesh, made by hands); <sup>12</sup> that you were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off are made near in the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For he is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, <sup>15</sup> having abolished in the flesh the hostility, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man of the two, making peace; <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the hostility thereby. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far off and to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. <sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone; <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole building, fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord; <sup>22</sup> in whom you also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."***

Referring back to the original question as to "Was Jesus a Jew", having explained the meaning of being a Jew, then it appears that the question is probably emanating from people who think of Jewishness as a race rather than a faith or religion, so in that case the question would be wrong since Judaism or being a Jew is a religion, and not a race as refuted above. However, Jesus' ancestry is traced back to Abraham genetically, which again has nothing to do with Jewishness as explained above with scriptures.

If the question refers to His faith, then it's also a wrong question, and to the ears of a person with a sound doctrine, it would be just as ridiculous as asking if Jesus was Muslim, Buddhist or anything else for that matter. Jesus was a revolutionary person who came to show the whole world the way to God, and it is clear from what Jesus said and did in His life on earth, and also what His disciples said and did, that the emphasis has been on the importance of obedience to God rather than man's tradition.

Although He fulfilled all the laws, but He set us free from the laws, and taught us a new way of life, which is called Christianity, and that is following Christ, which is not Judaism. He was a stumbling block for the Jews Himself, and they couldn't understand Him (1 Corinthians 1:23).

Having no regards to His own ancestry lineage or being bound by any of the Jewish traditions, He indeed made us free and above the laws by making us kings and priests as we read the following scriptures;

**Revelation 1:5-6** World English Bible (WEB)

*"To him who loves us, and washed us from our sins by his blood; and **he made us to be a Kingdom, priests to his God and Father**; to him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen."*

**Romans 6: 12-18** World English Bible (WEB)

*"<sup>12</sup> Therefore don't let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. <sup>13</sup> Also, do not present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. <sup>14</sup> For sin will not have dominion over you. **For you are not under law, but under grace.** <sup>15</sup> What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? May it never be! <sup>16</sup> Don't you know that when you present yourselves as servants and obey someone, you are the servants of whomever you obey; whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God, that, whereas you were bondservants of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were delivered. <sup>18</sup> Being made free from sin, you became bondservants of righteousness."*

Paul again also even makes an example of circumcision to emphasise the fact that people need to be circumcised in heart not in flesh, it's a spiritual thing, not a physical matter as we read the following;

**Romans 2:25-29** World English Bible (WEB)

*"<sup>25</sup> For circumcision indeed profits, if you are a doer of the law, but if you are a transgressor of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. <sup>26</sup> If therefore the uncircumcised keep the ordinances of the law, won't his uncircumcision be accounted as circumcision? <sup>27</sup> Won't the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfills the law, judge you, who with the letter and*

*circumcision are a transgressor of the law? <sup>28</sup> For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; <sup>29</sup> but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and **circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter**; whose praise is not from men, but from God. This by itself is enough to put an end to the argument of righteousness being achievable by observing certain rules and going through certain rituals.”*

**Romans 3: 27-31** World English Bible (WEB)

*“<sup>27</sup> Where then is the boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. <sup>28</sup> We maintain therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. <sup>29</sup> Or is God the God of Jews only? Isn't he the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, <sup>30</sup> since indeed there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith, and the uncircumcised through faith. <sup>31</sup> Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be! No, we establish the law.”*

Closing the case here by the following scripture:

**Galatians 3: 28** World English Bible (WEB)

*“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

Trusting this has shed light on what has been a disputed argument since the first century as you saw in the scriptures.

There's of course a lot more scriptures to mention here from both the Old and the New Testament, but if you feel anything could be improved, please do not hesitate to contact us, and let us know your thoughts regarding this hot issue.

May the Lord richly bless all the readers.