

## **DO YOU HAVE YESHUA GENES?**

By David Ben Ya'akov

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Now that sounds like a strange subject for an article doesn't it? Well, it doesn't sound as strange as some of the things that will be coming upon the earth in the days to come. I like to visit a site on the internet on a daily basis: called "The Drudge Report." Matt Drudge isn't a believer as far as I know, or at least he hasn't professed faith in Yeshua Ha Mashiach since I've been visiting his site, but he does have some off the wall articles featured from time to time there.

While visiting his site during the first quarter of 2005 I came across an interesting article that really sparked my interest. The article that is presented below is there for several reasons. First, I am interested in genetics; gene projects and things of that nature. Second, I am interested when anyone equated religion with science, especially when it is a secular scientist who is promoting religion. When I see the two words in the same article the red flags go up and I assume that the enemy of God is trying in some way to pervert God, His Word or His People. Thirdly, I am a student of history and I've seen how belief in genetics has led to many problems in societies, such as the holocaust, to name just one. So, let's look at the article and see what it says, then we can dissect it and see what its intentions really are.

Genes contribute to religious inclination

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NewScientist.com news service

Maggie McKee

*Genes may help determine how religious a person is, suggests a new study of US twins. And the effects of a religious upbringing may fade with time.*

*Until about 25 years ago, scientists assumed that religious behaviour was simply the product of a person's socialisation – or “nurture”. But more recent studies, including those on adult twins who were raised apart, suggest genes contribute about 40% of the variability in a person's religiousness.*

*But it is not clear how that contribution changes with age. A few studies on children and teenagers – with biological or adoptive parents – show the children tend to mirror the religious beliefs and behaviours of the parents with whom they live. That suggests genes play a small role in religiousness at that age.*

*Now, researchers led by Laura Koenig, a psychology graduate student at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, US, have tried to tease apart how the effects of nature and nurture vary with time. Their study suggests that as adolescents grow into adults, genetic factors become more important in determining how religious a person is, while environmental factors wane.*

### ***Religious discussions***

*The team gave questionnaires to 169 pairs of identical twins – 100% genetically identical – and 104 pairs of fraternal twins – 50% genetically identical – born in Minnesota.*

*The twins, all male and in their early 30s, were asked how often they currently went to religious services, prayed, and discussed religious teachings. This was compared with when they were growing up and living with their families. Then, each participant answered the same questions regarding their mother, father, and their twin.*

*The twins believed that when they were younger, all of their family members – including themselves – shared similar religious behaviour. But in adulthood, however, only the identical twins reported maintaining that similarity. In contrast, fraternal twins were about a third less similar than they were as children.*

*“That would suggest genetic factors are becoming more important and growing up together less important,” says team member Matt McGue, a psychologist at the University of Minnesota.*

### ***Empty nests***

*Michael McCullough, a psychologist at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida, US, agrees. "To a great extent, you can't be who you are when you're living under your parents' roof. But once you leave the nest, you can begin to let your own preferences and dispositions shape your behaviour," he told **New Scientist**. "Maybe, ultimately, we all decide what we're most comfortable with, and it may have more to do with our own makeup than how we were treated when we were adolescents," says McGue.*

*About a dozen studies have shown that religious people tend to share other personality traits, although it is not clear whether these arise from genetic or environmental factors. These include the ability to get along well with others and being conscientious, working hard, being punctual, and controlling one's impulses.*

*But McGue says the new work suggests that being raised in a religious household may affect a person's long-term psychological state less than previously thought. But he says the influence from this early socialisation may re-emerge later on, when the twins have families of their own. He also points out that the finding may not be universal because the research focused on a single population of US men.*

*Journal reference: Journal of Personality (vol 73, p 471)*

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## **ANALYSIS:**

So, what is the article really saying. Well, in a nutshell, it is saying that religious people are that way because their genes dictate that they be religious. In other words, they are denying that God plays any role in the destiny of a person. Too, they are disputing that having godly parents helps to bring up a godly child, teen and finally a godly adult. But when we read God's word, we see that our upbringing has a lot to do with how we turn out.

*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6*

*Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him. Proverbs 22:15*

In the scriptures above God clearly proves that rebellion is inherent in the human from the time he or she is a child. If anything is in the human genetic pool it is rebellion. It wasn't

always there but since the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden it has been inscribed upon the tablets of our genes.

*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: Romans 5:12*

So seeing that all are born with a genetic defect toward sin it would stand to reason that when people aren't acted upon by anything that would lead them toward God, they would naturally tend to be repelled by the notion. But we are all spiritual beings residing in fleshly temples which means that even without outside intervention by a person or persons to promote the notion of God, we would still know, by our conscience, that we are doing wrong when we in fact do wrong. I always get asked the question, "what about people who never heard about God, surely God can't punish them for not knowing Him." The Apostle Paul, in the book of to the Roman believers of his day illustrated this, when talking about the subject.

*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Romans 1:20*

Simply put, everyone who has ever lived has had evidences of God's existence, just by observing creation all around them should be proof that God exists; that He is a God of order and power and that should cause everyone to seek out this God of majesty. I know that some in the Christian realm will not agree with this following statement, but I believe it to be true. There are those, who never heard the Gospel, who have lived what God would term "righteous" lives and have not served foreign gods out of ignorance; and these people will be excused on the Day of Judgment and allowed into His Kingdom. God is a just God, and that is a just act. And this will happen because although they had the propensity to sin because of their human nature, they denied the flesh and tried to seek a righteous God.

Some might say that there haven't been people who have search out an unknown god. How could anyone with any wits worship anything that doesn't have a name ascribed to it? Well, such a thing did happen in Athens and can be read in Acts, chapter 17:

*Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblers say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would*

*know therefore what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)*

*Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. Acts 17:18-34*

So, it appears that down through history that there have been some who have sought out a righteous God. Paul says that those people, who didn't know God's name would "haply feel after him," The word "haply" if defined as: by chance, luck or accident. God tells everyone that:

*And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13*

We have to take the word "haply" in its correct context; and when we do we can render the scripture in Acts as saying; if per chance you would seek the Lord, you will find Him. But it takes an action. Have you ever been given a dare where someone tells you to take a chance and do something you wouldn't ordinarily do? And when you took that chance you had great results and were happy that you took that chance? That is the illustration there.

To summarize, even though we are born with the propensity to propel away from God, the spirit within each of us causes us to search out God. And those who listen to their conscience

and obey its want to know about God will find Him. The argument about genetics determining whether a person will become religious is a dead one when it is examined more thoroughly.

## **GENETICS AND HISTORY:**

Genetics and history are two subjects that go hand in hand. It is because of genetics that most of history has been written. When you read about history from an extra-biblical sense you really don't read many good things. History is the story of civilizations and how they came about and just the same, how they came to their demise. Sure, there are some high points, like people who influenced mankind with philosophies, inventions and even sometimes benevolence; but you have to admit that the majority of history is written about wars, rumors of wars, forceful land acquisitions and men's evil toward other men. Granted, many will read this and get all up in arms saying that I left out one of the worst offenders in all history; that being religion against religion. You are right, religious strife has made mankind look embarrassingly stupid. The question must always be asked, is it really religion fighting religion, or is it really one group of people who feels superior to another because of ancestry, race, creed or color, and they use religion for an excuse.

For instance, when the French and English came to North America many came to find religious freedom. When they arrived, they saw the Native Americans as savages and tried to evangelize them. Sometimes this worked and the settlers lived side by side with their Indian hosts in relative peace. Most times the cause for friction between the two parties was that the Europeans were seizing the land from the Indians. In their minds, the land was fertile and the savages (who were different and primitive) didn't know how to use it wisely, so they just evicted them and took over the land. So, the real intention for the wars between the Indians and the white settlers was caused due to thievery on the part of the Europeans. Most secular people turn this around and make it a Christian versus pagan issue, which it is not.

Europe before and during World War Two is another example. The Jews of Europe were very well off financially and were making political gains. They were the best bankers, the smartest teachers and the most successful doctors, lawyers and just about any other field you can think of. A person with a spiritual eye can see that what happened to the Jewish people before and during the war was good versus evil, but to the anti-Semitic person who lived in Europe at the time, the jealousy was turned into a religious hatred. To the German, who was born into a supposed "religious nation and society," their jealousy and envy was excused in their seared conscience as religious indignation. Religion always gets a bad rap, especially when it is

Christianity that is in focus. And, the true Christians; those who are born again and love God with all their hearts; always get the blame for the actions of those who are wolves in sheep's clothing.

You can go just about anywhere in the world and you will see genetics dividing people. Below I will exhibit a few instances that I have seen myself. Being of Italian extraction, I'll start with the Italians. If you go to Italy, and you bring up the subject of Sicily, some Italians will actually tell you that the Sicilians are not Italian. The premise is that Sicily has been conquered so many times that there is much mixed blood on the island. That causes some mainland Italians to consider Sicilians a different breed than the true Italians they consider themselves. That is one instance of genetics dividing a nation.

Another instance is the Latin American realm. Many may not realize it, but there is a hierarchy in Latin American society. Of course, those who are claim to be full Spanish claim to be highest in the caste system. The Cubans claim that they are second in line, followed by the Puerto Ricans and it goes all the way down the line till you get to those who are born Mexican. I'm not making this up and it is easily verifiable. I know it sounds stupid, but it all has to do with what sort of indigenous person is mixed with conquistador blood.

In Asia you will get mixed responses if you were to ask which culture is higher in scale than the other. Japanese will tell you they are at the top of the purity scale; while the Chinese will tell you that their culture is more ancient, thus purer. All over the world it's a mess, all because of how genetics is equated to what secular society calls the "races." Indigenous Europeans will tell you that whites are a higher class; Asians will tell you that they are more highly developed than the other races; and those in Africa will tell you that Africans are the favored race. Perhaps someday we will all realize that we are one race, the human race. That's how God see us, why should we see each other differently than he does.

Genetics was the cause of the worse human disaster in history. It started with a group of people in Germany who had the audacity to think that since they had light skin, blue eyes and blonde hair, they were Aryan which they considered to be the master race. On the other side of the world, the Japanese, who believed they were the master race started to conquer lands they felt were inferior to theirs. By the time it was all over, over 50 million people had died in a world war that still haunts our memory. Aryanism's biggest victim was the Jewish people, whom Hitler placed so low on his genetic scale that he considered them to be almost totally apelike. He reduced their status to the lowest common denominator and stripped away their humanity. His

genetic beliefs caused him to convince scores of Germans and other Europeans that Jews were less than human; merely animals. Animals are much easier to kill so giving them that status along with labeling them “Christ Killers,” made Germans numb to the fact that genocide was happening all over Europe. When it was over, the world had lost over 33 percent (6 million) Jewish souls. I’m sorry if I sound repetitive, but the Holocaust is the best example of how adherence to the genetic creed ruins a person, a group of people, states, nations, civilizations and all of humanity.

## **HOW COULD GENETICS SOON AFFECT CHRISTIANS AND JEWS?**

We read in magazines and books today how genetics is claimed to be the cause of many things. Those who promote homosexuality as a viable lifestyle have effectively perverted genetics by saying that they are born homosexual. So, what God calls a sinful lifestyle has been explained away as a genetic anomaly and has been accepted as an “alternative lifestyle.”

Some have speculated that some criminals who commit serious crimes like murders, rapes and other heinous acts are actually born with that propensity. They blame it on genetics, saying that those criminals couldn’t help themselves and should be spared the punishment that is due their crime. Other believe that these genetic defects can be overcome with rehabilitation and they stick to that theory even though the recidivism rate proves them to be wrong.

It used to be, and still is to some extent, the practice of those who sin to blame their actions on how they were brought up. If their parent was a drunk then they would be. If they were brought up under a father who abused their mother, they would too abuse their spouse. Everything was blamed on the sins of the fathers. Don’t get me wrong, sometimes this is true, but we have to realize that we have turned into a society that blames their problems on others rather than accepting the consequences for their own actions. I don’t know the statistics, so I’m not an expert in this; but I’ll bet that for every person who blames their parents for their own actions, there are ten people who raised up in similar circumstances who grew up to be fine citizens in society. But happy stories never get good press and you can’t get any grant money to study good results, so studies on bad results always make the medical and legal journals as well as the news media.

We’re rapidly heading toward being a society that wants to get rid of things that it finds ugly or not useful. We throw away everything the minute it gets a scratch on it or if a new thing



comes out to make the old thing obsolete. If it is something that gets in the way, it is removed or destroyed.

We started to see this in the 1970's when abortion became legal. Suddenly, if a pregnancy got in the way, the baby could be cut up, suctioned out and thrown in a bin with other murdered children. Then we decided that we didn't want our elderly parents and grandparents around. They are a nuisance to take care of and they take up too much of our precious time. So, we started to take our precious elders; the ones with all the knowledge and stuck them into nursing homes. We comforted ourselves that they would be well cared for and comfortable. It didn't matter that they live in squalor, getting bed sores while wasting away in facilities that constantly smell of urine. Now, there's a drive to make it so that these often termed "once valuable" members of society can commit suicide should they feel that they don't want to live anymore. But who's to make the final decision? We've learned that living wills aren't honored by the courts should a family member object to it. Will it be that sometime in the near future that some doctor will decide that they're tired of taking care of someone who just won't die and they'll write the order to kill the patient? Will it be some nursing home director who decides that someone on the waiting list has better insurance that will pay the facility more? Will it be a family member who sees the patient's fortune dwindling away from medical costs and out of greed, demands that the person be put to sleep, supposedly for their own good? We're heading down that road folks; it's just around the bend.

But the real question in this article is what about the Christians and the Jews. We're the only people who believe in the real God; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. We're an anomaly in this world. God made us that way and He proves it in His Word:

To the Jewish People he says:

*Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a **peculiar** treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: Exodus 19:5*

And:

*For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a **peculiar** people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. Deuteronomy 14:2*

And:

*And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his **peculiar** people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments; Deuteronomy 26:18*

And to the Christian, God says:

*Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a **peculiar** people, zealous of good works. Titus 2:14*

And:

*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a **peculiar** people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: 1 Peter 2:9*

I just had to go to the Merriam Webster website and see how it defined the word “peculiar,” and here are the results of the search:

*Main Entry: **<sup>1</sup>pe·cu·liar***

*Pronunciation: pi-'kyūl-y&r*

*Function: adjective*

*Etymology: Middle English *peculier*, from Latin *peculiaris* of private property, special, from *peculium* private property, from *pecu* cattle; akin to Latin *pecus* cattle*

***1** : characteristic of only one person, group, or thing : **DISTINCTIVE***

***2** : different from the usual or normal: **a** : **SPECIAL, PARTICULAR** **b** : **ODD, CURIOUS***

***c** : **ECCENTRIC***

Modern society has taken this word and has redefined it to me some sort of bad thing, but it really is a special word. Looking at the highlighted section, you can see that in Latin it means “private property,” “special.” We’re God’s special private property. We’re a distinctive group, different from what is normal. Now how many of you know that this sort of person stands out in this world.

Now, being different for Messiah’s sake is a wonderful thing if you’re in His camp, but from the world’s perspective we’re not exactly welcomed. If you’ve been a Born-Again Christian for any period of time you know that the world holds a magnifying glass to us and they’re always keeping a close eye on us. How many of us have been cut to the quick when someone of the world accuses us of being worldly? It’s like a knife that cuts clear through to the heart. Besides, being rebuked by a sinner isn’t exactly a claim to fame, if you know what I mean.

Yeshua warned us about how the world thinks of us many times. After all, it hated Him so we should be ready to accept that hatred when it is focused on us:

*I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. John 17:14*

*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. John 16:33*

*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. John 15:18*

Do you know why some of your neighbors really don't like you? Well, it's because when they see you, you remind them of Yeshua. When they think of Yeshua, they, in their demented knowledge of Him, think of their sin. If a neighbor is secretly cheating on their spouse, they see you and their spirit hears the words, "thou shalt not commit adultery." When a person at work is stealing from your employer and they see you their spirit hears, "thou shalt not steal." When your neighbor has had an abortion and afterward, they see you their spirit hears, "thou shalt not commit murder." The list goes on and on. We are temples of the Holy Spirit. Part of the Holy Spirit's mission in this world is to convict the world of sin.

So, wouldn't it be convenient for the world to be rid of us? It would be so easy for them to fornicate, murder, steal and all without license if we weren't on earth to remind them that there is an authority that will demand recompense for their actions. Well, I have to admit, that after a day of hard work, then some time in front of the idiot television tube and maybe brushing against a maladjusted member of society in front of a local market, I'm ready to be gone from here and leave them to their stupid decaying world. It will be so nice on the day when we hear the ram's horn blow and hear Yeshua call us to heaven. But until then, we'll be hated for Yeshua's sake.

We saw how the Germans and other Europeans solved what they thought to be a problem in the last century. They took a group of people, convinced themselves through vain philosophies that evolution was right, and through that process they, in their minds reduced the Jewish people, gypsies and others into a class of sub-humans. With that in mind, the murder of so many was easy and to some, it was considered doing God a service.

But let's look at things. The world is a messed-up place these days. Could it be in the future of many of us for us to be labeled as unstable, faulty and a nuisance because we

(according to the article above) are programmed genetically to be religious? Could it be possible that this will lead to persecution, torture and death in like manner of what happened in Nazi Europe? Only God knows the answer to that question. But I think that in a world that leans more and more toward decay and debauchery each and every day, it would be convenient to label us as “peculiar,” in their definition of the term. Could our future be concentration camps and maybe even ovens? I’m not writing this to scare anyone, but we have to consider all possibilities. We’ve seen many times how people with strange ideas lord themselves over others that they see as less superior. Our world is crying out for democracy. They will get socialism in its place and we saw where socialism got Germany, Russia and other places where it was rampant. I think that what I’ve been inspired to write here should make any Christian who reads it to think soberly about what is real. We all think that these sorts of things will happen in some other land, to some other people and so forth. But we have to think that the people being affected by hatred toward Christians thought the same things a few years back.

### **THE SOLUTION:**

Personally, I think that persecution of professing Christians who live in relatively safe nations right now might be beneficial. We’ve become too soft, too complacent, too burdened down with the cares of this world and we will have to undergo a process of persecution. It seems to be the only thing that keeps the church pure. Persecution separates the wheat from the chaff. It causes the believer to become a stronger believer and it causes the Church to grow in numbers. This isn’t a happy newsletter is it?

We need to be in prayer a lot more. We need to be fasting and seeking the Lord. We need to repent of the sins that we all have been party to. We have to learn to love the Lord with all of our being and in all of our actions as well as in our words. We need to really be that peculiar people; sanctified and set apart for God. Instead of having stickers on our cars that read WWJD, we need to be living stickers that read DWJWD (Do What Jesus Would Do) or perhaps RPF (Repent Pray and Fast). I could go on and on, but we all have the Holy Spirit living inside us. Let’s pray that our Lord would use His Spirit to talk to us and show each of us what to do. I’ll pray for you; will you pray for me? Thanks in advance for the prayer.

David Ben Ya’akov