Black Hebrew Israelites

On December 10, 2019, a kosher market in Jersey City was attacked by two individuals. The store’s owner, an employee, and one customer were killed, as was Detective Joseph Seals. There are reports that the alleged perpetrators may have been members of the Black Hebrew Israelite movement.

- There are many sects which refer to themselves with variations of the name Black Hebrew Israelites. Some, but not all, are outspoken anti-Semites and racists. It should be emphasized that the extremist and anti-Semitic sects of Black Hebrew Israelites are unrelated to the thousands of black Jews and other Jews of color in the US, who are genuine members of the Jewish faith. Furthermore, they should not be confused with Ethiopian Jews who mostly live in Israel today. Anti-Semitic Black Hebrew Israelites assert that white people are agents of Satan, Jews are liars and false worshipers of God, and blacks are the true “chosen people” and are racially superior to other ethnicities.

- Today there are several noteworthy sects of Black Hebrew Israelites. For example, the Sicarii Black Hebrew Israelites are a San Diego-based anti-Semitic and racist fringe religious group whose followers believe that Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans are the true descendants of the 12 Tribes of Israel. They are an offshoot of the larger Black Hebrew Israelites and echo the majority of the movement’s core principles, including the beliefs that white people are agents of Satan, Jews are liars and false worshipers of God, and blacks are the true “chosen people.” Their leader is Adonis Gaude, who is...
also known as “Ahlazar BanLawya” or “Hebrew Guerilla.” While preaching in public, members of this sect may attempt aggressively to engage passers-by. Some members have also been involved with violent acts.

- Another sect of Black Hebrew Israelites is Israel United In Christ, a New York-based group with a national and international presence as well, including in Newark, NJ. The leader of the group is Nathaniel Ray (aka Bishop Nathanyel Ben Israel). The group’s mission is to spread the Black Hebrew Israelite ideology and to educate black individuals of their true place in society. They are committed to spreading the ideology globally and recruiting as many black individuals as possible. They rely heavily on social media to promote their beliefs, as well as hosting public activities such as marches and Bible readings. They reject Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, specifically calling Jews “the bastards that funded the slave trade.” They blame Jews and other ethnicities for all social ills plaguing black individuals, and claim that acceptance of this ideology and God will free black people. Further, they assert that Jews and white people worship the devil, and white people will become their slaves in Heaven.

- In Miami, Florida, in October 2019, Larry Greene (aka Elijah Israel), a self-identified black Israelite, was charged with two counts of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon after allegedly assaulting two people as they were leaving a prayer service at a local synagogue. According to the arrest affidavit, Green threatened to kill the victims with a knife, called them “fake Jews” and told them to “go back to Israel.” This case was treated as a hate crime.