

Are Black Atheists Satanic Traitors with a Slave Mentality?

By Norm R. Allen Jr.

Recently, the Atheist Alliance of America held a conference in close proximity to the Women of Color Ministries. Mandisa Thomas, a leading Black atheist activist, attended the conference. She and other atheists were confronted by some of the nice Christian ladies from the other group. These women essentially accused Thomas of being a sellout with a slave mentality, essentially accused the White atheists of being demons, and confidently proceeded to pray the demons away.

I am happy to say that, during my 24 years as the world's leading Black humanist activist, I had never encountered such disturbing irrationality. On the contrary, my messages were largely accepted by most of the predominantly Black religious audiences I addressed. I only know of two religious fanatics that suggested that I was of the devil. However, I never had a group of religious crazies trying to pray the devil out of me, and I have never been accused of being a sellout just because I did not believe in God.

It is truly ironic that Black Christians would accuse Black atheists of being mentally enslaved sellouts for not believing in God. Indeed, most Black Christians worship a White, blond-haired, blue-eyed Jesus that was forced upon them by – get this – White slave masters!

The great 19th Century freethinker Robert Green Ingersoll beautifully pointed out how Christianity was used in every aspect of American slavery: from the slave ship, to the auction block, to the plantation. In his fine booklet *A Christmas Sermon*, he profoundly observed that “The Bible is the real auction block upon which the Negro stood during slavery.”

Good Christian slaves thought nothing of running to slave masters to thwart slave rebellions, as was the case with the Denmark Vesey-led rebellion in South Carolina. After all, mindless obedience and blind loyalty were two of the biblical “slave virtues” that Ingersoll condemned.

Quietism is also a feature of Christianity. Some Christians are content to endure their plight on Earth while waiting patiently for pie-in-the-sky in the bye-and-bye.

Conversely, freethought and secularism are concerned with improving life in the here-and-now.

I know of no instances in which slavery has ever been promoted in the name of atheism. However, the Bible routinely condones slavery (Luke 12:47-48, Ephesians 6:5-6, and so on.) How, then, could atheists and *freethinkers* be accused of fostering a slave mentality? Obviously, some Black Christians are downright delusional!

The Nation of Islam has long provided strong denunciations of Christianity as the “White man’s religion,” and the bane of Black existence. Malcolm X called Martin Luther King and other Black Christians “religious Uncle Toms” that used Christianity against their people.

However, the Nation had its own problems. Like the good Christian ladies mentioned above, they considered Whites to be a race of devils. For all their pro-Black rhetoric, the Nation formed loose alliances with White supremacist outfits such as the American Nazi Party and the White Aryan Resistance, and with a Holocaust denier. They defended bigoted Muslim slave owners in Sudan and assumed many other thoroughly anti-democratic positions in numerous areas.

There have been Black atheist leaders that could in no way be considered mental slaves or race traitors. Leading Black Panthers such as Huey Newton, Eldridge Cleaver and Bobby Seale were atheists during their revolutionary heyday. Their cultural competitors, US, headed by Maulana Karenga, were atheists. (Karenga created the Kwanzaa holiday.) Hubert H. Harrison, who inspired Marcus Garvey, anthropologist Joel Augustus Rogers, and Black historian John G. Jackson were all racially conscious Black thinkers, as are any number of Afrocentrists.

Black atheist writer Sikivu Hutchinson and others have pointed out that Black atheist mothers are made to feel inadequate if they do not send their children to church and teach them lessons from the Bible. For too many, Christianity becomes an inseparable part of Black identity and culture.

The worst part of this religious insanity is the notion that there is no good in the atheist, as the Bible teaches. It is this mindset that has led to the persecution and murder of atheists in Egypt and other parts of the world. As long as an entire class

of people can be essentially demonized, they will inevitably be the victims of discrimination.

Many Christians believe that atheists are going to Hell. However, Hell for atheists means listening to the insufferable preaching of religious lunatics that feel absolutely certain that they have the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Mandisa Thomas needs help. More Black atheists need to come out of the closet and become involved in organized atheism and humanism. There is strength and respect in numbers. If more Black atheists come out of the closet, it will be much easier to combat the ridiculous notion that Black atheists are mentally enslaved, Satanic race traitors.