

The Obama thing isn't the point

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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I for one am not sure the actor who plays Satan in the History Channel documentary looks all that much like President Obama. But I don't find this quote [from the miniseries producer](#) especially heartening:

Mark Burnett said the actor who played Satan, Mohamen Mehdi Ouazanni, "is a highly acclaimed Moroccan actor. He has previously played parts in several Biblical epics -including Satanic characters long before Barack Obama was elected as our President."

So a fair-skinned actor from Western Europe plays Jesus and a darker-skinned North African actor plays Satan, but there's no problem because the latter guy *has played Satanic characters before*. Lucky him! The Obama resemblance may be overblown, but why cast a biblical epic this way? Go for historical authenticity, or cast people who all look the same, or cast people who all look different. Just don't give the ultimate good guy fair skin and the ultimate bad guy darker skin. We've been down that road too many times before.

Ouzanni's actually [been in several Bible-based television films](#). In *David* (1997), he played brutal Ammonite king Nahash to [this guy's](#) lily-white David. *In the Beginning* (2000) starred Martin Landau as Abraham; Ouzanni played a slave trader. Nothing to see here: this dark-skinned actor has been playing bad guys in movies starring light-skinned actors since long before Barack Obama was elected as our president.