

here is the key quote: from Great Challenge #9/ Question2

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The full quote is:

DID HE(JESUS) LIVE IN KASHMIR UNDER ANOTHER NAME?

No, not another name really. While those of you from the West call him Jesus, the whole Arabic world calls him Esus, or Esau. In Kashmir he was known as Yousa-Asaf. His tomb is known as The Tomb of Yousa-Asaf who came from a very distant land and lived here. It is also indicated on the tomb that he came to live there 1900 years ago.

Miguel Serrano, the author of The Serpent of Paradise, who visited the tomb, writes: "It was evening when I first arrived at the tomb, and in the light of the sunset the faces of the men and children in the street looked almost sacred. They looked like people of ancient times; possibly they were related to one of the lost tribes of Israel that are said to have immigrated to India. Taking off my shoes, I entered and found a very old tomb surrounded by a filigree stone fence which protected it, while to one side there was the shape of a footprint cut into the stone. It is said to be the footprint of Yousa-Asaf, and according to the legend, Yousa-Asaf is Jesus.

"On the wall of the building hangs an inscription and below it a translation from the Sharda into English which reads: YOUSA-ASAF (KHANYA, SRINAGAR)."

Jesus was a totally enlightened being. This phenomenon of resurrection as far as Christian dogma is concerned seems inconceivable, but not for Yoga. Yoga believes -- and there are ample proofs of it -- that a person can totally die without dying. The heart stops, the pulse stops, the breathing stops -- Yoga even has methods that teach this. In India we know that Jesus must have practiced some deep Yogic exercise when he was put on the cross because if the body really dies, there is no possibility of resurrection.

When those who had crucified Jesus felt that he was dead, his body was brought down from the cross and given to his followers. Then, after wrapping the body in thin muslin and an ointment, which even to this day is known as the "ointment of Jesus," two of his followers, Joseph and Nicodemus, removed the body to a cave, the mouth of which they blocked with a huge boulder. There is one sect, the Essenes, that has its own tradition about it. It is said that Essene followers helped Jesus to recover from his wounds. When he was seen again, because his followers could not believe that he was the same Jesus who had been crucified, the only way -- and this is recorded in The Bible -- was to show them his healed wounds. Those wounds were healed by the Essenes, and the healing took place during the three days when Jesus remained in the cave recovering from his ordeal. Then, when the wounds were healed, he disappeared. The huge boulder at the mouth of the cave had been rolled away and the cave was found vacant.

Jesus was not there! It is this disappearance of Jesus from the cave that has led to the common theory of his resurrection and ascent to heaven.

But after he had shown himself to his disciples he had to disappear from the country, because if he had remained there he would have been crucified again. He went to India into which, one tradition says, a tribe of the Jews had disappeared.

The famous French historian, Bernier, who visited India during the reign of Aurangzeb, wrote: "On entering the kingdom after crossing the Pir Panjal Pass, the inhabitants of the frontier villages struck me as resembling the Jews."

Yes, Kashmiris really do look Jewish -- in their faces, in their every expression. Wherever you move in Kashmir, you feel that you are moving in a Jewish land. It is thought that Jesus came to Kashmir because it was a Jewish land in India -- a tribe of Jews was living there. There are many stories in Kashmir about Jesus, but one has to go there to discover them.

The crucifixion changed Jesus' mind totally. From then on, he lived in India for seventy years continuously, in complete silence -- unknown, hidden. He was not a prophet, he was not a minister, he was not a preacher. That is why not much is known about him.

Christianity lacks much. Even about Jesus it lacks much. His whole life is not known: what he practiced, how he meditated is not known. The Christian apostles who recorded what he said were ignorant people: they never knew much. One was a fisherman, another was a carpenter. All twelve apostles were ignorant.

The apostles didn't understand what Jesus was doing when he went to the hills and was silent for forty days. They only recorded that it happened and that when he came back again, he began preaching. But what was he doing there? Nothing is known -- nothing.

After his period of silence, he became more and more involved in something which looked more social and political than religious. It had to be so, because the people around him were absolutely non-philosophical, so whatever he said was misunderstood. When he said, "I am the king of the Jews," he was not talking about a kingdom of this world; he was speaking in metaphors.

Not only his enemies misunderstood him -- even his followers and apostles misunderstood. They, too, began to think in terms of an earthly kingdom; they could not understand that what he was saying belonged to another world, that it was only symbolic. They also thought that Jesus was going to become king sooner or later.

That created the whole trouble. Jesus might not have been crucified in a different land, but for the Jews he was a problem. Jews are very materialistic. They were materialistic in the time of Jesus, and they still are.

To them the other world is meaningless; they are only concerned with this world. Even if they talk of the other world, it is only as a prolongation of this world -- not a transcendence but a continuity. They have a different way of thinking.

That is why, as far as the material sciences are concerned, the Jewish contribution is so great. It is not accidental. The person who is most responsible for molding the whole world in terms of a materialistic concept was a Jew, Karl Marx.

Karl Marx, Freud, Einstein -- these three Jews are the builders of the twentieth century. Three Jews building the whole world! Why? No one exists in the world today who has not been influenced by the Jewish concept.

Jews are very down-to-earth, rooted in the earth, so when Christ began to talk like a Buddha, there was no meeting, no communion. He was continuously misunderstood.

Pilate was more understanding toward him than his own race. He continuously felt that an innocent man was being unnecessarily crucified and he tried his best not to crucify him. But then, there were political considerations.

Even when they were about to crucify Jesus, at the last moment, Pilate asked him a question: "What is truth?" Jesus remained silent. It was a Buddhist answer. Only Buddha has remained silent about truth, no one else.

Something has always been said -- even if it is only that nothing can be said. Only Buddha has remained silent, totally silent. And Jesus remained silent. The Jews understood this to mean that he did not know. They thought, if he knows, then of course he will say. But I have always felt that Pilate understood. He was a Roman; he might have understood. But Pilate disappeared from the scene; he put the priests in total charge and just disappeared -- he did not want to be involved.

This whole thing happened because there were two languages being used. Jesus was speaking of the other world -- of course, in terms of this world -- and the Jews took every word literally.

This would not have happened in India where there is a long tradition of parables, a long tradition of symbols. In India, the reverse misunderstanding is possible because the tradition has been going on for so long that someone speaking of this earth may be understood to be speaking of the other world. There are poets in India who talk about romance, love, and sex -- of this world, totally of this world -- but their followers interpret these as symbolic of the other world. Even if you talk about wine and women, they think that the wine means ecstasy and the women are devas. It happens!

Jews are literal, very literal. And incredibly, they have remained the same. They are a strange race, with a different outlook from the rest of the world. That is why they have never been at home anywhere. They cannot be, because they have a different type of mind. To penetrate a Jew is always difficult. He has a certain closedness, a certain defensiveness. And the longer Jews have been homeless, the more defensive they have become.

The basic thing about Jews is that they think in terms of matter -- even God seems to be part of the material world. That is why it was impossible for them to understand Jesus. For example, Jews say that when someone does something wrong to you, you should do something wrong back to him -- and with double the force. This is how matter behaves. React! If someone puts out one of your eyes, then put out both of his eyes.

Jesus began to say an absolutely contradictory thing: if someone slaps you on one side of the face then give him the other side also. This was absolutely Buddhist. One cannot really conceive of how a Jew could suddenly begin to talk like this. There was no tradition for it, no link with the past.

Nothing happens unless there is a cause. So Jesus is inconceivable as a Jew. He suddenly happens, but he has no roots in the past of Jewish history. He cannot be connected with it because he has nothing in common with it. As far as the Jewish god is concerned, Jesus' love, his compassion, is just nonsense.

You cannot conceive of a more jealous god, a more violent and angry god than the Jewish god. He could destroy a whole city in a single moment if someone disobeyed him. Then Jesus suddenly emerges and says, "God is love." It is inconceivable unless something else had penetrated the tradition.

When Buddha talks about compassion it is not inconceivable. The whole of India has been talking about it for centuries, and Buddha is part of the tradition. But Jesus is not part of the Jewish tradition. That is why he was killed, crucified.

No buddha has ever been killed in India because, however rebellious, he still belongs to the tradition; however rebellious, he conforms to the deeper ideals. One even begins to think that he is more Indian than Indian society in general because he conforms more to the basic ideals of the country.

But Jesus was a total outsider in Jerusalem, using words and symbols, a language, totally unknown to the Jews. He was bound to be crucified; it was natural. I see Jesus as living deep in meditation, deep in enlightenment, but involved with a race that was political -- not religious, not philosophical.

Jews have not given great philosophers to the world. They have given great scientists but not great philosophers. The very mind of the race is different; it works in a different way. Jesus was just an outsider, a stranger. He began to create trouble; he had to be made silent.

Then he escaped, and he never tried again. He lived in silence with a small group -- working silently, esoterically. And I feel that there is still a hidden, esoteric tradition that continues. If one forgets Christianity and goes back to discover Jesus without the Christianity, one will be enriched. Christianity has become the barrier now.

Whenever you think about Jesus, the Christian interpretation of Jesus becomes the only interpretation. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were found twenty years ago near the Dead Sea, they caused much agitation. The Scrolls, which were originally possessed by the Essenes, are more authentic than The Bible. But Christianity could not compromise. The Dead Sea Scrolls tell a different tale, a totally different story about the Jews. Even the Koran has a different story to tell. It seems that Mohammed also was in contact with many Jewish mystics.

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This happens with every teacher. Ultimately the outer group becomes more and more influential; it becomes an establishment. The first thing an establishment has to do is to kill its own esoteric part, because the esoteric group is always a disturbance. Because of "heresy," Christianity has been destroying all that is esoteric.

And now the pope is at the opposite extreme to Jesus: this is the ultimate schism between the exoteric and the esoteric. The pope is more like the priests who crucified Jesus than like Jesus himself. If Jesus comes again, he will be crucified in Rome this time -- by the Vatican. The Vatican is the exoteric, organizational part, the establishment.

These are intrinsic problems -- they happen, and you cannot do anything about it.

Yes, Jesus was an enlightened being just like Buddha, Mahavira, Krishna.

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