

Was Jesus really a Buddha?



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I know people of faith will be angry at this but blind faith leads to ignorance. If you can get past that perhaps you can also get past bigotry and discrimination.

I was a gifted and talented Social Studies student in my youth and a Theater honors student in college. Exploring the nature of human existence and the motivation of why people do what they do has always been fascinating to me.

As a child I read the Bible. I found it full of contradictions. Now as an adult I perceive the nuances of those discrepancies in a new light.

History is a matter of interpretation. It has never been set in stone completely because in the past there was no way to record day to day life. Our history as we know it, has been determined by research and exploration.

Because history is mutable it can and has been manipulated, I want to argue here that the story of Jesus has been altered to influence politics and distort reality. Wars have been fought over someone in power skewing the facts of past relationships. In a way our current culture of “fake facts” has led me to see the facts of the Bible and Jesus in a new light.

Jesus historically was born in 6 to 4 B.C. and died maybe as late as 37 A.D.. Buddha was born in Nepal in the 6 th century B.C., 500 years before Jesus.

Now people may assume that humans back in those time periods did not travel. However Nomads have existed in the world as far back as 8000 B.C. The center of Nomadic life was Eastern Mesopotamia, or Egypt and the Middle east. In fact trade between India and the Middle east dates back to 2000 B.C.

So could Buddhism have existed in Israel and even Africa, at the time of Jesus? The answer is historically yes.

In fact an emissary from India travelled to Rome and apparently burned himself alive in Athens to demonstrate his faith in around 20 B.C. It was Rome who made the legal decision to crucify Jesus in 37 A.D., 50 years later. For those unaware, the most well known image of a person setting himself on fire today is Thích Quảng Đức, a Vietnamese Buddhist, protesting the persecution of his people by Catholics in Vietnam in 1963. Could this have been a sign that the Roman's persecuted Buddhists?

Buddhism was actually persecuted in 224 A.D. in Iran and their temples burned to the ground when the region made Zoroastrianism the state religion. Iran and Israel are not that far from each other.

Israel has in the recent past also condemned Buddhism. In 2011 residents of Arava region in Israel condemned the building of a Buddhist temple in Israel because they saw Buddhism as worshiping an icon and violation of the ten commandments. As of today there appears to be only one Buddhist temple in Israel, the Tel Aviv Zen Center. Does it not seem plausible that Israel might have condemned Buddhists in 37 A.D.?

Now Zen buddhism has different forms. I have called myself Zen leaning, because I like to sit Zen style. My birth into Buddhism came from exposure to martial arts and Shaolin practitioners, as well as books translated from Chinese. I lived in a house in Pasadena and one of the women in the house was an older hippy yogi. She moved to Hawaii, but as a departing gift she gave me novels about a Chinese Judge Dee, a Magistrate who solved mysteries using his mind, and at times some martial arts skills, to solve crime. Shaolin is Chan ("Zen").

Some of the forms Zen takes do not worship or prostrate to Buddha and do not see Zen Buddhism as a separate religion. Hence perhaps why the

only Buddhist center in Israel, or that I can find, is Zen. Israel would not see it as against the Bible.

I see Buddhism as a religion without a Devine being. It is a practice of beliefs, a code of ethics.

Would ancient Jews at the time Jesus taught his disciples see someone teaching love and human compassion as a threat to the Bible or to the ruling class?

Keep in mind Rome killed Jesus and by Biblical accounts he was called “the king of the Jews.” Now knowing that Jesus was called “King of the Jews” leads me to think that perhaps Jesus was a political opponent to Herod Antipas, the King of Israel appointed by Rome, who according to Gospel helped decide Jesus fate to be crucified. However the accounts of the Crucifixion in the New Testament were written somewhere between 70 A.D. and no later than 120 AD.. that is 30 plus years after the Crucifixion. However modern versions have been altered by culture and language and time. Some of the books of the New Testament, like Revelations, were not added until later.

In addition the earliest existing copies of biblical text today date to the 2nd Century A.D. They were manuscripts possibly made from older copies. We do not know. History has made a leap of faith assuming what has been found written 100 plus years after Jesus lived is the same as the original written circa 70 A.D.. Think about that. We know when the New Testament was written, but churches and kings and time have shaped it to be what it is today. Translations from Greek did not appear to have occurred until the 2nd Century A.D..

In fact the bible combing the new and old testament did not appear until 90 to 120 A.D. and was approved by the churches of the time. Please note that according to the linked article it was faith that determined what went in, not fact, and the same can be said for the New Testament.

I have tried to determine when the old and new Testament bibles were combined but can not find a concrete answer. However the oldest known copy of the Bible is 1600 years old and was written probably 300 years after Jesus died. According to an article in CNN (yeah fake news), this copy leaves out details of Jesus’s Crucifixion and contains

books not in the text today. So if churches changed the Bible, could they also have changed the nature of who Jesus really was?

What I find really interesting is this passage from the Babylon Torah from 70 A.D. I found on line in an article about the [crucifixion](#).

On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favour he was hanged on the eve of the Passover!

— [Sanhedrin 43a](#), *Babylonian Talmud (Soncino Edition)*

This passage in the Talmud is considered to refer to the crucifixion of Jesus who was seen as someone who enticed “apostasy,” basically acts against the Jewish faith. That does not read “Jesus king of the Jews,” unless we see that as sarcasm. To the Roman’s Jesus was acting up against the Jews to be there new king. That would mean he enticed Israel to go against there own beliefs. The New Testament stories include tales of Jesus rebelling and overturning market tables in the temple, called cleansing.

What if Jesus was both against Rome and against the Jews, but to solidify and unite the opposition to uprising and instill fear, Rome branded him the “King of the Jews?” Bible historians have claimed Jesus was a [Jewish Preacher](#). But the above Talmud reference implies to the Jews he was a heretic. The story of how Jesus “[cleansed the temple](#)” appears in all four Gospels. The referenced Temple is the [Second Temple](#), the Jewish Holy Temple. How could he be a Jewish Preacher when he desecrated the Temple representing his faith? Or was he really a true Jew?

Why do I say Jesus was a Buddha? Buddha is the title of the original creator of the Buddhist practice. But it is also the title given to any [teacher](#) of Buddhism who has reached enlightenment.

Buddhism is according to the [Merriam Webster Dictionary](#):

a religion of eastern and central Asia growing out of the teaching of Siddhārtha Gautama that suffering is inherent in life and that one can be liberated from it by cultivating wisdom, virtue, and concentration.

In Buddhism a teacher teaches students how to deal with pain and suffering. There are, like in Christianity, many interpretations. Though all manifestations believe in the four truths to an eight fold path and also five precepts. Overall the teachings involve compassion for others and kindness.

To anyone who know the stories of Jesus does that sound familiar? Just do a search of Jesus and love and read the references. In essence Jesus taught to love neighbors, and live for now. So did Buddha. To Buddhism Dana is a key concept. It is cultivating generosity. Well Jesus “cleansed” the Temple as an act of defiance against greed and several times in the Bible talked of helping the poor.

Buddha was a teacher against the class structure of India that kept poor people poor and oppressed, and taught giving and love. In fact his most famous quote is:

Birth does not make one a priest or an outcaste.

Behaviour makes one either a priest or an outcaste.

So I have a challenge to historians. Prove my theory. Take down the rhetoric that has lead to 2000 years of people trying to kill each other for a MAN who if you examine closely wanted a life of compassion and kindness. Jesus was a Buddha.

As a final piece of possible evidence, there are references on line to Buddhism in Egypt as early as 500 B.C.. So Buddhism existed in Egypt but skipped people in the Israeli region knowing about it? There are also perhaps not so far fetched ideas that Egyptians and Buddhists influenced each other.

