

A SHORT ENCOUNTER WITH BUDDHISM

I'd like to start out by giving my readers a little biography. When I tell my biography I usually encapsulate things and only go into specifics when the story needs to have those specifics presented. As many of you know I didn't find out about my Jewish ancestry until I was older. It is quite an interesting story. I grew up with all things Episcopalian. My family was an eclectic mix of faiths. My paternal grandfather left the Roman Catholic church when he was a young man. He said that he got tired of seeing the people acting so pious inside the church and getting into fistfights outside the church doors. He converted to Lutheranism which was the faith of his wife, my grandmother. I can't really remember them attending church in a religious manner. They were basically holiday Christians, visiting a church during Christmas and Resurrection Day. I don't ever remember going to church with them. My maternal grandfather was a Roman Catholic and died such but my grandmother liked to attend Methodist services. He had departed the scene long before I was born. He relocated to Chicago which is where he was raised. Like I mentioned before, I was brought up as an Episcopalian. I received my confirmation and took my first communion when I was 12 years old.

As time marched on, through my teen years I stopped going to church. As far as I knew, mainline churches were the only thing out there. They were a total bore because they were ritualistic in nature and I always mused that I could join the Elks or Moose club and get more fellowship than I could in a dead church. I got messed up in the drug culture until one night in spring of 1979 when I saw myself as a cadaver in a bathroom mirror. I quit everything cold turkey, drugs, booze and cigarettes. I was looking for answers and I thought that I had found them in the home of my maternal grandmother who had taken me in for a short while so that I could sort life out. We really hit it off she and I did. She was reading books authored by Alice Bailey. I found the books very appealing because in them Bailey proposed that there was no such thing as sin and that there was no hell. She said that everyone would enter heaven and that we would have many chances to come back to life to atone for sins in our past lives. What she was presenting in her books was basically general Buddhism and/or Hinduism. Bailey's books appealed to my flesh because in them I came to believe that I could continue to be the scumbag that I was (Yahweh was revealing my dire state to me at that time) without having to pay for being a scumbag.

The grace of Yahweh Yeshua came into my life in the memory of words presented to me by a friend that I had always considered to be our village idiot. This friend was odd, but he knew

Yahweh Yeshua and went through great pains to tell me about sin, hell and the need for a redeemer. When I had reached my lowest point, I humbled myself and reached out to this odd fellow to find out more about Yeshua. By then I had moved back to California, having left New Jersey yet again. Things soured when I reached the west coast. My dad had been seeing the woman that would soon become his second wife and she was a bonafide bipolar patient with schizophrenia. Dad was on my case right from the start. No sooner had I put my truck in the driveway he demanded that I go out and look for work, yes, that very same day. Work was hard to find back then and I almost had a breakdown. I remember driving away from the house with the intent of finding a cousin that used drugs to ask him if I could get high again. On the way down to Fairfield (California), I started to cry and confessed to Yeshua that my life was a mess and that I was ready to give up. I asked Him, that if He was real, he could forgive my sins and come into my life to live inside me to make me a new person, and that if He would do that I would follow Him. I did visit my cousin but didn't get high that day. Now I didn't hear angels singing or feel a zap of electricity go through me when I asked Yeshua into my life. There were shreds of evidence early on. I started to obey my dad, even if it meant me humbling myself against my will. In addition, I noticed that my propensity for using four letter words in just about every sentence had gone away and one day while pruning some roses, when I pricked my finger, I said, "gosh darn-it," which really amazed me. This was my first real evidence that I had become a changed man.

During my time with my grandmother, I studied a lot about Hinduism and Buddhism. I read a lot of books about the subject and sought out people of those faiths to find out more. I can remember thinking to myself that I was superb in messing my life up, there was no question about that, but what about redemption, was it possible? I also thought about how most religions go out of their way to refute the Bible. If all religions led to God then why were they all opposed to Yeshua? Why did the world delight in killing Jews and Christians? I would remember the lessons on the narrow road leading to Yahweh and how the Judeo/Christian ethic was the only one that mentioned redemption through a deity and not on personal works. In science, there are certain Laws that are in place that govern how the universe works and they all work with each other. Religion is not like that, not at all. In the Christian faith, love is the law that governs all of the other laws. In Judaism, if one obeys the Torah then one shows love toward their neighbor thus showing love toward Yahweh because the crux is humbleness and contriteness, which shows that we love others and Yahweh.

So why did I write that short biography or part of my whole biography? I did so because I had an encounter last weekend with Buddhism. In my job, I sometimes have to escort clients to

religious services. Last week I was asked to escort a client down to the Buddhist service. As we walked out of the unit, I asked the patient about his faith. He is Latino so I had just assumed that he was Roman Catholic in faith. He affirmed that he is Roman Catholic, but that he feels like he can relax in the Buddhist service. I could relate to that because I used to meditate and I did feel more at rest afterward. He asked me what I thought of Buddhism. I told him that I studied Buddhism and Hinduism and that there were some things that bothered me. I focused in on reincarnation. I told him that life was so hard in just this one existence that having to do it over and over again until I reached the Brahma was not a concept that I felt comfortable with. Brahma is defined as:

***Brahmā** is a leading god (deva) and heavenly king in Buddhism. He was adopted from other Indian religions that considered him a protector of teachings (dharmapala), and he is never depicted in early Buddhist texts as a creator god. In Buddhist tradition, it was deity Brahma who appeared before the Buddha and urged him to teach, once the Buddha attained enlightenment but was unsure if he should teach his insights to anyone.*

Brahma is a part of the Buddhist cosmology, and lords over the heavenly realm of rebirth called the Brahma-loka – the most sought after realm for afterlife and reincarnation in Buddhist traditions. Brahma is generally represented in Buddhist culture as a god with four faces and four arms, and variants of him are found in both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist cultures.

I told my client that it was much easier for me to accept one New Birth in Yeshua, through atonement by His blood that washed away my sin. That is all that I said.

When we arrived at the chapel I chose to stay out in the hallway. I felt that if I was invited to the service and I was asked to share my thoughts I would have to be honest and I would probably be asked to leave. That would not have been in the client's best interest in figuring that we could address anything that the client might want to talk about afterward. Also, remembering the client population that we deal with, I thought that causing such a disturbance could set some people off. I was able to hear the speaker so I was good with that. I wanted to take notes about what was said but soon realized that I had forgotten to bring a pen and I only had the patient's pass paperwork to write on. An Ancillary staff member from another unit let me use her pen.

The speaker started out by telling the congregants that they needed to separate their mind from their bodies. She explained that the body tries to control the mind because the body wants to pursue the future and reflect on the past and to attain peace, the mind cannot be part of the

body. She continued to speak psychobabble about meditation and how it can only happen when the mind/body separation was complete. As she continued to speak, she did something that I caught but probably passed over the other listeners. She started to call the human brain “the monkey brain.” She said that the “monkey brain” is animalistic in nature and that it interferes with attaining peace through meditation. I remember thinking, “didn’t she just say that the mind had to be separated from the body because the body is a hindrance,” but now she’s saying that the mind, which is ensconced within the brain is another culprit in attaining peace through meditation. In essence, what she was saying that they needed to shut everything off, everything, in order to meditate.

The problem with shutting down the brain/mind is that you become an empty vacuum. It is a giving up of one’s sovereignty and that is dangerous. Let’s look at it from a political standpoint. If Donald Trump, his vice president, and the Republican decided one day that they were going to close shop and move on before another election, there would be chaos. There would be a mad drive by liberals, progressives, and others to occupy the vacuum that would exist, and you know that they would be knocking the doors down faster than you can say Obama is a traitor. When a human being shuts down their mind, thus relinquishing their sovereignty there is a host of others that want to occupy that vacuum. Many Hindu’s and Buddhists who are serious about their faith become possessed by something called “The Kundalini Spirit.” This is a very powerful demonic spirit that is very good at counterfeiting the Ruach Ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit), and unfortunate for the church at large, as the church grows colder and farther away from Yahweh, and it embraces doctrines from counterfeit religions, this false demonic spirit is growing in power in many churches, especially those that are seeking signs and wonders as evidence of the presence of the Ruach Ha Kodesh, and those who wrongly think that they can demand gifts and offices from Yahweh. Of course, Yahweh is going to give to people, but only the gifts that He wants them to have, not what they desire. He knows our flesh and its desire to circumnavigate around Yahweh’s plans for us. So if you are seeking to become demon possessed or demonically oppressed, just empty yourself and shut down your brain, giving away your sovereignty. I do not encourage anyone to do that, but it is a sure-fire way to invite “walk-ins” into your human shell.

What I heard next from the Buddhist woman came after an extended time of meditation. This woman started to talk about miracles. She said that as far as she was concerned, walking on the water or rising up from the dead were not miracles. She said to her, and the Buddhist tradition, miracles are being able to achieve peace within oneself, sort of like looking at nature and seeing what a miracle the beautiful places of the earth truly are. Her words, not mine. I felt

bad for this woman, that she was knocking Yahweh, yet she was trying to “become one” with His creation. She denied the miracles of Yeshua, but could not realize that the one that she was defaming was the one who spoke the Earth, moon, and stars into existence. A scripture came to me at that moment:

²¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³ And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

²⁴ Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

²⁵ Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

²⁶ For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

²⁹ Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

³⁰ Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

³¹ Without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

*³² Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. Romans 1:21-32
KJV*

This scripture perfectly sums up religions where redemption is said to be self-attained. It is said that Hinduism consists of hundreds of thousands of gods. Hindus pick the god that they want to be associated with. There are peaceful gods as well as warring and spiteful gods in Hinduism. Buddhism takes on the same character as Hinduism, self-attained salvation.

After the service was over, I told the client that I had a chance to listen in while the speaker talked. He asked me what I thought. I told him I didn't agree with some of the things that the speaker said. I told him that I hold to a Biblical way of looking at things. I told him that I could never accept the concept of reincarnation because it is not a Biblical concept and that my opinion is that Yeshua did perform miracles by walking on water as well as rising from the dead and ascending to Aveinu. He thought for a brief second, chuckled and "yes, those were definitely miracles."

Don't get me wrong, I didn't choose to accept the offer to bring this client down to a Buddhist service to throw a wrench into his religious works, so to speak. I went so that I could listen to what the speaker had to say. It has been many years since I studied Buddhism and I wanted to see if anything changed and I wanted to compare it more to the New Age which tends to take on a Buddhist/Hindu mindset. The fact that the client asked me my opinion and what I thought was an added bonus and gave me a chance to make remarks that the client could reflect on at a later time.

I learned a long time ago that the usual "Christian" method of presenting sin and hell to people of an eastern mindset doesn't work for the most part unless Yahweh has been speaking to them about such things. I have found that my profession meshes well with the Jewish way of conversation. As a nurse, I have been trained to perform active listening. Basically, this means listening to the client in all things and then approaching each complaint by asking questions. For instance, if a client stated that they were going to hit me I would ask them why they wanted to hit me? I then would ask them to consider the consequences of hitting me. I would ask them if hitting me would cause them to move forward toward a discharge or if it would set them back months or years. I would also ask why they feel like hitting me? Did I say something that triggered them? Am I wearing a color that they don't like or does the sound of my voice remind them of someone that abused them? Are they hearing voices that are telling them to hit me? All of these questions play into effect and asking them can relieve some stressors in that person's life at the moment. It also shows that I care. Yes, I don't want to be attacked, but I also want to find out what I can do to help them to de-escalate and find some sort of peace at the moment.

Taking the above into account, when it comes to people's religion or creed the similar questions can be asked. For instance, if the client had not asked my opinion, I could ask him for his opinion. The crux of the problem in our society is that people have forgotten how to think. Most want to take the easy way and that means that they accept what they hear. Just yesterday someone posted a picture of what looks like a boomerang shaped UFO on Facebook and made the comment, "this is a good one." Now, I think that he was saying that he thought that it was a good photoshop job, but he could have meant that it was a good photo of a UFO. I noticed that the object wasn't creating a shadow on the field which it was above and it was a sunny day. If the poster was seriously commenting that it was a good photo of an original UFO it would cause him to see that it was a photoshop job. If he was commenting that it was a good counterfeit then I was agreeing with him and pointing out another flaw. The whole thing in our present era is to cause people to think, to rely on data and not what they've heard.

A good example would be the subject of tithing. A few years ago, I went round and round with a couple that insisted that I was being rebellious for not tithing 10 percent of my income, even though I was on disability insurance and had to live with them because I couldn't afford a place of my own. Their persistent pressure caused me to do a study on tithing which caused me to realize that I was right and that they were wrong. Of course, they weren't going to back down seeing that he was a church elder and his wife was the church secretary, and more importantly, they had been fed the tithing doctrine for decades and they never researched it themselves. Had I just decided to roll over and allow them to persist then I would have been guilted into tithing, and I would not be as scripture dictates, a cheerful giver. I am thankful to this couple. It was questions like, "why aren't you tithing," and "why makes you feel that you don't have to tithe," that caused me to get into scripture to research and to find out the truth in the matter.

We have forgotten that we sow the seeds and Yahweh will reap the harvest. Often Christians feel that they have to do both. What good is it if you tell someone that they are a sinner if they don't know what sin is? In turn, what good is it to say that Yeshua can save a person if they don't know that they are perishing? I mean, heck, we don't even know if the person that we are talking to is being drawn by Aveinu.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6:44 KJV

I have found that throwing out little catch-words works well with people. Something like, "I'm sure glad that Yahweh shows grace to me," is wordage that causes people to listen.

Everyone wants grace in this life. Some people don't know what that word means and they'll ask for a definition which allows the Gospel to be presented to them. Others are looking for a way to find peace in a predicament that they are going through and they'll ask about how they can have grace. Bringing up peace, contentment and joy are other words that describe what people are looking for.

One of the best ways to speak to people is to live like Christians if you're going to call yourself a Christian. A few years ago, I refused to attend a Halloween party that the rest of the staff was attending. One of my Muslim co-workers came through the storehouse where I was talking with another man that didn't like the idea of the party. The Muslim man asked me why I was not in there with the others. I replied sort of boldly that I was a Christian and that the others were celebrating a Satanic holiday and that I refused to attend such a thing. The man stopped and was thinking about what I said. He looked me in the eye and said, "Finally, a Christian that lives like a Christian is supposed to live." I told him that I was just being faithful to God and thanked him for what he said. Not long after that, two other Muslim men approached me to ask me about my faith. They were a little confused that I was wearing a Kippah and tzitzit yet I was referring to Jesus as my savior. Talking to one man, I told him that over the course of my life I had tried other religions and that I could attest that without a doubt that belief in Yeshua was the only thing that works. Another Muslim remarked that he was impressed at how I could stay calm at hectic times. That was a real shocker to me because I had thought that the inner turmoil that I felt at work was showing, but Yahweh preserved me from blowing my testimony. We didn't talk too much after that, but I did pray that Yahweh Yeshua would reveal Himself to them in dreams and visions because I know that He has done so to many Muslims and they have become Born Again Christians as a result.

I think that it is important that Christians realize that other religions are out to destroy Christianity. Buddhists, Hindus, and others are all worldly religions with an emphasis of appeasing their deities so as to attain a better life in a reincarnation and/or a better status in their heavenly realm. The teachings of Yeshua refute their belief systems and it causes them to hate out of a lack of understanding. When those systems talk about all religions coming together, or that all religions think the same things, or that we all worship the same god, that is done to water down faith in Yeshua so as to bring about the death of true faith in Him. In regard to the client going to the Buddhist service and the others who were there in attendance, the purpose of the statements of the speaker was to destroy faith in Yeshua and/or faith that any Torah Observant Jew would have because Buddhism appeals to the flesh, even if the speaker said that the purpose was to shut off the flesh. Our human frailty leans toward disobedience and although Buddhism,

Hinduism, and other eastern religions claim to want to achieve Nirvana or Brahma, they knew full well that the sin nature will win over. Their only promise, which is a false promise, is that meditation will help you to become a better you so that hopefully you'll live a better life the next time around.

Having worked with Buddhists and Hindus for quite a few years I can attest that they are no friends of Christianity or Judaism or at least those who actively practice either faith. To be fair, Buddhists tend to live peacefully with those of other faiths. But as I can attest to what I heard at the service last week, and what I have heard in the past, their aggression toward the Judeo/Christian ethic usually is stated in their services. There are factions in other nations, like the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka who are fighting people of other religions, but their fight is one of culture and/or nationalism. Buddhism is like a bear that becomes violent only when severely provoked. Hindus on the other hand, have a rabid hatred for other religions, especially Islam and Christianity. The hatred of the former has to do with Islam's ongoing war with Hindus. The two have had a hate/hate relationship for close to 1200 years caused by Islam's doctrine of world conquest that the Hindus have fought against time and time again. If you want to see how Islam uses appeasement to conquer a people look at the skirmishes that they've had with India. The Hindu hatred for Christianity most probably has in large been caused by the remembrance of British occupation for many years. Britain brought Christianity back to India, but it also brought servitude in the form of the Caste System which elevated lighter skinned Indians and degraded darker skinned Indians. Add to that mix the fact that Christianity contradicts Hinduism and Sikhism and you have an atmosphere that easily ignites Hindus into violence against believers in Yeshua. I personally know two pastors in India that have been attacked by Hindu mobs but have survived the attacks and have led many of the attackers to faith in Yeshua.

Having worked with Hindus, had I been ignorant about Karma I would have never known that they believed in it. During my eight-year stint at one employer, I was persecuted by Hindus who went to great lengths to get me fired from my position. They were capricious liars that were constantly making up stories to tell to the bosses. Knowing their character, I would sometimes make up false information that I could easily refute just to show my bosses that they were out to assassinate my character, but they were never taken to task for defaming a coworker. They would often take innocent conversations and turn them around against me. One story I tell is when a delivery driver and I were talking about songs sung by Ray Stevens. We couldn't remember one song and one day I did remember the title and said, "Hey John, the name of the song was Ahab the Arab," The next morning I was called into the boss's office and reprimanded by him. He said, "word has it that you're talking bad about the Arabs." Although the boss didn't

want to hear my explanation, I made him sit and listen to my defense, although all it did was cause him to tell me to watch what I say in the workplace because people are listening. I cannot and will not speak ill of all Hindus. I work currently with a Hindu and he is a moral and ethical person and he has my respect, but the majority that I've had contact with would cut your throat if they had the chance. So much for Karma, right?

The word "Karma" is a word that I hear more and more in Christian circles. Talk about ignorance. A few years ago, I had a female friend that was a believer in Yeshua, but like me, she had dabbled in other things before coming to faith in Yahweh. I told her that some woman at work was using the word "Karma" a lot in talking about supervisors would get paid back in this life for their evil. My friend became angry and said, "that's bullshit because people who practice eastern religion know that Karma comes around in the next life, not this one. I know because I used to be one of them." Christians tend to mimic the world so they have substituted the process of "sowing and reaping" with the word Karma. I like to refer to sowing and reaping as "Yahweh's law of reciprocity." It's not that Yahweh is out to get us; He doesn't have to because we're expert at ruining our own lives.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this Delusion Resistance Journal entry, the client that I was talking to is Roman Catholic by faith. I am not surprised that someone of Roman Catholic extraction could be duped by Hinduism simply because wherever Roman Catholicism goes it tends to give up a little Christianity and it takes on the paganism of the culture that it is trying to convert. The examples are too numerous to list here. It was easy for me to understand why this client could practice two religions at one time seeing that so many that venerate the Vatican tend to do so in one way or another. I do find that grievous, but what I find even more grievous is when those who claim to know Yahweh Yeshua personally start to use pagan vernacular to express themselves. Of course, I have to take into account that a lot of paganism is present in modern day Christianity, it being a carryover from the Roman Church when the Protestants almost pulled fully away from the pagan Vatican.

The whole problem with taking on aspects of other religions and incorporating them into the Christian faith is that it causes a person to serve more than one god. It causes a believer to serve Yahweh and a pagan deity. Yahweh doesn't like to share billing with another god and there are consequences in practicing dualism when it comes to faith. Yeshua warned against this very thing:

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single (sound, fulfilling its office), thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matthew 6:22-24

In essence, we need to walk upright with Yahweh and with him alone. We need to learn how to witness to the lost in a society that is much different than it was just twenty years ago. We need to realize that we need to practice active listening before we talk about Yahweh Yeshua to another, in order to know how to approach them. We need to know if Yahweh is leading them to Him and to pray that He will do so if he's not doing it already. Let's do what is right. Let's realize that other religions will Always try to compete with our faith, they don't want to meld with us and if they ever did that is prohibited by Yahweh. And, we know that taking on pagan terms and doctrines only water down our Faith in Yeshua. In our day and age, we need to fight to maintain our faith, not to cut it with other substances.