

Gita Universal Series

An Avant-Garde analysis of Jesus' Teachings

Book 3

THE BOOK OF THOMAS

"If they run towards the west, they find fire

If they turn south, they find it there, too.

If they turn north, erupting fire threatens them again.

They cannot find the way to the east, either, to run there and be

Safe.

Jesus in this very book

Analyzed

By

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Prologue to Coptic Gita Series

Human race is torn into rags and shreds by regional, geographical and, the worst of all, religious bigotry. Regional and other physical divides can and have to be overcome by scientific studies and education, which in itself is not an impossible task, though looks highly improbable; for, science and the resultant technology seem to be hastening our fall into the fire from the frying pan - thanks to the innovative methods of destruction. Religion is a different issue. More often religions eschew logic, divide the human race; and behave as sole arbitrators between God, the Supreme Being and human. These religions credit God with all superlative qualities like Omni potency, Omni presence extreme benevolence, mercy and so on; but while practicing they exhibit abject discrimination, intolerance and worst of all, sanction liquidation of all things of other faiths and paths to reach or realize God. Religions, in general, preach peace and perpetuate violence of unlimited magnitude. The result is misery, fear, psychological deterioration of human species and disoriented utilization of science and human intelligence. And, during this process of Hara-kiri humans need company - the company of all those innocent beings on earth other than human.

The simple question that ought to be asked but never posed is: Why religions, which are supposed, or at least promise theoretically, to take human to the same God or somewhere near that entity differ so much in their fabric and texture? If the goal of all religions is the same God, how is it that the various 'heads' of the variegated religions do not even begin to make an attempt to initiate an *unbiased* analysis of all the religions and come out with the *common core which ought to be the real Truth*? Will such an effort anger the single God? Can God be angry? Have the

divisions of east and west, heresy, Gnostic and agnostic any relevance in the search for such Truth? Of the following statements: “The Truth is **revealed** by God to one in a billion” and “The Truth is **realized** by one in a billion”, which sounds more sensible and hence, tenable?

Hoping for such an analysis to be initiated in the twenty first century is Utopian optimism. Could it have happened in the past – in the distant past? Could there have been a gentleman or a lady who have attempted this? Anyone who took up this job had to be honest to self and hence would not have resorted to claims of revelations, being the *chosen one* or such super natural. They would have been modest, keener on learning than on exhibitionism and miracles like the present day man-Gods.

It is an undeniable fact that earlier generation of Homo sapiens was less complicated and more open minded than the present. Maybe they were ignorant of many ‘advances’ human has made to this time; and, precisely for this reason they were more receptive to ideas. It, therefore, stands to reason to expect or conjecture that there must have been a few people from east and west who posed such questions as asked earlier and sought to answer them. Needless to say that they ought to have made an unbiased study of the scriptures of *all faiths, teachings of all sages and seers that lived during and before their life time*. It also has to be expected that such persons would have been victims of either smear campaigns or of unlimited glorification whose glare hides the true or original thought of the person. This is quite common in history and natural in religion. Krishna and Buddha used their lives to arrest the devaluation of ‘thought’ and ‘realization’ (Dharma) into religion. And, both have become victims of smear and over glorification – else, how can one explain

Bouddha becoming Buddhism and the macho masculinity attributed to Krishna. Both were from the Bharata Khanda, Indian subcontinent or East. Does it mean that there was none in the 'west' who thought like a Krishna, Kapila, Buddha and the like? Truth, after all, cannot have geographical constraints.

Yeshua, the Jesus of Christians, is the most misunderstood and misinterpreted individual that ever walked on earth. A non-Christian has two mutually exclusive means of realizing Yeshua. One is The New Testament (TNT) with its synoptic Gospels; the other is 'historical' description available to us, in fragments, in this century. These two sources are mutually exclusive in the sense that one contradicts the other almost verbatim. *As introduced by The New Testament* (TNT) to the contemporary millions, Jesus, son of Mary - the virgin mother, *does not fit into* some of the qualifications listed in paragraph 4. A macroscopic study of TNT leaves many questions unanswered; and microscopic analysis unearths as many contradictions and paradoxes. One cannot help wondering whether Jesus could ever have immodestly boasted about being The Savior, let alone canvassing that he is the Only Savior, preaching a new *religion*. It appears that the synoptic gospels, four in number (including the Gospel of John), as edited and permitted to be included in TNT, *speak the truth, perhaps, nothing but the truth; but do they speak all of the TRUTH?*

This means that to find the Truth, the whole of it, TNT cannot be taken literally; one has to read between the lines and even between the words. For some reason, which is not clearly known but a guess can be hazarded; the editors and compilers of TNT felt that the material that provides the links between the lines have to stay out of it. This omission derives the illusion that Jesus exhibited miracles/super natural

powers to attract people to himself, canvassed that he is the chosen one, cursed and condemned theologies other than his and the like. It happens many times that an innocuous attempt to glorify a real person and paint a larger than life picture of his/her, actually creates an out and out distorted version of this noble soul. A simple and straight forward human being is portrayed as a superman. Historians are adept in this art. Talking about historians one may well recollect what the Jew-Roman historian Flavius Josephus said about Jesus – after all, he was a historian of the very first century CE and benefited to no end by the victors – Romans, of the time.

I am not a Christian, if being a Christian is equated with the ritual of Baptism and the like; in fact I have no *religion*; but (or, hence) I like the *man* Yeshua immensely. After going through TNT, not just once, I realized it hides a lot of the superiority of Yeshua *in between its lines*; and history loses him in the folds of fiction, as is its wont, equally efficiently. In this state of desperation did I come into contact with the so called Apocrypha or Gnostic Gospels. Of all of them, three books, The Gospel of Mary Magdalene, The Gospel of Thomas and The (secret) Book of Thomas stole my heart. They constitute the tool kit to know the Yeshua – the real one. As I read The Gospel of Mary Magdalene first, I decided to write an exegesis on it first, to be followed by the Gospel of Thomas. These are written neither for commercial profit nor as a religious service. The single purpose is to bring out the Truth which ought to be universal and cannot be monopolized as India's, America's or even Israel's.

However, we have to be grateful to some of the historians whose efforts have provided us some of the missing and needed links. Most potential connections have been literally unearthed in 1896, in Cairo, 1945 at Nag-Hammadi in Egypt (Qubt or

even Gupt or Agupt), and in Qumran in 1947. These provide us with a better characterization of Jesus, the Yeshua, provided – yes provided they are studied, not just read, in *conjunction with several other scriptures of yore*. Jesus reveals himself as a human with a mission that consisted of not removing sin from the sinners but take ‘beings’ away from the hallucination of the werewolf of sin (cf. line 15 of page 7 of the text). Then, why were these scriptures not allowed into TNT? A pertinent question, but is without the ambit of this work. Relevant to our work at hand is the content of some of the writings that could not make it to TNT.

In these books, The Nag Hammadi Library and The Gospel of Mary Magdalene (Gnostic books), Jesus was more of Yeshua searching for the TRUTH, not in one region like Israel, not in one religion like Judaism, not in one Torah, Talmud or Deuteronomy. In other words Jesus or Yeshua was asking questions we posed at the very first instance and seeking answers to them. The very fact that his re-search was through ‘real life situations’ like parables rather than resorting to a commandment or dictates ‘from the Lord – the God of a region’, does evidence, very lucidly, that he has rejected ‘Laws’ attributed to Divinity and forced on the human; and was looking for those laws which were given by the Supreme Being to the creation at the beginning of creation. Those laws, and not the ones made by man with the tag of divinity, need to be followed in pursuit of real happiness which is Bliss. His search mocked the self styled authorities, protectors and mediators of God. As the Supreme Being is neither bound nor bounded, Jesus rejected the superstition that anybody’s search for IT can be bound by a few

rules and regulations written on a few pieces of paper or papyrus. Knowledge, he was convinced, cannot be confined by geographical or political frontiers; and Knowledge alone is the instrument of Bliss; and Bliss is the ultimate achievement. He *did not* appreciate ‘fear of God’ or ‘prescription by God and mediators’ of punishment and preventive medicines in the form of sacrifices and guilt offerings. The most important factor that comes out of these books is the other or real face of Jesus, Yeshua whose scholarship is universal, who knows the relation between the creator and the created.

Yeshua’s search was universal. There was, at that time an exchange and interaction of thought which was universal too. Notwithstanding the portrayal of the Greeks, Egyptians and the Easterners in ‘religious’ books, they were races that encouraged such interaction. In fact, the present Arab name of Egypt – Misr, or the old name Agypt (Agypt) mean respectively mixture or well mixed; and open or not hidden. The land of Yeshua was under the influence of all these races in his time. The result of openness could not have missed Jesus. It is imperative, then, that to know the real Jesus any scripture, be it the TNT or the Nag Hammadi tractates or the Gospel of Mary Magdalene, should be studied not in isolation but in syzygy with thoughts from everywhere on earth, in fact from every corner of the universe.

Lots of exegeses on “The Gospel of Mary Magdalene” and “The Godpel of Thomas” do exist. They all seem to have just one of the two purposes. Some try to rein it in to the realm of TNT, make it compatible with TNT version of Jesus. In this attempt they down play the differences in the characters of Yeshua and Jesus and of other followers including the Miriam of Magdalena.

Hence they are constrained or tied up. On the other hand some of the analyses use this Gospel as a stick to beat TNT and Christianity in its present form. Neither bothers, in the least, to cognize the universality of the thought of Yeshua and the intellectual totality achievable by a Sishya like Miriam.

The works, hitherto, on Nag Hammadi finds, and The Gospel of Mary Magdalene that has come to light a few decades earlier, have inevitably contained a regional and religious bias and seem to be more apologetic– damage control and management efforts, than illuminating. The Dead Sea scrolls of Qumran and the whole history of Essenes have been studied with the presumption that Essenes were ‘Jews’ and the scrolls were their researches on Talmud or Deuteronomy. The Gospel of Mary Magdalene vanished from the face of earth as the Nicene congregation was getting ready to establish their own concept of Jesus, demolishing any piece of paper that could contradict their version of the great soul. This Gospel was branded as heretic and later given the adjective Gnostic with the unsaid implication that ‘God’ will punish heretics and Gnostics. When it finally surfaced in 1896 the people that mattered tried to send it into oblivion by down rating it, by reduction of its antiquity and best by writing exegeses that will drag this Gospel into the mainstream of TNT. Let us look at this sample from JYL (pp. 44):

*The **path of Christianity** that we find in this Gospel is one of gnosis or divine knowledge - '*

Strange, very strange it is. Probably, at the time of the Gospel, Yeshua might have become Jesus but there was no Christianity. ‘Christ’ was a common noun – an honorific at that time. Then, to claim that

this Gospel shows a *path of Christianity* (that did not exist at that time) is strange, to say the least. Further, we have been hyped from childhood that there is only path which is straight and narrow; and here we have another path in the same Christianity. If gnosis is a path of approved Christianity why should this gospel have had to hibernate for nearly 2,000 years under ground? Are gnosis and divine knowledge synonyms? JYL seems to think so. If so, then why was divine knowledge (to be read as gnosis) frowned on by the third and fourth century clergy like Clement of Alexandria? The incompatibility of this gospel, except for a few names common, with what is now established as Christianity shows that this gospel spells out a philosophy different from the religion born out of the consensus of Councils of Nicene in the late fourth century.

By the time Dead Sea scrolls tumbled out of the caves of Qumran, social, political and even religious outlook has changed, rather drastically in the west, particularly in East Europe. Resistance, originated from a sort of materialism, to the tyranny of monarchs that has been validated, if not nourished, by religious institutions, took over the psyche of the mass. Bolshevik and such hunger driven revolutions in Europe took a moderate toll on the absolute supremacy of religious heads. Hence study of such scriptures as the Gospel of Mary Magdalene has become more legal and less of a taboo, though it remained a matter of disinterested curiosity. It did not take much time for the curiosity to convert into a scientific dissemination of knowledge; and a new look at these Gospels was welcomed even by a large section of believers. With the mysteries of Holy Blood, a married Jesus who lost seventeen years of his prime youth to the New Testament and

seemingly wanton omission and or minimization of the roles of some characters in the copy righted scriptures forced some reaction from people that matter in religion. Gradually it dawned on some zealots that the best way of annihilation is absorption. Gospels of Mary Magdalene and of Thomas were worked on by some to get it lost in the numerous folds of Christianity and thereby hide the thought of Yeshua as revealed by these books. [Even today these scriptures are referred to as “writings of early Christianity” but not as “Thoughts of Jesus or Yeshua”. Christ is only an honorific and not the name of an individual or of a school of thought established or founded by that individual. Then, why should the thoughts of this Gentleman Yeshua go by the honorific and not by ‘Jesuit’ or ‘Yasho’?] Hence, the exegeses, thus far, on the Gospels of Mary Magdalene and Thomas exhibit this motivation in no uncertain terms.

To me these books bring out, in tons, the fact that the Supreme Being is not bound by religion or Geography. There is no taboo in looking or even going to East to realize the Truth. Yeshua reveals this in this Gospel. His teachings in this Gospel are essentially the same as in the Upanishads or Vedanta (please distinguish between Veda and Vedanta).. Bhagavad Gita, taught by Krishna to his *Sishya* Arjuna is the essence of Upanishads. The Gospel of Mary Magdalene is the essence of the same material that is in Upanishads, taught by Yeshua to his *Sishya Miriam*. *The medium of instruction might have been Aramaic in case of Yeshua; but the book (or whatever survived of it) as it surfaced in 1896) was in Coptic script. Hence I call it “Coptic Gita¹”.*

The whole Gospel is explained in the light of Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita. Beginning with

the question “what is matter?” and its answer by Yeshua², his description of the origin of Sin, the absolute necessity of developing Nous and the syzygy of Mind, Nous and Atma (the Triple) and the climax in the sojourn of the Soul (*Atma Prasthaana*), all require a heavy dose of Gita intimacy. I just did that in this exegesis.

The analysis in the present write up is not bound by any obligation. The firm faith in the oneness of the Supreme Being leads to the conclusion that IT (the Supreme Being) ‘distributes’ Its grace equally amongst Its creation. We have to then agree that Knowledge, which is Its grace, is not confined to a person, region or race and definitely not to a man made religion. A ship in high seas, about to sink, sends an SOS message. The message should give the details of its *location* so that the ‘Rescue’ can be quick and effective. Likewise a being about to sink in the whirlpool of material vortices, has to give its ‘Location’ before hoping for Rescue. Knowing one’s own location is a nonmaterial introspection. In the Gospels of Mary Magdalene and Thomas we find a call for such introspection. When this is obtained by the individual the necessity for a middleman or a mediator between the individual and the Supreme Being becomes redundant and even undesirable.

To illustrate this aspect let us consider the ‘supremacy of the human’. Religion after religion wants us to believe that the Homo sapiens are a cut above the other elements of the creation of God. This instigates the human to ‘*lord over all that crawls on the earth, flies in the sky and swims in the water*’. This unwarranted covenant has wrought havoc with the earth; and shortly the destruction will extend to other planets in our solar system and beyond. It must be granted that when

this supremacy was advocated, the advocates were ignorant of planets or the solar system. The strong superstition was that life exists on earth alone, which 'was' flat. When the individual human realizes what it is, identification of oneself with the body will be removed from within. This will lead to the 'sameness' of every element of the universe. The result is an experience and a sentiment to describe which 'love' is awfully inadequate (more so in these days when it is manufactured or made in a jiffy). One who does achieve this 'sees' the Supreme Being in everything around him/her and hence hatred, jealousy and greed vanish. What remains is Bliss and perfect balance. Well, is that not permanent happiness? In that state the person converses with the Supreme Being in Its language – Silence. So, the job of redeeming is done by oneself and can be done only by self. Middlemen are, therefore, irrelevant.

Unfortunately such an eventuality is tragic for the mediators; after all, they subsist on the guilt offerings of 'sinners' anxious to wash their sins off before the bugle sounds or an equivalent occasion predicted by many religions. Such prescriptions for the cure of 'sin' are the content of religions – in general; in them they are in the form of 'Laws' by men who convince the gullible of the divine origin of such laws. Introspection, a deep look into oneself to know what one is in reality, will find such washing off sins and consequently the washers in the form of laws/rules and mediators totally redundant. Such a person will build a ladder, all by him/herself, to take him/her from Here to Eternity, Bliss or Heaven; such a person will not wait (in vain) for Heaven to down a ladder to him/her or for an yet another mortal to prop one for his/her ascent to heaven. The raw material for making the

ladder and the terra firma to support the ladder are in the form of a teacher, Rabboni or Guru³ who has already reached the state of being able to build and use the ladder. Bhagavad Gita (Krishna) tells Arjuna:

TAT VIDDHI PRANIPAAATENA, PARIPRASNENA, SEVAYA
UPADESHYANTI TE DNYAANAM TATTVA DARSINAH

4.34

This Sloka is explained in detail later in this book. It is the second line that is relevant here. It says “*that Dnyaana to be earned by the three stepped process (described in the first line) can and will be taught to you by one who has already experienced the True Nature of the issue.*” Thus, preaching can come from any half or even less baked individual, but teaching (Gurutva) requires complete identification with knowledge – Dnyaana of the non-anatomical and non-material inner content of the individual. A Guru trains the Sishya to elevate his/her perceptual and cognizing capacity so that on successful completion the Sishya will be able to obtain the Dnyaana and then build the ladder for himself and help others who have similar inclinations.

Perhaps, as a result of biting the forbidden fruit, right from the beginning, Adam’s descendents hid the Truth or tried to hide it, even from the Truth itself. They began hiding their bodies with whatever opaque material available. And when the human learnt to talk, the Truth was hidden, thanks to the invented instrument - lie. When writing came to the humanity, he resorted to destruction as the best way to lie and hide the truth. Gospel of Mary Magdalene and other Gnostic⁴ gospels were victims of such ‘humanitarian’ act - hiding tirade, against the Truth. To avoid destruction of a permanent nature by the over enthusiastic, the

End of Preview.

Rest of the book can be read @
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