

Strange Story of Jesus DID CHRIST DIE IN ORIENTAL LAND?

Just as the Christian world is preparing to celebrate the birth of Christ, there comes from Japan this strange story of a group of Buddhists and Shintoists who believe that Jesus is buried near their village.

By RELMAN MORIN

TOKYO (AP)—Did Jesus Christ die in Japan?

Peasants in a remote northern village believe He did, and that His remains still lie in Japanese soil. To them, the Biblical version of his betrayal and death in Jerusalem is mere legend. The truth is, they say, that He escaped, returned to these islands, and died here at the age of 105.

Six-Pointed Star

They point to an ancient burial mound, on the outskirts of the village of Heral, and vow it marks the spot where his body was placed. Surmounting the mound is a pillar, bearing three Japanese characters, and strangely enough—a six-pointed star composed of interlocking triangles, like the Hebrew emblem. The characters are pronounced "So-rai-taro Tenku." The last word means "heavenly," and the first two form the Japanese name for Jesus.

These peasants are not Christians, but Buddhists or Shintoists. Hence, they do not worship the memory of Jesus in a religious way, nor is the mound especially sacred to them. They describe Jesus as a "Sei-jin," a saint or wise man.

The village is in Aomori, near the extreme northern tip of Honshu, largest of Japan's three main islands. To the east is the sacred lake, Towada, and at no great distance southward is Mount Yadaljin. This name, in pronunciation, is almost the same as the modern Japanese word for "Jew."

No one knows the origin of the name, nor the history of that strange burial mound. The six-pointed star is completely foreign to these people. It does not appear in any of the Japanese religious symbolisms. No one knows who put it there.

Some of the peasants are acquainted with the Biblical version of the death of Christ. They do not dispute it, but they do not believe it, either. This is the Aomorian story, which they claim has been carried from father to son through nearly twenty centuries:

During the reign of the Emperor Suinin, the eleventh Emperor, a young foreigner, a white man, came to live in the district. He was then 22. After 12 years, he disappeared. His name was Sorai-taro.

Fifteen years later, he returned. He said he had been in the land of



Japanese peasants kneel before the mound they believe to be Jesus' burial place. The pillar bears an Hebraic six-pointed star and Japanese characters standing for 'Jesus.'

his birth, teaching religion and philosophy, and that, because of his beliefs, he had been sentenced to death by crucifixion.

At this point the Aomorian story makes a sharp right-angle from all other stories about Jesus. It says that Sorai-taro Tenku told them he had a younger brother, Iskiri, who sacrificed his own life on the cross. The substitution is described in the Aomorian legend as a divine miracle. Adam and Eve, Too

Sorai-taro Tenku traveled for four years, thereafter, his route leading him across Europe and through Siberia. At Kalkura (now Hachinohe-machi) he reached Aomori again. He died at the age of 105, in the eleventh year of the reign of Keigo Tenno, twelfth Emperor of Japan.

The spot where his house is supposed to have stood is called "Sorai Zuka," Jesus' tomb.

On the slopes of Mount Heral, overlooking the village, there are still to be seen the ruins of a stone edifice which the villagers call "Tsukino-Tatte," the House of the Moon.

Many foreign articles are reported to have been unearthed from the ruins. People say it is the place where Jesus worshiped.

From generation to generation, the peasants say, too, a story has come down to them of "Aya and Apa," Adam and Eve. They believe their ancestors learned it from the man they say was Jesus Christ.

DEMOCRACY STILL BEST
Editor Beacon Journal:
We have much to be thankful for, as everyone who reads the daily papers well knows.

Perhaps politics are rotten and many politicians sometimes go far astray. Perhaps we do not agree with the administration or with the manner in which the country is being run. Perhaps the national debt has reached staggering proportions, causing taxes to be almost unbearable. But would we exchange any of these things for what other countries have to offer?

No, my friends, a democracy is still the best form of government under which to live. And as we have carved and eaten of the old turkey on Thanksgiving day, let us all express sincere thanks that we are still a free people living in a free country.

And please remember this, "better times come after better thinking, and never before." In other words, better times are the "result of what men think, and not the cause of better thinking."

Men alone have the power to make better times. When we have the will to make times better, then and then only will conditions improve. Just so long as we remain pessimistic, down in the

dumps, blue, discouraged, afraid to make a move or take a chance, or lack the courage to adopt new plans and new ideas, then just so long will business remain in the doldrums. Reverse this method of thinking and working, and notice how quick business picks up and things improve.

We should all be thankful that we are still living in a country where man still has the power to bring these things about himself, and where the control of his own destiny is largely in his own hands, and if the majority of us in all denominations get in tune with the "Living God Law" and will practice in our lives each day, we would surely have a better world in which to live.

GEORGE W. HALL,
Stow, O.

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DOG RETURNS HOME 40 MILES WITH PUPPY

AN Abergele (North Wales) farmer sold a sheepdog and her 11-week-old puppy to a farmer 40 miles away. The dogs were taken to their new home.

Three days later the dogs arrived back at their old home.

Marks on the puppy's neck suggest that the mother had carried it part of the way.