

530 “Never man spake like this man”

One of the boasts we sometimes hear about Britain is that we are now a multi-ethnic, multi-Faith society, in which people of markedly different backgrounds live together more or less in harmony. Such a state of inter-Faith harmony has become essential with the arrival in Britain of large numbers of adherents of other Faiths since 1945, and as such it certainly has its merits.

But the harmony comes at a cost, and the cost is about Truth itself. In practice, politicians tend to regard these “World Faiths” as being more or less the same as each other, each one, it is assumed, having slowly evolved during the supposed millions of years of human existence, to take their place today alongside one another in modern society. As to the degree of Truth or Falsehood within each such Faith, who knows?! - that is a question rarely considered. Instead, in the interests of social harmony all Faiths are to be equally respected. Thus for example, the fact that the British Prime Minister is “a proud Hindu” in his own words, that the Home Secretary is a Buddhist, and that the next leader of the Scottish National Party may be a Muslim – none of this is deemed to matter in contemporary, secular Britain.

Unfortunately for this relaxed approach regarding different Faiths, Truth does exist and Truth does matter! As hopefully we know from these Weekly Reflections, the “truth-credentials” on which the Judeo-Christian Faith is based are immensely strong in their own right, and especially so when compared with the truth-credentials of other Faiths. In the Holy Bible for instance we are given a thorough, historically-rooted explanation of God’s existence, character and deeds; of humanity’s recent creation and fall from innocence; of Man’s helplessness in trying to regain fellowship and peace with our Creator by human effort; of God’s intervention in His own Son Jesus Christ to suffer death on our behalf – “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for [the sins of] the whole world” (I John 2.2, KJV); and of God’s plans for the future of this planet and universe.

Next, in Genesis Chapters 1–11 we have an entirely unique, God-revealed record of the first 4,000 years of creation. We are told of the genealogy from Adam to Abram (and in Luke Chapter 3.23-38 from Jesus Christ back via Abraham to Adam himself); of the global Flood; of the post-Flood spread of sin; of the language being confused and the people being scattered from Babel by Almighty God. In that Babel scattering lie the true seeds of the subsequent “World Faiths” of today,

each being a Satan-encouraged, Man-made concoction of beliefs and practices based originally on garbled memories of the original biblical events, notably the worldwide Flood and the need for blood sacrifice.

Then we have the coming of Jesus Christ into this fallen world as Messiah and Lord, an event which is repeatedly foretold in the Old Testament and is then wonderfully fulfilled and explained in the New Testament. Jesus' life and character; His teaching and miracles; His death, resurrection and ascension; and His prophecies and promised return – all are also 100% unique with not a rival claimant in sight. A few examples from John's Gospel make the point: "Never man spake like this man ... Verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am ... I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? ... I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (from John 7.46 / 8.58 / 11.25-26 / John 14.6).

And furthermore, Jesus – "shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs" (from Acts 1.3a) / "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4.20) / "But Paul said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness ... for this thing was not done in a corner" (from Acts 26.25-26) / "For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2.5) / "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables ... but were eyewitnesses of his (Jesus') majesty" (from II Peter 1.16).

Of course Truth matters, and in Jesus Christ we have been given "the Way", not "one Way"; "the Truth", not "one Truth"; and "the Life", not "one Life". When "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (from John 6.66), Jesus asked the twelve, "Will ye also go away?". Let us stick with Peter's reply, and make it known to others as and when we can – "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (from John 6.67-68).

True then. True now. True always. Thanks be to God indeed.

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