SUPERHUMAN LIFE (5) IS THE BIBLE TRUE?

By Ernest O'Neill

What is life about? Why are you here? Why does the earth exist? All of us humans can give our best answers to these questions, but even to Einstein we have to say, "What do you know about these cosmic questions?" We have to say this because all of us humans suffer the same limitation--we're trying to explain the enigma from WITHIN the enigma! We're like goldfish that have never been outside the bowl trying to explain why they're there and where the bowl came from.

We'll never know why we're here or why the world exists unless we hear from some power OUTSIDE our world. There must be something or someone out there in space that can see beyond the farthest star our radio telescopes and space-probes have discovered. Only such a "visitor from outer space" can logically be expected to explain why you exist.

What we've been sharing during the past few months is that such a visitor came to our planet more than 1950 years ago. We discussed last month the evidence for his existence presented in that collection of history books know as "the books"--"TA BIBLIA" in Greek. We talked about the integrity of the eye-witnesses who wrote the original accounts of this man's life. We mentioned also the non-Biblical historians like Pliny, Tacitus, Celsus, Josephus and others who corroborated the details of his life. In other words, if we ask the question about the life of this man Jesus, "Is what they wrote true?", we have to answer because of the substantiating evidence, 'Yes."

BUT do we have what they wrote? After all, this visit from outer space took place more than 1950 years ago. Buddha lived around 500 B.C. but the details of his life were first written down

500 years later. Those intervening years provided all the time needed to develop untrue legends about him that could then be presented as history. Obviously that time didn't exist in the case of this man Jesus, because accounts of his life were being circulated throughout the ancient world just 20 years after he died. BUT 1950 years have elapsed since those accounts were first written. How can you be sure those accounts have not been lost, tampered with, even completely re-written? How can you be sure that what we read in this Bible is what they wrote?

Obviously by having a Bible that was 1950 years old! If you had an account of his life that was written within a hundred years of his death, then you could be sure that nobody had changed the original account or if you had a lot of old copies of his life you could travel round the world unearthing them all and changing them to present a spurious story. Because the material used in old manuscripts was so perishable, the early scribes would destroy the old script after making a new one: the result is that ancient history like Caesar's Gallic War has only 10 ancient manuscripts to confirm the original account--and the oldest one was copied 900 years after Caesar wrote his original history. It's the same with the histories of Livy, Herodotus, Tacitus--even Plato's Republic is based on a few ancient manuscripts, the oldest of which was copied about 1300 years after Plato lived. This is why the ancient history departments of our universities regard anything written within 200 years of the event as an eye-witness account.

What is the oldest manuscript that attests to the life of this man Jesus who lived 1950 years ago? 130 A.D.! That's barely a hundred years after his death--and just 30 years after the death of one of the eye-witnesses that wrote about him. But perhaps someone got hold of that manuscript (it's in the library of the University of Manchester in England) and changed it. If the classical scholars accept Caesar's account of the Gallic Wars on

the basis of 10 ancient manuscripts, how many are there to help us check that we have exactly the account of Jesus' life as it was originally written? 4,000!

That's right--there are more than 4,000 ancient manuscripts between the year 130 and 1100 A.D. that all attest to the accuracy of the account that we have in our Bible of the visit to our planet of this remarkable being from outer space, Jesus. If any of the world's history can be trusted, then the history of this unique being justifies that trust more than any other history we possess. If he actually lived, why believe he came from some superhuman life?

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