16th May 2024

God

"In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadows to blind those who don't."

Blaise Pascal, *Pensées (1669)*

Do giraffes have long necks so they can reach the tastiest leaves at the top of Acacia trees, or do they eat the topmost leaves because they have long necks? It's not a dilemma which keeps me awake at night, but it's one of those "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" questions.

I was pondering such a chicken-and-egg question when I was driving on a single-track country road recently. The road twisted and turned, up hills and down again, for several miles, with passing places to allow other cars through safely. "Who build this road this way?" I asked myself. A pathway that followed animal tracks? A drovers' road that followed a footpath? A road for vehicles that followed an ancient cattle-track? A metalled road that simply followed the contours of the land because it was easier? Who knows? And, though I'll not be losing sleep over that one either, it's another interesting "chicken-and-egg" question.

So, here's a quandary ... Which came first, God or faith? Did God exist, with faith following on from our discovery of God? Or did our belief-system have a need for a divine entity so that a God was created? God first, and faith to follow, or faith first with a God created as a result? Did God exist first, or did we create God because we needed to?

The idea that humanity invented God is an issue which has intrigued thinkers through the ages. From the ancient Greeks to the Old Testament prophets, the notion of manufactured gods has been explored at length. Some religions, such as Judaism, had an unwavering commitment to one God, believing that all other gods were a human construct. And yet, some still argue that even this "monotheistic" approach is of human origin, in that we needed a "God idea" to make sense of everything else, our life-experience, emotions, culture, hopes and beliefs.

And me? I believe in God! Did I create this God, or is this God a revelation to me because of my need for faith? I'm pleased to say that I'm not losing sleep over that chicken-and-egg question either.

A prayer for today

"God?" "Yes." "Are you there?" "Yes."
"Are you here?" "Yes." "Are you with me?" "Yes." "OK?" OK."

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