

Earthly Tribulations

Like his first book, *The True Self*, J.R. Singh's *Earthly Tribulations* is one serious read that incorporates some of the same subject matter. In this collection of essays relating to what he calls "earthly problems," Singh provides interesting multicultural analyses on corrupt governments, laws, spiritual beliefs, racism, war, women's rights, abortion, health care, and other issues. That's a lot of stuff packed into a little book.

***Earthly Tribulations* is a thought-provoking, no-nonsense, and intelligent book that can either start an argument or settle one. Observe:**

On corrupt government: "Trying to bring about change through the democratic process can be a difficult task for any political party. It becomes an ongoing battle between those who have become accustomed to illegal practices and those who want to put an end to them."

On personality: "[T]rends of society affect each person in different ways. Nothing lasts forever, as what may be acceptable today will most likely become a thing of the past."

On spiritual beliefs: "While millions choose to worship God through prayers, rituals, and different forms of meditation, I have chosen the path of selfless action and follow mostly what my conscience tells me is right and intelligible."

On war: "To many people, when injustice rises to the point where it cannot be stopped through dialogue, war may be the only solution to forcefully remove tyrants who advocate violence and continually violate the law."

On racism: "What makes racism such a complicated problem to expunge is the difficulty in knowing what people sincerely think about others of a different race. I do not believe racism or prejudice will completely be obliterated; however, I believe that with the right effort it can be controlled."

On women's rights: "In a nation where equal rights are strongly emphasized and there are strict laws to protect women from physical abuse, men tend to treat women with a certain degree of respect."

On arranged marriages: "To many people in western societies [arranged marriage] seems old-fashioned and unfair, however many people of eastern cultures do not consider it so bad, since they claim to have only a small percentage of broken marriages."

On abortion: "Amid varying views on abortion, many at times have called upon government to enact laws enforcing what they support. But it is hard for governments to please everyone, since for the greater part it appears to be a personal issue where the circumstances have to be carefully weighed."

On laws: “Though many laws may not be perfect, we have to adhere to them to sustain a world of order and harmony.”

On television and the media: “[A] lot depends on us to reflect on some of the information we are fed, so that we are not easily persuaded by biased views.”

On health care: “[I]n the coming years, the quality of health care may largely be determined by what governments can provide or what citizens can afford.”

On nature: “Nature is that uncanny part of God which has the ability to create, absorb, and change things.”

While certainly not light reading, *Earthly Tribulations* addresses a diverse range of subjects without being one-sided or wordy. Singh uses clear and concise language to enlighten us on worldly matters, leading to mind-broadening discussions to those brave enough to undertake them.

Review by: Maryann Boulter (nightsandweekends.com)