

Toetrede

Liturgie van die Lig

Woorddiens

Lesing 1 Job 2:1-10 (1953)

¹ EN op 'n dag toe die seuns van God kom om hulle voor die HERE te stel, het die Satan ook onder hulle gekom om hom voor die HERE te stel.

² Toe vra die HERE vir die Satan: Waar kom jy vandaan? En die Satan antwoord die HERE en sê: Van 'n swerftog oor die aarde, wat ek deurkruis het.

³ En die HERE vra vir die Satan: Het jy ag gegee op my kneg Job? Want daar is niemand op die aarde soos hy nie: 'n man vroom en opreg, godvresend en wat afwyk van die kwaad; en hy volhard nog in sy vroomheid, alhoewel jy My teen hom opgehits het om hom te vernietig sonder oorsaak.

⁴ Toe het die Satan die HERE geantwoord en gesê: Huid vir huid, en alles wat iemand het, sal hy gee vir sy lewe;

⁵ maar strek net u hand uit en tas sy gebeente en sy vlees aan — waarlik, hy sal U in u aangesig seën!

⁶ En die HERE sê aan die Satan: Kyk, hy is in jou hand; spaar net sy lewe.

⁷ En die Satan het weggegaan van die aangesig van die HERE, en hy het Job met bese swere getref, van sy voetsool tot sy skedel.

⁸ En hy het vir hom 'n potskerf geneem om hom daarmee te krap, terwyl hy in die as sit.

⁹ Toe sê sy vrou vir hom: Volhard jy nog in jou vroomheid? Seën God, en sterf!

¹⁰ Maar hy antwoord haar: Soos 'n dwaas praat, praat jy! Die goeie sou ons van God aanneem, en nie ook die slegte aanneem nie? By dit alles het Job nie gesondig met sy lippe nie.

Broodjies vir die Pad

The insightful pastor might begin her or his four week meditation with a survey of popular explanations of the problem of evil:

1. Punishment for sin, “you deserve it” – just a few weeks ago, a pastor invoked divine punishment for the floods that hit New Orleans during Hurricane Isaac - they deserve it because of their immortality and toleration of homosexuality, he suggested. The “they” included a mostly African American community, small children, and elderly adults.
2. “You chose it” – some new age philosophies suggest that “we create our own realities” – everything that happens to us is a result of our thinking either in this life or a previous lifetime. The “decision makers” choose rape, incest, abuse, and cancer by their attitudes!

3. “Karma” and “acts-consequences” – there is an exact, unbending correlation between behaviors and outcomes that shapes our lives, whether as result of previous lifetimes or current actions. We reap what we sow. Those who “reap” are two years with advanced cancer or babies born with fetal alcohol syndrome!
4. “Stuff happens” – evil and suffering are simply realities serving no purpose and having no intentionality...the evils of life are purely random and so are the benefits we experience. “Stuff” comes equally to the righteous and unrighteous.
5. “God’s will” – God determines everything in God’s wisdom, saved and unsaved, blessed and cursed. All things flow from the hand of God. “God wills” an automobile crash that kills a young mother!
6. “Education and testing” – our sufferings strengthen us and show our true character. The “exam takers” are parents who watch helplessly as children die of incurable diseases.
7. “Many factors” – there is no overarching source of evil; but evil occurs as the result of the interplay of creaturely freedom and creativity, environment, randomness, and God’s action in the world. “I’m responsible but not fully responsible. I can make a difference, but there are factors beyond my control. Even God has to deal with limitations.”

<http://processandfaith.org/resources/lectionary-commentary/yearb/2012-10-07/proper-22>



A state is best entrusted to someone with justice, restraint and concern for the public well-being ([#DesideriusErasmus](#), Instit. Princ. 1516)



People seek a pleasant life in external things, but it is unattainable unless the mind is free of anxiety ([#DesideriusErasmus](#), Colloq. 1533)



This week the RCL begins a series of readings from the Book of Job as part of the extended exploration of ancient Israel’s wisdom tradition in these final months of Year B.

Job has had a profound impact on Western culture as a classic of the human quest for meaning in a world marked by suffering. It is rightly seen as an example of wisdom literature and yet it also offers a critique of traditional wisdom, as Jay Williams observes:

... though Job begins with the thought-forms and the questions of the wiseman, the book must be said to stand ‘at the edge of wisdom.’ It is, in fact, an impassioned assertion of the awareness that the simple moralism of most wise men is hardly enough. Proverbs is full of the

kind of 'practical' advice which a father might offer to his son who is starting out to seek his fortune in the big wide world. Work hard, act and speak honestly, beware evil women and you will succeed. Job avoids all such clichés. In fact, the more one reads the book the more difficult it becomes to know just what answer is being given. Only the most superficial reader will put down the book fully convinced that he has understood it. Like Plato, who also wrote in dialogue form and who often ended his dialogues inconclusively, the authors of Job involve the reader in an intense debate which ends, not with a final Q.E.D., but with a new set of questions. If there is truth to be found in the book, therefore, it is born in the midst of struggle. Perhaps the truth is the struggle itself. [Jay G. Williams, Understanding the Old Testament, 267-268]

The ambiguity and ambivalence of Job is one of its most attractive features for many modern (and postmodern) readers. Here is a biblical text that celebrates the lack of a compelling answer, and instead calls us to faithfulness that sees beyond suffering to a meaning beyond human comprehension.

The literary origins of this text are unclear:

It is even more difficult to say when the book was written. Ezekiel referred to Job as an important person alongside Noah and Daniel (Ezek. 14:14-20). Moreover, tradition put him in the patriarchal period and made the book one of the oldest in the Bible. Modern scholars are skeptical of such claims to antiquity, but proposed dates range from the tenth to the third century B.C. The book itself is completely silent about its time, with no allusions to historical events or topical subjects ... Job 3:4 is a parodistic allusion to Gen. 1:3, a creation account usually dated after the Exile in the sixth century B.C. Such evidence suggests but does not prove that Job was composed and completed after the Babylonian exile. [Edwin M. Good, Harper Bible Commentary, 370]

This week we begin with the classic opening scene in which God and Satan are engaged in a wager over the strength of Job's love for God. For many people this will raise questions about the Satan figure as an embodiment of evil, but that is really an aside in the reading of Job. Here, Satan is effectively the Director of Public Prosecutions in the divine court; one of the "sons of God" with a specific portfolio, rather than a rival to the Almighty.

<http://gregoryjenks.com/2012/10/01/pentecost-19b-7-october-2012>

Brood vir die Pad

Dienstigheid baar nie 'n gedeelde storie

deur Wilhelm Jordaan

By die Open Book-fees in Kaapstad reken Antjie Krog "n kabinet moet letterkunde lees". Saam met die planne om die land te laat draai, benodig maghebbers ook skrywers en digters se besielende visioenêre woordeskat wat die klem op sosiale kohesie plaas.

Ja, sekerlik, want op neerdrukkende dae is Suid-Afrika 'n land sonder sin en samehang; sonder 'n verenigende, gedeelde narratief.

Lank gelede het die Engelse digter Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 – 1822) gesê "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world".

Waarmee hy bedoel het skrywers skep nuwe maniere van dink en voel en daaruit kom, algaande, saamsnoerende simbole.

Hoe haalbaar is dit? Politieke maghebbers luister mos eintlik net na hulself en omarm skrywers wat hul lof besing. 'n Politiek dienstige letterkunde baar nie 'n gedeelde storie nie.

Sommige maghebbende (én magsoekende) politici haal ook graag uit die letterkunde aan – merendeels as vertoon om die indruk van ontledende, beleë wysheid te skep. 'n Gewilde staatsmaker is Yeats se "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold..." En net daar stop dit gewoonlik – die betekenis van die res én die geheel onverreken.

In die reël gebeur Shelley se soort "wetgewende" letterkundige krag eintlik net wanneer skrywers deel het aan protes teen onreg in 'n politieke bestel en 'n nuwe werklikheid begeer of voorsien. Soos wanneer die Pool Czeslaw Milosz in 1945 in Warschau skryf: "Wat is die poësie tog as dit nie/Nasies of volke kan red nie/Bloot instemming met die amptelike leuens/'n Lied van dronkaards wie se kele enige oomblik afgesny sal word..."

Soos toe die digter Siphos Sepamla in 1976 die wit en swart mense van apartheid-Suid-Afrika beleef het as "the blues people": "I want to holler the how long blues/Because we are the blues people all/The blues is you in me..."

En Breyten Breytenbach, wat in 1985 geskryf het: "Ons bring vir julle die grammatika van geweld / en die sinsbou van verwoesting – /uit die tradisie van ons vuurwapens / sal julle die werkwoorde van vergelding hoor/stotter..."

In sy studie Heroes and Hero Worship kry Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) nie plek vir die politikus as held nie, maar wel vir die digter as held wat in sy hart ook tegelyk politikus, denker, wetgewer en filosoof is.

'n Moderne voorbeeld is Václav Havel (1936-2011), Tsjeggiese digter, dramaturg, essayskrywer en internasionaal gerekende staatshoof (eers van Tsjeggo-Slowakye en toe van die nuwe Tsjeggiese Republiek) wat sy lewe aan kreatiewe andersdenkendheid en protes teen onreg gewy het.

Wat hy geskryf en as staatsman geleef het, is gedra deur die morele durf om mag aan die magteloses te besorg én die weiering om met selfdienende politieke leuens en magsmisbruik saam te leef.

Dié soort durf is nodig vir 'n saamsnoerende storie oor en vir ons land.

<http://www.beeld.com/Rubrieke/WilhelmJordaan/Dienstigheid-baar-nie-n-gedeelde-storie-20121002>