

Steek èrens in jou woonplek 'n kers aan terwyl jy lees.

Tema: As sterre val en berge wankel, hoe maak ons in en na tye van groot onsekerheid?

Skriflesing: Markus 13:15-37

Broodjies vir die pad

“To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world.”

— Karl Barth

“Faith is homesickness. Faith is a lump in the throat. Faith is less a position on than a movement toward, less a sure thing than a hunch. Faith is waiting. Faith is journeying through space and through time.”

— Frederick Buechner, *The Clown in the Belfry: Writings on Faith and Fiction*

“Questions you cannot answer are usually far better for you than answers you cannot question.”

— Yuval Noah Harari, *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*

“The opposite of poverty isn't property. The opposite of both poverty and property is community. For in community we become rich: rich in friends, in neighbours, in colleagues, in comrades, in brothers and sisters. Together, as a community, we can help ourselves in most of our difficulties. For after all, there are enough people and enough ideas, capabilities and energies to be had. They are only lying fallow, or are stunted and suppressed. So let us discover our wealth; let us discover our solidarity; let us build up communities; let us take our lives into our own hands, and at long last out of the hands of the people who want to dominate and exploit us.”

— Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life*

“There is treasure buried in the field of every one of our days, even the bleakest or dullest, and it is our business, as we journey, to keep our eyes peeled for it.”

— Frederick Buechner, *The Longing for Home: Reflections at Midlife*

“Perhaps the art of harvesting the secret riches of our lives is best achieved when we place profound trust in the act of beginning. Risk might be our greatest ally. To live a truly creative life, we always need to cast a critical look at where we presently are, attempting always to discern where we have become stagnant and where new beginning might be ripening. There can be no growth if we do not remain open

and vulnerable to what is new and different. I have never seen anyone take a risk for growth that was not rewarded a thousand times over.”

— John O'Donohue, *To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Invocations and Blessings*

“Technology isn't bad. If you know what you want in life, technology can help you get it. But if you don't know what you want in life, it will be all too easy for technology to shape your aims for you and take control of your life. Especially as technology gets better at understanding humans, you might increasingly find yourself serving it, instead of it serving you.”

— Yuval Noah Harari, *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*

'Nuwe geloof in data . . . en ook in jouself

Wilhelm Jordaan

Die teoloog Ben du Toit skryf behendig in sy boek *God: Is daar 'n ander antwoord?* oor sy “radikale bevryding” van tradisionele godsdienstige idees – soos dat God die Skepper is. Nee, sê hy met oortuiging, die mens is skepper en dit kom alles uit die mens se voortrefflike evolusionêr gevormde skeppende breinprosesse.

Ek glo wesenlik soos hy glo, maar waarom laat sy boek my met 'n gevoel van verskriklike verlies en leegheid? Met bewoë respek reken ek Du Toit het verwondering, 'n sin vir misterie oor dinge wat buite meetbaarheid en weetbaarheid lê, verruil vir feite en wetmatige sekerhede wat uit die wetenskap kom.

So asof mense se geloof in en 'n verlange na 'n teenwoordige God, hoe dié begrip ook al verstaan word, geen lewensvormende betekenis het nie. Soos Du Toit sê: Ons is keuseloos deel van die heelal. “God” is dan bloot 'n gawe illusie om die werklikheid van 'n koue, onverskillige kosmos te verdryf.

'n Gedig soos dié van T.T. Cloete (“Mikrologie”) is daarvolgens net alfabetiese vingeroefeninge sonder sin en lewenskrag; mymerende mistiek: “dat in die fetus / van die vlooi / die dinkdroom van God / netjies ruim berus / en tot in die oneindige plooi op plooi / oopvou en ontplooi tot en tot en tot . . .”

Dit geld ook gewone mense se hoopvolle én verleë biddende stamelings; 'n vlugtige gedagte; 'n onrustige gevoel; 'n huiwerende insig; en elke flentertjie twyfel wat bemoeienis maak met die misterie van dit wat mense “God” noem. Dit is die mysterium tremendum van waaruit baie mense wil leef; en nie keuseloos in die heelal is nie.

En dié mysterium, gedra deur verwondering, benodig nie klinkklare rasonale antwoorde nie. Wel tsetseltjies ironie, soos Julian Barnes skryf in sy boek *Nothing to Be Frightened Of*: “I don't believe in God but I miss him.”

Die idee dat “God” weglaatbaar is, word ook in tergende besonderhede deur Yuval Noah Harari in sy boek *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* ontleed. Sy toekomsvisie in 'n neutdop: Die mens sal op eie wetenskaplike houtjie goddelike eienskappe verwerf, onsterflikheid en ewige geluksaligheid. Vir hom is “dataïsme” die nuwe godsdienst wat met voortgaande evolusie die “vloei van data verder sal verhoog”. Daaruit kom organiserende beginsels wat hoër lewensdoelwitte bevorder. Dit

benodig nie geloof in 'n God nie; net geloof in jousef . . .

Moontlik waar, maar hoe arm sal ons wees met ons parate antwoorde op alles sonder verwondering. Vol van onself sal ons die eeue oue lied “Hoe groot is u” (“O heer my God, as ek in eerbied wonder . . .”) al singend, selfaanbiddend herberym: “O mens ons god, as ons met trots aanskou / hoe al ons werke elke dag ontvou: / Die gene-, kwarke, die hadrons, beurse, markte / hoe ons al die data onderhou . . . / Dan moet ons juig, ons maker en ons god / Hoe groot is ons, hoe groot is ons. / Want deur die hele kosmos klink dit saam / hoe lieflik mens, jou grote naam . . .”

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<https://www.netwerk24.com/Stemme/Menings/nuwe-geloof-in-data-en-ook-in-jousef-20201124>

“The moon looks wonderful in this warm evening light, just as a candle flame looks beautiful in the light of morning. Light within light...It seems to me to be a metaphor for the human soul, the singular light within that great general light of existence.”

— Marilynne Robinson, *Gilead*

“So why study history? Unlike physics or economics, history is not a means for making accurate predictions. We study history not to know the future but to widen our horizons, to understand that our present situation is neither natural nor inevitable, and that we consequently have many more possibilities before us than we can imagine.”

— Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*

“What is there within the Bible?”

“It is a dangerous question. We might do better not to come too near this burning bush. For we are sure to betray what is—behind us! The Bible gives to every man and every era such answers to your questions as they deserve. We shall always find in it as much as we seek and no more: high and divine content if it is high and divine content that we seek; transitory and “historical” content, if transitory and “historical” content that we seek. Nothing whatever, if it is nothing whatever that we seek. The hungry are satisfied by it, and to the satisfied it is surfeiting before they have opened it. The question, “What is in the Bible?” has a mortifying way of converting itself into the opposing question, “Well, what are you looking for, and who are you, pray, who make bold to look?”

— Karl Barth

The Fall of Berlin 1945

by *Antony Beevor*

The Red Army had much to avenge when it finally reached the frontiers of the Reich in January 1945. Political instructors rammed home the message of Wehrmacht and SS brutality. The result was the most terrifying example of fire and sword ever known, with tanks crushing refugee columns under their tracks, mass rape, pillage and destruction. Hundreds of thousands of women and children froze to death or were massacred because Nazi Party chiefs, refusing to face defeat, had forbidden the

evacuation of civilians. Over seven million fled westwards from the terror of the Red Army.

Antony Beevor reconstructs the experiences of those millions caught up in the nightmare of the Third Reich's final collapse, telling a terrible story of pride, stupidity, fanaticism, revenge and savagery, but also one of astonishing endurance, self-sacrifice and survival against all odds.

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/42661.The_Fall_of_Berlin_1945

Brood vir die pad

Hoe lank sal die swaarkry en die onreg nog duur?

RRV

“Hoe lank nog, Here?” In die Ou Testament lees ons telkemale dié vraag.

In Psalm 6, byvoorbeeld, sê die digter: “Ek is heeltemal gedaan. Hoe lank nog, Here, voor U uitkoms gee?” En in Psalm 13 vind ons die volgende reeks uitroep: “Hoe lank gaan U my nog bly vergeet, Here? . . . Hoe lank gaan U nog van my af wegkyk? Hoe lank moet ek nog my eie planne maak en my dae met kommer deurbring? Hoe lank sal die vyand my nog oorheers?”

Talle meer voorbeelde kan uit die Psalms uitgelig word wat deel vorm die sogenaamde usquequo-tekste (van die Latyn vir “hoe lank?”). Al hierdie tekste is gelaai met rou emosie; midde-in ervarings van pyn, moedeloosheid, woede en uitsigloosheid word 'n klag, en dikwels ook 'n aanklag, tot God gerig.

In die profetiese literatuur weerklink die klag oor onreg op 'n soortgelyke wyse. In die boek Habakuk lees ons dan ook: “Hoe lank moet ek nog om hulp roep voordat U hoor, Here, moet ek bly kla oor geweld voordat U red?” (1:2). En 'n hoofstuk later: “Ellende wag vir hom wat hom verryk met goed wat nie syne is nie . . . Hoe lank sal dit nog voortduur?” (2:6).

Gegewe die feit dat die vraag “Hoe lank nog, Here?” vandag nog steeds in situasies van swaarkry, siekte, onderdrukking en geweld na vore beur, kan ons onthou dat mense ook deur die eeue dit gewaag het om met profetiese visie en spraak op dié vraag te reageer.

In sy kommentaar op Habakuk 2:6 skryf Johannes Calvyn byvoorbeeld (en dit is woorde wat dikwels in die kerkstryd teen apartheid in Suid-Afrika aangehaal is): “Wanneer mense deur hulle ambisie en hebsug die wêreld versteur, en die onskuldiges laat ly, roep almal uit: ‘Hoe lank nog?’ En hierdie uitroep word volledig en duidelik deur die Here gehoor.” Calvyn voeg selfs by: “Dit is asof God homself hoor in die klag en krete van hulle wat nie meer ongeregtigheid kan verduur nie.”

Die Amerikaanse burgerregte-leier Martin Luther King het ook dikwels die vraag “Hoe lank nog, Here?” in sy toesprake opgeneem. Bekend is die eindeel van sy toespraak op 25 Maart 1965 in Montgomery, Alabama: “I know you are asking today, ‘How long will it take?’ . . . ‘How long will prejudice blind the visions of men’ . . . ‘How long will justice be crucified?’ . . . How long? Not long, because ‘no lie can live forever’ . . . How long? Not long, because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.”

<https://www.netwerk24.com/Stemme/Sielsgoed/geestelike-waardes-hoe-lank-sal-die-swaarkry-en-die-onreg-nog-duur-20201121>

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