

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

Tema: Verdraagsaamheid. Wat is dit?

Skriflesing: Handeling 11:19-30

Broodjies vir die pad

“Men build too many walls and not enough bridges.”

— Joseph Fort Newton

“Laws alone can not secure freedom of expression; in order that every man present his views without penalty there must be spirit of tolerance in the entire population.”

— Albert Einstein

“Tolerance is the virtue of the man without convictions.”

— G. K. Chesterton

“The first duty of love is to listen.”

— Paul Tillich

Spirituality

"Spirituality combines awareness, intention and practice. I define it as becoming conscious of and intentional about a deepening relationship with God. The words are very carefully chosen. Becoming conscious of our relationship with God: I am convinced that we are all already in relationship to God and have been from our birth."

— The Heart of Christianity by Marcus Borg

“Being an agnostic means all things are possible, even God, even the Holy Trinity. This world is so strange that anything may happen, or may not happen. Being an agnostic makes me live in a larger, a more fantastic kind of world, almost uncanny. It makes me more tolerant.”

— Jorge Luis Borges

“Christians are hard to tolerate; I don't know how Jesus does it”

— Bono

“Compassion is the sometimes fatal capacity for feeling what it is like to live inside somebody else's skin. It's the knowledge that there can never really be any peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy finally for you too.”

— Frederick Buechner

“Maturity cannot be hurried, programmed, or tinkered with. There are no steroids available for growing up in Christ more quickly. Impatient shortcuts land us in the dead ends of immaturity.”

— Eugene H. Peterson, Practice Resurrection: A Conversation on Growing Up in Christ

Haar nalatenskap

In die lelie van haar nag
het sy steeds gebloom
haar taak hier op aarde
tot vervulling gekom

in lewe was sy onsigbaar
'n skugter plant
wat in die skadu's rank

onsigbaar haar doen en late
onmisbaar haar liefdesdade
omgee haar grootste bate

maar dis in haar nalatenskap
waar suiwer waarde bot
saad wat sy gesaai het
ontkiem

en nou tot waskom blom

Driekie Grobler

“It's an universal law-- intolerance is the first sign of an inadequate education. An ill-educated person behaves with arrogant impatience, whereas truly profound education breeds humility.”

— Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn

“Even if we didn't know the context, we were instructed to remember that context existed. Everyone on earth, they'd tell us, was carrying around an unseen history, and that alone deserved some tolerance.”

— Michelle Obama, Becoming

“So, is there an afterlife, and if so, what will it be like? I don't have a clue. But I am confident that the one who has buoyed us up in life will also buoy us up through death. We die into God. What more that means, I do not know. But that is all I need to know.”

— Marcus J. Borg, Speaking Christian: Why Christian Words Have Lost Their Meaning and Power - And How They Can Be Restored

“Lay people are usually unaware that the scrupulous scholarly work achieved by modern biblical criticism ... represented by scrupulous academic work over about 300 years, belongs among the greatest intellectual achievements of the human race. Has any of the great world religions outside of the Jewish-Christian tradition investigated its own foundations and its own history so thoroughly and impartially? None of them has remotely approached this. The Bible is far and away the most studied book in world literature.”

— Hans Kung

“The so-called *paradox of freedom* is the argument that freedom in the sense of absence of any constraining control must lead to very great restraint, since it makes the bully

free to enslave the meek. The idea is, in a slightly different form, and with very different tendency, clearly expressed in Plato.

Less well known is the *paradox of tolerance*: Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them. — In this formulation, I do not imply, for instance, that we should always suppress the utterance of intolerant philosophies; as long as we can counter them by rational argument and keep them in check by public opinion, suppression would certainly be unwise. But we should claim the *right* to suppress them if necessary even by force; for it may easily turn out that they are not prepared to meet us on the level of rational argument, but begin by denouncing all argument; they may forbid their followers to listen to rational argument, because it is deceptive, and teach them to answer arguments by the use of their fists or pistols. We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant. We should claim that any movement preaching intolerance places itself outside the law, and we should consider incitement to intolerance and persecution as criminal, in the same way as we should consider incitement to murder, or to kidnapping, or to the revival of the slave trade, as criminal.” — Karl Raimund Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*

“There is a desperate hunger for belonging. People feel isolated and cut off. Perhaps this is why a whole nation can assemble around the images of celebrities. They have no acquaintance with these celebrities personally. They look at them from a distance and project all their longings onto them. When something happens to a celebrity, they feel as if it is happening to themselves. There is an acute need for the reawakening of the sense of community.” — John O'Donohue, *Eternal Echoes*

Brood vir die pad

Wag Nirvana of Armageddon?

Anton van Niekerk

Waarheen is ons as mense op pad? Is ons onderweg na Nirvana – die toestand volgens Oosterse godsdienste van die staking van ewige hergeboorte en die aanbreek van volkome geluksaligheid? Of is ons bestemming Armageddon, die oord van die finale konflik tussen goed en kwaad – voorspel tot die “laaste oordeel”?

Dit is op die oog af naïewe en dalk onbeantwoorbare vrae. Maar in tye van oorloë, gerugte van oorloë, terminale siektes, moordenaar-virusse en pandemies bly dit terugkerende vrae. In ernstige intellektuele kringe (vergelyk die werk van prof. David Benatar, filosoof aan die Universiteit van Kaapstad) word “antitalisme” ernstig gepropageer. Dit is die standpunt waar aangevoer word dat ons as ’n spesie daarna behoort te streef om uit te sterf, in ag genome ons nimmereindigende fontein van slegte ervarings, asook die skade wat ons aan die aarde aanrig.

Oor of ons as mense ons bevind in ’n stygende kurwe van prestasie en voorspoed, en of ons onkeerbaar aan die versink is in ’n maalkolk van (self)vernietiging, stry die geeste al lank. Ons hoef nie verder te gaan soek as die 19de eeu nie.

Kultuurhistories sal daardie 100 jaar altyd aangeteken staan as die eeu van voorspoed, gedryf deur die geloof in vooruitgang en optimisme. In sy magistrale boek *The Birth of the Modern* toon Paul Johnson treffend aan watter stortvloed van tegnologiese en ander ontdekkings in slegs die tydperk 1815 tot 1830 (die 15 jaar ná Napoleon se nederlaag by Waterloo) gedoen is.

Teenoor die vooruitgangsgeloof van die 19de eeu staan die katastrofes (wêreldoorloë!) van die eerste helfte van die 20ste eeu. As ons die gerekende Harvard-intellektueel Steven Pinker kan glo (volgens sy *The Better Angels of Our Nature*), is die 20ste eeu steeds verreweg die beste en voorspoedigste tyd om in te leef, ongeag die oorloë en geweld.

Dit toon hy aan met ’n stortvloed van empiriese getuienis wat hy in grafiek ná grafiek illustreer. Yuval Harari is eweneens gaande oor die onpeilbaarheid van die moontlikhede van die komende vierde nywerheidsrevolusie. Hy voorspel met groot stelligheid dat onsterflikheid (of ten minste ongekende verlengde lewensduur) die sentrale agenda van die 21ste eeu gaan wees.

En tog, te midde van al hierdie kakebeen-verlammende prestasies van ons tyd, veg ons skielik teen ’n onsigbare monster-virus wat dreig om miljoene om die lewe te bring. Dit herinner ons aan die Spaanse Griep van ’n eeu gelede wat veel erger verwoesting gesaai het. Ons het ten minste die moontlikheid van entstowwe, wat 100 jaar gelede onbeskikbaar was of nie naastenby so gou ontwikkel kon word nie.

Wat staan ons dan te doen: Om soos Pollyanna (onthou u haar nog?) slegs die silwer randjie van die wolke te bly sien en onverpoosd te bly glo in ’n beter wêreld? Of moet ons identifiseer met die bipolêre pessimis, wat, in reaksie op Pinker se aandrang dat ons in die beste moontlike wêreld leef, droogweg antwoord: “Ek is so bang hy is reg!”

Albei moontlikhede moet afgewys word. Slegs 11 jaar voor die Eerste Wêreldoorlog en Spaanse Griep vlieg die Wright-broers vir die eerste keer self-aangedrewe. Wilbur sterf in 1912. Orville leef lank genoeg om die eerste vliegtuig in die 1940’s deur die klankgrens te hoor bars en word lid van die kommissie wat ontwikkel in die Amerikaanse ruimteagentskap Nasa – wat die eerste mens in 1969 op die maan laat stap. Alles slegs in 66 jaar!

As spesie is ons ’n aflossende samespel van vermoë en onmag, prestasie en mislukking, vordering en agteruitgang, triomf en nederlaag. Watter een gaan wen, bly, met enkele uitsonderings, ons keuse. Dááror het ons geen keuse nie.

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<https://www.netwerk24.com/Stemme/Menings/wag-nirvana-of-armageddon-20210412>

“May you experience each day as a sacred gift woven around the heart of wonder.”

— John O'Donohue, *Eternal Echoes: Celtic Reflections on Our Yearning to Belong*

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