

THE VOICE



Mennonite Brethren Bible College
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The Voice

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The Voice, founded in 1952, continues to serve its constituency each year by dealing with theological and church-related concerns and issues.

The Voice is a publication of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College. The M.B.B.C. was founded in 1944 as a school for pastors, missionaries, men and women interested in church-related ministries and Christian laymen, in order to assist the church to be an evangelical witness in Canada and abroad. It seeks to combine theology and arts in order to serve the needs of a broad spectrum of the church.

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

With this issue of The Voice, we are seeking to broaden our appeal and our service to our brotherhood in at least two respects. Until now The Voice has been a faculty production and has been largely directed to the interests of those engaged in ministries related to the church. While this will in large measure continue to be the case, we will henceforth feature "Guest Articles" written by competent men who are active Christians in various professions in our society. These articles, together with the others, will enable us to be of service to the total spectrum of our believers in our day.

The time is urgent and the need is great. Those of you who attended the Laymen-Ministers Conference at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College this spring, displayed excitement and interest in open, frank dialogue between laymen and pastors, on the urgent concerns of our day. We plan to have at least one major article in each issue of The Voice which deals with contemporary situations. In this issue Dr. Abe Voth shares observations and reflections arising out of his experience as medical doctor. What he has to say in "Medicine and the Total Man" is of interest to all of us who are subject to the strains and stresses of modern life. The article also offers valuable counsel to those who frequently find themselves in counseling situations. In the next issue we shall take a look at "Student Unrest" and in the third issue a University Professor and several city pastors will address themselves to the issue of the church in the urban-secular city.

Besides treating contemporary issues we plan to have major articles on Biblical-theological subjects and on the church in history. Others will deal with literature and music or the Christian and the arts. In this issue, Dean Ewert in "The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament" points out how significant a role the Holy Spirit played in the life of believers in Israel. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit will receive considerable treatment in issues yet to come. We trust these articles will direct us to that Spirit who sustains, and guides and empowers believers for action in this world.

The article "Voices in the Wilderness"* points out the need for Christians to understand the mood and thought of modern man—to whom the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be communicated. Generally modern fiction urges a new concept of men upon its readers. From the self-sufficient, generally good and progressive men of the past generation there has been a swing to the modern

man—disillusioned, despairing, aimless, and inherently evil, inhabiting a hostile universe. While many of the voices are able to analyze man's dilemma, there is the urgent need to restore the lost vision of man as a creature of God made to know God and to relate to him.

Two regular features of The Voice will be the "Preaching Lab" and "Book Reviews." The Preaching Lab should be a delight to all pastors and speakers. In each instance it will be treating a text of Scripture and seek to provide ideas for an approach to the text and raw materials for a sermon. In the Book Review section we want to feature a major review in each issue which will be followed by brief reviews on books appealing to a wide range of interest.

We invite your active interest in the revised Voice. We invite your suggestions and comments. May The Voice, as the official publication of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College, in this 25th Anniversary Year, speak out with renewed conviction to serve the entire constituency, so that we may be the Church of Jesus Christ in our generation.

Victor Adrian

**Because of lack of space this article will be published in a later issue. Generally we plan to have three major articles in The Voice.*

GUEST ARTICLE

MEDICINE AND THE TOTAL MAN

*by A. B. Voth **

It was two o'clock in the morning on a cold and frosty day when the telephone rang and awakened me somewhat abruptly from restful sleep. A harsh and obviously very excited voice at the other end of the line literally shouted into the telephone, "Come over immediately, my husband needs you desperately—he has very severe chest pains and I am sure he had a heart attack." Little did I realize as I hurriedly dressed and drove over to this home, that this would be the beginning of a frustrating and nightily disappointing relationship, but that would also in the end become one of the greatest experiences of my medical career. A man of some 25 years, his hands both clutching the left side of his chest, his eyes wide with fear and emotional agony, sat on the edge of the bed. Examination showed that no coronary occlusion had in fact taken place, but this man was suffering from the worst degree of anxiety I have ever seen. I saw him many times since then; his symptoms were always the same. A careful history of this man's disability revealed the following very interesting details.

1. He was of Mennonite background, a soldier during the war, and as such he had lived through the Blitz of London. He never saw active duty but the London experience shocked him to the point where he had to be sent home to become a patient in the Veteran's Hospital.

2. He was treated "energetically" while there with rather massive doses of sedatives, particularly barbiturates, and 2½ years later he was discharged, still greatly tortured by his neurosis, but now having the added problem of barbiturate addiction.

3. He moved to Saskatoon and went to work as a car salesman, but the pressure proved too much and he developed a duodenal ulcer; a surgeon shortly after "corrected" the situation by doing a gastric resection. But his anxiety continued unabated.

4. Shortly after this he slipped on a patch of ice and injured his lower back. A new area for anxiety had now developed. The family physician who saw him referred him to an orthopaedic

** Dr. Voth is a practising physician in Saskatoon. This paper was presented at the Pastors-Laymen Conference at the M.B.C. this spring. Dr. Voth has presented other papers at church conferences as well as at medical conferences.*

surgeon who admitted him to hospital and performed major surgery on his back.

5. Now he was both an orthopaedic and cardiac invalid. His anxiety now reached unprecedented proportions. A psychiatrist saw him in consultation and admitted him to the North Battleford Institution. Here he stayed for the better part of two years, and during that time he had weeks of insulin and electric shock treatments—all to no avail. As a measure of desperation, it seems, a prefrontal lobotomy was then performed. This surely would change the behaviour patterns of this man and render him a useful citizen capable of conducting his affairs in a responsible manner, but Bill refused to change.

6. It was shortly after this that the incident of the night in question took place. In the months and years that followed, it was my happy privilege to spend many hours with Bill and his family. Needless to say, my patience with him ran out on numerous occasions, but gradually, by slow and painful degrees, we were able together to work out the problems and conflicts which formed the basis of his emotional difficulties.

7. Then came the glorious moment when everything changed for the better, in fact, for the best. Poor Bill had once more been admitted to a mental hospital. This time the psychiatrists told him: "Bill, you are an intelligent man, you have everything going for you, you are the master of your own salvation; we will give you a choice. Tomorrow morning we will await your answer; either you will make up your mind to behave soberly and responsibly, or else we will start a program of treatment which might end in you being carried out the back door." Bill spent a restless night, but he made his choice. He discharged himself from the Institution and that afternoon I saw him in my office. There, as we sat on opposite sides of my desk, Bill was gloriously redeemed and liberated as he gave his heart and life to Christ. That was 7 years ago. Bill has never smoked another cigarette, he has never had another drink, he has consistently refused to take any medications of any kind for fear he might once again be started on his addiction problem. He has been reunited with his wife and two girls. His anxiety problem is not entirely settled but much improved. Today he is running his own consulting service for men with similar problems.

Now, why do I present this interesting case to you today, and why all the unfortunate detail that characterized the management of this man's medical disability? I agree that it represents, probably, mismanagement of an extreme degree but it will serve well to illustrate some of the points I wish to make during the remainder of my presentation—"Medicine and the Total Man."

It is indeed a truism, and one all too frequently forgotten, that all of man's illnesses occur in the social setting of his human relationships. It behooved the physician, therefore, to fully explore

the psycho-social as well as the physiological factors that contribute to the patient's symptoms. It is only then that he will be able to fully understand all the forces that conspire to produce or to prolong human disease, and to provide a rational and complete program of treatment. It is again a truism, and again too frequently forgotten in practice, that "The human discords in a patient's daily life are played on the organs of his body."

It is then of the utmost importance that we consider not only the patient's physical well-being; equally important, and often even more so, may be the mental, emotional, social, spiritual, economic, psychic and physiological factors. All of these may, in part or in whole, be responsible for the type of symptoms the patient reveals to us as physicians.

The history of medicine would indicate that this emphasis has not always been recognized and appreciated. It has always been easier to look for physical causes to account for physical disorders, and mental factors to account for mental disorders. But such a direct and easy etiological relationship can frequently not be found or established. I do not wish to belittle the tremendous advances that have been made in physical medicine over the past several decades; these have been little short of miraculous in many areas. Surgical procedures deemed impossible just a few years ago are now becoming almost commonplace, the most spectacular probably being the various organ transplants. But by far the greatest number of human illnesses cannot be treated by such an easy approach.

Probably the most encouraging advances in medical diagnosis and treatment in recent years have been those related to mental illness. In a few short decades the management of the mentally ill has advanced from the "Dark Ages" to what is undoubtedly a scientifically oriented, highly humanistic approach, and one which has already revolutionized the prognosis of untold numbers of people afflicted with mental disorders. These advances include the new drug treatment of depressions, so effective that electroconvulsive therapy is fast becoming a "relic" of those "Dark Ages." We may add to this the advances we have made in public education regarding mental disorders. Finally we are beginning to realize that diseases of the mind are really not different from illnesses of the physical body, and I am deeply grateful to men of vision, such as Dr. McKerracher of the Department of Psychiatry at the University Hospital in Saskatoon, men who have been instrumental in achieving changes in hospital construction so that every general hospital is now coming to have a psychiatric wing in which will be located and treated those unfortunate ones among us with mental illnesses. The closure of the obsolete mental hospitals where thousands of humans are segregated from society is long overdue.

The most significant advances, I believe, have been made in the field of psycho-social medicine, the recognition of the tremen-

dous role played by the emotions in the etiology, genesis and progress of human disease. This is the emphasis I would wish to make in my presentation today.

I am certainly grateful that increasing numbers of family physicians are beginning to realize the importance of this particular approach to the diagnosis and management of human illness, also for the vision of many medical schools and teachers of medicine who are beginning to appreciate more and more the need for this philosophy and attitude of mind. Even the mildest of the hundreds of "nuerotics" are ill people and need our help. The recognition of their problems is often very difficult, and often we tend to become impatient and frustrated. What a tremendous relief we all feel when a neurotic individual finally is found to have gallstones or an active duodenal ulcer, or even a tumor, something that we can deal with physically and definitely. But their particular illness does not lend itself to diagnosis and management in such a direct and straightforward way. It is true that probably all of these will eventually develop some truly physical disorder, and it is indeed a humbling experience to have such an individual, or his spouse or family, greet us with the words "We told you so."

The story is told of one such unfortunate lady who after years of functional illness died and on her tombstone were inscribed the words for all to see: "I told you I was ill." But these people are really no less ill; their's is an emotional illness. It behooves us to recognize it and to give it the best treatment that medical science can offer.

That man is a complex and "compound" individual hardly needs mention here. The Bible clearly recognizes this and even attributes the "origin" or the "etiology" of "sin" or "illness" to certain "parts" of this complexity. Hebrews 4-12,—For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts, and the intents of the heart." I Thess. 5:23—"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." These passages indicate clearly that the whole man "consists of body, soul, and spirit," and that sanctification, or "healing" in our present context of discussion, consists of being "blameless" or "well" in all three of these areas. I am fully aware that the Biblical concepts do not neatly overlap those of modern psychology, but I suggest that there is sufficient identification to make the analogy a meaningful one. Psychology, I believe, would define "personality" as "the individual's behaviour pattern in terms of mental and physical activities together with his attitudes as manifested in personal relationships." It is the expression of the whole man.

These have been fairly general considerations, but I trust

that they will become somewhat more meaningful as we now proceed to discuss in greater detail some of the "mechanisms" patients "resort" to when they are faced with "stresses" of one kind or another, some, or all of which, they cannot successfully cope with. To the ministers in our audience today these should be of particular interest because in the past, I am certain, we have sometimes dealt very wrongly with church members, in matters of discipline and excommunication, because we failed to understand their situation. What we often interpreted as spiritual decadence and disinterest was possibly nothing less than a case of endogenous depression, and spiritual segregation of such an individual was the worst possible kind of treatment we could mete out to them.

Let us therefore consider the case of a patient in whose psycho-social environment some *major* change has taken place. Specifically, a near relative has suddenly died, a major financial crisis has occurred, a job has been lost, a treasured possession has been lost, a major change in the individual's social status has taken place. A woman has come into the menopausal years of her life, an unwanted pregnancy occurred, a previously considerate husband has become a drunkard and abuses his family. Now, what are some of the common "response mechanisms" which the patient may manifest to this distressing situation in which he finds himself?

1. The first is depression. Now a certain feeling of sadness or a degree of depression is, of course, a normal response to the loss of anything of value. But often the response is out of all proportion to the nature and the severity of the situation that initiated it. This type of reaction we as doctors and you as pastors must learn quickly to recognize and identify. These are areas in which we must learn better to cooperate and to give mutual aid more readily than we have done heretofore.

What are the signs by means of which we can recognize a state of depression? Let me list a few; there are indeed many, and probably no single disease entity is such a complete "imitator" of physical disease as is depression. The patient will therefore complain of physical symptoms; he fails to see the relationship between his emotional problem and the symptoms he experiences. As far as he is concerned, a physical disorder of major proportions is present with him, and is producing all his difficulties.

- a. The earliest symptom of an incipient depression is fatigue, fatigue quite unrelated to the physical or psychic energy expended. By the time we see these people, they have often been to a number of other doctors or chiropractors who have not been able to help. They have spent little fortunes on vitamins, tonics, diets, even on vacations.

- b. The patient will next complain of insomnia, sleeplessness. He just cannot fall asleep; when he does for a brief moment, his sleep is interrupted by disturbing dreams. Every technique

imaginable is tried to induce sleep, but unsuccessfully. The patient now spends the greater part of the night pattering around, watching television, since he cannot sleep anyway.

c. His appetite now begins to fade as the depressive experience deepens. Weight loss results and he is now all the more convinced he is suffering from a malignant disease. The very thought drives him into deeper depression. Epigastric distress, biliousness, nausea and vomiting confirm his suspicions.

d. He becomes very conscious of his heart beat, he experiences palpitations, his heart misses beats, and frequently the depressed individual can be seen in public places with his fingers of the one hand over the radial pulse of his opposite arm, busy counting the dropped beats. He will complain of shortness of breath and pain in the chest.

e. Further observation of this individual will reveal the fact that he is subject to frequent crying spells. He is subject to all sorts of irrational fears, he is riddled with feelings of guilt and desperation; relatives will tell of his increasing irritability.

f. To his pastor the depressive will make comments such as—"I am no good, I never was, I never will be. I feel so hopeless. I even lack confidence in God. I don't know what's come over me. I was always so self-assured. I don't know why. I have just lost all my confidence." When this happens to you as a pastor, think *first* of depression and urge the individual to seek medical help.

g. Thought disorders—which occur—we must take note of ourselves. The patient will not volunteer these to us. Those would include indecisiveness, loss of interest, death wishes, delusions and hallucinations. There is a difference between a man who has a true "vision" from the Lord and the depressive who is suffering from visual and auditory hallucinations.

h. Behaviour disorders need carefully to be examined. Marital discord, of which most pastors undoubtedly see a considerable amount among church people, need to be carefully evaluated from this point of view. Often a depressive experience of one or other of the marriage partners is at the basis of marital problems.

2. Remember, we are studying reaction patterns of people to stressful situations. The first is depression. The second is anxiety. A depressed individual may be anxious and an anxious person depressed, but the two are not synonymous. Anxiety is a painful state of apprehension of dangers and difficulties one anticipates in the future. It is a feeling of dread, of uneasiness which arises whenever there is an expectation of danger or a threat to one's personality. The actual life situation which might give rise to anxiety are legion. Again, as in depression, a certain degree of anxiety must be considered normal. If the anticipation is not out of proportion to the threat, the degree of anxiety is

normal. The anxiety will then disappear as soon as the threatening situation is removed. Anxiety becomes abnormal when the precipitating situation is unknown or unrecognized. It is one of the most distressing and painful of all abnormal mental states. It is also one which the pastor is likely to encounter rather frequently in his consultations with his parishioners. He dwells incessantly on his liabilities and becomes very self-deprecating. He becomes greatly absorbed with the failures of his past, and he looks to the future with the same highly critical attitude. He tends to mull over the past, and as he thus ruminates, he begins to have grave doubts concerning the correctness and the morality of his actions. If he is a Catholic, he will examine all his confessions most minutely, wondering whether he included all he should have said, whether the wording was correct, whether he was genuinely sincere. He wonders too whether the priest understood the seriousness and gravity of the sins he confessed. He will be compelled to go to the confessional over and over again, confessing the same sins. Similarly Protestant people will go to their pastor over and over again in an effort to find reassurance of their salvation and their forgiveness.

Remember, then, that anxiety is a response of anticipation to a situation that does not really exist, or at best is unrecognized and unidentified. The reaction is therefore basically one of fear, fear of any one of a multitude of things, fear of cancer, of ulcers, of heart disease, of brain tumor, of blindness, of a stroke, etc. Why he fears one thing more than another is quite inconsequential, for it is not a question of what he fears, but rather of the fact that he fears, which is important. Might I list for your consideration at this time some of the anxieties and fears in evangelical church people which come to our attention at the office from time to time. I would suppose that our pastors are fully conversant with them but they are always interesting to me. Some of these need not necessarily be pathological, but many of them are and represent disordered states of mind.

- a. Anxiety concerning the will of God in one's own personal life.
- b. Fear of being misunderstood, misquoted and falsely blamed.
- c. Fear of mental illness.
- d. The fear of nuclear war and the annihilation of mankind.
- e. Fears of another world-wide depression with its economic disasters.
- f. Fears induced by the news media as to world conditions.

These and many other factors contribute in our day to a tremendous increase in the number of illnesses resulting from stress and anxiety. It seems as though "the peace of God which passes all understanding" is a theoretical consideration only. As a Christian physician I have nothing better to offer the anxious patient than the positive assurance that the peace from God can

and will dispel his apprehension and fears. There is no better form of mental hygiene than to walk daily with God and to rely daily upon the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit. I love the words of Luke 6:47-48, in a recent translation, "Everyone who comes to me, and hears my words, and does them I will show you what he is like; he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon rocks. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house, *and could not shake it*; because it has been well built." Good, solid Christian foundations in all areas of human behaviour, built up from infancy in the home under the tutelage of Christian parents, continued through church and Sunday School under the guidance of informed teachers and pastors—this, I believe, is one of the strongest bulwarks against pathological anxiety among evangelical Christians.

Depression and anxiety are two response mechanisms to stressful psycho-social situations. A third and final one for today involves psychosomatic disorders. This does not by any means exhaust the field, but I have chosen these three, first because of their frequency, second, because these are areas in which physician and pastor would do very well to fully cooperate. *Together* we can do much to help those people. Let me define this third group for you. "Psyche" refers to mind, "Soma" refers to the physical body. Theoretically at any rate, four major groups of disorders or illnesses might therefore be identified. Purely psychic diseases would be the purely mental diseases; purely physical diseases would be the somatic diseases, a combination of psychic and soma, tending *more* to the psychic would be the psychoneurotic disorders. Those tending *more* to the somatic are the psychomatic disorders.

In one sense all diseases may be said to be psychosomatic, since to every physical ailment there is at least a small psychic component. But the group we are including here are those conditions which tend to be chronic, unremitting, recurring conditions, such as peptic or duodenal ulcer, rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, bronchial asthma, various forms of eczema, headaches, chest pain of myofascial origin and a host of others. The illnesses in this category differ from those in the first two in one very important respect. Anxiety and depression may be accompanied by somatic or physical symptoms, but here actual physical or structural changes have occurred in the individual's body. He is not merely suffering from inflammation of the gastric mucosa, but he now has a defect or ulcer in this mucosa, a defect which is painful, a defect which may hemorrhage or perforate and lead to the patient's death. The bronchial musculature which initially responded only to noxious agents to which the patient happened to be truly allergic, now becomes spastic and irritable when the individual is emotionally disturbed. The skin which was originally smooth and soft breaks out in rashes that are most difficult to manage, all because the poor patient is in a state of inner turmoil;

problems and conflicts have arisen to which she has no solution or answer, and this is her way of responding. She now has a socially acceptable condition which is, at least temporarily, an acceptable solution to her dilemma. But the important thing to remember is that she has a dilemma, she has an inner conflict or problem, she has some emotional difficulty which is in need of resolution. Pastors can be extremely helpful in the management of these people and their problems by helping them to identify and to resolve their difficulties. This is most time-consuming, and from the economic point of view, not very rewarding, but some of our most grateful patients have been those who, after months or years of effort, have been able to rise successfully and permanently above the trying circumstances that led to their disabilities. Bill was one of those victorious individuals.

Now, it would be very interesting and instructive, I believe, for us as pastors and laymen to understand a bit more fully the reasons why certain individuals "choose" to react in these particular ways. What inherent "weakness," if any, causes them to adjust to their problem situation by adopting such "regressive" forms of behaviour. We who are present here today would all appear to have the inner fortitude and the moral prowess to cope adequately, and quickly, with the problems of life as they arise. But we are among the chosen and fortunate few. O yes, we do become anxious and depressed a bit, when some injury, illness, disaster, disappointment strikes us, but we are able to adjust to these difficulties, we can accept the limitations imposed upon us by these circumstances, we can be content to live as fully and completely as these conditions permit. But for many other people such an easy refuge does not exist.

Let us study the personality structure of these people somewhat more closely, and I believe this knowledge will help us all, pastors and laymen, who are interested in the "whole man" to identify these individuals even before morbid conditions develop. These folk all exhibit a type of personality structure which can be observed and described, and even when they are not involved in some serious conflict, or before they are involved in some conflict, they will manifest exaggerated patterns of behaviour. They tend to be, almost without exception, extremely independent and self-sufficient. But this is only an outer veneer. Learn to know them more intimately and you will discover that beneath this stalwart exterior a different situation prevails. They may not be aware of it, but inwardly they are harboring very strong dependency needs, and they are afraid to admit these needs because by confessing and admitting them they cannot maintain their self-esteem. Therefore they must assume the air of complete independence and self-sufficiency.

Now a person with such a personality becomes ill, or he feigns an illness. He is now forced to turn to others for help, but fortunately for him, his psycho-social situation now changes;

he is now a patient—family, friends, doctors, nurses, neighbors, employees, all change their attitude to him. He now receives help, attention and sympathy because he is sick; this kind of dependency he can accept and live with and at the same time maintain the strong image he holds of himself. It is entirely satisfying to him, and so he resorts to it over and over again, and soon he becomes entrenched in a pattern of regressive behaviour from which it is so difficult to extract him.

This, then, is the rather frightening complex situation that faces us as practicing physicians every day of our lives. It is obvious that somewhere along the line we need to identify a primary concern; sometime and somewhere we need to find a specific direction and course to follow. As doctors we are called to treat the physical body. All our years of training are dedicated to this particular responsibility, but soon we begin to realize that we cannot pursue this activity far without treating the personality as a whole. The removal of a diseased appendix takes relatively little skill and courage; the extirpation of a gall bladder filled with calculi can be mastered in a few short years and then the operation becomes routine and mechanical. Yes, to attend to the purely physical needs of our patients is not too difficult at all.

But then comes the afternoon in my office; here the doctor begins to function as a *man*, not as a technician. Here is where his knowledge and understanding come into play. Here his function changes; no longer is it his duty so much to *save* a life, he assumes the role of "comforter, consoler, encourager, contributor to human happiness." Here he must train himself not to treat an illness, but here the concept of "the whole man" really comes into play. Here he experiences over and over again that all the advances of modern medicine are unavailing; here he recognizes afresh each day that the bottles of medicine so hopefully prescribed fail to achieve the desired ends; here he daily searches his heart when he discovers that all his skills have reached their limits. He is faced with sorrow and suffering that is becoming intolerable, and the patient is not making any further progress. Analgesics and narcotics bring no relief of pain. Tranquilizers fail to produce any sense of mental tranquility.

"What is to be done when all that can be said and done medically is no longer effective? Who is to accompany the patient through the valley of the shadow of death and who is to make the phantom of death less terrifying?" This is where the human knowledge and understanding of the physician find their fullest application. He has the experience to know where and how it hurts, to see the real situation and yet know its compensations, to realize that fears may sometimes be liars and to enable the patient to comprehend this, to experience suffering with the patient and yet not be worn down by it. He is able to offer the greatest help and support. The Christian physician must make

him see beyond the momentary deep affliction into a distant, but sure and happier horizon.

How can a physician offer such help? There is only one way. He must be a follower of the Man of the compassionate heart, our Lord Himself. When He saw the rampant disease, the hungry multitudes, the masses of individuals lacking purpose in life and lacking a spiritual leader, He was moved with compassion. This is often the doctor's role. He often occupies the key position. He finds himself at the moment in a place which no other person, parson, friend, or lover can occupy. He is there standing between the suffering and the anxious person and the One who came to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and to set at liberty them that are bruised.

Thousands of people today are in captivity of one kind or another. It is a great satisfaction to have a small part in setting them free.

THE 'SPIRIT' IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

by David Ewert *

Since the New Testament writers, in the main, stand in the Old Testament tradition in their use of the 'Spirit', it is important, for students of the Scriptures, that they familiarize themselves with the Old Testament use of 'Spirit'. The Hebrew word for 'Spirit' is *ruach*. (There is no way of distinguishing between 'spirit' and 'Spirit' in Hebrew as we often do in English).

Ruach probably comes from a root which means to blow.¹ Snaith suggests that *ruach* is an onomatopoeic word, coming from a root which means 'to breath out through the nose with violence.'² More important than etymology are the different meanings that *ruach* has in the OT. We turn, first, to the physical meaning.

A. The Physical Meaning of 'Spirit'; Breath, Wind.

1. *Ruach* as a Physical Phenomenon. a. Breath.

Ruach occurs 378 times in the Hebrew Bible, and in roughly one third of its occurrences it means 'movement of air', 'wind', 'breath' (H. W. Robinson places the number at 131;³ C.A. Briggs counts 117;⁴ neither distinguishes between 'breath' and 'wind' in their calculation—admittedly a hard thing to do). *Ruach*, this living breath, appears in nature as wind, and in man and animals as the breath of life. Ras Shamra texts also use *ruach* in the sense of 'breath'. In Ex. 15:8 and 2 Sam. 22:16 where the wind is described as a '*ruach* of the nostrils of Yahweh', *ruach* clearly means 'breath', although it is used as a metaphor.

A few examples may serve to illustrate the use of *ruach* in the sense of 'human breath'; God's anointed ruler shall slay the wicked "with the breath of his lips" (Isa. 11:4; compare 2 Thess. 2:8). Elihu cannot hold his 'breath' (*ruach*) any longer, he must speak (Job. 32:18). Job complains that his 'breath' is repulsive to his wife (19:17). Of the idols it is sarcastically said that they have no "breath in their mouths" (Ps. 135:17; Jer. 10:14).

The breath of animals is also called *ruach*. The pessimistic Koheleth avers that man and beast "have the same breath" (Eccl. 3:19). Jeremiah pictures the wild asses standing on bare heights without food, panting for 'breath' like jackals (14:6).

* Dr. David Ewert recently wrote his doctoral dissertation at McGill University on "The Spirit and the Age to Come". He is returning to his teaching ministry at M.B.C. this fall. We may expect future articles on the subject of the Holy Spirit.

Hard, violent breathing is a sign of anger—a metaphor used of man's anger (Pr. 25:28), but more often anthropomorphically, of God's wrath. For example, "by the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are consumed" (Job 4:9).

More frequently, however, *ruach* means 'wind', rather than 'breath'.

b. Wind. — We may distinguish, here, between the literal and the figurative meaning of *ruach*. (i) The literal use — *Ruach* is the western wind which springs up daily (Gen. 3:8; rendered "the cool of the day," RSV). The idols are so weak that a gentle wind can carry them away (Isa. 57:13). "when Jonah tried to flee, the Lord "hurled a great wind (*ruach*) upon the sea" (Jona 1:4); a "strong east wind" drove the sea back, when Israel fled from Pharaoh (Ex. 14:21).

Since winds come from different directions, *ruach* acquires a meteorological meaning. The 'four winds of heaven' (Dan. 7:2) are the four points of the compass. Zechariah in a vision sees chariots going forth "to the four winds of heaven" (Zech. 6:5). The 'east side' is the '*ruach* of the east' (Ez. 42:16). This meaning of *ruach*, namely, 'direction', stands half way between the literal and the metaphorical use of *ruach*. It is found some 18 times (mostly in later texts).

(ii) The metaphorical use — '*Ruach*' stands for that which is 'empty', 'nothing', 'vain': Job castigates Eliphaz, telling him that the "speech of a despairing man is wind" (Job 6:26). Eliphaz, later, in return, accuses Job of 'windy knowledge' (Job 15:2). Koheleth confesses that everything under the sun is a feeding on 'wind' (Eccl. 1:14, 17; found 9 times in Eccl.). Hosea accuses Israel of 'sowing the wind' (8:7), of 'herding the wind' and of 'pursuing the east wind' (12:2). The Wisdom writer warns those who trouble their household, for they will "inherit wind" (Pr. 11:29). The molten images of pagan gods are said to be "empty wind" (Isa. 41:29). Sometimes, *ruach* is a figure of speech for 'violence', 'destruction', 'force'. The stormy wind out of the north is the enemy of Israel (Ez. 1:4). Hailstones and a deluge of rain accompany the stormy wind of judgment (Ez. 13:11). Only rarely is *ruach* used in the sense of 'wind' without the connotation of power and force (Gen. 3:8 would be such an exception).

2. *Ruach* as Manifestation of the Deity.

Although 'breath' and 'wind' are physical phenomena, one can hardly say that the OT regards them as 'natural' phenomena, for the 'physical' *ruach* is believed to be a manifestation of Yahweh. God "creates the wind" (Amos 4:13); he regulates it (Job 28:25); he "brings forth the wind from his storehouses" (Ps. 135:7); "He makes his wind blow" (Ps. 147:18). The wind is Yahweh's 'breath' (Isa. 40:7). A wind from Yahweh brings either judgment (Hos. 13:15) or blessing (Isa. 59:19). The exile was brought about by a 'fierce blast' from Yahweh (Isa. 27:8. Hill suggest on the basis

of such passages where wind is the breath of God that the original meaning of *ruach* is 'breach' (emerging from nose or mouth), and that this was then extended to 'wind', regarded as the breath of a superhuman being. He admits, however, that speculations on 'original' meanings are not really significantly fruitful for our study⁶ (H.W. Robinson feels it was the other way round.)⁷ We should note, however, that it was the conviction of the Israelite, that the wind is under Yahweh's control, and that he expresses his power through it. Indeed, the winds are his messengers (Ps. 104:4). Since the wind is invisible, there is always something mysterious about (one cannot 'grasp' it), and the connotations of mystery and power never seem to be absent when *ruach* is used.

B. *The Anthropological Use of Spirit* ...

We have already shown that *ruach* is used for the breath of man and animals (anthropomorphically, also, for the breath of God). To this must now be added the meaning of 'vitality', of 'life principle'.

1. *Ruach* as Life Principle.

Ruach denotes the principle of life in both human beings and animals, usually in association with *neshama* (breath). Living things are called *ruach chayyim* (Gen. 6:17; 7:15). The sign of the *ruach* in a body is the *neshama* (Gen. 7:22). Observe the parallelism in Job 27:3, "As long as my *breath* is in me, and the *spirit* of God in my nostrils"; also, Isa. 42:5, "who gives *breath* to the people upon it, and *spirit* to those who walk in it." Whereas one writer says of the idols that they have no *ruach* (Ps. 135:17), the other says they have no *neshama* (Hab. 2:19). 'Breath of life' (often shortened to 'breath') is an abbreviation for 'breath of the spirit of life'.⁸ In Gen. 7:22, *ruach* and *neshama* are combined, although the LXX omits *ruach* and gives the rendering *pnœ zoes* (breath of life). To say that the Anointed of the Lord, under whose shadow Israel lives, is the "breath (*ruach*) of our nostrils" (Lam. 4:20), means that the existence of his subject depends on him.

Closely related to *ruach* and *neshamah* is the word 'soul' (*Nephesh*). Man becomes a 'soul' (*Nephesh*) of life when God's 'breath' is put into him (Gen. 2:7). One might speak of 'soul' as the 'spirit' delimited by its connection with a body.⁹ The expression 'sould of life' (Gen. 2:7) appears to be synonymous with 'spirit of life' (Gen. 6:17; 7:15), and this suggest that *nephesh* (soul) is related to *ruach*. In Job 12:10, we find *nephesh* and *ruach* in parallel construction, and in both cases the meaning is that of 'life' principle: "In his hand is the life (*nephesh*) of every living thing, and the breath (*ruach*) of all mankind." This, of course, is not to say that *nephesh* is a synonym of *ruach*; *nephesh* does not rise to the same psychical heights as *ruach*.¹⁰

That *ruach* is the 'life principle' also illustrated by Ezekiel's vision of corpses (Ez. 37). There were bones, sinews, flesh, and

skin, but no life, until *ruach* was added. There is no life without spirit.

From 'lif principle', *ruach* easily takes on the meaning of 'life' itself. "Into thy hand I commit my spirit (*ruach*)."¹¹ means to commit one's life to God (Ps. 31:6).

But just as 'breath' and 'wind' are viewed as manifestations of God, so the 'life principle' is God's breath. Man's *ruach*, one might say, is an extension of God's *ruach*.

2. God's *Ruach* and the Life Principle of Man.

The word of the Lord to his prophet is: "For from me proceeds the spirit, and I have made the 'breath of life'" (Isa. 57:16). It is by God's *ruach*, then, that man is created (Job 33:4). When God takes back his *ruach* all creatures die (Ps. 104:29). When a man's *ruach* goes back to God (Eccl. 12:7) or when his breath departs (Ps. 146:4), or when a man's spirit is 'broken' (Job 17:1), he returns to the earth. When God hides his face, man's *ruach* fails (Ps. 143:7). It is only as God continues to sustain man's *ruach* that he continues to live (Job 10:12). It should be noted that the *ruach* of man has no independent existence after death. God takes his spirit back and gathers the breath that belongs to him (Job 34:14).

Man's spirit can be restored to him, when it is almost gone, by the hearing of good news (Gen. 45:27), or by food (I Sam. 30:12) and water (Judg. 15:19). The absence of *ruach* causes some kind of diminished vitality; its presence or return gives strength and well-being. From this it follows that *ruach* is not only the principle of existence (which makes the difference between life and death), but it also denotes the principle of full vitality. Did the action of breathing (observed as going on or as ceasing; as strong or weak) provide the key to this understanding of *ruach*? Hill thinks so.¹²

Ruach is, then, a divine power within man's (and animal's) mortal body. The *ruach* of all men is in God's hand (Job 12:10). Eichrodt points out that in contrast to the pagan view according to which there is a natural unity between man and God, in Israel every creature remains completely dependent on Yahweh.¹² It is God's prerogative to determine how long his *ruach* is going to abide in man (Gen. 6:3). Whereas among Israel's neighbors the idea that the gods give life to man is common, in Israel Yahweh alone is the "God of the spirits of all flesh" (Numbers 16:22; 27:16). Man's existence and well-being depend entirely on Yahweh's breath, his *ruach* (Job 34:14; Zech. 12:1).¹³

The line between the 'anthropological' and the 'psychological' use of *ruach* is perhaps a thin one, but, as we shall see presently it can be drawn.

C. The Psychological Meaning of 'Spirit'

Some scholars think that this use of *ruach* is found only in the later writings of the Old Testament. Of course, one cannot always be certain that an idea is late, simply because it is more

common in a later text. In any case, the psychological use of *ruach* seems to have developed naturally from the close association observed between breathing and various feelings and emotions.¹⁴ For example, in anger the *ruach* is hot (Ex. 3:14); in impatience it becomes short (Micah 2:7; Job 21:4); in terror it is excited or troubled (Gen. 41:8; Dan. 2:1, 2). From this usage it is but a short step to the use of *ruach* to describe the dominant disposition or bent of an individual. Observe first the use of *ruach* in describing human emotions.

1. *Ruach* as Seat of the Emotions.

The emotions of a man are determined by the *ruach* that dominates him at any given time. His *ruach* may be agitated as we have just seen (Gen. 41:8; Dan. 2:1,3). Pharaoh is said to have been 'pushed' by his *ruach* (Gen. 41:8), that is, the vital spirit in him surged to and fro. Man's *ruach* may become embittered (Gen. 26:35), or grieved (I Sam. 1:15; Isa. 54:6). The *ruach* may be broken because of the weight of sorrow (Pr. 15:13; Isa. 65:14). To be discouraged is to be 'short of *ruach*' (Ex. 6:9), although 'shortness of breath' can also mean impatience (Job 21:4). In anger, a man gives vent to his *ruach* (Pr. 29:11); when he ceases from anger his *ruach* becomes slack (Judg. 8:3); a man who is in control of his *ruach* is slow to anger (Pr. 16:32). The *ruach* may be in anguish (Job 7:11), or gripped by jealousy (Num. 5:14, 30). When Job's *ruach* drank the poison of the arrows of the Almighty, he was completely overwhelmed (Job 6:4).

In most of these cases we notice that the *ruach* is a force somehow exterior to man, which overwhelms him emotionally and makes him act contrary to his customary temper.¹⁵ It has not yet been completely incorporated into the psychic life of man; it seems to act from without. And yet when one notices how completely the *ruach* can dominate a man, one can hardly help thinking that it has become a part of him.

2. *Ruach* as the Center of Reflection

There are instances in which *ruach* takes on intellectual rather than emotional functions. A man's ability to understand, says Elihu (Job 32:8), rests with his *ruach* (and this, he adds, comes from the 'breath' of the Almighty). It was because Daniel had an 'excellent spirit' in him (a spirit of the gods as the Chaldeans would say), that he was able to give wise counsel and interpret dreams (Dan. 5:12). Those who made the priest's garments were endowed with an 'able *ruach*' to do the work (Ex. 28:3). David's plan of the temple came from his *ruach* (I Chron. 28:12). One's inability to make proper decisions comes from a 'confused spirit' (Isa. 19:14). False prophets follow their own spirits (which are empty) (Ez. 13:3). A drowsy spirit is not open to insight (Isa. 29:10). The prophet holds out the promise to the house of Jacob, that those who formerly 'erred in spirit' will come to understanding (Isa. 29:24). It is with his *ruach* that man seeks to understand God's ways (Ps. 77:6).

As in the case of the emotions, so also in the case of man's thought processes, the *nephesh*, the *leb* and the *ruach* tend to overlap. In the great majority of cases however, where *leb* is found, it refers to the intellectual and volitional processes rather than the emotional (The LXX at times has *nous* for *leb* when it could have used *kardia* (Isa. 29:24; Job 20:3; Isa. 40:13). *Leb* (heart) differs from *ruach* as the center of intellectual activity, in that *leb* is more conscious, deliberate spiritual activity of the human ego, whereas *ruach* is more like an external influence which dominates man.¹⁶ Snaith says of *leb*, *nephesh* and *ruach*, that they have circles which intersect, but the intersection takes place only at the fringe of each circle of ideas.¹⁷

3. *Ruach* as the Disposition of Man

A man's basic attitudes, his *Weltanschauung*, his bent of character, his general disposition, may be said to express the *ruach* which dominates his life. By contrast to the emotional and intellectual activity of the *ruach*, we must now think more of the volitional aspect.

Of the faithful Caleb it is said that he was of a 'different spirit' than the other spies (Joshua excepted) (Num. 14:24), i.e., he was of a different character. A wise man who restrains his words has a 'cool spirit' (Pr. 17:27). The man who is 'trustworthy in spirit' does not betray secrets (Pr. 11:13). Koheleth had discovered that the 'patient in spirit' are better than the 'proud in spirit' (Ecc. 7:8). To be 'lowly in spirit' is a highly commendable attitude according to the wisdom writer (Pr. 16:19; 29:23). When it is said that the Lord 'weighs the spirit', it means that God alone knows what we really are; he knows our basic attitudes. If a man is said to have a certain kind of spirit it means that he is dominated by it; that it reflects his disposition. For example, apostate Israel was said to have the 'spirit of harlotry' (Hos. 5:4), that is, unfaithfulness was her dominant characteristic.

The religious outlook of a man in particular is related to his *ruach*. It is that *ruach* of man that reaches out after God (Isa. 26:9). The Psalmist prays for a pure heart and a 'right spirit', i.e., an upright disposition (Ps. 51:12; although it could be rendered as 'steadfast spirit'; 'free spirit'). A penitent state of mind can be described either as a broken heart or a broken spirit (Ps. 51:19). Such 'crushed spirits' (Ps. 34:19; Isa. 57:15; 66:2), always have the assurance of divine presence. A blessing is pronounced on the man whose spirit is without deceit (Ps. 32:2). The Psalmist complains about a former generation in Israel "Whose spirit was not faithful to God" (Ps. 78:8). The prophets hold out the hope that in the future age God will remove 'the unclean spirit' (Zech. 13:2) and will put a 'new spirit' into his people (Ez. 11:19). Also, he will give them the 'spirit of compassion and supplication' (Zech. 12:10). Such promises suggest that a complete change of the man's character, his disposition, will be brought about in the new age.

In most of the above references *ruach* is seen primarily as an ethical direction of the will, or, as we have already shown, it is used to describe individual moral qualities. Again it should be observed, that as in the emotional and intellectual activities of the *ruach*, so also in the volitional and inner disposition of man, *ruach* is not so much an *alter ego* which resides in man, but is a power which functions under God's control. This can be seen from instances where God 'stirs up' a man's *ruach* to do something (Jer. 51:1; Hag. 1:14). Man does not live autonomously.

D. '*Spirit*' as Divine Power in Action

Behind the 'wind' that blows, gently or furiously, behind the 'breath' of man and beast, behind the 'depressed spirit' or the 'intellectual acumen' of man, behind his 'wicked disposition' or his 'godly attitude', the spirit of God is at work. Always his work is mysterious in nature. We must now mention the exceptional displays of the power of God's spirit. One area in which God acts with unusual power might be called the 'inspiration' or 'charismatic'.

1. The Inspirational Activity of God's Spirit.

In the earlier period of Israel's history, God's spirit fell unexpectedly on certain individuals, particularly on the early prophets and the warriors who saved Israel. When the *ruach* came upon Othniel (Judg. 3:10) upon Jephthah (11:29), when it took possession on Gideon (6:34) and 'rushed upon' Saul (I Sam. 11:6), these otherwise obscure men became heroic and won unexpected victories over their enemies. It strikes us as very bizarre to hear of God's *ruach* 'pushing' Samson (Judg. 13:25 or 'rushing on' him (14:6) to enable him to make superhuman exploits. The infusion of divine power was violent and overwhelming, but usually of temporary duration, given to deal with a specific crisis. Such feats of valor restored Israel's confidence in God and his covenant with them.

Not only did such invasions of 'divine energy' give man unusual strength, but at times, they created ecstatic conditions. This was particularly the case in the early prophets. When the 'spirit of the Lord' came on Saul he began to prophecy (I Sam. 10:6, 10), even rave (I Sam. 19:23) as did his messengers when they met Samuel's prophetic band (I Sam. 19:20f.). The 'spirit of the Lord' could pick the prophet up and whisk him away (I Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16; Ez. 3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:1, 24). The pagan soothsayer, Balaam, had to utter oracles of blessing upon Israel against his will, as the 'spirit of God' moved him (Num. 24:2). God exercised his sovereign authority by giving the spirit of prophecy to whom he wished (Medad and Eldad are a good example of that, Num. 11:27).

As time goes on, this sudden, charismatic spirit-possession becomes less frequent, it seems. The great pre-exilic prophets of Israel attribute their prophetic call and endowment to the 'word of Yahweh' rather than to the 'spirit of Yahweh'. Mowinckel has tried to show that the literary prophets reacted to the charismatic

element in the earlier prophets. They do not base their authority on possession of the spirit of God, but on the fact that God has laid his hand on them, and that they know God. With Ezek. and the later prophets, however, the ecstatic character of the older prophets comes to the fore again, although the message of the later prophets is in keeping with that of the literary prophets.¹⁸ Perhaps we should not distinguish too sharply between the *ruach* and the *dabar* (word) of Yahweh—Micah claims to be filled with the Spirit of God for purpose of prophecy (Mic. 3:8). Nevertheless, it cannot be gainsaid that the ecstatic element is not as prominent in the literary prophets as it was in the earlier, but that it appears again in the post-exilic period.

In most cases where the coming of the spirit on man is an explosive phenomenon, the spirit is not thought of as a permanent endowment (although in the Elijah stories the ecstatic, characteristic element seems to be combined with the permanent - cf. 2 Kings 2:15). However, there are texts which describe the spirit more in terms of a permanent endowment. Moses, for example, is given God's spirit to judge Israel (as were his helpers and his successor) (Num. 11:17, 25; 27:18; Deut. 34:9). Pharaoh acknowledged that Joseph had been given the spirit of God to enable him to be a wise ruler (Gen. 41:38-41). God 'filled' the artisan Bezaleel with his spirit to fashion the furniture for the tabernacle (Ex. 31:3). David was anointed for kingship by Samuel and 'the Spirit of the Lord' came mightily on him from that day on (I Sam. 16:13). He was also enabled to 'speak' by God's Spirit (2 Sam. 23:2). Perhaps one could look upon these cases as instances where the natural powers of men were exceptionally heightened by the spirit of God, so that they could fulfill their God-given functions.

2. The Creative Presence of the Spirit of God

Ruach, as the powerful divine breath, is occasionally related to the creative acts of God. In Gen. 1:2, the 'spirit of God' moves upon the face of the waters. Koehler uses this verse to show how impossible it is to build "a conception of the Spirit of God with Old Testament teaching."¹⁹ He puts the verse in an appendix, for it does not seem to fit in with other OT texts that speak of the spirit of God. Why one should set a text aside because it may be the only one in which the spirit of God is seen in its cosmological activity and defies classification is hard to understand. Moreover, Baumgaertel suggests other texts, besides Gen. 1:2, in which the spirit appears as "die das physische Leben schaffende Gotteskraft."²⁰ That there is present, in Gen. 1:2, some reminiscence of the Babylonian cosmogony and the triumph of Marduk over Tiamat seems certain, but that does not mean that it has the same meaning. To render *ruach elohim* as 'mighty wind', as von Rad does in his Genesis commentary, may be questioned. Baumgaertel points out that *ruach* "ist sonst als schoepferisches Prinzip genugsam bezeugt und hier durchaus am Platze."²¹ Edmond Jacob

asks, whether it is likely that the author would have used Elohim in Gen. 1:1 for the creating God, and then have used it in the sense of 'violence' in v. 2. Perhaps it is safest to say that more than one idea could be present in *ruach 'elohim*, i.e., the 'spirit of God' is the divine power, but also the 'breath of God' which, like the wind, is creative and vivifying. This creative power of the spirit of God in the cosmos is mentioned by the Psalmist: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth" (33:6). But, as we have seen earlier, God's spirit not only creates the world and all that is in it, but it is the dynamic force by which the life of all creatures is sustained. Israel's faith does not accept the view that there are immanent, divine forces in nature; all nature depended on the creating and sustaining power of God. The parallel between *ruach* and *dabar* (word) in the text just quoted reminds us of Gen. 1, where the action of the *ruach 'elohim* is given order and direction by the divine 'word'.²³

Ps. 139, in which we have a description of God's creative activity (vv. 13-16), more than any passage in the Old Testament, stresses the universal presence of this God. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (v. 7). The spirit of God is, indeed, the creative, active, personal power of God, present in the world.

3. God's Spirit as Moral Energy

The spirit of God is also thought of as a power which leads men to live the good life. The Psalmist prays for the 'guidance' of God's spirit (Ps. 143:10). 'Guidance' stands parallel to 'instruction'. The Spirit is God's presence in the life of an individual. But it is not yet the Spirit indwelling the believer. Ezra reminds the post-exilic community that God had given past generations his spirit to instruct them (Neh. 9:20). No doubt he has the prophetic word in mind. The post-exilic community is assured of guidance and protection by God's spirit (a token, perhaps, that they are standing on the threshold of the new age (Hag. 2:4f.; Zech. 4:6b). The spirit of God is God's power, but power with a moral emphasis.

However, not only the community experiences the help of the Spirit to do that which is right, but the individual, also, looks to the spirit for strength to live a righteous life. Only once does an individual, deeply disturbed by sin, express, explicitly, the desire for a moral renewal by the spirit of God (Ps. 51:12-14). The Psalmist prays for a right spirit (v. 12) and for a spirit that is willing to obey (v. 14), or could it be a 'generous spirit'? But he realizes that only God's 'holy spirit' can do this for him, hence the petition not to take away 'his holy Spirit' (v. 13). Certainly the phrase 'his holy spirit' has ethical content here. It is that sense of the presence and power of God which purifies and inspires to righteous living; that inward power which makes for holiness.

E. *The Spirit as an Evil Power.*

What strikes us as very strange is that the spirit of God can become active as evil spirit (Judg. 9:23; I Sam. 16:14f; 18:10). This evil spirit is seen even in opposition to God and is hypostatized (cf. I Kings 22:19ff, where the 'spirit' offers himself as a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets). But in contrast to the Babylonian view where the good wind has its counterpart in the evil wind which brings evil upon men, in the OT the evil spirit is always subordinated to God's power, and does not operate independently.²⁴ In keeping with the exclusiveness of the OT faith in God, these spirits, too, were regarded as having been created by God; they were employed in the service of his will. Finally, they became personalised as 'Satan' and his emissaries.

There is one other area in which the activity of God's spirit is described by the OT writers, namely in salvation history. We hope to deal with this topic in a future issue of THE VOICE.

FOOTNOTES

1. W. Bieder, "Pneuma," in TWNT, VI, 357.
2. N. H. Snaithe, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (London: The Epworth Press, 1944), p. 143.
3. H. W. Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1946), p. 74.
4. C. A. Briggs, "The Use of *Ruach* in the OT," JBL, 19 (1900), p. 133.
5. D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings* (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1967), p. 205.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
7. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
8. L. Koehler, *OT Theology*, tr. A.S. Todd (London: Lutterworth Press, 1957), p. 137.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
10. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the OT*, tr. J. A. Baker, 3 vols (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1967), II, 140.
11. Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 215.
12. Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, II, 48.
13. P. van Imschott, "L'Esprit de Jahve source de vie dans L'Anc. Test.," *Revue Biblique*, NS 44 (1935), 481.
14. Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 215.
15. Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, II, 132.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
17. Snaithe, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
18. S. Mowinkel, "The Spirit and the Word in the Pre-exilic Reforming Prophets," JBL, 53 (1934), 199-227.
19. Koehler, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
20. F. Baumgaertel, "Pneuma," in TWNT, VI, 361.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 361. n. 149.
22. E. Jacob, *Theology of the OT*, tr. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1958), p. 144.
23. J. Hehn, "Zum Problem des Geistes im alten Orient und im AT," ZATW, NF 2 (1925), 218f.
24. Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

THE PREACHING LAB

conducted by John Regehr *

"Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for 'All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord abides for ever.' That word is the good news which was preached to you.

In this section we propose to give practical coaching in preaching. We shall work through selected texts, using a variety of approaches. The intention is to give stimulation and perhaps direction, but to permit the preacher the full use of his creative powers to fashion a sermon.

SELECTING THE TEXT

Made receptive and unhurried through a moment of prayer, we find a preachable portion to stand out: I Peter 1:22-25. We read through it several times meditatively.

FOCUSING ON THE SUBJECT

The text suddenly seems to cluster around the subject of the love of the brethren.

FORMULATING THE THEME

The, thrust of the portion comes out in the imperative statement: Love one another earnestly from the heart!

VISUALIZING THE SITUATION IN WHICH THE SERMON IS TO BE PREACHED

Our age suffers generally from a sense of aloneness. Much is being said about the significance of meaningful inter-personal relationships, communication, dialogue. We fear to go beyond courtesy in our relationships, and so we brush by each other at

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the fringes of our lives. The text exhorts us within the fellowship of the saints to risk the closeness of love, and it explains that such relationships—foreign to the unbelieving world—are possible within the body of Christ.

TRACING THE CREATIVE THOUGHT IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT

1. *The Imperative is Preceded by a Three-fold Statement*

- a) having purified your souls
 - The Perfect Participle points to an earlier experience, the effects of which still abide.
 - Purification has reference to the atonement.
 - It is a cleansing in depth; 'soul' is "the seat of the inner life."
- b) by the obedience to the truth
 - It is the truth that purifies (cf. Jn. 17)
 - The truth penetrated deeply (the two-edged sword).
 - We accepted its estimate of us and its proclamation of God in Jesus.
 - We said 'yes', and made it the premise for living.
- c) for a sincere love of the brethren
 - The change we experienced placed us into a community.
 - "Into an un hypocritical brotherly love" implies direction; i.e. purifying and obedience tends toward deep brotherly relatedness.
 - Christianity is an ethical religion, and love is not optional; to curb the normal movement of purification and obedience toward love is to negate them.

2. *The Imperative is, Therefore, Warranted*

- a) Since the cleansing took place deeply, we can love genuinely, earnestly, from out of our deepest being.
- b) Since God is greater than our hearts (cf. I Jn.), we can dare to expose the heart in loving.
- c) Since obedience to the truth is motivation at the core of our being, we are free to love—after all, love is now disciplined by the truth in obedience to which it operates.
- d) Since the brother, too, knows himself accepted in spite of his sin, we can take the risk of making ourselves vulnerable by loving him and exposing ourselves.

3. *The Imperative is Ultimately Justified in What God Did*

Lest we think that we are our own ground for confidence (i.e., that we can love because we have purified ourselves, and we have decided to obey the truth), and thus arrive at works-righteousness once again; or lest we throw up our hands in despair at our utter inadequacy (i.e., we are not really pure, and we do not fully obey), the text turns our attention to what God did.

- a) he has begotten us anew
- God did the redeeming work.
 - The Perfect Participle indicates a completed act with abiding results.
- b) through His Word
- God's Word equals God's act; he speaks and the deed is done; so, too, our re-birth. It accomplishes what it announces.
 - This Word is *imperishable*; i.e., it is living and abiding; it has that life in itself which cannot cease, as natural life does (cf. v. 24).
 - The Word is *seed*, and from it a plant grows: the believer's new life. The life, then, is God's; yet it is uniquely the life of the believer too.
 - No wonder the Word is called Good News, Gospel! Through it God made us totally new.

Note: It is quite in order, then, for God to demand that we love from the heart; after all, he created the deep change that makes such love possible. What is more, if he wants to bless men with his presence, is it not reasonable that he effect it by those in whose heart he already dwells? As such a person loves from the heart, God is enabled to express himself and be to that other person what he wants to be, namely, a redeeming God.

ARRIVING AT THE PROPOSITION WHICH THE SERMON WILL SET FORTH

(The preached sermon may begin with this proposition, and then set out to prove it.)

Because of what God did deep within our being, and because of what we ourselves have experienced in our souls, it is possible for us to love sincerely and deeply out of the heart.

HIDDEN PRESUPPOSITIONS AND PRINCIPLES

1. To declare the great things God has wrought in me is a more effective way of encouraging me to love than is the whipping or the conscience-kneading device. Even in 'Imperative' preaching we ought to use a great deal of the 'Indicative'.
2. Faithfulness to the text implies both careful attention to individual words as well as sensitive alertness to the creative thought processes within the text.
3. Let the sermon, even the exhortative one, contain Gospel! Let it be Good News!

BOOK REVIEWS

FAITH AT THE FRONTIERS by Carl F. H. Henry.
Chicago: Moody, 1969. Pp. 204. \$4.35.

One of the most articulate, widely read and in turn widely-quoted Protestants today is Carl F. H. Henry. Holding a double doctorate (Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Th.D.; Boston University, Ph.D.), serving as professor (Northern Baptist, Fuller, Wheaton and Gordon seminaries), editing *Christianity Today* for its first twelve years, Henry remains one of the most versatile, positive and clear thinkers of our day. His interests are reflected in the titles of his books: *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism, Remaking the Modern Mind, Christian Personal Ethics, Frontiers in Modern Theology*—and more. *Faith at the Frontiers* illustrates these interests further, and is a suitable single-volume for the reader who is interested in capsule statements by Henry on 1969's pressing issues, who is interested in living his faith at today's frontiers.

The sixteen essays comprising *Faith at the Frontiers* are addresses given by Henry to groups as diverse as the United States Committee of the WCC, college commencement audiences, Home Mission boards, Sunday School conventions, and congregations. Since the same quotation can frequently illustrate different thoughts, there is frequent repetition. Careful editing by the publisher or re-writing by the author might have prevented the duplication of Malik's "hinge of history" statement (p. 33,71), Pusey's address (p. 29,63), Henry's own account of his early life (p. 69,74) and Huxley's quotation (p. 31,67). Obviously, people—no matter how competent—will repeat themselves; it is not a question of "if" but of "how soon." One would hope that in the same book such repetition would be avoided!

I was also disappointed by Henry's casual dismissal of Bonhoeffer (p. 30). The dismissal may well be in order, but Miskotte's *When the Gods are Silent* and Hamilton's *Life in One's Stride* (particularly p. 60) indicate it dare not be so casual. Henry's quoting Bonhoeffer's famous "recourse to God as a working hypothesis (Henry fails to cite the exact reference; it is in *Letters and Papers from Prison*, p. 107, Fontana edition) begs the question as to whether Bonhoeffer is writing descriptively or prescriptively (approvingly). The fact that Bonhoeffer is not altogether unambiguous is sufficient warrant to take him more seriously than Henry appears to do.

But having said that—and it is a large "but"—let me draw attention to the excellent dimensions of the gospel which Henry brings to bear on the frontiers man is advancing towards in science, theology, technology, ethics and society.

Man is at these frontiers, but Henry anticipates them with hope and a positive orientation. His is no yearning for the safe

enclaves of two generations back when we were all on the farm, streetcars were pulled by horses, and people worked sixty-hour weeks. Henry sees new developments as opportunities, not as insurmountable barriers, although he does warn about misuse (or misapplication). One is reminded of Shaw's bishop in *Joan of Arc*, who reminds Joan that she has too much religion. "Is there harm in that?" asked Joan, to which the bishop replied, "No harm, but great danger!" Henry realizes the disaster which uncontrolled technology can unleash, but he also draws attention to its potential for man's benefit.

Most of the essays (eleven) deal with issues in theology; these issues range from the need for world evangelism through religious attitudes on the campus to concerns about ecumenism to analyses of thanatology (death-of-god movement, now itself deceased). Theology, Henry affirms, must keep in proper and equal tension "the importance of the individual, of social justice and of world evangelism"; "young evangelical leaders must therefore dedicate themselves as never before to every legitimate concern of the Christian believer in modern society" (p. 27). He brings optimism to this challenge in striking prose: "The living God is history's highest bidder and, awaiting the last trump, he has already bid the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection, and a small band of redeemed fishermen" (p. 37). (I'm not sure whether "the last trump" is a deliberate pun in the context or not!)

In talking about "A Christian Concept of Current Changes" and church renewal, he points out that "we have no right to final judgement about the church, but the Head of the Church does" (p. 55). He then points out that church renewal must be carried on in the context of the letters to the seven churches, that "Jesus specially condemns lovelessness, overtolerance, immorality, an unrepenting spirit and complacency" (p. 56). Change, then, must be seen in obedience to the example of Christ, acting on the conscience and the will of people. "The church exists in fact not primarily in a mission to the world outside, but in obedience to its risen Head and in His redemptive embrace" (p. 60).

Christian educators will be intrigued by his fourteen "Proposals for Revitalizing the Sunday School," the need to "present Christian answers with the same effectiveness and excitement that now characterize public education" (p. 85). With more three-day weekends on the way, the "traditional Sunday school program will be under still heavier pressure than it is now . . . There is no scriptural mandate to concentrate the educational mission on a single day of the week, let alone in a single hour of that day" (p. 84). Heady reading, that!

Henry enunciates seven principles whereby we could "build evangelical enthusiasm for ecumenism" (p. 102). (Some of his proposals were accepted in part, and his disillusionment with their results are expressed in the Spring/69 issue of the *Evangelical*

Missions Quarterly, where, dealing with Uppsala [the last WCC session], he writes, "There was a conspicuous promotion of a socialist ideology and of revolutionary means of achieving it.") Henry reiterates the theme of his plea for unity in *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis* through a sermon by the same name, when he writes (or says), "Any structural form that precludes or impedes the total fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission is not only dispensable, it is intolerable" (p. 178).

In terms of the political and social frontier, Henry engagingly sketches four presuppositions which materially implicate us in our society and demand response from us. (Encouragingly enough, they also match the dimensions of social action which have been enunciated by several articles in *The Voice*!) Thus, there can be no withdrawal. "Since Greek and Christian influences upon Western political traditions have shaped broader and deeper opportunities of political engagement than in New Testament times, the Christian as citizen of two worlds . . . should be publicly involved to the limit of his knowledge, competence and opportunity" (p. 104). For this purpose, "man's daily work viewed as a divine vocation constitutes the most accessible and natural bridge from the contemplative world of theology to the practical world of economic affairs" (p. 107). (The difficulty of doing just this is underscored best in Heideman's *The Reluctant Worker-Priest*.) This action need not implicate the entire church nor be marshalled by it; there should be "a movement of regenerate individuals . . . Counsel and guidance . . . (from) their churches is quite another matter from official endorsements of legislation in the name of the church" (p. 113).

On the frontier of ethics he deals with Robinson's *New Morality*; Fletcher's *Situation Ethics* had not yet been assembled in book form when Henry delivered the lecture (1966), and in any event, Henry's reference to Paul Ramsay's critique of Robinson covers all Fletcher deserves to evoke and more. "What of the *New Morality*?", a lecture given in March of 1966, sounds strangely familiar; by now most of Henry's critiques have been used by so many others that we tend to be in the same room with the critic who felt that Shakespeare used too many clichés.

The technological frontier receives attention in terms of mass media and their relationship to the church. I found it very intriguing that he could talk at length about journalism and broadcasting and television, and avoid any reference—however oblique—to McLuhan's *Understanding Media* (published as early as 1964 although popularized only by 1966. Did Henry anticipate the trough of the movement before the crest appeared?) Henry, while glad for the growing interest in, and responsible editing of, religious news by the "seecular" press, deplors the fact that "the American newsstand carry not a single religious news magazine" (p. 165). Another startling charge he makes is that over 90% of Christian mass media productions (literature, radio, television)

is geared to Christian believers, and that 95% of church literature is read by those already committed. (There is nothing as delightful as being certain of one's audience. Remember, in *Games Christians Play*, the statement that "Most leaflets are intended for non-believers, but somehow it seems safer to send them to people already in the fold"? More people appear to be playing than Culbertson thought!) What society lacks is a realization of the "unconscious assumptions, the unargued biases, that define religious news value" (p. 167); the Christian journalist must point out these deficiencies and supply a whole world-view. Also, for Henry, "the weakest aspect of evangelical mass media effort lies in the failure to pool resources" (p. 195). Surely in that one statement much could be said about our proliferation of radio-broadcasts, our piling heaps-upon-heaps of denominational papers which endlessly quote each others' collective insights. Further, to utilize the opportunities of technology more adequately, "we need increasingly to hold before this generation of Christian young people the vocational possibilities of service and leadership in the mass communications field" (p. 192). Take note, all academic deans of our colleges and seminaries! Or will we continue to concentrate on mass-producing platitudinous pulpiteers?

Two frontiers that I would like to see Henry touch on are those of genetic engineering (e.g. what of the possibilities raised by Taylor's *The Biological Time Bomb*?) and developments on the campus in relation to accelerated social and status mobility (that's a euphemism for unrest).

But the scattered excerpts selected should excite you into reading *Faith at the Frontiers*, in an attempt to see what your faith could do for the frontiers you face. Vern Ratzlaff

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JOB, OUR CONTEMPORARY, by H. Harold Kent.

Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1967. Pp. 65. \$1.25.

The ancient Book of Job continues to attract contemporary thinkers, especially those who are involved in the field of human experience. Much has already been written about the book of Job in an attempt to set forth its central purpose or to seek its answer to the age-old question, "Why do the righteous suffer?" To this rather large body of literature has now been added this modest volume. The author is the minister of Emmanuel Church (Evangelical) of Toronto, but is also at the same time, active as an architect. As pastor and "man of affairs" Kent has increasingly been faced with the questions that men ask in daily life, and the search for answers to these questions has driven him to the Scriptures, and in this instance particularly to the Book of Job.

However, Kent does not in this volume deal particularly with questions of purpose, nor with specific textual or exegetical problems. His basic premise is that this book is "as up-to-date as tomorrow morning's newspaper" and as such speaks to man's need

and predicament today. As one reviewer has correctly put it: "here are no pat answers, no evasive omissions; instead the author comes to grips with the puzzles and paradoxes recorded in the book of Job . . ." What he finds there he relates to contemporary life.

This approach is refreshing. While Kent's concept of the book is at all times orthodox and his attitude reverent, there is little here of the more traditional treatment of the subject. There are a few instances where the traditional prevails. One such instance is his characterization of the three friends. It has always seemed (at least, to this reviewer), that the characterization of the three friends, professedly on the basis of what they say, is somewhat artificial.

Kent deals more specifically with matters of attitude, feeling, faith, and doubt in the presence of experiences which man have in this world. He focuses on Job's ambivalence, the alternation of flashes of inspired hope with clouds of deep and dark gloom, not to mention despair. Always, Kent relates what he finds in Job's experience to the life of contemporary man in his relationship to God.

This book is no study in ancient history. It seeks to avoid the pitfalls of stereotyped and barren orthodoxy, and as such it is a wholesome antidote to a dogmatism which knows more of theory than of life. Man's heart today cries out, as Job's did, for an authentic and dynamic encounter with the living God, an encounter which gives comfort and assurance even if it does not yield knowledge and understanding, in the perplexing situations of life. Towards this end, Kent's treatment of the book of Job is a help.

H. H. Voith

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THE PRACTICE OF SACRED MUSIC, by Carl Halter.

St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955, reprinted 1961. Pp. 96. \$1.50.

This manual on the practice of sacred music should be in the hands of every pastor, church musician, and lay church member interested in the use of music in the church. It presents anew the challenge that faces the Christian in expressing his faith through music.

The author is well qualified to write on the subject. He has been a practicing church musician for many years, is a fine organist, and served as chairman of the department of music at Concordia Teacher's College. He is in the long-standing tradition of Lutheran music-making that harks back to Luther himself, and has deep concern for music in the life of the Christian and the church. Mr. Halter expresses himself clearly and easily. There are no technical terms that an ordinary reader could not understand. If time is at a premium today, then the brevity of the discussion should have appeal in itself.

The volume deals with two main aspects of music-making

in the church: principles and practice. One would suppose that a general reader would concern himself more with the principles that are discussed and the practicing musician more with the problems of repertoire and performance. That would be a mistake. In the first place, the "principles" are not that easily separated from the "practice," nor is the book written in such a way that these emphases are separated. For example, the average reader would gain a great deal by reading the chapter on "The choice and presentation of Organ music" because the role of the organist in the church service must be understood by the church members as well as by the organist himself. Even the section dealing with organ registration and design is helpful to the lay member in acquainting him with the basic design of an organ, the main terms used, and the possibilities of the instrument.

The first few chapters deal more particularly with the meaning of worship and the part that music should play in expressing worship. These chapters are most helpful in providing the proper framework for all our music-making in the church. They help to provide the Christian rationale that should permeate the thinking of the church musician as well as the lay member. In this regard music is seen to fulfill a functional role in the main. It is not to be used as an end in itself, but directed always toward God, and supporting the Word.

Halter also discusses the role of forms in a service, and the uses and dangers of adhering to traditional forms. Private worship allows for much flexibility and variety in forms, but corporate worship requires some compromise. Group worship also leads to greater enrichment as one member shares his talents and insights with another. He also stresses the importance of creativity in worship, that our expression of worship should remain fresh and relevant, and that the church should keep up with the times in the modes of expression used.

Halter suggests rightly that the church has a great tradition of music-making. Most of the serious music of composers before 1750 was associated with religious works. The church has a fine tradition of music of this "worshipful" quality, but in the chorales and hymns there is another important use of music for the church: didactic music—or music designed for teaching biblical truths. In this regard Halter encourages the church to write relevant material for the present and to explore the riches of the past at the same time.

I am impressed with the practical insights provided in this manual with respect to improvements suggested for congregational singing, for the use of soloists in the church, and for the use of instrumental music. Mr. Halter is in favour of using church concerts as well, provided that the music used is built around some general theme, and is not used for mere entertainment. Church music should address itself to the needs of the whole man. This is a wholesome approach.

Peter Klassen

Coming in the October, 1969 Issue

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