



GOOD BOOKS

From books by Paul Stevens, we move on to Calvin Miller, a pastor and poet. His autographed trilogy, *The Singer* (1975), *The Song* (1977), and *The Finale* (1979) is part of BGST's Lending Collection. The strong lines of Miller's poetic imagery and the arresting cover designs and illustrations by Joe De Velasco, a Chicago artist, make this trilogy unique. Miller in the North American counterpart of great British writers like C. S. Lewis (*The Chronicles of Narnia*) and J. R. R. Tolkien (*The Lord of the Rings*). His delicateness with the English language is refreshing. He has no plot, but the fleeting 'snapshots' of his other-worldly visions produce an impact that is quite out of this world. It is essential to be able to read between measured lines and understand the identity of the Earthmaker (the Creator God), the Singer or Troubadour (Jesus), the World Hater (Satan), and the such. In the style of a ballad he moves quickly from one episode to another, for example, from a lady with the half-parted lips (=a prostitute) standing at an open door to singing a "Hillside song" in the Canyon of the Damned (=Hell).

In the midst of all this, profound thoughts are slipped in unassumingly, as in the following insightful comment: "To God obscenity is not uncovered flesh. It is exposed intention. Nakedness is just a state of heart. Was Adam any more unclothed when he discovered shame? Yes." (*Singer*, p.79). The smashing of the Singer's hand and its eventual healing is a beautiful portrayal of the pain and healing that is associated with Jesus, who brought healing to this sin-sick world through the Cross.

In *The Song* the empty well and dying earth represents hopeless mankind. Into this pathetic situation steps in the Singer with his Anthem. A titanic struggle between good and evil ensues. A gripping account of the massacre of children and their mothers relives the horror of the Jewish holocaust. In *The Finale* the galatic struggles move into position for the last battle. The reader (if he has not given up reading by this time) is rewarded with a striking genre which Miller uses effectively to unburden his heart. Summoning up horses, dragons, and heavenly invaders, he concludes: Finally, "there was music all around them in the air. They sang the Star-Song, and far above the Crystal Chair, their music drifted outward into the universe" (*Finale*, p.174). (QSH)

✦ Chapel

Benny Fang, a BGST student, spoke to us from I Samuel 15 on the simple theme: partial obedience. Saul, given a command by God, fulfilled it only partially, keeping alive

the Amalekite king Agag and also a number of the choicest animals of the Amalekites. He made excuses, but ultimately could not escape the fact that he had not done what God had commanded him to do. We, too, need to accept that partial obedience is not really obedience at all, and that it is total obedience that God requires of us.

NEWS BITS

CHAPEL THIS WEEK

This week's chapel will be taken by Mr Wee Chow Leng (tentmaking in Israel) who will give us an "Israel Update". Come and let us pray for the critical situation in Israel.

SEMESTER TWO'S COURSES ...

For those of you who are planning for the next 6 months, here are some courses for your consideration:

- ✦ **Interpreting I Samuel**
(1.5 credits, Dr Satterthwaite)
- ✦ **Interpreting II Samuel**
(1.5 credits, Dr Satterthwaite)
- ✦ **OT Foundations II**
(3 credits, Dr Satterthwaite)
- ✦ **Biblical Hebrew II**
(video class, 3 credits, Mrs Peck)
- ✦ **NT Greek II**
(video class, 3 credits, Dr Quek)
- ✦ **Romans**
(video class, 1.5 credits, Dr Quek)
- ✦ **The Christian Faith**
(3 credits, Dr Quek)
- ✦ **To All People Everywhere: Biblical Theology of Missions**
(video class, 3 credits, Mr Martin Goldsmith/Mr Edman)
- ✦ **Christian Education and other courses**

GUEST LECTURERS' COURSES:

- ✦ **Personal Evangelism**
(Mr Jim Chew)
- ✦ **Christian Ethics**
(Rev John Ting)
- ✦ **Other courses**

MOTHER'S DAY

We wish to pay tribute to mothers and in a small way encourage them to perform their roles with the strength of God. Enjoy these 'tidbits'!



Herbert Spencer:

"[My mother] was a woman of ordinary intelligence and of high moral nature. She was never sufficiently prized. Speaking broadly, the world is divided into two classes: those who deserve little and get much, and those who deserve much and get little; and it is a source of unceasing regret to me that my mother belonged to the latter class."

A Feudal Custom

The story is told of a remote village in a mountain district of feudal Japan which was called "The Place to Leave Your Mother". Those were the days when the old who had reached seventy were brought there to die. A young man carried his mother up the mountain to leave her there. As they went along he noticed that she was breaking twigs along the way. Curious, he asked her why she was doing that.

She replied, "Son, after you leave me in that village I don't want you to lose your way going down the mountain."

The young man could not leave her mother after that. Her love for him changed an age-old custom.

Dorothy Sayers in Unpopular Opinions

Speaking about women may seem out of place at a worship service. But no, I would like to say that God's word had a lot to say about women and we had better take note. There seems to be such an ambivalence about how to regard women (or men for that matter) sometimes. Let's hear what one woman, Dorothy Sayers, has to say about this subject. She wrote:

"Perhaps it is no wonder that the women were first at the Cradle and last at the Cross. They had never known a man like this Man – there never has been such another. A prophet and teacher who never nagged at them, never flattered or coaxed or patronized; who never made arch jokes about them; never treated them either as "The women, God help us!" or "The ladies, God bless them!" who rebuked without querulousness and praised without condescension; who took their questions and arguments seriously;

who never ... urged them to be feminine or jeered at them for being female; who had no axe to grind and no uneasy male dignity to defend; who took them as he found them and was completely un-selfconscious."

Why Women Cry

"Why are you crying?" the little boy asked his mom.

"Because I'm a woman," she told him.

"I don't understand," he said.

His mom just hugged him and said, "And you never will..."

Later the little boy asked his father, "Why does mother seem to cry for no reason?"

"All women cry for no reason" was all his dad could say.

The little boy grew up and became a man, still wondering why women cry. Finally he asked God:

"God, why do women cry so easily?"

And God said,

"When I made woman she had to be special. I made her shoulders strong enough to carry the weight of the world; yet, gentle enough to give comfort....

I gave her an inner strength to endure childbirth and the rejection that she faces many times from others....

I gave her a hardness that allows her to keep going when others give up. I enable her to take care of her family through sickness and fatigue without complaining....

I gave her the sensitivity to love her children under any and all circumstances. This same sensitivity helps her give her child confidence and removes her teenagers anxieties and fears....

I gave her strength to carry her husband through troubled times, yes, even helping him come to terms with his faults. I fashioned her from his rib to protect his heart....

I gave her wisdom to know that a good husband never hurts his wife, but sometimes tests her strengths and her resolve to stand beside him unflinchingly....

I gave her a tear to shed – it's hers exclusively to use whenever it is needed. It's her only weakness....

It's a tear for mankind...."

May God's richest blessings with ...

Mr Lam Kin 14/5
Mr Chew Wee 15/5
Mr Koh Soo Keong 15/5
Mr Lim Chin Keng 15/5
Mrs Rebecca Tay 15/5
Mrs Pauline Koe 16/5
Mdm Tan Soh Hiang 19/5

