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Epistles

Multiple

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"To be known and read" by all. . .

Annabaptist Hunt

Recently, my daughter-in-law, Tanya, came across a small booklet "What Lies Ahead for the Anabaptists?" Tanya is from the Ukraine and has familiarity with several languages. She now lives in Harrisonburg, Virginia, the site of Eastern Mennonite University, and borrowed the booklet from someone there.

The booklet tells of a man who returned to the Ukraine after having spent some years in the U.S. He was full of the Holy Spirit and seemed to be able to find the right people who were interested in spiritual things. This was about 1925, before the Russian revolution took hold. The Holy Spirit taught them to quit drinking vodka and smoking and about foot washing before the Lord's Supper, all without Bibles. As time went on, the Spirit warned them that terrible persecution would come, but before that time, he told them to go to a certain village. There were no maps. At that village they were directed to the next, and so on. Finally, they came more than 3,000 kilometers, to China!

This is a fascinating story of the

Holy Spirit's leading. I would like to correspond with Gerry Wagoner, since he is of the Anabaptist heritage. My E-mail address is kennoe@hiwaay.net.

Kenneth Noel

Here's your inspiration for the day. Enjoy!

If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 feet and is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail with no top.

The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkably nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. All it can do is shuffle about helplessly, and no doubt painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, it takes off like a flash.

A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some

way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists until it destroys itself.

Lots of people are like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. They struggle about with all their problems and frustrations, not ever realizing that they merely have to look UP. . . the answer is always ABOVE.

I will turn mine eyes to the Lord,
whence comes my help.

Blessings,

John and Shirley Bilbro
bilbro@midrivers.comp

Not a Twinge of Regret

This thought was sooooo good I wanted to share it with you and your PD readers:

“I have wept in the night for shortness of sight

that to somebody’s need I was blind;

But I have never yet felt a twinge of regret

for being a little too kind.”

Sorry, I don’t know the author.

Anna May Waters
ahwaters51@iGlide.net

The Theology of a Bird and a Beast

Perspective Digest is, as you say, a magazine of theology. Love it! Especially because it isn’t stuffy. In my theology, neither is God. I plan to share a few good laughs with him up there. I’m with you on another thing: I, too, think that Jesus would just love to present a noble dog to a child who died with it or who didn’t. I’ll leave the loving fate of cats to one of your kindly theologians. Just thought your readers would enjoy the following from a child of 10. (Sir Ernest Gowers quoted the following response to an invitation to write an essay. Its genuineness is guaranteed.)

“The bird that I am going to write about is the Owl. The Owl cannot see at all by day and at night is as blind as a bat. I do not know much about the Owl, so I will go on to the beast which I am going to choose. It is the Cow. The Cow is a mammal. It has six sides—right, left, an upper and below. At the back it has a tail on which hangs a brush. With this it sends the flies away so that they do not fall into the milk. The head is for the purpose of growing horns and so that the mouth can be somewhere. The horns are to butt with, and the mouth is to moo with. Under the cow hangs the milk. It is arranged for milking. When

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people milk, the milk comes and there is never an end to the supply. How the cow does it I have not yet realized, but it makes more and more. The cow has a fine sense of smell; one can smell it far away. This is the reason for the fresh air in the country. The man cow is called an ox. It is not a mammal. The cow does not eat much, but what it eats it eats twice, so that it gets enough. When it is hungry it moos, and when it says nothing it is because its inside is all full up with grass.”

A Lover of Animals

Having just come from a funeral for a mouse, how could I not print a plea submitted by a lover of animals? The mouse belonged to my 6-year-old granddaughter, Julianna. She, her older sister, Allison, their mother, Kimberly, and my wife, Stella, were the mourners. Julianna dug a little hole just behind the backyard fence, gently placed her mouse in it and looked expectantly at me. Now, if any of you know of a mouse text, I'll keep it in mind for the next funeral. That noontime, I opened my Bible and, well, I glanced down frequently as I spoke of a loving God who made little animals with specialized functions. I assured my audience that Jesus would undoubtedly

take personal pleasure in returning favorite pets to their owners when he returns. I turned the conversation to their dog (Micky), as big as a Shetland pony. Somehow it was easier to picture Jesus expending his love over Micky than the mouse.

Now, be assured that all this was done with dignity. I then offered a prayer for all the little creatures that God has created—knowing, of course, that a more complex theology would embrace a few mutations masterminded by the devil. When I finished, Julianna picked up a handful of forest dirt and gently dribbled it on the dear departed. We stood—had I mentioned that we knelt for prayer?—and slowly left the grave site. By the time we reached the house, Julianna's sorrow had dissipated in the assurance of a resurrection morning.

As for the 10-year-old's cow or owl or whatever, I'm afraid my seminary training did not include a course on untangling anomalous hereditary features of bovine creatures.—
R.R.H.