

In the Beginning Was the Word | BY BONNIE DWYER

Walking into a room full of books always charms me. Somehow I feel as though I am immediately among friends—friends who have such important things to say that they have taken great pains to put them down on paper. These are friends who will make me laugh and cry, who will take me back in time to amazing places. Friends who will give me new ideas and ways of thinking about life.

Opening the Bible is a similar experience. Each morning, cup of tea in hand, I sit down to talk with the Israelites, given that at the moment I am in the Chronicles. The details of Solomon's temple set my mind awirl. There is a church board meeting on my agenda for the day; we'll be discussing the painting of the sanctuary. Ideas begin to form.

Listening to the Bible has the same effect. Several years ago when I had a lengthy commute to work, I would play tapes of Alexander Scourby reading the Bible for my morning drive. His melodious voice and the poetry of King James English were like music washing over me. Refreshed by the tones and words, my mind would awaken and creative ideas would flow, even if his words were just the begats of Matthew 1.

Were I a sculptor, like John McDowell, I would portray the Bible as an egg, or inside an egg, or inside the smallest of a series of Russian nesting dolls. The Bible, for me, is the beginning of ideas and creativity.

"In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1) has become a favorite text, especially since the other book that I am now reading is James Gleick's *The Information: A History. A Theory. A Flood*. His tour through science history shows information and information theory reshaping everything from economics and philosophy to biology and physics. So now as I think of God's first creative act, I think of algorithms and words—information.



In this issue, our focus is on creatively exploring the Bible down through time and in art and literature. Recently in Loma Linda, there was a celebration of the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. The articles by Melissa Brotton, Lisa Geriguis, and Sam McBride came from that series of meetings. Ryan Bell's reflections on what is pure were given at the 2010 Adventist Forum Conference. We round out the Bible section with Reinder Bruinsma's review of the new Adventist Study Bibles.

Of course, with the many official church meetings this time of year, there is news aplenty to share. We have looked for information to illuminate the headlines that you may have already heard.

To conclude, we again turn to those books that are like friends. Herold Weiss would be such a friend, and so is his latest book, *Finding My Way in Christianity*. Another friend Roy Branson reviews it and highlights Weiss' significant contribution to our community life. Don't miss it. ■

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