

# THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

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Founder: F.L.A. Freytag

Administration and editing  
27, Route de Vallière  
1236 CARTIGNY / Geneva  
Switzerland Tel. 022 756 12 08

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## What divine goodness has in store for mankind

THE wonders of the Universe speak things that fill us with emotion. When, of an evening, we are able to admire a beautiful sunset, we have a feeling of the wondrous majesty of the Almighty's handiwork. Then, the stars come out one after another, lighting up the sky. Soon, the vault of heaven is an entrancing sight. The glory of God shines forth with power. Then, the Moon also sheds its light as a kind greeting, telling us of the immensity of divine wisdom.

It is because it is dark at night that we are able to see the stars, but they are there just the same in the daytime. It is the brightness of the sunshine that prevents us from seeing them. If we stand inside a tall chimney stack, and look up through the opening high over our heads, we shall see the stars as plainly as at night.

The Universe is a wonder of glory and perfection. It shows us an admirable mechanism with glorious accuracy. All things move there with magnificent tranquillity. In Space, the planets revolve noiselessly and without collisions, in sublime harmony. That is why, if our hearts are well disposed, we feel carried away with gladness and enthusiasm at sight of all the greatness of the Lord, which the Universe reveals to us. They are powerful and penetrating accents, comprehensible to all who are receptive to divine impressions and wish to be initiated into the ineffable and glorious wisdom of God, revealed in all his creations.

The wonders of nature elicit shouts of admiration from us. To gaze at a calm and clear lake is most restful to our sensory nerves. And when we think of all that the seas and oceans contain, this is also an exceedingly expressive testimony to us. Aquatic creatures of all sorts and sizes are to be found there, from the whale down to the smallest fish, and even protozoa, to be seen only with a microscope, and, small though they are, also alive. We are transported with enthusiasm when we are able to obtain some idea of the magnificence and diversity of the creative thought that has brought all that the Universe contains into existence. And to think that all these things display magnificent harmony! All things hang together; there is no waste; there are no crumbs in the universe; nothing clashing with the rest. There is fantastic diversity and even perfect harmony between things and creatures, because everything is governed by one perfect and immutable law, which requires all to exist to do good.

Glorious examples of the Lord's creative power are

to be seen wherever we look, and glorious are their effects. Fields, woods and mountains, all things are splendid. When a landscape is flooded in sunshine, what a profusion of colours there is on every hand! In the early morning, if a ray of sunshine strikes a dew drop caught on a blade of grass, it sparkles as if it was a diamond that had dropped there: that is also a greeting that stirs our hearts.

Unfortunately, the Earth, at present, is not the Lord's footstool. It lies under the curse, where man has set it through his Fall. That is why a magnificent landscape, bathed in sunshine, can change its face from one instant to the next. The calmness and peace that pervaded it can disappear in the twinkling of an eye. The wind only has to rise, carrying along great clouds that burst and shed their contents over the land; then, at times, there are such terrible downpours that vast areas are flooded, bringing disaster to thousands of people. Therefore, man is afraid when the rain starts to come down in torrents, and when the streams rise and burst their banks. So rapidly does this take place, at times, that nobody has time to run to safety. What a disaster it is when the water carries everything away before it!

Elsewhere, there are terrible cyclones and tornadoes. In some cases, so mighty is the energy let loose in the fury of these storms, that railway-train engines have been physically lifted off the track and hurled to one side. In the throes of these mighty outbursts, man is as helpless as a blade of straw.

Mankind are astonished and terror-stricken; they are unable to understand; they wonder how such terrible things can happen. Could not God have prevented such horrible catastrophes? How can nature — so splendid, such a charming setting, and a landscape so magnificent — thus be suddenly destroyed by such terrible disasters? And why?

Neither did we know the why and the how of it in the past. We wondered in the same way, and felt the same about it. Now, the Lord has given us the solution to the mystery. We know that it is man himself who is to blame for his own misfortunes: it is he who is the kingpin of these terrible events, which are the sorrow of so many people, and which carry away houses, goods, wives, husbands and children.

It all comes about because man — who was a king on Earth, a representative and a reflection of the glory of God — became a slave to sin. Why did this hap-

pen? Because he listened to him who set about turning him away from his Benefactor. Never should we have thought that what was said to Adam after his Fall — that henceforth the earth would bring forth thorns and thistles, and that he would eat bread in the sweat of his face — would be fulfilled so tragically and painfully.

The fact is that to be cut off from communion with God, was the most frightful misfortune man could call down upon himself. The terrible results of that rupture made themselves felt in the course of time with ever-growing intensity, to reach the state of things we are able to observe today. What trouble, what pain and what illnesses he very often has to suffer before he goes down into the grave, till he returns to the dust whence he was taken!

The situation for man could look quite hopeless. Fortunately, however, it is no such thing. All is not lost, far from it, for a voice made itself heard, and is still to be heard today: "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

That, indeed, is the result of the Work — so admirable, sublime and ineffably noble, compassionate and selfless — done by our dear Saviour on our behalf. It is he who provides mankind with that magnificent gleam of hope which soothes them kindly with its vivifying light. He intends to restore calm for ever, to set our hearts at rest, and to be our Supreme Friend and our Shepherd. It was he who calmed the storm on the Lake of Gennesaret, giving, in this way, a glorious demonstration of the Work he had come to do. We have learnt to know him and have also felt that he calmed the storm which often has raged in our hearts, and restored calmness. He is called the Prince of Peace: he will establish peace and happiness all over the world.

The Lord is offering us his Salvation, but we, for our part, have to grasp it, not only in theory, but also in practice. We have to change, to become different people and to get out of our darkness, so that divine grace may be able to penetrate into our hearts.

For that purpose, we have to become accessible to God's Holy Spirit, by whose agency the transformation can take place. Everything has been created by that wonderful Spirit. It was that Spirit that was also employed in creating the first man, just as in creating matter. Everything in the Universe is simply a crystallisation of the Spirit of God, which has taken shape in a diversity of ways.

Therefore, we have every reason to realize that all things were created perfect, as, moreover, we are given explicitly to understand in Genesis. It is man himself who has damaged everything, because he has accepted

### The baker's son

WHAT with his oven and his kneading trough, little Jeremy's father hadn't a moment to spare. He worked for two employers, so that while the dough was rising in one bakery, he would be kneading in the other, and while the bread was baking in the first, he would be making up the loaves in the second. Such labour was exhausting to his body rather than replenishing to his purse, but it was preferable to the war (World War One) being talked about behind the scenes in diplomatic circles. This war had come upon them out of nowhere, in spite of everything, because some great men had decided it had to be, so that others might go and fight one another.

The baker (father) then had to march away, leaving the heat of the stove and the warmth of the hearth, for the raging fury of the battle front. At the end of several years,

the roaring of the guns had been silenced. For, as the poet said: "War ended for lack of fighters." Staring at the ruins of Europe, Wilhelm II (German Emperor) blubbered: "I never wanted that!" But then no one had wanted such a thing: nevertheless, such was indeed the outcome! With the signing of the Armistice of 11 November 1918, and the unburdening of the consciences, they solemnly promised never to do it again.

After those long years of anguish, alternating between hope and despair, what joy it was to mother and Jeremy, to have father home again. His coming back seemed like a miracle to them. However, what was left for the survivors was a balance of enormous debts and colossal economic chaos. They had to work long hours for very little wages. Mother had eventually tired of great efforts to make ends meet. It was now going to be a matter of working in their own business, instead of having an employer to take the pickings.

A friend who owned a small unoccupied shop, offered it spontaneously. So, they leased it, while, a mile away, father had discovered a bakery whose owner had not returned from the battle front. As for the first sack of flour, grandmother had lent them the money, for they were in a bind.

A year later, the business was on its feet. It was so prosperous that mother's friend suddenly wished to have the shop again. They had had to borrow once more, but enough to buy a house this time. Of course, it would have to be an old house, and they would have to be able to install the oven in it, together with the kneading trough, and without the fear of the sudden regrets of the owner. Mother — who served in the shop filled with the appetizing smell of freshly baked bread, plum tarts and apple pies — also took in boarders, for they had to pay back, with interest, what they had borrowed.

So, Jeremy was growing up amidst this

whirl of activity. Great was his joy when, now and again, he was allowed to accompany his father to work, and greater still when father allowed him to lend a hand. He especially liked to be near the biscuit mixture, and when father's back was turned for an instant, he did not waste his time either: he would quickly grab a spoon... My, that was good!

No one would have ever compared Jeremy to an oak tree, he would rather have reminded one of a slender sapling. He cut a very small figure at school, among a group of big fellows always ready for a fight. Signed though the Armistice might be, and silent the guns, this did not alter the fact that men's minds remained unchanged, and the minds of their offspring as well. War was still with them — civilized, of course — for here, as everywhere else, the question was who is the first, the most cunning or the strongest.

Amidst this turbulence, Jeremy seemed out of place. Fortunately for him, he never set out



the influence of an evil spirit, that of the Adversary. That is what has given rise to the gigantic disturbances experienced on Earth. It is also that that gives rise to the storms, the wraths and the hatreds which rise in the hearts of men, bringing them unhappiness, making them suffer, and finally causing their death.

No more must such things be, and to put a stop to them, we must accept the divine education. It will free us from everything evil within us and make us prosper like a tree planted near a watercourse. What our whole being imperatively needs is the circulation of God's Holy Spirit, which is the vital element, essential to man. Men are not in possession of it at present, which is why they destroy themselves one after another, and all go down into the grave.

In the Kingdom of God, all things will be wonderful: there will be no more crying, tears or pain. No more storms will rage, either within or without, and fine weather will remain in man's heart and around him. When the Earth becomes Paradise again, and mankind are under the power of divine grace, then the Earth will truly be the Lord's footstool. It will reflect his glory and his majesty. Moreover, in spite of all the disturbances that take place on it, due to having been damaged by mankind, it still declares the glory of God, and the power of his handiwork.

What doesn't it produce, this Earth which is the feeding mother of all the creatures that have their home there, providing them with the abundance of all it has to offer for their maintenance! For thousands and thousands of years, spring after spring, the buds appear and flowers open, and autumn after autumn, the trees bear fruit. The Earth produces an abundance.

It is no fault of the Earth that there are unfortunates who do have not enough to eat: it is the fault of the vandals who destroy the trees, and of the malefactors who monopolize the produce of the soil. The Earth goes on giving — year in, year out — in spite of all the ill treatment inflicted on it, bearing glorious witness that is deeply moving to the wisdom and the love displayed by the Almighty Who prepared all things for the happiness of mankind and of all the creatures that our planet was intended to house.

For close on 6,000 years, that era of distress and woe has been taking its course on Earth. It is the time during which, according to the word of prophecy mentioned above, in consequence of his folly, man has had to eat bread in the sweat of his face. Meanwhile, God has been preparing the Ransom for mankind to extricate them from that lamentable condition and restore to them the Kingdom of God, which they lost in Eden.

As Solomon says, the Lord has set the thought of eternity in the hearts of men. That is why, as a general rule, even in the most difficult moments, people still hope in better times. And whenever one sets out to seek divine communion, assistance is given so that one may find it. Accordingly, the faithful of the Old Covenant wholeheartedly did their best to get into harmony with the Lord. Hence, they were able to feel the full power of his assistance and approval.

So it was in Noah's case. He sought to get into harmony with the divine conditions and laws. The Lord enlightened him to a splendid degree and gave him to understand that conditions, as they stood at that time, could not continue, and that the logical consequence of what mankind was doing would be a cataclysmic flood. Noah understood, and set about building his ark. He delivered his testimony to those around him, but his advice and warnings were laughed at. Nevertheless, in due course, that which could not be averted befell, the catastrophe took its course.

It is exactly the same today. Moreover, the matter

has been foretold in the Bible. It is written that, in the last days, that is to say, at the end of this world of darkness, and the opening of the Kingdom of God on Earth, it will be as in the days of Noah. People will be more corrupt than ever, and therefore sudden ruin will overtake them. However, those who fear the Lord will be spared from the deluge of fire which will burst over the world. The Scriptures declare that it will be tribulation such as there has never been before and never will be again in all eternity, for that time of tribulation will be followed by the Kingdom of God, which will stand for ever.

The Lord intends to educate mankind so that they may become viable. But He cannot do it without their personal cooperation. He has redeemed them from condemnation and offers them new life. But this new life can only be acquired if the conditions are fulfilled. The conditions which must be fulfilled are those which lead to viability. In the past, our Lord healed the sick and raised the dead, but they, in turn, all disappeared into the grave. Why? Because one can only become viable by acquiring a fundamentally altruistic character. That is personal work that each has to do for oneself with the assistance of divine grace. This is a lengthy schooling.

Had Adam and Eve followed out the education of the right and the good proposed to them in Eden, the good would have formed their character, and they could not have done wrong. Badness could have found no contact in their hearts. Those conditions were not fulfilled, and that was why they fell and misfortune extended to the whole human race till today. We have come to the peak of the trouble. But soon, the storm will be calmed to give free play to the wonderful, beneficial and consoling effects of the Work of Christ and of his Little Flock.

The effects of that are already making themselves felt by those who accept "the programme of life" now being proposed to mankind. "The springs of life" are being offered to those who will rally to the divine law. Till now, mankind have been doing things and displaying sentiments that make them die. Therefore, they suffer and die in expectation of the Revealing of the Sons of God, which takes place today in the last members of the Little Flock, and in the Host of the Lord, now rising. It is to those who wish to join the ranks of that glorious army, so that with it they may head for eternal life, that *The Monitor* is addressed, to say to them in the Lord's Name: "Choose life now. Why would you die?" That is what we wish each of our readers for their greatest blessing.

## Building "the new world"

Our friends in Belgium sent us an article from the Belgian French-language magazine *En Marche*, No. 1697 from the 23rd of June 2022, with the title "Défaire le monde" ("Deconstructing the world"), which deals with our future regarding the technological development of our society. We quote its text by Julien Marteleur as follows:

### Deconstructing the world

*In environmental circles, the concept of "exnovation" [the philosophy of not innovating; an opposite of innovation] is doing the rounds. In view of imminent changes, some people propose to draw a line under the race for technological innovation, which is further depleting the planet's resources. Is this a Utopia?*

*Since the middle of the 19th century and the beginning of the Industrial Age, humans have been leaving behind increasingly indelible traces on Earth. Our unbridled race of progress has created a new geological age: the Anthropocene [the age of humans]. For the first time, the history of our planet has collided with the*

*men and women who inhabit it. Pesticides, smartphones, nuclear power plants... The disorder caused by the effects of human industrial activity, makes the survival of all species more and more complicated. Apart from climate catastrophe, this organized chaos threatens food security and limits access to vital resources and energies, which leads to sudden and forced migrations. We know that we are reaching the limits of our system. Isn't it time to "deconstruct" the world as we know it?*

### Causes, but no remedies

*Technology, on which human beings now depend on a daily basis, is alone unlikely to solve this crisis. On the contrary, it is rather the cause of the current situation, instead of being the remedy. Faced with this observation, Alexandre Monnin, Diego Landivar and Emmanuel Bonnet — the coauthors of the French book Héritage et Fermeture. Une Écologie du Démantèlement [Legacy and Closure. An Ecology of Dismantling] — intend to "deinnovate" and to even "defuture". "To defuture" means 'to give up on an already obsolete future'. Rather than investing in technologies and activities that are condemned from the environmental and material point of view, they should not be made or should be minimized," they explain, taking the example of 5G. "This technology is already almost economically condemned, with high maintenance and technology-upgrade costs. And it represents a 'layer' that will eventually have to be dismantled, because, at some point, we will turn to something else that is more 'efficient'. We might as well do without it right now!"*

*José Halloy, a professor of physics at the Paris Cité University, has, for several years, been working on the availability of raw materials needed for our technologies. Some technologies are kept alive at exorbitant costs, even though they are, in essence, doomed to disappear, because there will never be enough natural or mineable resources to make them last indefinitely. These technologies are described by him as "zombies", which are firstly the famous "connected objects", which could number 100 billion by the year 2050. Or again... an aeroplane, which, in addition to a disastrous carbon footprint, requires the use of composite materials during its construction, which are lighter and more resistant than metal. But the efficiency of these materials has reached a plateau. It will therefore be necessary to "find" new ones... This is a vicious circle from which the aeronautics industry will find it very difficult to escape.*

### Encourage to give up

*In this sense, Alexandre Monnin, Diego Landivar and Emmanuel Bonnet suggest that the coexistence between economy and ecology will only be possible after a phase of business adaption and alignment with respect to planetary limits. "An encouragement phase will have to be organized in which it will be necessary to give up different things," they warn. But "giving up" should not be done randomly or in a rush. These three men point to a particularly current example: European countries that have announced their intention to give up Russian gas, due to the Ukraine conflict, have had to scramble to find alternative sources of energy by autumn, and have increased their supply of liquified natural gas (LNG), a source of energy that is almost twice as polluting as natural gas. Monnin, Landivar and Bonnet, who are also research professors, insist on the need for a "renunciation strategy", which must also be concerned about what it leaves behind. "Let's imagine that we close an airline because most of its activities are incompatible with limits of the planet's resources. What will happen to the baggage handlers and the pilots? A whole network of dependent people has to be saved and supported. Another example is private swimming pools. We support an area that wants it inhabitants to give up swimming pools due to water shortages. Except that would put an end to the activity of hundreds of plumbers, swimming-pool special-*

for school without a crunchy fresh roll in his pocket, and as he himself never felt hungry, he would make a present of it to the toughest lad in the class, who said: "You stay near me, and I'll bet you that none of the other boys will have the guts to touch you." Thus, an agreement was struck between both of them.

At home, sad to relate, the lad seemed to be obsessed with an urge to disobey. Here, however, it was out of the question to offer anyone a bribe in the form of a tempting tart to get out of doing one's home tasks, or to be let off without a well-deserved spank. With scoldings and dressing-downs, and with a whole scale of punishments, all traditional arguments had soon been exhausted, entirely without result. Mother, who was working hard from morning till night, did not have the leisure to worry out the intricate problem of Jeremy's education. At certain times, when the matter was at its worst, she had

had a reformatory school in mind, or perhaps the orphanage. But grandmother had been adamant: "That won't do for business people with any self-respect!" They had found a place for Jeremy with the brothers in a Christian school, far away from home. Since he could not answer the learned questions of the brother teacher, the lad was sent down, with the little ones, into the lower classes. This was humiliating, but other trials were soon to thrust that one into the background. The greatest one of all, to Jeremy's mind, was the hypocrisy of a society that teaches the Gospel virtues, but ignores them in everyday practice.

Jeremy was no fount of knowledge, but at the end of his time at school, according to the brother superior, he knew enough to follow in his father's trade. As for his character, he was unrecognizable, and his parents doubtlessly attributed the merit of it to that school which styled itself Christian. At all events,

exile had been good for him. Now, he was animated with the ardent desire to earn his parents' affection, which he felt he needed. Under the guidance of his father's skill and experience, he was gradually initiated into the mysteries of breadmaking, as well as into those of the successful creation of doughnuts and fancy pastries.

The birth of a little sister had cast no shadow on Jeremy's happiness. On the contrary, the event had made him glad, for it occasionally conferred on him a fatherly occupation. With the passing of the years, he had come to the end of his apprenticeship, and so to the eve of his exams. Father had left nothing to chance, and success had crowned the efforts of the one, and the willingness of the other. That his son came first in the bakers' examination of their town, was far more gratifying to father than would have been the nation's highest medal of honour. His comportment showed it clearly enough.

Jeremy had some idea of the trend of world events, for he had been reading the magazine titled *The Golden Age*, to which his parents subscribed. It described a millennium in accordance with Bible hopes. However, these studies had not convinced him, for he already had a feeling that to change the face of the world, you had to change the spirit of it.

One day, when Jeremy was standing in for his mother at the shop, two ladies came in at about noon. As soon as they had paid for what they had bought, they passed a brochure over the counter to Jeremy, and being kind-hearted, he gave them a cake.

Its title was "Who owns Earth", which immediately caught Jeremy's attention. For that was just it, whose planet is this after all, over which men were quarrelling so ferociously? Who is the legitimate owner?

The text was a clear explanation, full of common sense, because, after all, what had man brought to Earth? Earth, over which he



ists, importers, manufacturers, installers, etc. We must collectively devise renunciation protocols in order to properly close these activities."

### The Utopia of reality

*These questions arise again: "How is this 'deconstruction' done without obtaining the informed consent of people who need to feel that their self-created needs are assured? Are we ready to give up on a certain vision of the future?" If we are here today, it is probably because we have been used to seeing our dreams become reality. So much so, that a return to a certain form of reality, of technological sobriety, seems like science fiction to us. Would Utopia be a return to reality?*

The above sensible considerations greatly interested us because they seem to come from people who contemplate. Our society has produced technology, in fact, a lot of technology. After the Fall into sin, the sentence was pronounced. It was said to humankind: "Cursed is the ground because of you. With hard labour shall you eat from it all the days of your life" (Genesis 3: 17). Soon after, humankind were confronted by the need to work for their survival. The means to do this work were firstly rudimentary, and then they tried to improve and to perfect these tools. They built machines and mechanization appeared, and then came automation and computer science, and finally robots with artificial intelligence. That all sounds wonderful, but, as Julien Marteleur says, technological progress has a limit, and it seems to have been reached.

Furthermore, one should think about the burdens generated by the production and the use of those technologies. The various contaminations of the air, the water, the ground, the plant life, etc., the noise, and the harm to humans and animals. Raw materials and other resources are almost exhausted. We are facing a problem that is unsolvable from the human point of view, but the article's authors are very optimistic when they express the wish to deconstruct in order to survive. In reality, the difficulty is much greater and is not confined to the fact that we have given far too much importance to technology in comparison to other aspects of human life. But let us firstly examine this aspect of the problem. Isaac Asimov, a Russian-born American writer, said: "A civilization that produces technology but not wisdom, will die and will take the world with it." That is a great truth and is exactly what is happening to us. In all areas of human activity, we must admit that we have given much more importance to the means than to the purpose. Technology has fascinated us and made life easier in many domains, but at what price!

Apart from the damage that our industries cause, we should also consider that the economy is based on production and consumption. If we decide to deconstruct, many jobs will be lost, as Julien Marteleur mentions, and what will then happen to the economy? As we see, our society isn't ready for such a change. For this reason, the world will not be deconstructed, or better said, there will not be a need for it, because our society will collapse by itself. That is what is announced in the divine Word. Our world will sink in an unprecedented Tribulation, which will occur as the equivalent of our line of conduct.

Because it is not only our tendency to materialism that is at fault. The mentality of humankind also plays a big role here. Through the Fall into sin, we have turned away from our Creator, the Almighty. Therefore, it is illusory to expect to receive the blessing as the harvest of our unfortunate sowing. And because we generally reap far more than we have sown, the equivalent of our line of conduct will be measured by what we have produced. And that is how it should be. However, God, Who is Love, has not prevented humankind from receiving the wages of their sin. Why? Because we would not have learnt anything if we had been saved from the consequences of our mistakes. We know, however,

that the Lord has allowed the equivalents to manifest themselves without weakness. On the other hand, He has also provided the Ransom, which is the real solution to our problem and to all the other problems that we are confronted with. Our dear Saviour gave his life, so that we can get ours back. It is an act of unfathomable love to take the place of sinners, and to endure the wages of sin for them, as our Lord Jesus Christ did.

The way out of the curse does not consist of deconstructing the world, but of building "the new world", whose foundation is love for others, and whose principle is the Universal Law of altruism. To be able to exist in this new state of things, we must change our character: turn away from selfishness and become selfless. This becomes possible through the Sacrifice of Christ, who, after he paid our Ransom with his life, justifies all people, so that they can develop good sentiments and attain lasting life. Death and its procession of suffering, will have to make way for eternal life for humankind in the bliss of God's Kingdom.

## Saved by mice

When we talk about mice, we usually automatically think about harmful little rodents that must be exterminated at all costs. The following report shows us the matter from an unusual but interesting side.

This is a true story from a soldier in the First World War. Here are the main points:

*We were fighting in the trenches. I was only 17 years old and didn't have too many serious things on my mind. Our trench shelter was infested with mice, against which we undertook an energetic extermination campaign.*

*But one day, two very young mice camped on the end of my bed. I thought they were funny. I made a small cage and put them in it. A few weeks later, they became magnificent specimens. As I had taken care of them almost daily, they had become tame. I let them wander around the trench shelter, and when I called them and enticed them with treats, they came to me and obediently let themselves to be put back into their cage.*

*One day, something amazing happened. Evening was coming, and twilight was beginning. The mice started going crazy. They threw themselves against the walls of the cage, and forcefully tried to break through the mesh. They had never behaved like this before. I tried to understand these animals, and then an idea suddenly came to me. I had once read that animals sense dangers much more quickly than humans do, because of their highly developed instincts. I went out, and using binoculars, I discovered strange activity on the enemy's side. It seemed like they were going to use poison gas against us. It is known that poison gas was used in the First World War. I immediately rang the gas alarm, and we threw on our gas masks. Soon, we could actually smell the gas. It was a heavy gas, which settled in the hollows of the ground and certainly also in our trench shelter.*

*That is why, whenever there was a gas alarm, it was always said: "Especially get out of your trench shelters." I was already out of the trench when I remembered the mice. I thought: "Those poor animals will have to die." I went back and quickly broke open the cage. The mice escaped at lightning speed and disappeared. I never saw them again because we never returned to that trench. I'm sure that the mice noticed the gas long before we did, thanks to their exceptional instinct. They probably hid in holes to escape the catastrophe.*

Those good animals saved the lives of a group of soldiers, of whom fortunately none died of poison gas.

That is an interesting fact. It reminds us of the saying: "We often need someone smaller than ourselves," just like another one: "A good deed is never lost." This is a very important lesson, which is a motto that should never be forgotten. This could definitely be seen in countless rescues and even in catastrophes that hang over the

heads of humankind, who have removed themselves from the protection of God's Spirit through continual disobedience to the Universal Law.

In that domain, small causes can have big effects. If the instinct of those two mice had not given a warning, dozens of soldiers might have died painfully. We may say that that event was relatively insignificant because there are millions of victims in humankind's war madness. However, that very interesting fact is still there, and it reminds us of the glorious Law of Equivalents.

Let us therefore learn to never waste an opportunity, no matter how small it may be, to be good, to do good and to energetically fight against, in ourselves, all the tendencies and the destructive instinct that cause so much damage.

## The role of the rich in climate change

The question of environmental pollution, especially of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, is a frequent subject of current debates. Today, the richest people are being targeted because their "carbon footprint" (which is a measure of carbon dioxide emissions from an activity or a product) has been proven to be bigger than those of the lower classes. This is explained to us in the Belgian French-language magazine *En Marche*, No. 1703 from the 3rd of November 2022, in an exposé by Soraya Sousse, titled:

### Climate: the power of the superrich.

**Private jets, golf courses, superyachts... When we know that the biggest polluters are the wealthiest people, wouldn't it be great if the planet's superrich were to finally begin working on reducing their carbon footprint? Naive question, complex answers!**

*This summer, the US media accused celebrities Sylvester Stallone, Kim Kardashian, Kevin Hart (actor and comedian) and Dwayne Wade (basketball star) of being "water wasters" and exceeding their monthly water allowances in drought-stricken California. And this, despite restrictions imposed by the state. At a press conference in September, the captain of the French football team Paris-Saint-Germain (PSG), Kylian Mbappé and his coach, Christophe Galtier, showed total disregard for environmental problems by justifying their private-jet flights (for example: from Paris to Nantes [approx. 385 km]). The ensuing media outcry rekindled the debate about the responsibility of the superrich in the fight against climate change.*

### Ecocide by the superrich

*Today, the effort for environmental change is unevenly distributed. While some people are choosing to live more modestly, other people are continuing to consume excessively and are thereby accelerating the process of environmental imbalance. Contrary to popular belief, it is not the poorest people who pollute the most. The proof is in the figures: the carbon footprint of the richest 1% of the population, is 66 times higher than that of the poorest 10% of the population of the planet. On the other hand, it is the poorest who suffer the most.*

*This year, Greenpeace France and Oxfam France, published a detailed report about the responsibility of the superrich in the fight for the environment. Both of these organizations have analyzed and calculated the carbon footprint of France's billionaires. The result: the financial assets of 63 French billionaires emit as much as that of 49.4% of French households. Alongside that, an investigation by the British newspaper The Guardian revealed that, in 2017, billionaire Peter Thiel (co-founder of PayPal and director of Palantir, a US data-collection company) and that billionaire Larry Page (co-founder of Google), had invested in land in New Zealand, a region that would be less affected by future climate change.*

took the title of owner, so fully did he possess it, that, in the end, it possessed him!

After turning his back on the great law which governs all things, on that tree of life that grew in the midst of the garden, having failed in the duties presented to him by the conditions of that splendid abode, man had gone as far as the final break with his Benefactor. Very quickly, as history shows, he became the terror and the curse of the whole of earthly creation.

So, Jeremy read the brochure through with great interest, and next day, at the same time, the two ladies returned. It was with pleasure that he accepted a different brochure they offered him this time, and he offered them a loaf of bread and a slice of tart. "They can't be well off, and I expect that'll be their meal," he thought.

The text of this brochure described the principles of the law that regulates the balance of life, that law of universal mutual assistance,

which makes nature so beautiful, and which requires all things and every creature, to exist for the good of all others.

Jeremy was immediately able to put two and two together. Had he not felt very happy just now, when he allowed his heart to have its say, for the purpose of giving pleasure? Was it not in accordance with the justice of that law that he had been rewarded, and was it not also owing to it that those two ladies brought in the peace that radiated in the shop, which was even more pleasant than the smell of freshly baked bread?

Mother had returned to her duties when the two ladies, following out their mission, had come again. They were telling her all about their hopes when Jeremy came in with a plate of pastries.

"Come here, my son! Come and see...!" his mother exclaimed. Jeremy approached the counter on which the ladies had laid a copy of a paper printed by The Angel of the Lord

(the Philanthropic Association). Jeremy was shocked, for everything that bore the slightest resemblance to a religion, aroused mistrust in him. He looked at his mother and then at the ladies with a smile that clearly said: "Don't count on me. You are very nice, but don't waste your time further." He was about to leave, but his mother insisted: "Come, come, my boy. These ladies have invited us to see a film this evening, illustrating the Universal Law!"

At that, Jeremy had willingly lent his ears, for the science of that law appeared to him far and above anything he had yet heard. That evening, he accompanied his mother to the Station Hotel where a large room had been hired for the occasion.

There were between 30 and 40 people present, who had all come in the hope that the Universal Law would provide the solution to their many problems. There were the idealists whom the world's wretchedness did not leave

indifferent, there were some who had suffered life's disappointments, and there were some who grieved, on the verge of despair. All were seeking a gleam of hope.

Rhetoric was not the lecturer's strong point. It was not his intention to speechify, but just to give an idea of the goodness illustrated by the example of the whole Universe. Nothing could upset him; nothing could agitate him. Neither the wobbly table on which the ancient projector rested, nor the film which would break at the crucial moment.

Mother held the table as steady as she could, and Jeremy lent a hand in mending the film. The atmosphere was relaxed and collected, and in the silence of their heart, every person present had been able to examine their conscience. They had taken the resolution to make effort to obey that will, so good and so wise, which the great Lawgiver expressed in his law.

As she gave the lecturer her address, moth-



Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the profits of the richest people in France have doubled, and their purchases of luxury vehicles have soared. Sales of superyachts have increased by more than 8% in 2021, compared to the year 2019, before the pandemic, according to the specialist website *The Superyacht Group*. Private-jet flights have also soared: in 2021, a website specializing in business flights, *WingX*, counted 3.3 million flights worldwide, a record for a single year. However, private jets, which carry an average of 4 to 5 people per flight, are 5 to 14 times more polluting (per passenger) than commercial aircraft, and are 50 times more polluting than trains, according to a report by the NGO company *Transport & Environment*.

### Great power, great responsibility

Of course, not all the rich are insensitive to climate issues. The equality advocacy groups *Patriotic Millionaires*, *Millionaires for Humanity*, and *TaxMeNow*, which bring together supermillionaires, are in favour of higher taxes on large fortunes. But these groups are in the minority on the planet of the extraprivileged.

The effort to combat climate change must be collective. And not only from the wealthiest, of whom some are also celebrities and therefore highly visible in the media. They set an example for many citizens to follow and emulate. In this respect, the media have a major role to play in choosing which personalities to promote. The media also have a role to play for politicians, who have the responsibility to implement strong and ambitious measures for "ecological transition" [sustainable development], by making the biggest polluters pay a high price. The countries with the highest Gross Domes-

tic Product (GDP) also have a historical responsibility for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. They must therefore finance the efforts of developing countries and guarantee them the resources they need to ensure their ecological transition.

It is easy to understand that the richest people consume more and therefore pollute more. They have a more expensive lifestyle. Until now, that didn't bother anyone, but today, things are different because everyone is much more aware of pollution and its effects on the environment.

We can also understand the reaction of less-privileged people who are asked to reduce their consumption when they see that other, rich, people are completely insensitive to this problem. As Soraya Soussi writes: "Naive question, complex answers!"

In fact, there is no ready-made answer, insofar as everyone should feel responsible to the collective. Especially when we think about our children. What sort of environment are we leaving them?

The relative affluence that we experience in our Western countries has enabled us to consume, to enjoy, to go on vacation and to satisfy our desires, more so for some than for others. Furthermore, advertising has encouraged us to consume and to purchase, even if it's not useful. This behaviour has become a social phenomenon and such a widespread habit, that we can no longer imagine a life without consuming. This trend has a name: consumerism. In it, it is less important to satisfy our needs, and more important to fulfil our wishes. And we never thought that our habits would have a direct impact on the environment.

In 1972, the American mathematician and meteorolo-

gist Edward Lorenz asked the question: "Does the flap of a butterfly's wing in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas?" and thereby founded the well-known "butterfly effect" in "chaos theory". Therein lies the problem with our consumption. The paradox of the butterfly wing and the tornado, could be formulated as follows: consumption is the offspring of abundance and scarcity.

Let us put things into perspective regarding the super-rich. In fact, it's not having a lot of things that makes one happy, but of appreciating what one has. It is gratitude that makes one happy. Even though humankind are made for abundance, because no one is destined to be poor, it is not abundance that makes us happy. We can possess the greatest riches and still be unhappy. Happiness comes from character, and gratitude can be learnt, like anything else.

To come back to the climate problem that we are occupied with in this article, it is an illusion to believe that the super-rich will change their habits. If one can afford luxury, one will not go without it. Also, lawmakers depend on those who have the most money. One therefore cannot expect change from them.

That can only come from the Lord God, Who will soon introduce his Kingdom of peace and justice on Earth. Then, it will not be a question of pollution, material riches, or poverty. Humankind will learn to conduct themselves as one should in God's Kingdom: to think of others, according to the great Universal Law, which governs everything in the Universe, and which states that every being and every thing, exist for the good of each other. There will therefore no longer be any type of environmental imbalance or pollution, and only bliss for all and for ever.

er told him that her son was going away on his military service, and that whenever the lecturer was in the area, she would put him up at her house.

In the drabness of barrack life, Jeremy would turn over in his mind the idea of goodness: so simple, so logical, and so much the contrary to what mankind were doing. His mother's letters helped him to have patience in the trials of his situation, and to also discern the path to divine deliverance.

"My son, this letter comes to you to share my joy with you by sending you a little of the light which illuminates the path of Truth to our eyes. Many things have become new since you went away, for every week, we learn, at the meeting, what we must do to introduce the Kingdom of God on Earth, according to the words of Christ. I am learning patience! I don't shout at people anymore, and I shall surely arrive at not reproaching either, for the law requires us to repair, with kindness, all that goes wrong. It is not very easy, but it fills me with joy."

"Mankind, rendered wise by the trouble they are making for themselves, will also return to the true God. Then, one nation will no more draw the sword against another (you may tell this to those around you), and all the words of the prophets will be fulfilled."

"You, in turn, will come to know those friends who call one another brothers and sisters."

"My son, it's so splendid, and yet it's true. Your mother, who loves you."

Grandmother had no great liking for the introduction of the "Kingdom" into the life of her daughter. She felt left out and had complained about it to her daughter's husband to get him to exert his influence to induce her to leave all that.

"Far be it from me, mother," he answered. "You should even go with her, it would do you no end of good!"

After finishing his time in the military, Jeremy had to take a job in another town in order to learn the fine points of the pastry-chef trade. Nevertheless, the ideal proposed by *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance) had henceforth entered into his life.

The business was doing fine, and no one was idle in the pastry shop. Jeremy, who had his whole heart in the hope of seeing mankind one day delivered from their sad lot, had given a reason for his hopes to those around him. He had been derided, for the prosperity of the world appeared to depend on a good business turnover. If it went wrong, you could do nothing about it, and those Utopia merchants on the outside weren't going to change anything.

An apprentice, Charlie, was sharing the room with Jeremy, who caringly listened to his griefs. Jeremy willingly gave him encouragement when he was going through a rough patch, inspiring him to overcome evil

with the weapons of goodness, and also setting him an example.

There came a week when workdays lasted between 15 and 16 hours. The owner's wife, whose heart was ruthlessly dry, demanded more; nevertheless, her husband had made a concession: "We'll sleep till two o'clock tomorrow morning."

When the ring of a bell woke Jeremy, daylight was already coming into the room. He sprang out of bed: "Charlie, we've overslept! It's half past five!" The boss, who was quivering like an electric buzzer, displayed no small anger. "Pack of idlers!" he shouted at them.

Jeremy abruptly set down the mixture he was making up. He was getting worked up too... Should he go back upstairs and pack his things and buzz off out of the way of this thankless brute? "Steady there," said the voice of conscience, "you've got a testimony to give, and what about learning your lesson? And don't forget Charlie, who needs you."

The youngsters had been hard at work for a long while, yet the boss's wife, in an evil temper, went on venting her spleen over their shrinking heads. "Don't worry, Charlie. Let the storm blow over," Jeremy whispered over the apprentice's shoulder.

The boss, who was still a little open to reason, rebuked her: "Leave them alone now!" She was exceedingly vexed at this, and gave him a violent poke in the back with her elbow. In return, she received a big handful of flour, right in her face, just as the doorbell announced the arrival of a customer. Without stopping work, Jeremy turned and sent Charlie a smile, which said as plainly as words could have: "You see, it's just as I told you. The wrong done always turns against the doer."

A congress, which was to assemble the friends of the Truth in the sight of God, was drawing near. Jeremy was looking forward to it and had taken the precaution of letting his employer know in good time. But you couldn't count on him for days off for mere fancies. Jeremy, for whom the will of God was no mere fancy, explained his intention: "Well then, you can start looking for someone to take my place. You'll always find plenty of bakers, but in the house of God, the harvest is big and the labourers are few!"

At that meeting, Jeremy met some brothers, the first collaborators on the Test Stations which were to illustrate the promise of the prophets with the Work of Christ. "It's so splendid, and yet it's true!" his mother had written. Indeed, it was true, and it was splendid! The young baker, whose heart was already bounding to that noble calling, expressed the wish to respond to it. He waited two years for the door to open, but he did not wait for it to close again, for he was glad, as in the parable, to be one of the last comers of the servants, knowing that this place was worth a thousand others elsewhere.

Today, his life is expanding in the light of "the sun of righteousness", in the pleasing prospect of the "times of refreshing", which will come to crown the Work of Almighty God and his small servants.

### News in brief of the Reign of Justice

The end of the year is fast approaching. It is the time for each of us to take stock of the year that is drawing to a close. We must surely acknowledge many failings and therefore appreciate the Lord's infinite patience with us. We are still here, not because of our personal merits, but because of divine mercy. However, time passes, and we are getting closer and closer to the Day of Deliverance for all humankind. God's people must be ready to give, even in the midst of turmoil, a convincing and impressive testimony of the Lord's goodness and power. In fact, although He has shown unlimited patience up to today, He does not delay in fulfilling his promises, as we are taught by Apostle Peter. So, let us be among those who collaborate on this event with all the strength of our soul, for the blessing of all humankind.

During the month of December, we will have the joy of meeting to celebrate our dear Saviour's birth on Earth. We are pleased to reproduce here a summary of a presentation that God's Faithful and Wise Servant gave, in his time, for the Christmas feast:

"Every year, when we again hear the words of our text: 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. Today, in the city of David, there has been born for you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,' this awakens, in our hearts, the vibrations of all the sensitive chords of our soul. ... That is because the words of our text represent the most concentrated essence of all the powers of the infinite love of Almighty God and of his beloved Son, for the benefit of humankind. ...

For us, there are no visible demonstrations. Therefore, we need the necessary spirituality to be able to grasp, feel and attain all that it contains for us as Salvation, and also as collaboration, in the birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem. To do this, we need to develop faith, the faith of Simeon, of Anna the prophetess, and of a few other faithful children of God, who were able to discern, in the little child presented to them, the Saviour of the world. ...

The Wise Men from the East had even less light. But in spite of everything, they were able to understand that, in this King of the Jews who was to be born, there was Salvation for all people. They deeply felt this, which is why they were able to be employed by the Lord God to bring a testimony to Herod, and then to explain their faith to Mary and Joseph. And because their hearts were deeply touched, and full of esteem and appreciation,

they did not want to arrive empty-handed. They brought royal gifts and were thus able, because of their sensitivity and respect, to give to Joseph and Mary enough to be able to travel to Egypt and live there until Herod's death. ...

Mary completely placed herself in the Lord's hands. She had nothing other than the Lord's promises, contained in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, and this gave her a deep desire to sanctify herself to the Almighty. As a result, she, too, was employed in a marvelous way. The immense honour that thus fell to her was, of course, accompanied by very profound trials, but she overcame them victoriously with the Lord's help. ...

Our dear Saviour, for his part, fulfilled the promise that had already been made in the Garden of Eden to our first parents, that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, so that, one day, humankind would no longer be killed by the equivalent of sin and destruction. No human being could have ever crushed the head of the serpent. He had to come who alone was capable of achieving this power and glory, and who achieved it in an impeccable and perfect way.

Nothing was too much for our dear Saviour to ensure the Salvation of poor humanity. He willingly learnt obedience with all his heart, through the things he suffered. The account of his agony in Gethsemane, and of the terrible moments of the Crucifixion, show how painful the Saviour's death on Calvary was. And yet, as we have often thought about it, it was far less painful than the moment when he had to separate himself from his Father, and to go through the annihilation of his existence as a celestial being, to be born on Earth as the Son of Man. ...

What unfathomable and inexpressible humility on the part of our dear Saviour! Who among us would want to leave their state of adulthood with all their experiences, and to return to the embryonic state, to be born again as a little child? ...

The Work to be done is considerable, but true faith is much more powerful, because it is capable of moving mountains. This is why, if the obstacles that pile us before us are immense, they must fall like shadows before God's faithful people, and the Almighty will show his power and glory in a great way through his people. We must therefore soon be ready to allow ourselves to be employed for God's glory as a revelation to humanity. ..."

We wish for each and everyone of our dear brothers and sisters, and our dear readers, that these impressions may be put to good use, to form a character that is worthy of inheriting the divine promises, to the glory of God and of our dear Saviour.