

THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

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Founder: F.L.A. Freytag

To Be Secure From All Danger

EVERYWHERE all over the world, fear and anguish are the order of the day. Whichever way you turn there is danger for everybody, old and young, great and small, rich and poor alike. Accidents are ever on, the increase, sickness and disease stalk abroad, and none may escape for long. So how readily we are able to understand people when they take all manner of precautions for the purpose of obtaining some security from these woeful prospects. However, one thing is certain, and that is that in spite of all that is done, all the measures taken for that purpose, mankind, are nevertheless without any real protection.

There is safety nowhere for the reason that mankind are under the direction of an evil shepherd, Satan, the god of this world, whom our Lord Jesus called the liar and the murderer from the beginning. But the time is shortly to come when his power is to be utterly broken by the Kingdom of God's being set up all over the world, by the work of salvation being done by the Son of God and the last members of his faithful Church. Those last members are about the completion of their sacrifice. They have now to provide the spectacle of the Lord's second coming on Earth, in so doing they are accompanied by the Host of the Lord who make up the first fruits of the New Earth in which justice dwells, as explicitly declared in holy Writ. This is what the apostle Paul calls the revealing of the sons of God to the groaning and dying creation, which without knowing it is anxiously expecting that wonderful power of deliverance.

The truth is that the Lord Jesus Christ will never return on Earth in flesh and blood. He has left his human nature behind for ever, for he gave it up a sacrifice on the cross for our ransom. He has become a life-giving spirit, as the apostle Paul points out when he writes: "Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more." For this reason it is also written that the Lord's second coming as far as the world is concerned will be made manifest in his saints and in those who have believed, that is to say in the very last members of the little flock still in the flesh together with the host of the Lord. For God's true children, the Lord's second coming took place at his resurrection. Therefore God's true children have' to reveal themselves liberators, benefactors and saviours in association with their Master who in time past came on Earth to operate the salvation of mankind.

All who wish to, then, may be at the benefit of divine

protection, but for that purpose must get under the power of the work of salvation operated by Christ and his partners. That is the only real cover and protection obtainable. All others are ineffectual against adversity which sooner or later gets its claws into everybody and is the result of the lack of cover in their own hearts. This lack of cover is the result of their wrong way of living. They destroy themselves with their selfishness. That is the death-dealing power which makes them suffer and die.

What tears and what cries of distress there are when man writhes in terrible pain that destroys his organism and brings him down into the grave. Neither gold nor silver can buy him out of that doom. The truth is that men's selfish dispositions drag them into misfortune and ruin. On the contrary, if they will acquire a new mental make-up, an altruistic one, this will be their salvation, their protection and their prosperity. To start with they must accept the ransom paid by our dear Saviour which does away with the curse that originated in Eden, and sets the feet of all men onto the road of life. That road to life goes me way of character changing, the selfish character must change into an altruistic one, one accordingly that is viable.

Going the way of law-breaking, man wears out like old clothes, being deprived of the benefit of the vital fluid, God's holy Spirit which is indispensable to him. Contrariwise, when he steps out in the direction of blessing, this ensures his obtaining real protection. Indeed, it is written that the angel of the Lord campeth round about them that fear the Lord and delivereth them from danger. This assurance inspires in one a delicious feeling of safety. Thus all things work together for the good of those who love God; however, there are conditions to be fulfilled, it rests with each one to comply with them.

Now, it is not everyone who is willing to accept the offers the Lord makes them to help them, protect them, to extricate them from their wretchedness and to bless them. Everyone would like to be protected, no one likes the idea of doing what needs to be done for that purpose. Accordingly it is not possible to feel divine blessing, for it ever depends on the fulfilment of certain conditions.

The Lord's promises are sure i they are quite open to being tested. He who will do his best to live up to the conditions attached to them has nothing to fear, for his

doing so will create magnificent conditions. And if for an instant one loses sight of the process being followed out, if one makes a mistake, if one is caught again by a selfish sentiment, the Lord is there and will grant cover and his grace. He helps us to pull ourselves together when we confess our fault and abase ourselves sincerely. For that purpose it is of no use to crawl in the dust as if we had to do with a harsh and ruthless task master. What is needed is to repent sincerely and with all one's heart, to be really and truly humble, being certain that in God one has a wonderfully kind Father, who is merciful, and that one can always regain one's moral balance with the justification of one's wrong doing. The question is to have perfect trust in God, and besides to have great appreciation for his love and faithfulness.

Gratitude is a sentiment which must be the automatic outcome of all the benefits granted to us by the Lord, his kind protection, and all the arrangements he has made that misfortune might not overtake us. The fact is that He allows only such things as will be indispensable to the transformation of our selfish dispositions which kill us, into law-abiding dispositions which ensure our obtaining eternal life.

Gratitude must give rise in us to a profound feeling of attachment to God. That is what will enable us to obtain ever closer communion with him, immediately laying aside everything that would interrupt it, for communion with God is the most precious thing it is possible to have. It grows in intensity within us as we do our best to live up to the divine teachings and make progress in gratitude and attachment to God and for his ways, for the feeling we have of how great is his kindness and the affection of his Fatherly heart.

We have magnificent prospects ahead of us. We know divine ways and God's charitable intentions towards all mankind. We have before us the introduction of the Kingdom of God and the restoration of all things, in which, if we so wish, we are permitted to take part. We are in the presence of certainties, things with a solid foundation that nothing is able to upset. This ought to fill us with gratitude towards the Almighty.

What above all we are bound to do, having ourselves been at the benefit of so much grace and kindness, is for our part also to display indulgence and mercy towards those about us. We have always to exist for the good of our fellow-men, according to the divine maxim. In that way we can be a power of blessing and of protection to others.

Mankind are in complete confusion. They know nothing about divine ways. Everything held out to them by religion of every description is error and false

The Lord guides the humble

IN a very ancient chalet perched high up the mountain side there lived a family of poor but very decent people. Father was truly one of the meek. He loved peace and harmony and admired them in nature. He did his best to create around him an atmosphere that was peaceful and beneficial. His wife backed him up in every way.

There were quite a lot of children: five boys and four girls, all very healthy and all somewhat boisterous. Therefore it was no easy matter to constantly maintain a good understanding between those little ones who were so spirited and full of vitality. There would arise quarrels at times, particularly between two of the boys who were inclined to be bossy, both of them, and were both unwilling to give way. When a quarrel became too violent, and the resistance on both sides caused the lads to raise their voices,

and even led to blows being struck, father would step in and set about putting things right in a strange manner. He would seize the two little rascals, tie them up together and say, "I am going to let you remain like this till you've made peace together: then I shall release you. You are brothers, and must love each other tenderly, bear with each other and live in unity together."

Generally, after a while spent in discontent and ill temper, the antagonists would get over it fairly quickly, for father had a great influence over them because of his gentleness and his firmness which was as kind as it could be. He would then untie the small culprits and say: "Give each other the kiss of reconciliation." Then he would take one on each knee and pet them a while, letting them feel his forgiveness and his fatherly affection.

Thus the children were brought up to sound principles which were to make a deep impression on them. Of course they were not

all equally accessible to that good influence. The most receptive was Antoine, the third of the boys. He was also calmer, more thoughtful, having inherited peaceable dispositions from his father and a disposition to meditation.

This was a poor family. So that as soon as one of the children was big enough to be of service, he had to leave home to earn his bread. At the age of twelve, Antoine's turn came round, and he became goatherd to a very big flock of goats, several kilometres from home in a very rugged part of the mountains. As he kept watch over his goats, his gaze would frequently wander to the summit of the high peak on the other side of which was his father's house; Antoine felt very lonesome, for he was used to living in a very cordial family atmosphere. The people with whom he was living were not bad people, but their hearts were set entirely on their profits. They loved money, and money loving people are not usually tender-hearted.

So that from them Antoine did not meet with a deal of understanding nor obtain anything to satisfy his sensitive heart.

Living as he did in surroundings dominated by high mountain peaks, he felt so very small. Sometimes he would lead his goats to a pasture that was fairly lofty from which he could get an extensive view over a magnificent panorama. Then something majestic and highly impressive would get hold of his young heart. He would watch the heavens and try to fathom things that were unfathomable to his youthful mind. He would feel quite close to the Master of that vast universe stretching away far beyond his sight. And it was to Him that he would unburden himself.

Antoine had received a few scraps of religious knowledge. He had been given the idea of a god who punishes. But that was not the impression that was dominant in his heart. He felt drawn to the Almighty. All alone with his herd, surrounded by mountains, he

representation, because by religious people the truth is not lived up to. The theory of truth dissociated from practice becomes spurious truth because unproductive of the results for which it was given. Therefore it is now needful for mankind to be able to see the difference between real and spurious truth. Who is in a position to show them this? Only God's true children. When people come into contact with us, it must be visible to them that we actually live up to what we preach, that the Gospel of Christ is not merely in our mouths but also in our hearts. It must also be visible to them that there is a power of blessing and protection resulting from our line of conduct. Then they also are inspired with the desire to follow a line of conduct the outcome of which is so wonderful.

All people in truth are most unfortunate, today more than ever they were. They are tormented by care, anxiety and fear about all sorts of things. For this reason, when it is borne home to them that God's blessing rests upon us, they are deeply moved. They become aware of the power residing in the truth in the living, and wish with all their heart to take their stand by it also.

When we faithfully fulfil the conditions set us we become what the Lord advises us to be: children of light and of the day, that is to say real sons of God free from all fluctuation and variableness, and capable of being true teachers of mankind.

The things taught are at the disposal of all who want them. Everyone who becomes acquainted with *The Monitor of the Reign of Justice* and faithfully follows and adheres to the principles taught therein, is able to feel God's blessing and protection and to become a source of magnificent encouragement and blessing to those about him.

To receive those magnificent impressions it is needful to exist always for the good of one's fellow-men and never to swerve from that divine maxim. It is the very essence of the Universal Law by which the whole universe is governed. In present world conditions, mankind have great adversity to bear. For this reason all who, from the writings of the truth, have become familiar with the divine programme, are invited to fly to the assistance of groaning and dying humanity. Moreover, it is in doing good to fellow-men that one does most good to oneself. In fact, according to the divine law, the only good one can do oneself must pass first through our fellows. For that purpose faith in the promises and in the faithfulness of God must be cultivated. To all who truly wish to serve Him, He says: "I shall not forsake thee nor leave thee, I will show thee my salvation."

We have come to the time when the restoration of all things is to take place and when the Kingdom of God is to be established on Earth. Everything that has no relation to that Kingdom will be shaken and unable to subsist. Everyone who attempts to preserve the former things, the ancient world that is passing with its errors and its darkness, will be carried away by the gigantic hurricane of violence and distress about to sweep over the world, which mankind have generated for themselves with their senseless goings-on. For those who fear the Lord, however, the sun of righteousness is rising with healing in its wings.

Every reader of *The Monitor of the Reign of Justice* who takes these profound truths to heart and does his honest best to live up to them whilst placing himself humbly under God's blessing, can be protected and be of the number of the meek who shall inherit the Earth. Everyone can get hold of *The Message to Humanity*, *The Book of Remembrance*, written in the Lord's Name for everyone who, at this very outstanding period of time, wishes to serve the Lord and to rally to the Constitution of the Kingdom of God by keeping his law.

would speak to God as to his protector. He would tell Him about his worries, his sorrows, his aspirations, indeed all that went on in his heart. The beauty of the spot where he was filled him with enthusiasm and with admiration. He would think to himself: "It is my Protector who made all these wonders. He is great, majestic and sublime. And he would rejoice over it to the bottom of his heart."

In this rugged and steep mountain country, storms would often burst with great violence. The thunder would echo long and loud and flashes of lightning would follow one another at very short intervals filling the mountains with their glare which never seemed to be interrupted. When Antoine was caught unawares with his herd of goats in one of these terrific storms, although he knew it to be dangerous, he would take shelter under a pine tree, beseeching the aid of Him who was his Protector. The goats would huddle around him trembling with fright, seeking protection

from the small goatherd, who was simultaneously their keeper and their friend. The fact was that Antoine loved his goats. When this happened he would talk to them, telling them with juvenile trustfulness that God was above them, that He was kind, all powerful. He could see them and was protecting them. Have no fear, he would say, and it was a fact that no harm ever came to him.

Several years went by till Antoine reached his twentieth year. At that time he was in the Savoie mountains where a big herd of cows was placed in his keeping. He had been there for two years, it was still longer since he had last seen his father. He was saving up, to be able next winter to go and spend a few days with his family, when came the news that his father was dead, buried under an avalanche.

This was a great blow to the young man who held his father in great affection and respect. Greatest of all was the sorrow of not

The question is to forsake the former things and to be actively about the new, joining up with the divine family. This family is now forming on Earth for the purpose of hastening the restoration of all things, the Kingdom of God wherein people invite one another under the vine and the fig tree. All the dead shall rise again in this Kingdom, and the evil days will be forgotten.

Such are the magnificent prospects before all who will rally to the truth and to the justice of the Kingdom of God, becoming terrestrial sons of God under the Lord's protection, who are going to inherit the Earth with all its prodigious blessings.

Unexpected reunion

In the Belgian French-language newspaper *Dimanche*, the following moving story was published:

At the age of 80, I feel completely rejuvenated

Everyone was preparing to celebrate my 80th birthday, but I was sad. Despite the affection of my wife, children and grandchildren, I was down in the dumps.

It began when I lost Ruby, my Scotch Collie dog. She was a smart dog that accompanied me everywhere and that I taught some tricks. The older I became, the more she seemed to watch over me.

One Sunday, when I came home from church, I could not find her, even though I had left her in the garden. At first, we thought that she had escaped, and we hoped that she would come back, but she did not. We sent out a search party of our friends and put up some notices, but Ruby was lost, and her absence had taken all my joy. My son wanted to give me another dog, but I felt too old to train it. In reality, I felt sorry for myself because of my situation and my lack of courage.

After my birthday meal, my wife and daughters went into the garden to look at the first spring flowers. I also saw how they tried to chase away a dirty skinny dog with matted hair, that tried to approach the house. I called out: "A stray dog: look out for children!" When the dog, which could no longer stand on its legs, heard my voice, it crawled towards me. I stepped back, but it laid itself at my feet with an adoring look that reminded me of Ruby. My wife came over to me and said: "Do you remember the scar that Ruby had on her chest?" "Yes," I answered, while I looked at the collapsed dog at my feet. As if it understood, it rolled on to its back, and while my wife was cleaning off the dirt that was stuck to its coat, she discovered the recognizable scar.

"It is Ruby," she said to me. "She has travelled a long way to celebrate your 80th birthday: her paws are bleeding. She is exhausted. Someone probably stole her during our absence. But she did not lose courage, and she succeeded in finding you. I will wash her now and call the vet."

At the age of 80, I feel completely rejuvenated because Ruby is well cared for and has become my attentive companion again.

The photograph of the Scotch Collie dog (the hero of this touching story), which accompanies this text, shows us this magnificent animal with long hair and a bushy tail. Her fine head with her intelligent and attentive gaze explains to us the attachment that her master, even at the age of 80, has for her.

The sadness he felt when he realized that his loyal companion was lost, had taken all his joy and shows the close connection between the two of them. That definitely is the main reason for the return of this brave animal. She must have travelled a great distance full of unforeseen difficulties to have arrived so exhausted, skinny and covered in dirt. She undoubtedly felt grieved when she was first rejected. But that did not prevent her strength from returning when she heard the voice of her beloved master, and laid herself at his feet.

We can imagine the man's joy and the dog's happiness when they recognized each other again after suffering from their separation. It is certain that their great friendship grew even closer and that Ruby's master saw, in this unexpected reunion on his birthday, the wonderful hand of Providence...

Beware of aluminium!

The use of aluminium (aluminum) is widespread nowadays. It is found everywhere: in convenience foods (ready-to-serve meals, fast-food products, precooked meals and frozen dinners), in packaging, in cosmetics and in vaccines. Aluminium salts are even used in water filters in order to filter out phosphorus, but in the water, one might then find invisible particles of this metal that is far from harmless. The following article — taken from the Belgian French-language women's magazine *Femmes d'Aujourd'hui* from the 7th of October 2015 — provides information on the latest research results of this omnipresent metal.

Should we stop using aluminium?

What is bad about drinking soft drink [soda] out of a can? Is there anything more common than using aluminium foil [aluminum foil, alfoil, tin foil] for picnic wrapping? Who gets upset when they use a deodorant [or an antiperspirant]? "Not so quick!" say toxicologists. We should be careful.

This is something new. The world's top experts, whose meeting [the Eleventh Keele Meeting on Aluminium] was hosted by the Lille 2 University of Health and Law (in northern France, near the Belgian border), presented the latest research results of aluminium. It included new research that has not yet been published in scientific literature. Is it gobbledygook that can only be understood by the initiated? Far from it! Under the guidance of the Englishman Professor Christopher Exley — who is sometimes known as "Mr Aluminium", and who has dedicated 20 years of his life to aluminium and its effects on health — doctors, biologists, pharmacologists and environmentalists presented their astonishing and troubling but also reassuring discoveries about the most common metal in the world.

Aluminium is everywhere!

It is worth listening carefully to these experts. Aluminium is around us everywhere, especially in our food and in our cosmetics. This metal is not expensive and has many "physicochemical" qualities, which is why it is used in the food industry as a preservative, a colour and an additive. For example, it fights against the development of bacteria. Natural aluminium is present in small quantities in many foods, such as spinach, grains [cereals], cocoa [used in chocolate], tea...but especially in convenience foods, where it is useful for industrial production. It is also the basic material of cans and trays, not to mention aluminium foil in the kitchen. It is also present in bathrooms, or more precisely said, in makeup, deodorants and styptic pencils. It is also found in some vaccines and antacids.

Bad news

We can already hear the sighs: "Oh no, not another chemical product that I cannot trust!" Yes and no. Let us begin with the bad news (because there is a lot of it) or at least what we must be aware of. Let us be on guard, as Christopher Exley invites us, because "aluminium is not the only cause of neurological or digestive disorders or of cancer. Genetic factors can also play a role". To the bad news:

• Aluminium is more easily accumulated in the digestive tract than previously believed.

"Until recently, it was thought that it was limited to 1 or 2% of the amount ingested. But the proportion can increase to 40 or 50%," says Christopher Exley. The phenomenon of accumulation possibly increases with

having seen his father before his death, and not having had a last chance to show him all his filial love. So the question of what lay beyond the grave then arose for him and constantly nagged at his mind. At Sunday school he had been taught that the good went to heaven and the bad to hell, but he was unable to take in the thought of either; heaven or hell.

He would wonder how God could possibly put people in hell and watch them suffering eternally. This was impossible. His father used to tell him that God was a hundred thousand times better than himself. And he knew his father to be a very good man. He and his brothers and sisters used to obey because father loved them and was kind. That was what used to attach them to him. Well then? And after all why should God have had us born on Earth only to send us to Heaven? The Earth is beautiful, the mountains majestic. What a pity it is to have to leave all

the beauties of nature behind. He felt he had truly been made for the Earth and not for Heaven. He loved to watch the stars in the evening, and before going off to sleep at night placing himself trustfully in the hands of his Protector, being quite sure of his kind solicitude.

Such were the thoughts Antoine cherished after his father's death, which was the first tragedy to bring sorrow into his life. How much he would have liked to possess the truth concerning those burning questions.

One evening he had gone to bed early as usual after offering up a prayer to his Creator, asking Him to enlighten him concerning the mystery of death and the beyond. It had been a very hot day, turning sultry towards evening, and finally a violent storm had burst over the mountains. Torrents of rain inundated the mountain side, and Antoine had had to drive the cows into shelter. It was about midnight when through the noise of the downpour

time and with the severity of an inflammation of the intestines.

• Nowadays, the experts better understand the mechanism by which **aluminium contributes to the movement of cancerous mammary [breast] cells to other parts of the body, which speeds up the spread of the disease in the body.**

• **Aluminium is increasingly suspected of playing a role in the sensitivity to pain.** Under its influence, occurrences in the intestines, which are normally not or only slightly painful, such as wind, are the cause of pain. Even if we do not have definitive proof yet, an overload of aluminium is strongly suspected of contributing to a functional disturbance of the large intestine [irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)] and to a pathological change of the bones through decalcification, such as osteoporosis and osteomalacia [a painful softening of the bones].

• **Aluminium is capable of moving from the digestive tract to the brain and accumulating there.** This could explain why it contributes to a little-known form of **Alzheimer's disease** that affects young people (it is also "very strongly" suspected of contributing to autism). It is possible that aluminium plays a role in the classic forms of Alzheimer's disease, but the current opinion is that it could "accelerate the occurrence and the aggressiveness of symptoms". They will occur earlier and be more serious.

• **Aluminium could lead to a reduction of male fertility,** which is observed in many parts of the world.

It has been found in male sperm cells, which is a completely new occurrence.

• Finally, aluminium is probably responsible for a **rare degenerative disease** called "macrophagic myofasciitis" [MMF], which is characterized by muscular problems associated with the injection of some vaccines.

All is not lost, we can do something

Are the experts gathered in Lille too pessimistic about it? Are they spreading panic? Not so quick. There are two good reasons not to lose courage from their statements. Firstly, their work has also furthered some excellent discoveries.

It has shown that **through physical effort, the body can eliminate much more aluminium than previously thought.** Until recently, it was believed that this was only possible through urine. Today, it is known that sweating (sweat) greatly contributes to it. This is another good reason to lead a life full of various physical activities, such as jogging, bicycling or another sport.

Another encouraging discovery: **when one drinks water that is rich in silica [a mineral], this limits the absorption of aluminium and/or helps to eliminate it from the body.** The only problem is: European legislation does not currently state that water producers must mention the amount of silica on their content labels. One must therefore consult a doctor or a nutritionist to buy the right type of water.

Although the proof of the toxicity of aluminium, is not new, we are reminded about the warnings that have been given but also quickly forgotten. The practical and economic side of things often gets the upper hand over the harmful side. That is how it is in all domains. One knows that something is not good, but one continues, despite everything, because one sees an advantage in it, without worrying about its effects on health. However, health is priceless, at least for those who care about it and for those who cherish the life of their children, parents and other relatives, without forgetting the general public.

But business does not go that far in its feelings... First, money, and then, health. Furthermore, there is also money to be made out of sickness. So, why deprive the population of something that makes it sick? There is the prospect of a market...and there will always be the development of some miracle pills or a new chemotherapy or vaccine with aluminium that can be sold.

What an art to care for people with products that make them sick! That is the entire science of humankind, which is based on the use of chemicals, and which is directed by the financial interests of the research institutes and international companies. When the first proofs are presented and the doctors, scientists and professors ring the alarm concerning the use of some products in medicines, food and cosmetics, then it always takes years, in which damage is done and the cases of cancer and other sicknesses are counted, before a decision is made to deal with the matter. Studies are conducted (which have followed previous studies), and the product is finally banned. Discussions and hesitations delay concrete intervention until the bank accounts are filled of those who govern the world according to their discretion, without worrying about its fate.

For those reasons, our answer to the question: "Should we stop using aluminium?" is an unhesitating: "Of course, and as soon as possible!" Especially nowadays when there are so many alternatives. There is no acceptable pretext to justify the use of a recognized toxic product that has well-known serious and sometimes irreversible effects on health. If people continue to frequently take harmful substances, such as aluminium or other completely different ones, then we will soon experience an increased mortality, a reduced longevity and a worldwide degeneration of humanity. It will not only be a physical degeneration, but also a mental one, because aluminium and other heavy metals penetrate into the brain! One only needs to look at the rising statistical curve of the number of cases of cancer and Alzheimer's disease, even among young people, to be convinced of this.

Fortunately, God's infinite compassion has come to meet poor humanity, and He has granted it the most valuable gift in order to get it out of its sad situation: Jesus, the Saviour. In him is concentrated all of God's love for humankind, everything that humanity shall receive and everything that it will soon receive: happiness, health and life, in one word: salvation. We have to turn to him in order to come out of all our difficulties and the persistent destruction of the world and to be healed of all our sicknesses. He invites us to leave behind us all our bad habits that destroy us, be they physical or mental, and instead to obtain true wisdom that leads every human being to true and lasting life, which means, to their real destiny, that of an earthly child of God.

Idols and pilgrimages

In his manifesto *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Respecting the Reformation of the Christian Estate* (1520), the great reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546, a German doctor of theology, composer, priest and monk) wrote words, full of common sense and clarity, with the sincere and noble intention of freeing numerous souls from the credulity and superstition expressed in practices that God did not command. Before being completely confused by errors and false beliefs, it would be good to read Luther's following words and to take the only true way to God: through his Son.

Article 12, extract:

Simple men are therefore quickly led into false ideas and a wrong understanding of God's commandments. They think that a pilgrimage is a very good deed, but this is not true. It is very seldom a good deed, and often a bad and misleading deed, because God has not commanded it. But He has commanded that every man should care for his wife and children, should fulfil his marital duties, and should also help and serve his neighbour. Now, it is getting to the point where a man goes on a pilgrimage to Rome and spends 50 or 100 guilders [gold coins], sometimes more or sometimes less, without anyone commanding it, while leaving behind

his wife and children, and those dearest to him, to suffer in need and misery. The foolish man thinks that his self-willed pilgrimage will atone for his disobedience and disregard of God's commandments.

Article 20, extract:

The miracles performed there prove nothing, because the Evil one can also do wonders, as Christ taught us (Matthew 24: 24). If they were serious about the matter and banned such things, the miracles would soon stop. But if the miracles were done by God, they would not be stopped by their commands (Acts 5: 39). And if there were no other sign that they are not deeds from God, it would be enough to see people acting frantically and irrationally, like herds of cattle, which could not possibly come from God. God has not commanded them, and there is no obedience or merit in them. Therefore, they should be vigorously prevented, and people should be warned against them. Anything that is not commanded by God or that goes beyond God's commandments, is definitely the Devil's work. Parish [local] churches also suffer from that, because they are less honoured. All in all, pilgrimages are signs of a great lack of faith among people, because if they truly believed, they would find everything in their own churches, where they are commanded to go.

But what should I say? Every man thinks about how he can establish and maintain a pilgrimage in his own district, without caring about whether people believe and live rightly. The rulers are like the people: the blind leaders of the blind. If pilgrimages are not well received, they begin to canonize [glorify] their saints, not to honour the saints, who are sufficiently honoured without them, but to attract the masses and to make money. That is where the pope and the bishops help and where it "rains indulgences" [where there are plenty of opportunities to pay money to buy a dead person out of Purgatory], and everyone has enough money for that. But no one cares about what God has commanded, no one runs after that, and no one has any money for that.

Oh, we are so blind that not only do we allow the Devil to have his way with his ghosts and his mischief, but we support him! I wish that one would leave the good saints alone and that one would not lead poor people astray. What spirit gave the pope the authority to canonize the saints? Who tells him whether they are holy or not holy? Are there not already enough sins on Earth, and must one further tempt God by interfering in his judgement and by making money bags out of his saints?

Therefore, my advice is to let the saints canonize themselves. Only God should canonize them, and every man should stay in his parish church in which he will find more than in all pilgrimage churches, even though all churches are actually pilgrimage churches. Here, a man finds baptism, the sacraments, preaching and one's neighbour, which and who are much more important than all the saints in Heaven, because they [all churches] have all been made holy by God's Word and the sacraments.

We would like those truthful words to find an echo in the hearts of those who are sincerely seeking the Lord, but who, without knowing it, are in error because of wrong thoughts or unfounded beliefs. As Luther rightly said, the adoration of the saints is not a commandment from God. And their canonization (to officially declare a dead person to be a saint) is not decided by people. God alone looks at the heart and perfectly knows the works of each. Consequently, only He knows who is a saint and who is not. Canonization risks declaring a saint someone who is not in God's eyes and, even the opposite, of not declaring someone who really is.

There are actually many who quietly and humbly do good works without the world perceiving it. They do good without expecting anything in return for it. They put into practice what their Master taught them:

he heard knocking at the door. He got up to open with astonishment, he had not seen a soul about in those parts all through the summer. It was such an out-of-the-way spot that no one ever came there.

When he opened the door he could dimly see the form of a man soaked to the skin and shivering. "May I come in?" came the voice of a young man, "I have lost my way and was overtaken by the storm".

"Come right in", said Antoine hospitably, "I'll light a fire to dry you and give you something warm to drink, and it will warm you up".

The newcomer was a young man of about Antoine's own age, and as Antoine helped to get his wet things off he explained to him that he had been wandering in the rain for hours when as luck would have it he heard the cows lowing in the cow shed and so was able to find the chalet.

Having lighted the fire and helped the young man to undress before it, Antoine

brought out a clean shirt and a spare pair of trousers to put on while the sodden clothes were drying. He felt warm sympathy go out to the thin and delicate youth he had befriended.

He rubbed him vigorously with a rough towel just as if he was lavishing this care on his own brother. He brought out his best trousers, jacket and shirt for the young man's use. Then having set a bowl of steaming broth before him, he said: "When you've drunk that you shall get into my bed, and I'll go and sleep with the cows."

"No, certainly not", the youth answered, "it is I who must go and sleep with the cows."

"That would be most unwise", Antoine answered, "for there is a bull with them, and he is a bad one." The young man was deeply touched by his host's solicitude, and thanking him warmly got into bed with an immense sigh of satisfaction, for he was worn out! He slept through the rest of the night like a log, and when he woke up in the morning

to brilliant sunshine, he saw his host was up already and getting breakfast.

Soon the two young men were sitting facing each other, each with a big bowl of cream before him and a plate of bread and cheese. The guest, greatly refreshed by a good night's rest, and very much impressed by the brotherly reception he had been given by the young cowherd, was watching his host with great interest.

They fell into friendly conversation, and Antoine recounted some of his impressions and a few episodes of his life.

At the view of this unspoilt and simple soul, so straightforward, and the fine feelings displayed by his host who served him with true brotherly solicitude the young man felt his eyes moisten.

"At what school have you learnt such wonderful sentiments, and where have you obtained such splendid impressions in your heart?" he asked.

"At the school of nature, which draws us near to God", Antoine answered. "And besides, my father was very kind and affectionate, and always taught us to be kind and helpful to others. Unfortunately he died recently, and at the thought of never seeing him again I feel very much cast down. Who is going to help me to solve the mystery of death and or what lies beyond the grave? I should so much like to know the truth about those very important things."

Antoine stopped speaking on perceiving the tears in his companion's eyes. He felt both his hands seized in the warm grasp of his guest who said:

"You cannot know the good you have done me with what you have just said. As for me, I am a poor thankless creature who has failed to esteem God's great kindness and the knowledge of the truth received through the publications of the Lord's Messenger. I have allowed myself to be caught up by the false

