

THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

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The calling of mankind to eternal life

SOMETHING inexpressibly beautiful, glorious and above all things comforting, today lies ahead of all people who will get into harmony with the Almighty. All they have to do is to respond to this invitation — so tender, so kind and so affectionate, from the Creator of Heaven and Earth — now being addressed to all who have ears to hear and a heart to understand: "My son, pay attention to my words, and listen carefully to my sayings. ... For they are life to those who find them, and health to their whole body." This is a wonderful call to lasting life and happiness.

The way to everlasting life could not be opened to mankind before now. The 2,000 years, or thereabouts, that followed our dear Saviour's coming to Earth, have been reserved for a special purpose: to publish the Gospel of divine grace all over the world, so that everyone who was to do the Work of the disciples of Christ, associating with our dear Saviour in his Sacrifice, might all be called and might come forward and fulfil their mission. Today, this calling, which the Bible calls the Heavenly Calling and the High Calling, is drawing to a close. That is why the time has come for giving the instructions that will enable mankind to no longer descend into the grave.

The message of the possibility of eternal life on Earth, is being carried to mankind. It is firstly contained in the book titled *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance). It came at the appointed time to open the door to health and life for mankind in the Lord's Name. Anyone who faithfully lives up to the directions given in it, unmistakably finds his way, and the result is sure. It all depends on the way in which the conditions are fulfilled. If one intends to succeed, one must take the matter seriously and pay the price. That is the whole secret of success.

It is a wonderful thing to perceive that God's plan is carried out with admirable exactitude. When our dear Saviour was in the synagogue in Nazareth, he read out this passage from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the LORD is on me, because He has anointed me to preach Good News to the poor [the gentle]. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners [the opening of the graves of those who are bound]..." When he had finished reading, he rolled up the Book of Isaiah and said: "Today, this Scripture [prophecy] has been fulfilled." Indeed, this verse referred to him personally. And throughout his career, he faithfully fulfilled that prophecy.

It is the same concerning the passage from Job which says: "If there is a messenger [an angel] at his side, a mediator, one among a thousand, to show to man what is right for him, then he is gracious to him and says: 'Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a Ransom.'" That messenger is the one who brings the message: "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men." That Tabernacle intercedes for the guilty and sets them free. That sublime message of deliverance is also shown in Revelation 14: 6, where, in his vision, John perceives an angel flying in the midst of Heaven with the everlasting Gospel to preach it to all nations and people.

It is that wondrous part of the divine plan that shows man what to do to no longer die, and this as the result of the reconciliation obtained by the Sacrifice of our dear Saviour and of his Little Flock. Accordingly, he is able to fulfil his destiny, the destiny of a terrestrial son of God who is happy and viable.

In the fifth verse, we are shown how the "elect" (the "chosen ones") are chosen during the Heavenly Calling to form the Bride, the Royal Priesthood. They stand on the Mountain of Zion, constantly purifying their hearts. In the sixth verse, we perceive how, at the end of that period, the angel flies in the midst of Heaven with the everlasting Gospel. That is the blessed moment when the mystery of God is completed.

The matter is also described by the Lord himself in Matthew 24: 45 as follows: "Who then is the Faithful and Wise Servant, whom his Master has put in charge of his Household to give the others their food at the proper time [to announce the Lord's presence and the Restoration of All Things]?"

It is a wonderful thing to perceive how everything corresponds with mathematical precision. And it is a glorious thing to perceive how it was possible for the faithful witnesses of the Old Covenant (Old Testament) to feel these things, as, for instance, Elihu delivers his testimony to Job and his friends. Firstly, he describes the conditions of man: "Man is also chastened with pain on his bed and with constant aching in his bones, so that he detests bread and the best food. His flesh wastes away, and his bones protrude. His soul draws near to the pit, and his life to the destroyers." Then this idea follows: "If there is a messenger [an angel] at his side, a mediator..." After that, he says: "His flesh will be fresher than a child's, and he return to the days of

his youth. He will pray to God and find favour. He will see God's face and shout for joy. God will receive man and restore him to righteousness [innocence]. Then man sings and says: 'I have sinned and violated what was right, but I was not punished as I deserved. God has delivered my soul from going down into the pit, and my life will see the light.'"

That is a soaring into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the effect of the message of the everlasting Gospel on those who fear the Lord and follow his ways. These people are manifested particularly in the Host of the Lord, who are the first who can enjoy the inexpressible benefits of the Ransom. This matter was prophesied about, and when the favourable time had come, God faithfully fulfilled what Elihu his prophet announced. He delivered the message which enables man to pass out of the present dispensation and into that of the Kingdom of Heaven without dying.

Now the beneficiaries of this immense and incomensurable favour are present; they can very easily assimilate the promise and its conditions. It all depends on the zeal and the honesty with which they run their race. Of course, they must go all out, to the absolute limit, for it is an immensely far-reaching promise, which calls for appreciation in proportion. That is why something that is near enough is not at all sufficient. Above all, one needs to be sufficiently nourished by the power of the Spirit of God which maintains life. But that fundamental honesty has not yet been obtained to a sufficient degree.

That is why it has also not yet been possible to offer a specimen of an old man who has returned to the days of his youth, who has recovered the freshness of childhood. And like Mary — when the angel announced to her that she would give birth to a child who would be called the Son of the Most High — we might say: "How can this happen?" The angel answered: "The Holy Spirit will come on you..." Mary was perfectly docile, and she did everything needful so that the promise could be fulfilled on her behalf. When the conditions are complied with correctly, the fulfilment of the promise cannot fail. One frees oneself from the things that cause death. But it means constant work on the part of our souls.

All this means that if at present the testimony of rejuvenation has not yet been given, this is because all that is needful has not been done yet by those who are now invited to lasting life and health. That is the long and the short of it, because, for everyone who does not want to go into the grave, there are some very exact conditions for them to fulfil. They have to be quite hon-

A prayer answered

NARCISSUS — a young tailor, and healthy and full of life — enjoyed a life of happiness with those he loved, in the warm sunshine of his native land. The sky of unchanging blue filled him with the joy of life, and he was forever singing as he plied his needle. He had become acquainted with a body of Protestant worshippers, and had obtained from them a Bible, a rare thing in a Catholic country. He was profoundly impressed by the life of Jesus and by his Sacrifice, and the stories of Moses and of Joseph stirred him to the core. Frequently, he would thank God for having placed such riches in his hands. He ardently prayed that the Lord would grant him a son who would be receptive to divine ways. Not long after this, a son, his eighth child, was born, and he called him Joseph. To his great sorrow, this child died young after an operation.

In 1941, at a time when the island was under the threat of invasion, another son was born, whom he called John. How greatly he hoped that this child would be the answer to his prayers!

As the enemy was advancing, Narcissus decided to take refuge with his wife and children in the north of the country. Events proved him right. On a day of beautiful sunshine, the spot where he had his home was bombed and badly damaged. Many people were killed. So, they had fled in the nick of time.

Fatally, the war spread ever further north until it at last overtook them once more. Whenever the air-raid warning sounded, poor mother, quaking with fear that she did her best to hide, had to take shelter with her little ones in those dark places which are the haunt of fear and anguish. So painful was this that they decided to move to the country, and they settled on the shores of a lake. Here, they ran into another kind of trouble.

What a problem it was to feed nine children! To make things as bad as they could be, Narcissus was dispatched to Ethiopia. This parting brought forth many tears. "Well, anyway," father thought, by way of consolation, "I shall at least be able to see the Red Sea where Moses divided the waters to get the Israelites across."

When the war ended, Narcissus rejoined his family in the big town of M. What devastation there was there: ruins, orphans, dire distress...! Mother would often go to bed foodless because she had shared out her meagre rations to the children. The lack of every needful thing went on increasing until homes had to be found for the children. John was sent to school, and three of his sisters were taken in by Swiss families who took affectionate care of them.

At birth, John was christened in the Protestant faith, but his mother, an ardent Catholic, had had him secretly rechristened in her own

church. She induced him to join the Scouts so that he would not fail to attend Mass. So, he was confirmed by a bishop who later became a pope.

John's heart was keenly receptive, and he had a great fondness for nature. The rugged mountains, the flowers of all seasons, and the bright stars above: all creation had the power to deeply move him. How much he desired to know the Creator of all those wonders, especially of the stars, which seemed to be kindly watching over him!

Narcissus was returning home one evening from a hard day's work, and feeling the need to rest on the way, he went and sat on a park bench. There was a young girl sitting there already, eating a frugal meal. She held out a paper to him, *The Monitor of the Reign of Justice*, warmly inviting him to read it. Narcissus set about reading it as soon as he got home. It brought him a great deal of joy, for it opened his eyes to many things and

est and entirely docile in living up to them. There is no other way to go about it. The programme is detailed in the Book of Remembrance with simplicity and precision which leave no room at all for trifling. Therefore, it is not at all possible not to succeed if all is done that ought to be done. It is neither complicated nor difficult. The conditions are as amiable and affectionate as they could be. All that is required is the heart of a son, sufficiently aware of the immensity of the grace being offered, to comply with all the conditions of the programme of life.

Man's destiny

Mankind have no idea of what their destiny is, or of the possibilities that reside within them. They believe that the longest life it is possible for them to attain is 100 or 120 years at the most, if things go as well as they possibly can. Yet Noah lived for 950 years and Methuselah for 969 years. Today, the average span of life for man is only some decades, and man is becoming more and more degenerate.

But the time has come when eternal life is open to all who will become children of God, real sons. The Truth shines to enlighten them. It points out to them that the Ransom has been paid and that henceforth there is no need for them to die if they will live up to the programme of life. Thus, they learn that life and health depend on many things, but above all, on one's degree of spirituality. Bad sentiments cause tension in the sensory nerves and slow down the circulation of the blood, and this is a source of danger. If the spirituality is right, there is no tension. Therefore, the question is to watch one's sentiments and to eliminate everything that is not "life promoting". Only altruistic sentiments are favourable. Therefore, everything selfish must be set aside.

In the Book of Remembrance, there is everything required for going towards eternal life, but one needs to strictly conform with it. One cannot expect to succeed with bare knowledge, even the most comprehensive of the programme. It must be strictly lived up to. Then, the result cannot fail, for the time has come when the mystery of God is finished, so that Job's prophecy can be fulfilled. Only, one has to rise to the level of the programme of life. These things are entirely new and quite unprecedented. One has to let all the former things go and place oneself entirely in the Lord's hands. As long as we go our own way, sticking to our own personal point of view, neither faith nor assurance are able to develop. One who goes on seeking some personal advantage, cannot put his trust entirely in the Lord, because he goes in fear of losing the thing he desires. In those conditions, success is impossible. A selfish man will not obtain everlasting life, that is quite sure. One who sticks to his personal thoughts, his comforts, his money, his own property, his cattle and his land, is clinging to the former things which are disappearing, and this is a hindrance to eternal life. You cannot have it both ways.

It is the same in the matter of physical health: there are rules to be observed. The spiritual diet is the most important, but the material one must not be neglected. If one eats things that are bad for one's system, if one eats too much or too little, or if one is forever grabbing a bite between meals, one is doing oneself harm. Matters are far worse spiritually. Every wrong feeling causes nerve tension and is a power of destruction inflicted on oneself. Even if one does oneself no harm, but no good either, there is still a loss, because the process of life demands that one should do oneself good, which we can only do by doing good to others. When we do that, we receive the recoil in blessing.

In the Kingdom of God, all people will be able to learn about their destiny and to take their stand to achieve it. Resurrections will take place gradually until all who have gone into the grave have come out again and in turn choose the life offered to them so generously by our dear Saviour who paid the Ransom to make up to them for the life they lost in Adam. When the Restoration of All Things spoken of by apostle Peter is an accomplished fact, the Earth will be entirely restored, and mankind will be perfect sons of God. There will be nothing but joy, gladness and happiness on Earth, because the former things will have passed away and all things will be new, and there will be no more death. They are the divine promises now being fulfilled, which all people must now be informed of, so that they may choose the life that the Lord's kind hand is holding out to mankind.

Will the world come to an end?

The thoughts of nine-year-old Alexa, which were published in the Swiss French-language weekly *Migros Magazine* No. 48 on the 27th of November 2017, attracted our attention. We quote them as follows:

Why the world will one day come to an end

"It is true that the Earth will disappear. Astrophysicists have been teaching us this for a long time. Like all stars, the sun will one day also die: that is the order of things. When the sun dies, it will firstly expand and then end by absorbing everything around it, in this case, the Earth... But we still have time! It is estimated that the disappearance of the sun and the Earth will occur in about 5 billion years.

What we also know is that we cannot control this event: no matter what we do, the world, as we know it, will one day no longer exist. Therefore, the time we still have on Earth should be used in the most active and respectful way, do you not agree? We should manage to give our existence a purpose that is rich and constructive. The fact that neither we nor the planet is immortal, allows us to see the present with different eyes, to give it greater importance, as though we could live forever.

If you agree with me, if you think that it is not that important to fear the end of the world, but that we should rather live in harmony with ourselves, with others and with our environment, then you will understand that we should do everything we can to create this harmony! Otherwise said, we should prevent our behaviour or our habits from being harmful to others...or to the planet. Life is fragile, and everything that is fragile should be treated with great care: planet Earth, our life and the lives of others..."

We would like to encourage little Alexa who wrote those touching lines, and, on this occasion, we would like to explain our thoughts concerning the future of our beautiful planet as well as the star that gives it light and warmth. When astrophysicists say they have examined the expansion and then the break-up of some stars in the universe, and if these things are real and established, they will nevertheless not worry us, because not all the celestial bodies in the cosmos have the same function.

The entire Creation speaks of its Creator, and it daily speaks to us of the victories of his infinite science. In everything that He has conceived and constructed, there is perfection from the infinitely large to the extremely small. It is not only our deep faith, but also our intelligence, which is generally called "common sense", that leads us to the firm belief that a divine Clockmaker is the origin of this immense clockwork that is the universe, and that it is He Himself Who maintains this mechanism with absolute precision.

What human beings create cannot be compared with God's wisdom and science shown in the creation

of human beings, in their body and their intelligence: their ability to think, to create things, to be aware of their surroundings by means of their senses, and to feel a whole range of sentiments. All this is both a wonder and a proof of the creative power of the Almighty.

Furthermore, in Creation, everything expresses harmony and is guided by a spirit of love that guarantees this harmony. A unique and perfect law rules all things. We call it the Universal Law because it applies to the entire universe. It commands the elements and the various bodies to exist for the good of each other. This explains why all things complete each other magnificently, why there are no shocks anywhere, and why continuity is indefinitely assured. We can also see this in nature, which perpetually renews itself, and which, every year for thousands of years, speaks of the science, the wisdom, the love and the power of the Supreme Being.

It was only on intelligent beings, particularly humankind, that the Universal Law was not imposed, but proposed. Because it is the expression of love, and love can only be expressed in freedom. For this reason, God wanted people to be free beings and not robots that automatically obey the divine will. He wanted them to be children of God, beings who choose by themselves to do good and develop a mentality full of nobleness and benevolence towards their fellow people and everything around them.

We see that that is currently not the case. No proof is needed for that... Through our first parents, humankind fell into sin due to a lack of gratitude and attachment to its Benefactor. Humankind therefore chose evil, and instead of altruism, selfishness continued to dig deeper into the human heart. Humankind's judgement is completely distorted, its sensitivity is greatly reduced, and its faith is practically non-existent. It is therefore not surprising that it doubts everything, that it does not know or feel God's goodness and protection, and that it has no idea of his benevolent plans with regard to the Earth and humanity. That is why, for humankind, everything has an end: the sun, the Earth and all the life it contains. Humankind calls itself scientific and claims to know and explain everything, while it is not even able to understand itself, either in the domain of its thoughts or in the domain of its body. Even the scholars who have intensively studied the human brain, cannot fathom its mysteries. And this inevitably leads us back to the Superior Intelligence Who is its Creator and Who alone knows all mysteries.

If humankind were to trust that Supreme Being, Who is Love, then it would no longer cling to that reasoning and no longer fear the disappearance of our sun and our Earth, because it would understand that they have a particular purpose and are superior to all other heavenly bodies in the universe. They support the lives of billions of people who are called to become children of God, and because of this particular purpose, they will last forever. The Lord God is the Master of the worlds and is the original and inexhaustible Source of all life. He it is Who takes care of the maintenance of the universe. If He therefore allows a star to dissolve and return to a simple state in the form of gas and other elements, then it happens because He judges its components to be more useful. Everyone knows the saying: "Nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed." But regarding the Earth and its sun, we can be sure that they are the object of very special care on the part of the Almighty.

As God's Messenger of our time expressed: "A single drop of God's Spirit can revitalize the sun for thousands of years." What humankind lacks is quite simply the communion with its God. That is why it is cut off from supply of the Spirit of life and why its vitality is exhausted after several years. The Holy Scriptures teach us that with the following words: "One genera-

awakened in him a splendid hope of future things. He wrote to the headquarters of the publishers in Switzerland, asking them to send him the book *The Message to Humanity*, and he also attended meetings held locally. Every time on returning from those meetings, he would relate to his family what he had been hearing. Every one of them would make fun of him, except John, who would bombard him with questions. That was how it came about that the lad (14 years old at the time) learnt that God did not punish, that his Name was Love, that there existed neither Hell nor Purgatory, and that there was to be the Resurrection of the dead on the Earth, which was to become the Kingdom of God. He came to understand that no religion at all was from God and that every denomination was a mere caricature of real Christianity, because Christianity required one to love one's neighbour as oneself. Bursting with joy over all these revelations, he enthusiastically

talked about them to his curate (a clergyman) and to his friends. But he met with nothing but antagonism and coldness... Only one of his friends listened to him with any attention.

When John left school, he obtained employment in a public bar where he was far from happy. Then, one of the customers employed him in his office. This made it possible for him to realize one of his most cherished dreams: to go to night school and later to go in for electronics. He eventually got his "dream job". Everything he undertook succeeded, and his employers were very pleased with him. Sad to relate, he began to become vain with his successes and to become distant with his people, which was very grievous for them.

Not to be different from his fellows, John began to look out for a girl to get engaged to. When he found one to his liking, to please her, he reverted to attending Mass, a thing which he had quite given up. However, he found that his heart was not in it, yet he had

a great desire to know more about divine things. Where was he to get this knowledge? To start off, he bought a Bible and attended many places of worship. He had contact with various pastors: an Adventist, a Waldensian and after that a Methodist. The latter had the merit of being honest with him, admitting that he had been wasting his time in his religion. One of these pastors was very kind and warm-hearted, and had at various times placed his church at the disposal of the Angel of the Lord (the Philanthropic Association). He had even accompanied their hymns on the piano. John attended a big congress of Jehovah's Witnesses with which he was once again disappointed. His fiancée was deeply annoyed over all this, and they had many heated arguments.

One evening, as he was chatting with his future mother-in-law, his fiancée brought him a small pamphlet titled *Man's Destiny*. With a lightly mocking air, she said: "I expect this

is something more to interest you." He read it immediately, and it filled him with joy. He understood from it that it was indispensable for mankind to become reconciled with God if they were to be reconciled one with another. When he got home, he compared his pamphlet with the books in his father's possession, and to his great joy discovered that they were all by the same author, F.L.A. Freytag. In one of his father's books, he even found the history of the real Church of Christ. This very exact information filled him with enthusiasm, for he realized that this was indeed the Truth. He was so constantly buried in these books that he came to neglect his studies because of them, and so he lamentably failed his examinations. This humiliation did not give him a lot of anxiety, for he knew very well that, henceforth, all things were to work together for his good, since God reveals Himself to the humble. So, he decided to give up any further studies.

tion comes and another generation goes, but the Earth remains forever." Ecclesiastes 1: 4.

Marvellous assurances are given to us regarding the timeless duration planned for our beautiful planet. Through the experience of evil, which is happening on Earth, and through the triumph of good, which the Saviour of the world and his associates are achieving, Earth will become a bright point in the universe, an everlasting education and edification for all other beings who will be created in the following ages on other planets. The Lord God speaks to us through his servants and prophets: "My righteousness will last forever, and my salvation from generation to generation" (Isaiah 51: 8). The current wicked world, which is governed by selfishness, will once and for all come to an end and will be replaced by the Reign of justice, of peace and of happiness, which will last forever. Daniel 2: 44.

Heaven is the God's throne, and the Earth is his footstool (Isaiah 66: 1). "He established the Earth on its foundations. It will never be moved" (Psalm 104: 5). According to the Master's promise, the meek (the gentle) shall inherit the Earth (Matthew 5: 5). "They will possess it forever and dwell there from generation to generation" (Isaiah 34: 17). But the greatest certainty that we have is the Almighty's immeasurable love for his creatures, which led Him to sacrifice his dearest...: "For God loved the world so much that He gave his only-begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3: 16.

More animal attachment

We have often reported about the touching cases of attachment from animals towards their owners. Nothing can stop an animal from finding its beloved master when circumstances have separated them. Neither distance, nor obstacle nor time can prevent its brave, courageous and keen perception. This always and finally leads it to its goal.

That was also the case for a stolen dog, which was reported in the French newspaper *La Dépêche* under the heading:

After one and a half years, the stolen bitch returned to her master...with a pup!

Mr André Sarda — who lives in the small village of Lavalette in the south of France, who is an employee at the Limoux-Quillan Hospital Centre, and who is the secretary of the canine club in the city of Carcassonne — has just experienced the most amazing animal story, a story that lasted one and half years. Read it for yourself:

On the first Sunday in September, Mr André Sarda went hunting with his four-year-old beagle "Fly".

Fly was chasing a hare that hid in a burrow next to a road that led from Lavalette to the small village of Caux-et-Sauzens.

Suddenly, a car stopped, one of its doors slammed shut, and it drove off. Mr Sarda, who paid no attention to it, approached the burrow, but could not see Fly. Thinking that Fly was hunting for more hares, Mr Sarda whistled for the dog to come. But there was no response. Mr Sarda spent the rest of the morning and the afternoon looking for his dog, but without success.

The next day, the search continued, and members of the club looked in their areas, but in vain.

Days past, then months and then a year, and then... on the 7th of February, which was one and a half years later, Mr Sarda, while he was driving his car into his garage at night, saw a dog lying at his door. What a surprise when he recognized Fly, lively but a little fearful! At her side and even more fearful, was a pup, her own, which was pressing against its mother.

At the end of their strengths, covered with dirt, and emaciated, Fly and her pup were picked up in the arms of their surprised owner and quickly taken into the house where they received lots of pats and care,

and a good meal.

During the one and a half years, the little bitch did not forget her owner, the only true one. One can only admire animals and their instinct!

What marvellous attachment from animals, which are capable of being guided with certainty and without special indications! It is admirable instinct that precisely leads them and assures them success in their efforts through all the difficulties.

Love works wonders. Animals often give us obvious and touching demonstrations of it.

Humans can also demonstrate the power of love and its prodigious effects. During numerous invasions and wars, so many families have been torn apart by deportation and capture. All who have kept the hope of a favourable outcome of their fate, of a certain reunion firmly in their heart, have mustered the courage to valiantly get through their temporarily difficult situation. How touching the confirmation of this hope has often been!

Evil will stop forever in the coming age, whereas good will last for all eternity.

"The fool says in his heart: 'There is no God.'" Ps. 14: 1

We thank the psalmist David for that quote. Although it was already verified in his time, it has very particular significance today when there is an increasing number of people openly declaring their atheism. This phenomenon does not leave us indifferent, and we want to know what leads these people to reject God.

Even the Ancient Greek philosophers Democritus, Epicurus and Euhemerus are quoted as defenders of atheism. Several scholars from the Middle Ages are also mentioned. From the Renaissance, we know about the French philosopher Montaigne (1533–1592) for whom it was impossible to know God: "Nothing human can in any way be related to divine nature or be made to agree with it in any sense, without being flawed or imperfect," he said in his publication *Essays*, and even when he talked about humankind with regard to God: "Attach yourself to what is yours, but not to what comes from Him; He is not your colleague, your fellow citizen or your companion; if He reveals Himself in a way, then it is not to lower Himself to your smallness or to give you control over his power."

In the 18th century, the French philosopher Pierre Bayle wrote in his book *Various Thoughts on the Occasion of the Comet*: "It is not enough to know that there is a God; one must establish the meaning of this word and associate an idea with it: one must, I say, research the nature of God, and this is where the difficulty begins," and further: "Not only atheists, but many other great men who do not doubt in divine existence, have agreed that religion is an art introduced by politicians in order to keep people under the yoke of obedience. But this is not proof that they believed that a government cannot completely manage without religion."

The Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677) explained in his publication *Letter 36 (23) to Blyenbergh*: "Neither the honest man nor the thief can cause God any pleasure or displeasure."

For the French Catholic priest Jean Meslier (1664–1729), God was neither infinitely wise nor infinitely good.

The French doctor and philosopher Julien Offray de La Mettrie (1709–1751) said in his book *Man a Machine (Machine Man)*: "It does not affect our peace of mind whether matter is eternal or was created or whether there is or is not a God. It is folly to torture ourselves so much about what we cannot know and what would not make us any happier if we did manage to know it."

The French essayist and philosopher Sylvain Maréchal

(1750–1803) wrote in his book *Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Atheists*: "Do we think about something we have no need of? And what need do we have of a God when we have a father, a wife, children, a friend, arms, eyes and a heart?"

The German philosopher and anthropologist Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872) explained in his book *The Essence of Christianity*: "In and through God, man has in view himself alone. It is true that man places the aim of his action in God, but God has no other aim of action than the moral and eternal salvation of man: thus man has in fact no other aim than himself. The divine activity is not distinct from the human."

The German philosopher and political theorist Karl Marx (1818–1883) wrote in the manuscript introduction of "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right": "The foundation of irreligious criticism is this: man makes religion, religion does not make man."

The Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) affirmed in his book *The Future of an Illusion*: "Religious doctrines are all illusions, they cannot be proven, and no one can be compelled to consider them as true or to believe in them."

The British philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) wrote in his publication *Is There a God?*: "It is customary to suppose that if a belief is widespread, there must be something reasonable about it," and in his book *Science and Religion*: "I cannot admit any method of arriving at truth except that of science, but in the realm of the emotions, I do not deny the value of the experiences which have given rise to religion."

The French biochemist Jacques Monod (1910–1976) claimed in his only book *Chance and Necessity*: "Pure chance, absolutely free but blind, is at the very root of the stupendous edifice of evolution: this central concept of modern biology is no longer one among many other possible or even conceivable hypotheses. It is today the sole conceivable hypothesis, the only one that squares with observed and tested fact," and further: "The ancient covenant is in pieces; man knows at last that he is alone in the universe's unfeeling immensity, out of which he emerged only by chance. His destiny is nowhere spelled out, nor is his duty. The kingdom above or the darkness below: it is for him to choose."

The Indian social reformer Goparaju Ramachandra Rao (1902–1975) wrote in his book *Positive Atheism*: "Whereas theism stands for man's surrender to his world, atheism is man's mastery over his world. Though the term 'atheism' looks negative in form, it is positive in content," and further: "Therefore, the safe and stable method to fight inequality and to abolish downtroddenness, is the adoption of atheism. All people are, of course, invariably atheistic in practice. If they also think atheistically, they not only grow honest, but they remove restrictions on initiative, act free, achieve more, and earn comforts. ... The essence of atheism is the freedom of the individual."

They are a few quotes, by no means exhaustive, from defenders of free-thought and atheism. When we, as unbiased observers, take those various opinions into consideration, we are compelled to make several remarks, and we would like to express them here, without a controversial spirit, only in order to throw light on theories that are, in fact, in profound darkness.

It must firstly be pointed out that most atheists do not take a stand against God, but against religion. Because God and religion are not the same. It can even be said that they are opposed to each other. For example, our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ — who came to Earth to pay our Ransom and to introduce us to God, his Father — was fought against by the religious people of his time. It was not the civilian authorities that wanted to kill him, but the chief priests.

We can also see that the majority of educated people become atheists. One searches for God through argument, analysis and logic, but one does not find God in

His people and particularly his fiancée were very much upset over this decision, but he, for his part, could clearly see that the Lord was encouraging him. He wanted to get in touch with the local group of Angel of the Lord (the Philanthropic Association), but did not know its address. One evening, a friend of his told him that he had caught sight of the name plate of the church he was looking for in a certain street. Another one gave him encouragement, saying: "I think your ideal is quite right." Nevertheless, he did not have the courage to go with him or to admit that he had already attended the meeting. John searched the street from one end to the other, but discovered nothing.

As he was having more and more trouble with his fiancée, they decided to break off their engagement. Now, he felt a great weight was lifted off his shoulders, and he ardently prayed to the Lord to lead him to the place where He gathered his children together.

He found it at last, and with his friend, he attended his first meeting. It made a much deeper impression on him than the big congress of Jehovah's Witnesses. John's friend asked the evangelists a lot of questions. As they left, he said to John: "If you really take those teachings to heart, you will fail your exams and lose your job." With quiet confidence, John replied that he did not mind as long as that was the Truth. He took out a subscription to the papers, bought all the books written by the Lord's Messenger, and attended all the meetings.

He realized there were still a few doubts clinging to the back of his mind. One evening, riding home on his motorbike, he asked the Lord to prove to him by a sign that He was with him in the way he was going and that it had his approval. Halted by a red traffic light, he was looking up at the sky when a bright shooting star flashed across, falling exactly in the direction of his house. With a

quiver of joy, he exclaimed out loud: "That is the Lord's answer. I'm on the right road!"

Magnificently encouraged by the Lord's visible approval, the young man started evangelizing in his spare time. He felt irresistibly constrained to add his efforts to those of the people who are carrying the Good News of the Kingdom of God. This made him very joyful and settled his convictions unshakably.

Hearing that the elder serving his native land was coming to the town to hold a meeting, he asked for permission to go and meet him at the station with another evangelist. When the elder had shaken hands with his companion, John, in his enthusiasm, hugged him, saying: "I'm a brother of the Kingdom too."

That meeting left an indelible impression in his heart, for he very keenly felt the Lord's presence in the midst of it. Now, his mind was quite made up: he was going to be an evangelist. He told the group elder of his

wish to give up his job, and was very wisely reminded of the conditions the Lord sets those who wish to follow him. John was too thrilled with the divine message to be able to wait a day longer. He left the evening classes he was still attending and gave notice to his employer. His boss was deeply concerned. He generously offered him a three-month holiday to try himself out in his new ministry, saying he would be willing to take him back if he found it did not work, while nevertheless feeling aware that his young employee's decision was irrevocable.

John's father was quite helpless in the face of his son's enthusiasm. He did not yet understand that the Lord had granted a wonderful answer to his prayer. And he would say to all and sundry: "The only son with whom I could share my ideas, has been stolen from me." Mother fought on in silence. She had a great love for John, but was an ardent Catholic.

The years have sped by. John has hung

this way. And the conclusion of all these arguments is also wrong, like the arguments themselves. To claim that God does not exist because it was unsuccessfully proven that He does exist, is a gross error.

On the other hand, we are surprised that all those scholars can only believe what they see, what they can demonstrate and what they can examine. They do not understand that the world, which surrounds us, contains many things that escape our senses.

Those few facts bring us to this conclusion: human wisdom and its science do not come from God. If they did come from God, they would lead to God. Even the religions were not created by God, because one can see that they have not led people to God or to each other, but have instead separated people from each other.

A human being is a finite being, which means that they have upper and lower limits. It is difficult for us to imagine infinity with respect to space and time.

For humankind, the concept of God belongs to the world of the imperceptible and the unknowable, in as much as our intellectual abilities are completely ineffective for us to approach God. There is only one effective way for that, and it is faith: "Without faith, it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to God must believe that He exists," says the writer to Hebrews 11: 6. It does not say that one must know or recognize that God exists, but believe. If arguments were enough to come to God, the intellectuals would have already done so. But it is only the sentiments that make the matter possible.

As soon as one puts reason aside and lets oneself be led by faith, an unknown world of possibilities opens to us. To let oneself be convinced of it, it is enough to read chapter 11 of the Letter to the Hebrews. In it, one sees what the faithful in the Old Testament (Old Covenant) achieved. It is then very easy for us to not only recognize that God exists, but that He has a plan for the benefit of humankind and that his beloved Son gave his life to save us. That is precisely the obstacle which is not only encountered by those who do not believe in God, but also by the religions. If one does not believe in God, it is because one has not properly received our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is the Author and the Perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12: 2). It is only through him that we come to the Father. He is the Cornerstone, according to his own words: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. Anyone who falls on that stone will be broken, and anyone on whom it falls will be crushed" (Luke 20: 17 and 18). In contrast, it is written that "anyone who believes in him shall not be disgraced". Romans 9: 33.

As far as we are concerned, we are not trying to prove that God exists, because, as we just said, reason is not enough for that. However, we will share the opinion of apostle Paul who said to the Romans: "Ever since the world was created, God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and his divine nature — have been clearly seen and have been understood in the things that have been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks to Him, but became vain in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools. ... They changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creation instead of the Creator, Who is praised forever" (Romans 1: 20–22 and 25). In fact, from the Earth right up to the

stars, everything in nature speaks of the well-disposed heart of the Creator, Who is not only all-powerful but infinitely kind. The Universal Law — which says that everything and every being exists for the good of each other and has communion with each other — also gives witness to the goodness of God. Regarding the Bible, God's Word is his second witness. How, indeed, can it be explained, if not through God's Spirit, that the prophets could long in advance describe facts that occurred much later?

We could say much more about this far-reaching subject, but we would mainly like to say that even though God actually exists, so does his Adversary, Satan, the Devil. And when humankind is misled to believe that there is no God, it is under the influence of that evil power. He is also the author of all the religions that have led humankind into error. Fortunately, we know that the day is coming when, according to the words of the prophet, "the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11: 9). "They shall no longer teach their neighbours or say to their relatives, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31: 34.

A declaration for the benefit of nature

From the monthly French-language health and environment magazine *Biocontact*, No. 294 from October 2018, we quote the following article that briefly and clearly expresses the fight and the opposition that conservationists encounter:

We want poppies!

Pesticides are poisons that destroy all living things. Pesticides are found in rainwater, in morning dew, in the nectar of flowers, in the stomach of bees, in the umbilical cord of newborn children, in bird nests, in breast milk and in potatoes and cherries.

Pesticides are a disaster for health. They cause cancer, Parkinson's disease, psychomotor disorders in children, infertility, and birth deformities.

The effects of pesticides are underestimated in a system that has gone mad and that has chosen to go blindly forward.

When one pesticide is banned, ten others take its place. There are thousands of them.

We no longer recognize our country. Nature is deformed. A third of the birds have disappeared in the last fifteen years; half of the butterflies have disappeared in the last twenty years; millions of bees and other pollinating insects are dying; frogs and some grasshoppers seem to have disappeared; wild flowers are becoming rarer. Our world is slipping away. Every fading colour and every dimming light is a real pain. Give us back our poppies! Give us back the beauty of the world!

No, we don't want more. At no price. We expect protection. We expect, from governments, the banning of all chemical pesticides in France. Enough said, enough done.

That text shows, in a few words, the despair of the author. It also shows his powerlessness in the current

situation, which is very sad, but not without solutions. One only needs to want to. Because, as the article says, pesticides are a disaster for health and also for nature. They do much more harm than good!

A farmer nowadays undoubtedly has to deal with many pests, and it is not easy to grow healthy plants without the help of herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and fertilizers. For some farmers, it is even unimaginable. Other farmers, who are aware of the environmental impact of all these artificial plant-protection products, have tried to change things and have returned to more natural methods. Even if their harvests might be smaller, they nevertheless have the satisfaction of contributing to the protection of the environment, which is also an economic factor. It is astonishing to know, for example, the value of the pollination of plants by insects! Some people estimate it to be 153 billion euros. Every day, it is becoming visibly clearer that the losses caused by farming with chemicals, are greater than the immediate profits gained by them. And the damage that chemicals cause might be irreversible.

The problems and difficulties that are encountered are the result of personal interest. Money is harsh taskmaster that subjugates and enslaves everyone, often without their realizing it.

All those chemical products, of which many are derived from crude oil, are the source of income for farm-chemical companies. But they do great harm to nature, to animals and to humans. When one thinks about all the troubles and the sicknesses and about the price that animals have to pay for this "modern" farming, then one can really say that humankind is cutting off the branch it is sitting on.

We are joining the call of the article's author: "We want poppies!" And we are publishing an even more urgent call: "We want the Kingdom of God!" We are wholeheartedly working on it, because we know that it is the solution to all humankind's problems. The Restoration of All Things — which was announced by the prophets, and for which our dear Saviour gave his life — is now standing at the door. It will be the deliverance for all the world's unhappy people, but we also know that it will have opposition, because the world's powerful people do not want to give up their interests. However, as Scripture says, all resistance is futile and will be overcome. It is the fight of the Lamb against the Dragon, and it is said that the Lamb will win because he is the Lord.

We can announce the golden time of happiness for all those who thirst for justice and truth. It is the Almighty, our God, Who has prepared it for all people through the sacrifice and the ministry of his beloved Son and his faithful Church which, during the entire Gospel Age, associated with him through the gift of its life for the benefit of all humankind. Poppies will flower again, as will the cornflowers and other flowers, on our meadows that are threatened by the use of chemical products. As the following song expresses: "The winter has past; the rain is over and gone. Flowers appear on the land, the time of singing has come, and the song of the doves is heard in the fields. The fig tree ripens its figs; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance" (Song of Solomon 2: 11–13). That is a poetic announcement of the Kingdom of God which will be introduced on Earth for the joy and the deliverance of all humankind.

on to his ministry of an evangelist in the Lord's service. His father has at last come to understand. Affected by John's zeal and the pleasant change operated in his dispositions, his mother has begun to attend the meetings. She feels honored that her child should be an envoy of the Lord to the unhappy human race, to console them and to communicate to them the hope of the Resurrection. She has witnessed the magnificent experiences John has gone through, which prove that God is a faithful Father Who takes tender care of his children.

News in brief of the Reign of Justice

The meeting at Sternberg Castle Station in Germany, was a great encouragement to the Family of Faith. On the first day, the Bible text was: "Wrath is cruel, and anger is overwhelming, but who can withstand jealousy?" The commentary by God's Faithful and Wise Servant was a kind but serious warning to fight, with all the energy at one's command, against the sentiments mentioned in that text of the day. One who is angry, also like one who is jealous, offers a picture of one truly in the grip of madness, and is like a man who is drunk and has lost all self-control. Indeed, what terrible deeds have been done under the influence of such sentiments. What regret and what sorrow there is for the man,

or woman, who has permitted himself to get spiritually drunk in this way, when he comes to himself and is faced with damage that is frequently irreparable! When such things happen, one can understand it being called "real madness", since, after all, a man has been thrust into doing that which is directly opposed to his own interests. The antidote is always the denial of self. Not only does it give self-control, but it also confers the possibility of helping those around oneself.

To close those two days of the congress, the last text was the Lord's kind invitation: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." After which he added: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." God's Messenger clearly brought out that the Lord, who tells us that his yoke is easy and his burden is light, had, as far as he was concerned, to carry the heaviest and the most painful burden that could be imagined. Yet he was able to find it light, just the same, because the unbounded love he had for his Father and for poor condemned mankind, whom he had come to set free, was a mainspring within him, able to surmount all hatred, all opposition and all wickedness aimed at him by the Adversary. That is the expression of such loftiness of soul that it surpasses human understanding. It shows us that to him who loves his neighbour enough, there is no insurmountable obstacle, and that he is able to go as far as sacrificing himself in

full. That is what every true disciple of Christ has understood and has been able to carry out as he followed in his Master's footsteps. That which makes the burden heavy and unbearable is the mixture we still frequently make of divine things with those of the Adversary. They are very rare who have really and unreservedly taken upon themselves the Lord's freeing yoke. That is also why they are very rare who have been able to wholeheartedly say, at every minute of the day and of the night, that the Lord's yoke is truly wonderfully agreeable and easy. Such a result is the fruit of an education that in some cases takes a whole lifetime.

With those powerful teachings placed before it there, the united Family of Faith was wonderfully fed, and it felt the very beneficial breath of divine grace. In general, a large number of the brothers and sisters set off with a fresh impetus to zealously place themselves at the Lord's service and to carry out his kind and glorious programme of liberation.

It is ever-more clearly being brought home to us that those meetings must not become merely simple gatherings of admirers, but of real idealists to whom altruism is not just a word or just a religion, but an invitation to action framed in unmistakable terms. As we were told at the meeting at Sternberg Castle Station, every Christian, worthy of the name, ought to be able to say: "Zeal for your house consumes me." We very distinctly feel that

the time has come when — in the midst of the terrible rising tide of discontent, of violence and of numberless conflicts, and of the unlimited worship of the "golden calf" — the remedy prepared by God and introduced by Him, must be made manifest. It is no longer the time of preparation, but the time for action, as the Lord's Messenger has told us many times. It is with that thought in mind that we will attend our meetings, resolutely laying aside every other sentiment. Let each of us take it to heart to join the ranks of those who hasten the Day of God with holy conduct and godliness. May the thought of each of us be to bear witness, with our way of living, to the fact that the new world is there in which one is no longer discontented or bad tempered, and has laid aside self-seeking, joyfully accepting every small inconvenience and trial that may be offered to us. Such a witness, borne collectively, will have much more effect than any amount of wonderful speeches. Witness of this kind has been borne in a small way here and there, but it must now be borne on a much greater scale and must become much more living. That is what we ardently wish all our dear brothers and sisters, and what, with all our heart, we wish to carry out ourselves.

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