

THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

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Founder: F.L.A. Freytag

The solution to world problems

AT the present time, when the whole social edifice is rocking on its foundations, one may well wonder what ought to be done to solve the difficulties and the question marks arising on every hand. It is a sure thing that all that men can put into action, according to their short-sighted views and their inability to judge as things really are, is doomed to complete fiasco.

Something very different is needed. So, let us first examine, in its broad lines, the programme the Creator of the universe had planned for the Earth and mankind inhabiting it. There, we shall find some wise directions. What we can immediately perceive is that mankind is in direct disharmony with the Almighty, Whose wonderful law, which governs the whole universe, they have broken. That admirable law shows that everything in the universe exists to do good: it bears witness to the fact that every creature has been created for the good of the rest, and that all things must have intercommunion.

That law was broken by mankind, and lamentable results followed. Wars have succeeded one another. That terrible procession of difficulties and misfortunes, those frightful situations, so painful and disappointing, are still going on today. Things are not getting any better, far from it. The prospects before mankind are gloomier than they ever were.

We are bound to see for ourselves that today, at the end of the period called the "Gospel Age", barbarity is being given free rein among the nations called "civilized" and even "Christian", and is progressing ever faster. In the course of the last world war, things acquired a very particular virulence. And they go on getting worse.

That is a state of things that our dear Saviour foretold. However, divine ways inform us and point out that those circumstances are only temporary. In the Book of Acts, a time of refreshing is announced, the Restoration of All Things, already foretold by the prophets of the Old Covenant. Besides, in the prayer he taught his disciples, the Lord Jesus quite clearly showed that a Day is coming when the will of God will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. That is quite clear.

Now, nearly 2,000 years have passed since Christ came to Earth to set the glorious Work of the deliverance of mankind in action. The first act of that deliverance was the Ransom he paid for mankind, condemned as a whole, and doomed to death. That liberating payment had to firstly make possible the calling and edu-

cation of a Little Flock of valiant and zealous collaborators. In association with their Master, those faithful disciples were called to work at setting up the Kingdom of God on Earth. Their preparation and education were most laborious. It lasted without interruption from the coming of Christ to Earth, till today. We have entered into the last phase of that wondrous Work.

As is clearly demonstrated by the way Christendom goes on, there are very few out of the large mass of Christians in name who have had any thought of honestly living up to the programme taught by the Son of God when he was on Earth. That is why Christ himself said that many are called, but few are chosen. Those who had it at heart to be disciples of our dear Saviour, did their best to live out the divine programme. They renounced self and lived up to the ministry the Master had charged them with, changing their characters. They truly displayed the characteristics of the Little Flock (the Royal Priesthood, and Christ's small and faithful Church). They were completely unknown of by the world and the big churches.

Side by side with the Little Flock, quite unknown, there developed many flocks, sometimes even immense flocks. They adorned themselves with the name of Christian, but their behaviour clearly showed that they were not imitators of our dear Saviour at all. They had not the spirit of Christ, so they were none of his. Christ said: "Love one another as I have loved you. ... By this shall all people know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." All the big religious denominations have displayed that they did not love one another, since they fought one another.

What disciples of the present time are faced with, is the introduction of the Kingdom of God on Earth. The question is to free mankind from the terrible circumstances in which they now are. Those circumstances are indeed, as shown in the Bible, such that if that frightful time of Distress were not shortened, no flesh could subsist, just as our dear Saviour pointed out. His apostles also spoke of it and gave all sorts of clear indications concerning that. Everything has been put in evidence sufficiently clearly for real disciples today to be able to recognize the epoch through which they are living, and to realize that the great Day of God is making its appearance. The Day of God also implies the downfall of Babylon the Great (false Christendom) and the setting up of the Reign of Christ on Earth.

The apostle Paul gives us many details concerning that. He tells us that among the confusion which will arise at that time, real disciples of Christ will be neither surprised nor at a loss, because they are "children of the light and children of the day". That is what we are able to perceive now. Those true disciples, moreover, constantly proclaim that the time of the setting up of the Kingdom of God, has come. They warmly invite all well-intentioned hearts to associate in that magnificent Work which must bring peace, happiness and lasting life on Earth. The wonderful Kingdom of God will create the protection and the deliverance for all sincere and honest hearts who are desirous of spending themselves, too, with all their might to free mankind at last from the Adversary's yoke, from "the rod of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers".

They are the things to be contemplated now. That is the one and only solution to the present lamentable situation which is without issue. The apostle Peter speaks of the present time, saying that the elements will be consumed and dissolved, and that a deluge of fire will fall on the Earth. They are symbolical words which give us to understand the intensity of the Tribulation that will rage on our planet.

In the midst of that ardent furnace, God's true children will introduce the New Earth. While everything around them is crumbling away, they will be able to subsist because they will have cultivated the divine sentiments in their hearts. That will be their protection. It is clearly written: "They shall be mine on the day I am preparing," and also: "Then, you will again see the difference between...those who serve God and those who do not."

The only urgent thing now is to permit one's heart to be transformed by following the Lord's directions, to overcome the power of selfishness which mows down mankind and leads them to the pit. That is what faces all who wish for joy and life. So, the question is to hasten that Day of deliverance and to abridge the time of Tribulation.

The thing to be contemplated for the purpose of solving the question marks and all the world difficulties which need solving, is to therefore seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness before all else, and to work with ardour on its construction. Throughout the Gospel Age, the Kingdom of God was solely represented by members of the small true Church which was unknown and hidden. Now, the general calling is taking place and inviting all mankind to associate in the Work of the Restoration of All Things. When the destruction of Babylon is an accomplished fact, when Babylon has

O Lord, make your ways known to me

FREDERICK is in tears. His father has just come in from the fields with his horses. He lost his whip on the way, and now the boy must go all the way back on foot to try and find it. There is not much gaiety at home. Besides his farm, father sells firewood. So, he is frequently on the road with his horses and carts, and when he gets home, he is most often drunk, to the great sorrow of his wife and children.

Mother has a deal to suffer from that state of things. So, she is constantly exhorting Frederick to never let himself be won by that passion for strong drink, which is the great sorrow of so many families. Being kind and God-fearing, whenever her work allows her the time, she gathers her five children around her and reads them some chapters out of the Bible, and applies her whole heart to explain-

ing it to them as far as she understands it. Frederick likes those moments of meditation very much, for he is particularly receptive to divine things.

When the Great War breaks out, father is called up. Then, in spite of his extreme youth, Frederick has to take upon himself the heavy work in the fields to help his mother and to permit the little family to get through those difficult times as easily as possible. As for mother, she applies all her strength and courage to the work, and is comforted by the cheerful assistance given to her by her young son. While his brothers and sisters, who are careless and indifferent, are out dancing and seeking entertainment and joining their friends in public houses, he is busy around the farm, making himself useful wherever there is a job to do.

One day, working in the big barn, he falls from a beam on to the concrete floor. Miraculously, he gets up quite unhurt, he has

not even a scratch. That makes him very thoughtful, for he realizes that his safety is due to divine protection.

As he is the only one of the children to take an interest in the farm work, his mother promises him that it is he who in time to come will inherit it. That gives Frederick great joy, for having put all his energy into the work of maintaining it, he has become greatly attached to it. He looks forward to that happy prospect with all his heart.

However, things turn out quite differently. A great grief overtakes him, striking at the very root the plans mother and son had made together. Mother catches a chill while working in the fields in very damp weather, and it develops into pneumonia, from which she never recovers, and dies to the great sorrow of her son who loves her very tenderly indeed.

Then, of course, his elder brother claims his legal right to the inheritance. Frederick

goes on working a few years on the farm without pay, and finally gives up all claim to it. He takes a job as an assistant gardener, and finally becomes a factory hand.

Being all alone, the young man often thinks of his mother. He calls to mind everything she has told him about divine ways, and the happy moments they have spent together meditating on passages out of the Holy Scriptures. And in that way, the desire becomes ever stronger in his heart to draw near to God and to study spiritual things.

As time goes on, Frederick gets married, and after a few years, he is made happy by the birth of a son. Having come into touch with the principles of Christian Science, he tries to interest his wife in them as well. However, she does not care for that sort of thing at all. That does not prevent their being closely united in their home, for the young woman is very kind-hearted, and there is a very good understanding between them, they get along

disappeared to make room for the New Heavens and the New Earth, God's Holy Spirit will be shed on all flesh, as the Scriptures tell us.

Then, there will be the wonderful restoration of the time of blessing, mentioned in the various prophecies, particularly by Isaiah. He says with enthusiasm: "Many people will come and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD.' ... They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and they will not learn war anymore." That prophet also says: "The LORD has decided where everyone will live. They will be there forever, from generation to generation. ... 'People will build houses and live in them. They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build houses and other people live in them. They will not plant and other people eat. My chosen people will live as long as trees and will fully enjoy the work of their hands. They will not work in vain or have children destined for disaster. I will bless them and their descendants. ... The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox... No one will be hurt or destroyed on all my holy mountain,' says the LORD."

That radiant vision of the New Earth is going to become reality in the near future. It is the promise of the Kingdom of God, so much longed for, and so much prayed for: "Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven." It is that sublime Work that the apostle Peter exhorts us to do, telling us to apply every effort to it. He says: "The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, in which the heavens [the spiritual and religious powers] will pass away with a loud noise, the elements [the civil and military authorities] will dissolve with intense heat, and the earth [the present social order] and its works, will be burned up." Further on, he says: "But according to his promise, we are looking forward to the New Heavens and the New Earth, where righteousness dwells."

We therefore have superb prospects ahead of us. They are the Restoration of All Things, which begin with the Return, or Second Presence, of Christ, as the apostle Peter also tells us. He adds: "Since Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have announced those days." It is therefore the answer to every question, it is the ideal and unique solution. The announced time of refreshing shall be the wonderful lenitive, the Balm of Gilead, for suffering and groaning humanity who is expecting deliverance.

The charity of animals, and the hardness of humans

In his French book *Les chiens et les hommes* (Dogs and humans), Maurice Barat tells the following story:

Solidarity among animals

A salesman trained his dog to bring him five bread rolls from a baker in a nearby street every morning, and for several months, the animal showed itself to be a reliable courier.

One day, the dog's master was surprised to see that two bread rolls were missing from the shopping bag. He thought that the baker had made a mistake, and so he told his dog to be careful. The next morning, when there were only three bread rolls in the shopping bag again, he called the baker who assured him that he did not make a mistake. Both men decided to follow the dog and saw that instead of going directly home, it disappeared into an old house in a nearby street. Shortly after, it quickly came out and went home. Curious about this detour, its master entered the old house

and found a female dog with its puppies at the end of a hallway. As a good mother, which she was, she started to growl and let a piece of a bread roll fall, which the father of the pups brought her every morning for food...

As a reward for this good deed, the master could do nothing better than severely reprimand his dog. What a difference in the mentality between them: one symbolizes generosity, and the other selfishness!

It seems as though the dog's master should have been touched after he understood why he was short of two bread rolls.

Such a gesture from the dog really should have spoken to its master and pleasantly surprised him, even if he suffered a minor loss and had to pay the cost. Is this not a heart-moving deed from a dog for his mate that is feeding her young? It is certain that human judgement — with its claims of ownership, its laws and its rulings — classifies this as theft and dishonesty. But can one expect these accusations to be understood by the brain of a dog?

Animals do not know what "stealing" means, because they do not understand "illegal activity". They live with the concept of complete freedom, which allows them to use what is available without any guilty feeling of violation. Because they are led by instinct, they naturally follow the perceptions of their senses and needs at the time, as they are not under any psychological pressure. Because they were created for abundance, they have no deceptive intentions. They are at home everywhere; the world belongs to them.

At least, that is the basis of their conduct. That can change in the company of humans and under their dependence. Domestic and circus animals are trained to behave in certain ways, especially due to the loss of their natural environment and living space. Dogs are especially able to adapt to the requirements of their masters. They even become attached and loyal, especially when they are treated well. They show themselves to be faithful companions, whose devotion can go as far as death. With the assistance of humans, they can develop fantastically. They can understand a large number of details, comprehend intentions and be clever, skillful and attentive guides on which one can rely. The proof is a guide dog that faultlessly, conscientiously and responsibly fulfils its tasks and that can recognize danger on a street, for the disabled.

Coming back to our bread-roll thief, it definitely did not intentionally do wrong. It did not think about itself, it was selfless, and while giving something to the bitch, it kept the largest part for its master. What a shame that he could not understand that or the problem of "conscience" and "responsibility" that he faced! Instead, he let himself chastise his dog and thereby show his lack of understanding and kindness.

Although humans should actually be the royalty of creation, they unfortunately often show themselves to be below the animals. The human heart has been hardened by filthy self-interest and is often harsh to others. Humankind will have to go through the Tribulation to put aside its terrible selfishness and to finally enter God's Kingdom where justice, goodness and nobility of the heart, rule. The animals will also find suitable areas for their activities. All beings will live in abundance and will emanate an agreeable and joyful ambience.

Why and how one becomes an altruist

The French natural-health magazine *Alternatif bien-être* No. 2 reports to us about an interview with Matthieu Ricard (a French writer and Buddhist monk) on the subject of altruism (selflessness, unselfishness), and whose statements are presented by Alessandra Moro Buronzo:

The incredible healing power of altruism

One of people's barriers to becoming natural altruists, is the impression that they would lose something or give up something of themselves, if they were to step aside to make way for others. But it is the opposite: the more closed off they are to others, the more they lose their possibility to exist and the more lost they are. Altruism, contrary to the view of a materialistic society, is not a defeat. Matthieu Ricard speaks about altruism in a language that melts scientific rigour and benevolence [kindness] together. His verdict is simple: the more one loves others, the happier one is. The following is the proof:

Why did you have the need to write 900 scientifically researched pages about altruism? Does its existence have to be proved?

It is certainly not necessary to write a book to show that selfishness [egotism] exists. No one doubts that. But it was necessary to show that true altruism exists, that one can develop it on the personal level, and that our culture can change itself to a have greater appreciation of others. My education and the fact that I have lived in the Himalayas for more than 40 years, have taught me that altruism is the ultimate human quality. However, as I delved into the subject, I saw that many philosophers, economists and psychologists brought altruism into discredit. For them, every action — even a beneficial one — towards others is directed by a fundamentally selfish motive. The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes spoke about the "war of all against all" ["The condition of man...is a condition of war of everyone against everyone"], and the Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud said: "I have found little that is 'good' about human beings on the whole. In my experience, most of them are trash..." What a grim view of human existence! I think — and I am not the only one — that altruism is a characteristic of a human being, which everyone should develop in order to achieve a more cooperative and united society. The concept of altruism is the only way to build a better world together by considering the challenges of the economy, of quality of life, and of the environment. In my book, I try to demonstrate that by basing myself on rigorous research work.

Before we continue, let us come to an exact understanding of what "altruism" means

It is the intention, the motivation and the desire to do good to others. In practice, this state of mind, as good as it could be, should be followed by an action that is aimed at improving the well-being of others, or reducing their suffering. However, if action is not possible, the motivation nevertheless remains altruistic. It is the motivation that "colours" our behaviour because one cannot only judge the action! A deed might appear to be beneficial, but be motivated by selfishness. For example, one can give someone a magnificent gift with the intention of gaining their favour in order to deceive them later. In order to understand whether a gesture is altruistic or selfish, one must know the underlying motivation.

In a society that is known for being competitive and selfish, do you not believe that many people think it is utopian to represent altruism?

Have you noticed that we hardly pay any attention to benevolent [kind], decent or helpful actions or to things that usually go well? All those things are normal to us. But our attention is immediately directed to violent or extreme behaviour or to bad news. If we are surrounded by 100 peaceful people, we do not even notice it. But if 2 of them begin to fight, we look at them and become vigilant. When we exit an aeroplane, we do not say: "Great, no passengers hit each other during the flight!" We consider decent behaviour to others as normal. One could call this "the banality of good". The largest part

very well indeed. As for him, Frederick does his best to live up to the religious knowledge he has acquired, and to promote harmony both in his family and in his dealings with his fellow men.

At this point comes the Second World War, and Frederick himself is called up. All his relations, and especially the aunt with whom he is living with his wife, prophesy to him that he will not come home from this war. "For," they say, "you do not possess the hardness required for a soldier's trade." Nevertheless, Frederick is quite confident, for he has wholeheartedly placed himself in the hands of the Almighty, asking Him not to allow that he should have to kill, and to permit him, whatever may happen, to remain faithful to this intention.

The parting is exceedingly moving. Many tears are shed by both him and his family by reason of the pain of his departure. Being in no hurry to board the train, which is to carry

him off to war, Frederick has to be contented with standing room, for every seat is taken. To add to his discomfort, there is an icy draught blowing down the corridor, which freezes him where he stands. So, he makes up his mind to try and get a seat at the next change by leaping from the train the moment it stops, so that he may be among the first to board the next train.

At the next stop, leaping from the train in full kit, he falls and breaks his wrist. So, instead of going to the front, he is sent to hospital. There, he is looked upon as a rotter and treated accordingly. He is hardly taken any notice of, and, most of the time, he is left to suffer in pain without receiving any relief. They neglect to set the bones immediately, so that his wrist cannot mend as it ought to. Much time is wasted in this way without Frederick being able to rejoin his company. With his wrist at last practically cured, he is sent off to the front, but then the war is

drawing to a close, and he has to surrender to the enemy.

Frederick now feels very keenly that he has been the object of divine solicitude, that God has answered his ardent prayer not to be permitted to have to kill his fellow men. If he has had to go through some difficult passes, he has the great satisfaction of having done no harm to anybody, and of nobody having been hurt by him.

There he is now, a prisoner in Russia. Then begin long weeks of hunger and of privations of every kind. He endeavours to adopt a serious discipline in his thoughts, and this does him a deal of good. In one camp, where a lot of glue had been left lying around to get rid of flies, some prisoners, thinking it was honey, ate it and died. Frederick, ever able to master his desires and to put his trust in God, had resisted the temptation and so been spared.

After a time, the prisoners are sorted out. Those in good health are set to work, and

the sickly are sent home. As Frederick's arm has set crookedly, it prevents him from doing useful work. So, he is among the happy ones who are repatriated.

How immensely glad Frederick is to get back to his family, and how happy his relations are that their prophecies have gone unfulfilled and that God has taken care of him! Deeply grateful to the Almighty for his visible protection, Frederick attends church regularly with his wife, seeking, at the same time, to reach a better understanding of the publications of Christian Science.

In the meantime, his wife is invited by a friend of hers, to attend a meeting held by the Angel of the Lord (the Philanthropic Association). She is deeply moved by it, and, from then on, attends the meetings regularly, because she obtains some edifying impressions of blessing there. Her whole heart is set on winning Frederick to that wonderful ideal which is doing her so much good. However,

of our life, from morning till night, consists of peaceful actions, of smiling, of helpfulness... But if someone slams a door in our face, we remember it for the rest of the day. Did you know that violence has been constantly decreasing for 500 years? For example, today in Europe, the chance of becoming a murder victim is 100 times less than in the 14th century. But we are fixated on bad news, which is mainly presented by the media. However, in the world, there are 1,000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that do tremendous things, but whose work is not noticed.

Is humankind therefore basically altruistic?

Firstly, it is not my opinion, but the result of a study of the behaviour of children and of the appearance of social behaviour in the course of evolution. Altruism and selfishness coexist inside every human being. It is enough to simply develop the former in order to make a difference. We are social animals oriented towards cooperation. One need only observe little children to see how they help unconditionally, which prominent studies have shown. For example, in a study, as soon as an adult dropped something on the ground, 95% of children between 2 and 5 years of age bent over to pick it up and gave it to them. When researchers show puppets that behave either good or bad towards other puppets, 4 out of 5 children — even 3-month-old children — pay attention to the former and disregard the latter. There is therefore a natural disposition to appreciate social behaviour and to cooperate. And this is confirmed at adult age. For example, it is known that people are reluctant to kill each other. During the First World War and during the Korean War, it was observed that only 15% of soldiers on the front line really shot at the enemy. The others only acted like they did or deliberately missed. Recent research in evolution has shown that cooperation is much more useful than competition in order to become species with increasingly complex abilities. Even Charles Darwin spoke much more about cooperation than about competition!

Is altruism good for us?

Conduct an experiment: be selfish [an egotist] for the entire day, and then look at the state you are in at night! If you are constantly in your own bubble, the whole world seems to be a sort of threat to you, and you will be very irritable and also unpleasant towards others. In contrast to that, if you are always benevolent and open to others, you will feel good within yourself, and you will maintain a good relationship with others. Everyone wins, but with selfishness, everyone loses.

Does one know what happens in the brain of altruistic people?

Neuroscientists have observed what happens in people who think about compassion or altruistic love, which is nowadays called the "supreme emotion". Of all the mental states, compassion is the one that activates, with the greatest intensity, the areas of the brain that are associated with positive emotions and with well-being. Why must altruism and compassion be taught at medical schools? A young medical intern [doctor in training] did dozens of hours of emergency service in order to learn his profession, almost like an elite soldier is trained. After a 36-hour shift, the intern was no longer capable of seeing sick people! In the USA, 60% of all carers [nurses, doctors and caregivers] have problems with "burnout" due to "empathic distress" ["empathy fatigue"]. The alternative would be to be indifferent towards patients, which would not be a good idea for carers. Tania Singer — a neuroscientist and an expert in empathy research, and with whom I have often worked — has shown that empathetic distress is a negative sentiment which leads to isolation; in contrast to that, altruistic love has shown itself to be a remedy for burnout.

Do you have examples that show how altruism has positively changed the lives of people?

There are millions of them! All those who practise altruism will tell you that it is the best way to simultaneously achieve good for others and also for oneself.

Is one born an altruist?

We train in order to acquire abilities. Why should it be different for human qualities such as inner peace, attention and altruism? Why should these qualities already be optimal at the beginning? One can learn and develop everything, and these mental qualities are no exception. When you train, you will see that after 1 month, your brain will already have a functional and structural change. To achieve that, everyday, after waking up, decide to organize your day for the good of others. You can also use 20 minutes everyday to develop unconditional benevolence, firstly, when you think of someone whom you dearly love, and then you can extend this sentiment to all beings. Your brain will change, and you will too!

How can one educate children to become altruists, especially within a school system that is based on competition?

The American neuroscientist Dr Richard Davidson established a 12-week course of altruism and benevolence [the Kindness Curriculum] in childcare centres in Madison, USA. The teachers taught the children, 4 years of age, lessons in gratitude, cooperation and mutual help, 2 or 3 times per week, each lasting for 20 minutes. The children also learned to be more aware of each other's emotions. The results were extraordinary: a very large increase in social behaviour, less conflict, more reconciliation and a large decrease in discrimination. This is the experiment that proved it: the teachers distributed stickers to the children and asked them to put the stickers in 4 envelopes on which there are 4 different photos: one of their best friend, one of a child they do not like, an unknown child and a sick child. Before the 12-week course, almost all the children gave stickers to their best friends. But after the course, all the envelopes had the same number of stickers in them, without discriminating against anyone. When one considers how much harm discrimination does to our society, one can better evaluate the importance of this type of experiment. In the USA state of Kentucky, this project will be extended to 100,000 children in order to continue this experiment on a larger scale.

Altruism also has limits. Can one be an altruist towards one's worst enemy, towards a dictator and towards a criminal?

That is the ideal target group in order to show that one is an altruist! It is easy to be friendly to those who are good to you. Benevolence consists of wishing for the world's suffering to end... If someone is exposed to hate or selfishness, it is undoubtedly a matter of an individual who is suffering and who causes suffering. Compassion is not a moral judgement or a reward for good behaviour: it is aimed at addressing the suffering, whatever it is, and wherever it is. A doctor who confronts a furious or dangerous madman will not beat him with a club, but will try, if necessary, to bring him under control and to look for a means to treat him. Would it not be desirable for a dictator to no longer feel hatred, cruelty or indifference?

When listening to you, one could think that the future of our planet (environment, economy...) and of humankind, depends on altruism.

Today, we are facing numerous challenges. One of our greatest difficulties consists of reconciling the imperatives [the essential things] of the economy, of the search for happiness, and of respect for the environment. Altruism is the guideline that makes it possible for us together to establish a new world and to naturally combine

these 3 time periods — short-term, medium-term and long-term — that are connected with those imperatives and to harmonize their demands. With greater consideration for the well-being of others, we could achieve a more solid and altruistic economy. We could ensure an improvement in living conditions and a reduction in inequalities. We would rethink the way we treat animals that we use for tools in our blind domination and that we turn into products for consumption, and we would not blindly sacrifice the fate of future generations for our short-lived interest and would not leave them a polluted and impoverished planet. One must therefore have the courage for altruism and have the courage to say that it exists, that it can be taught and developed, and that it is our best hope for a better world.

Without going into the above-mentioned thought that humankind is a social animal coming from evolution, we nevertheless appreciate that some people can comprehend and make understandable, the need to develop altruism. Ever since the time that "God's Messenger of our time" showed us the urgent need for humankind to overcome its selfish mentality and to acquire an altruistic mentality, who has listened to him? In his book *The Message to Humanity*, published in 1922, he demonstrates, in a masterly way, that the entire universe is subject to the Universal Law of altruism, which he defines as follows: "Each thing exists for the good of the others, and all have communion with each other." Only very few people, who are well disposed and obedient, have the courage to go against the current of the world and to follow this divine Law of love and benevolence. Of course, altruism is not readily acquired simply because one decides to, but is the result of a life-long fight against oneself. This fight represents a constant daily effort against the selfishness that resides within us and that is embedded in our neurons.

But also here, even if we have the best intentions, it is not possible for us to lead the fight without divine help. Jesus tells us: "Without me, you can do nothing" (John 15: 5). He is the One who delicately informs us about ourselves, about our flawed mentality, and he gives the strength and the wish to give up our selfishness in order to only exist for the good of others. He encourages us throughout this entire fight and floods our heart with joy when we take another step in the direction of good. Every effort is crowned with success and contributes to blessing. As the Lord's Messenger says: "Salvation is altruistic; by working on the salvation of others, one works on one's own salvation. And one can only do good to oneself by doing good to others."

But this education could also not be achieved without the supreme service given to us by the Lord: justifying our numerous shortcomings, and covering our sins with his redeeming blood. Justification by faith, and forgiveness that is granted to us, relieve and calm our conscience by taking away the feeling of guilt. Thus, the conscience can function normally, and we can humbly recognize our condition of sinners. In this situation, in which all people without exception find themselves, only One Being is able to restore the balance and to give the suitable equivalent for this shortfall: he is the One who gave his perfect life as the Ransom for the sins of the world. That is why the Holy Scriptures tell us that "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8: 1). Without that essential foundation, a complete change of humankind's mentality is not possible, because the selfish inheritance could not be deeply eliminated. Sin would remain in it, and sin's "wages" (consequences), which is death, would not fail to remind humankind that it is condemned, even if it knows all the science, philosophy and wisdom of the world.

Altruism is the essence of the Law that governs the entire universe and the Lawgiver Himself, the great Jehovah. The Holy Scriptures tell us: "God is Love", which means "Altruism". Because the only true love is

he is far too saturated with the teachings of Christian Science to want to follow her, although his longing is growing to be able to grasp the divine thought.

One day, Frederick has a serious accident at work. A very large set of shelves, which is being put in place, falls on his chest and fractures several ribs. For whole months on end, he is confined to his bed. During that time, he is visited by the friend with whom his wife goes to the meetings of the Angel of the Lord (the Philanthropic Association). She brings him *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance) to read.

Now, Frederick has a lot of time on his hands to meditate in. He appreciates the kind visit of that agreeable woman, and applies himself to reading that book. From the very first page, he is gripped by the beauty and the irrefutable logic of the teachings it provides. To him, it is a veritable revelation. He discovers there the answers to all the questions

with which his mind has been preoccupied since his earliest days. He also wants to read *The Divine Revelation and Eternal Life*. When he has done that, he feels that he has been enlightened in full. He is able to make out how erroneous Christian Science is. He realizes that there is no question at all of ignoring evil, but that the question is to overcome evil with good. Reading those precious books, he has no trouble at all to admit that evil is at the bottom of his own heart, and that he must fight it and conquer it within himself, so that he may become a real blessing to his fellow men, and so that truth may once and for all get the better of error.

Frederick is enthusiastic over having at last discovered what he has so long been looking for. He can never be thankful enough to the Lord for having led him to the fresh and limpid springs of the Truth, and for having satisfied his soul with knowledge of the wonderful ways of the Lord and the glorious

prospects of the setting up of the Kingdom of God on Earth.

From then on, Frederick does his very best, with all his heart, to collaborate, as far as he is able, on spreading the Good News of the Kingdom of God. His greatest joy is to be able to work in certain seasons on one of the "test stations" of the Kingdom of God, ever to incorporate himself more firmly into the wonderful brotherhood that reigns there, to give to the world a practical demonstration that will convince that the Gospel is a power of God which leads to life and happiness.

In spite of being advanced in age, Frederick feels wonderfully encouraged by the divine promises. It is his greatest desire to fulfil the conditions that will enable him to take part in the Restoration of All Things, and, in that way, to collaborate on the resurrection of his dear mother and her return to Earth, and also on that of all those who have departed. All that, thanks to the Ransom so generously

and dearly paid by our dear Saviour and the members of the Little Flock. With a deal of enthusiasm, he sings this wonderful hymn which says:

*They come, great joy their brows adorning,
Those whom from chains the Lord hath freed:
All those for whom we have been mourning,
His love doth give them back indeed.*

*Dear children of the Resurrection,
See them returning from the dead:
Hark how they sing their jubilation,
See youth eternal crown their head.*

News in brief of the Reign of Justice

We continue to receive good news from every part of the Lord's Work. We are able to joyfully note joy that the appreciation of the beloved brothers and sisters is constantly increasing, and that the publications of the Truth go on increasing in value in their eyes. We may

totally unselfish. God is not only animated by unselfish love, but He is its Embodiment. Divine love is the basis of all of Creation, and that is why it is harmonious and perfect in all dimensions from the infinitely large to the extremely small. The human body is like a miniature universe that is governed by the Law of love. In it, every organ works in an altruistic way for the good of the body, and receives for that, the fruit of the work of the other organs. The result is quite simply marvellous because it is life that is produced from it and that will be maintained and can last as long as this Law is respected.

Unfortunately, the human mind does not agree with the perfect Law. That it why it inflicts on the body all the nerve tensions that come from its selfish sentiments: animosity, anger, jealousy, discontent, impatience, etc. That is the reason why humankind dies. Because it lives selfishly, whereas it was created for altruism. It wears itself out, like a piece of cloth, under the constant influence of the diabolical spirit. Whereas the practice of altruism attracts God's Spirit, the Vital Fluid, which is the essential spiritual nourishment for its soul and for its nerves. One day, when humankind is constantly under the influence of this Spirit of life, it will no longer die. By following the Great Commandment: "Love God above all and your neighbour as yourself", Jesus said: "Do this, and you will live." Luke 10: 27 and 28.

Altruism brings peace to humankind: in families, in nations and among nations. It unites them into a single family, as though they were the organs of a body. This is where we touch on the actual purpose of God's glorious plan, according to which, one Family of Brothers and Sisters who truly love each other, is formed on Earth. For that, a reconciliation is necessary. One must be reconciled with one's Creator, with one's fellow people and with oneself by reconciling oneself with the Law of life, the Law of one's body, which is pure altruism. To accomplish this reconciliation, the Lord God gives one a Saviour, who is one's Redeemer and, at the same time, one's Educator.

The Lord God, in his faith and in his foreknowledge, knows that the time is coming when the experience of evil will finish and that its equivalent will lead humanity into its greatest humiliation: the complete failure of a civilization that, in all aspects, is built on the unfortunate foundation of selfishness. Altruism will then be revealed to all eyes, and, as the last hope, the nations will turn to the One who will open the "door of salvation" for them and who will become the Doctor of their soul.

Finally, it is no exaggeration to say that altruism is the solution to all problems. But it would be unrealistic to believe that it could be attained without God and without the One whom He gave as the Mediator between Himself and humankind: Jesus Christ. He was the greatest Altruist who ever lived on Earth. He not only gave his love, his tenderness, his unlimited devotion and his infinite compassion, but also his life in order to seal divine forgiveness for the benefit of all people, including his enemies. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14: 6). "There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other name under Heaven given to humankind by which we must be saved." Acts 4: 12.

The suffering of the African elephants

The following article — which was published in the French newspaper *Le Monde* on the 14th of September 2017 — shows us that African elephants are in constant danger due to poaching.

In order to escape poachers, elephants travel at night and hide during the day

A study from Kenya shows that these pachyderms, which normally travel during the day, have changed their behaviour due to the threat from humans.

The African elephant, which is normally active during the day, has learnt to travel and to feed at night,

in order to be able to better hide itself during the day. In this way, it tries to escape the attention of poachers who are very active in some areas, according to a study from the animal conservation organization Save the Elephants (STE) and from the University of Twente (in the Netherlands).

Last year, this behaviour was observed in an elephant called Morgan, which was fitted with a GPS tracking collar. It was determined to cross a dangerous area. This solitary male [bull] left the coastal region in south-east Kenya in order to go to Somalia. In this area, which is very risky for elephants, it had to devise a strategy to survive: it mainly walked at night and hid itself in bushes during the day.

The females [cows] are more careful

To study the behavioural changes in elephants, which are endangered due to poaching for their ivory tusks, scientists from Save the Elephants have established a "night-day speed ratio" for elephants, which measures their activity at night compared to daytime. "Our hypothesis here is that poaching is a clear daytime risk," was explained in the study that was published in the scientific journal *Ecological Indicators*.

The study and research team — led by Festus Ihwagi, a member of Save the Elephants and a doctoral student at the University of Twente — used data gathered between 2002 and 2012 from elephants fitted with GPS tracking collars in northern Kenya. More precisely, the team tracked 28 females and 32 males. Two periods were examined. During the first period, from 2002 to 2009, the level of poaching was moderate. During the second period, from 2010 to 2012, the level of poaching was particularly high in northern Kenya.

Normally, elephants rest at night and are active throughout the day. But the scientists saw that "elephants moved more at night than during the day where and when poaching levels were high", between 2010 and 2012, as the study underlines. This behaviour was more marked among the females than the males. Accompanied by young elephants [calves], females are often more careful, explained the scientists.

Easy prey for lions

"This study shows the adaptability of earth's largest land mammal to adapt their behaviour flexibly in order to stay safe," said Save the Elephants' founder Iain Douglas-Hamilton. "This alteration in movement behaviour by elephants has implications for their foraging strategy, reproduction and survival, which are not yet fully understood."

"For mothers with very young calves, the risk of predation of the calves by lions or hyenas would be higher at night," Festus Ihwagi told the French news service AFP. "For the mature elephants, it implies an alteration of their normal social life."

The researchers propose using their night-day speed ratio as a "real-time indicator of the level of poaching". Every year in Africa, about 30,000 are killed to supply the worldwide ivory trade, which is mainly destined for China and south-east Asia.

How sad that humankind has become such a cruel and merciless enemy of animals! Whereas humankind, according to God's will, should actually be their protector and benefactor, and animals should be the friendly companions of humans. The beauty of these divine creatures should have filled humankind's heart with admiration and with gratitude to its Creator, which should have led it to respect all forms of life. Life, which not only surrounds humankind everywhere or which is only biological or physical, but which is also full of sentiments. The sentiments of animals: the love of a mother and a father, joy and even gratitude, make them complete individual beings. How very regrettable it is that humans, among whom those feelings should have developed to a much higher level, are often far below their "lesser brothers and sisters"!

After the Flood, it was said to the human race: "Fear and terror of you will be in every living creature of the earth." (Genesis 9: 2). Whereas animals at the beginning

of Creation, had no fear of humans. It is written that God brought animals to the man (the first man: Adam) to see what he would call them (Genesis 2: 19). That was the paradisaical (edenic) condition, the perfect harmony and the mutual attachment among all creatures, which guaranteed them peace, safety and happiness. After the Flood, humans began to hunt animals in order to feed and clothe themselves, because the means of survival and the climatic conditions were no longer like they were before.

Today, it seems that human greed has reached its high point, and it is because of the love of money, that one sacrifices elephants, these magnificent animals, gifted with great intelligence and sensitivity. And with them, many other species are also paying with their lives for the terrible and increasing greed of humans. Our hearts are certainly moved in view of the daily fight for survival of the African elephants. Their ability to change their behaviour in view of danger, impresses us, but it most likely no longer suits their natural needs.

In another article from the same newspaper, but from the 14th of October 2017, more precise information is given about the extent of the animal trade:

In recent years, the plundering of natural resources has been increasing and has reached a frightening speed in order to satisfy the demand for wild animals and plants, especially threatened ones, which, thanks to the Internet, has become worldwide. Millions of animals are illegally caught or killed, to be sold as domestic pets, to be eaten, for tourist souvenirs, for ornaments, lucky charms, luxury jewellery or for ingredients in traditional Asian medicine.

These activities, whose extent is unprecedented, represent a serious threat to the survival and the conservation of numerous species, of which many are well known on our planet. There are killed, every year, on average, more than 70 million sharks, 100,000 scaly anteaters (pangolins), 20,000 elephants, 1,000 rhinoceroses and several hundred tigers, which are used for shark-fin soup, meat and scales, ivory, horns, and skins, respectively. These dizzying numbers — which could make us forget that each of these animals is a unique and irreplaceable individual — represent a continuous slaughter that shows no signs of slowing down.

In view of this painful situation, the only consolation that we really have today is that we, with all our energy and zeal, can work on the fulfillment of the divine promises. They remind us of God's will, which is that the whole world will be restored during the blessed time that is called the Restoration of All Things (Acts 3: 21). That is a new age which is currently beginning and which means that evil will no longer be allowed.

By means of the Ransom paid by the Saviour of the world for the benefit of guilty humankind, the Almighty will carry out a comprehensive education for all humanity. This education will be additionally encouraged by the phenomenal Tribulation in which humankind will revise its line of conduct. Humankind will understand that selfishness leads to misery and that it is high time to learn how to practise altruism. The wicked will disappear in the final fray, but the people of goodwill, who will be protected, will wish to let themselves be instructed by the Almighty in his ways of the Truth. This will then be the end of all misfortune for humans and animals.

Humankind will be delivered from the terrible influence of the current "prince of this world", Satan. Humankind will become wise and wonderfully kind and will slowly but surely reflect the pure mentality of its heavenly Father, the One Who did not hesitate to give the most precious thing He had, his beloved Son, in order to deliver humankind from the terrible path of evil and to make it earthly children of God, who will be able to live forever on Earth in perfect harmony with all living things. Our dear elephants will no longer have to travel at night or fear for the lives of their little ones, because there will be no more suffering or harm anywhere on Earth. The world will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Isaiah 11: 9.

say that every letter we receive expresses the immense gratitude that is felt for the precious teachings which faithfully come to bring God's people the encouragement and the stimulant indispensable for them in the good fight of faith, which God has provided for them through the ministry of his faithful Messenger.

How impressive it is to realize with what great fidelity and with what kind solicitude, the Lord has provided through his faithful Messenger, in advance and in great profusion, for the spiritual needs of his dear children! Every one of us is able to feel how necessary that is through these times when the Adversary's seduction and that of his demons, are beginning to do their work in our midst with a growing intensity of cunning and of craft, with the object of overthrowing everything

that can be overthrown. But the divine instructions — so much to the point and so precise, and incessantly renewed — make it possible for everyone who will absorb them to hold out to the end and to have the victory of good over evil.

★

We once again have the privilege of celebrating the memorable date of the 18th of October in commemoration of the ministry of the Royal Priesthood, and particularly also the great work and soul's labour of the Lord's Messenger under the leadership of our dear Saviour. We have been able to become more and more deeply imbued with the thought of what the ministry of the Lord's Faithful and Wise Servant has been and still is to us, and of all that God has been able to place in his care by reason of his faithfulness and devo-

tion to God's people. We will form a worthy estimate of his courage, of his faith, of his perseverance and of the efforts he made to teach us to love God above all, to be able to fulfil our ministry with all the enthusiasm and the faith it calls for.

Those various commemorative meetings describe to us with more power and precision than ever, the ministry that the last members of the Body of Christ are faced with, as is also the Host of the Lord, so that they may hasten God's Day. We are made to feel, with particular keenness, how needful it is, at the cost of every possible effort, to place ourselves at the benefit of God's Holy Spirit, which alone is able to grant us the power and the possibility to make our calling and election sure, once and for all.

We warmly thank the many brothers and

sisters who write to us on this anniversary of the Royal Priesthood. We are deeply moved by all those testimonies of affection for the last brothers and sisters who are still running the race of the High Calling in Jesus Christ.

Those of us who are consecrated disciples are more than ever aware of the immense grandeur of our ministry, and above all of our responsibility. We are ardently desirous of carrying out that majestic programme, with all the worthiness, the seriousness and the humility it calls for, and with the almighty assistance of the Lord. We give thanks with all our heart for the prayers and the attachment of the dear Family of Faith.

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