

THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

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Founder: F.L.A. Freytag

What is the judgement of Go?

IN Christendom, they have quite mistaken ideas about the judgement of God because they do not know God's character and dispositions. Besides, mankind generally have no notion at all of what justice means in its true sense. They pass judgement without rhyme or reason, and thoughtlessly and quite presumptuously, seeing that they have no foundation at all by which to appreciate things correctly.

To judge things correctly, one must know divine ways and the Almighty's glorious mindset. One's judgement must be founded on the Universal Law, and one must be righteous. If the judges who preside in courts of justice fulfilled those conditions, their judgements would be very different from what they are. The fact is that divine justice is altruistic, whereas human laws, which the judges have to administer, are selfish like the people who passed them. And so, with sublime wisdom, Christ said: "Do not judge, and you will not be judged." Indeed, no one who is not animated by God's Holy Spirit is capable of sound judgement.

Now, we may read this in the Bible: "When your judgements are executed on Earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness." Hence, the judgements of God are an immense blessing, real assistance and perfect deliverance. When mankind learn righteousness, they learn to behave in such a way as to become happy and viable. God's justice ensures the continuation of the things He rules. For instance, the Sun is righteous because it is supplied from the Source, God's Holy Spirit, which is righteous. Accordingly, the Sun fetches blessing. On Earth, it activates the whole hydrographic system. If the Sun were to cease to shine on to the Earth, all the water would freeze. Nothing would stir, there would be the stillness of death. However, the Sun sets everything in motion.

As Solomon said: "All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full." Yet the rivers flow unceasingly. The Amazon River, for instance, delivers to the sea, 120,000 cubic meters of water per second. It is 250 kilometres wide at its mouth. From that, we can get some idea of the amount of water it is constantly pouring into the sea. Yet the sea is never full, because there is a constant exchange of circulation.

It is interesting to realise that everywhere in the Universe — on Earth, in nature and in our bodies — there is a constant circulation. That demonstrates that the same Architect has designed all things, that the same Maker has been at work everywhere, and that

the same thought has been the mainspring of action everywhere, a thought that was righteous, upright and perfect.

The nations claim that they know justice and exercise it. But if experts in the law knew justice, they would be in perfect agreement with God's plan and with his line of thought. The fact that they are not in agreement with Him proves that they do not know justice. For that reason, God says: "As high as Heaven is above the Earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts." That is why it is only when God's judgements are executed on Earth, that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

Divine justice is splendid, it is all kindness, whereas the justice of men is all wickedness. As we have frequently shown, this is how it goes: say, a man breaks the law. He is summoned to appear before a judge who then condemns him. Thus, there are two malefactors: the delinquent and the judge who condemns him, who has no right to. In that way, there is no justice at all, since both are malefactors. What proves it, is that sooner or later, both will go to their graves, having received the wages of sin, which is death. So, that justice is benighted and unenlightened.

Very different to that is divine justice. It is all light and nobility, and all glorious blessing. When mankind know this justice, they will be glad to practise it. One will no longer want to injure one's neighbour, because one will understand that in doing so, one injures oneself first, destroying oneself with one's own line of conduct.

Of old, in the law of Moses, it was said: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth...burn for burn, wound for wound." That is simply a way of explaining another saying from the Bible: "The wages of sin is death." The sinner executes that sentence on himself by doing wrong. The wrong he does falls back on himself and tumbles him into the grave. It is written also: "The one who sins shall die." It is not God at all Who punishes. If He did punish, He would be a malefactor.

He always gives. Indeed, we are told by our Lord that every offence committed against God is forgiven. Every offence committed against his Son is also forgiven. Only, the man who does wrong destroys himself with the wrong he has done. It is our body that is our judge.

So, man dies, not from any divine condemnation, but from condemning himself with his own thoughts, words and deeds, which are diametrically opposed to the law for which he was designed. In breaking it, he damages

his organism and throws it right out of gear, even destroying it completely. It is the same as if you were to make a wonderful piece of machinery work backwards and employ it for a job for which it was never designed. In doing so, you put it quite out of order.

Mankind are quite ignorant of all that. Today, the cover that is thrown over all people and the veil that is spread over all nations, are being torn away, and all who want to, can see with the naked eye, the splendour of the wisdom that presided at the drawing up of God's splendid plan of love.

As we said above, God does not punish anybody. For 6,000 years, He has allowed mankind to have their own experiences, till the time appointed by Himself when He executes his magnificent and sublime judgement on Earth. He starts off by providing mankind with a Ransom, for they are condemned to death, being, from the first, conceived and begotten in iniquity. So, He provides them with a Ransom before their appearance before their Judge. That Ransom, which is the cover for the debts of the guilty party: the human race, is paid by our Lord Jesus Christ and by his Little Flock. The Little Flock is mentioned in the Scriptures and is also known by the names: the faithful Church, the Royal Priesthood, the Body of Christ, and the holy Consecrated. They are human beings who, having been redeemed by the blood of Christ, lay down their lives with their Master for mankind.

That work has been going on throughout the Gospel Age. Today, it is coming to completion. That is why the time when God's judgements are to be executed on Earth, has started. The Ransom that Christ paid on the Cross for mankind, places them in the position of being reprieved by divine grace. It is the foundation of God's judgements, which are executed in the Kingdom of God with an altruistic education to which all people are invited, so that they may become righteous and therefore viable.

The Gospel Age is brought to a close by mankind themselves, who do not love one another and therefore bring the present world to an end. They make war on one another and will exterminate one another in the trouble they make. That Distress, as we have shown elsewhere, is brought about by them, owing to their senseless folly. Their madness is now reaching its peak. At the same time, that trouble is the prelude to the "times of refreshing". In fact, the Scriptures declare that the time is coming when, for those who fear the Lord, "the sun of righteousness with rise with healing in its rays". Then indeed, the Ransom being paid in full, the condemnation weighing on mankind is lifted off them by the Work of Reconciliation done by our dear Saviour

Seed of blessing

MISTER X, a hotel proprietor in the town of Briançon (in southeastern France), had had a particularly trying day, and now, at nine o'clock in the evening, he felt he could take a few moments' rest. It was the busy season, and his house was full, full, it would seem, of the most disagreeable people it had ever been his misfortune to put up with. He had found the task of satisfying everybody, of appeasing the irritation of those he was unable to satisfy, and, at the same time, of keeping up the morale of his staff, settling disputes and, in general, keeping the business running smoothly — a great strain on his nerves, and he felt that the least little hitch might now make the cup overflow. Suddenly, he became aware of a young man who had stopped at his desk and was asking him something. "Well, it won't take long to turn that man away," he thought. The only vacant

room was the expensive one he always kept in reserve in case some important person came unexpectedly.

"I shall be staying in these parts for some time. Could I have board and lodgings at a reasonable price?"

"I'm sorry, we're full," Mr X answered somewhat gruffly.

The young man smiled. "I'm glad to see that business is so brisk in this town," and he continued: "I must have been to every hotel in the place, and they all say the same. But the fact remains that I have nowhere to stay for the night." He did not appear at all perturbed at thus finding himself stranded in a strange town, and raising his hat with a friendly smile, he turned away.

While he had been talking, Mr X had been watching his face and was struck by the fact that the only lines on it were such as were made by smiling, and that a serene light seemed to shine from his eyes, an influence

that dispelled the irascibility he had been feeling. Indeed, he was sorry to see him go.

On an impulse, he called him back. "Young man," he said, "my best room is vacant, but it is very expensive. That is why I didn't mention it before."

"Oh, indeed!" was the answer. "Do you think I could have it just for one night?"

"Most certainly, you may. Come, I'll show it to you."

The young man was delighted with the room and expressed his gratitude at being permitted to occupy such a princely apartment. His politeness was delightful, and his smile was full of friendly affection.

As he returned to his desk, the hotel proprietor felt that it would have been a great loss to have let the young man go. He had been feeling ill-tempered, irritated and all on edge until that latecomer arrived, and then when he smiled at him, his nerves started to relax, and as they talked together, a feeling

of peace came over him. But when he turned away, it was as if a cloud had blocked the Sun. Now, he felt quite set up again and ready to tackle any problem that might arise.

Waking up the next morning after a very restful sleep, he remembered the young man who had taken his best room for just one night. "Today, he'll be leaving because all the other rooms were booked for weeks ahead," he thought. He remembered the soothing influence he had had on him the night before. He once again felt that influence of peace taking command of his nervous system, and decided that the young man must not be allowed to go.

When he came to pay for his room, he took him aside and said: "I've been thinking: I would like you to stay. You may keep that room and pay whatever you feel you can afford. But don't say anything about it to the other guests."

And that was how it came about that

and his Church. That Church has nothing to do with those known in the world.

The survivors of that trouble will find themselves at the opening of a new dispensation, that of the Kingdom of God. From our dear Saviour, they will receive the law of love. He will invite them to make a covenant with God based on the Constitution of the Kingdom of God. The divine programme will be set before them, so that they may develop viable dispositions, as we showed above.

To acquire those viable dispositions, a viable character, they will have to live up to the divine principles, that is to say, to get in line with the law of their organism, which requires one to live for doing good and only good. That is the altruistic law of divine love. Till such time as they have reached perfection by carrying out that programme of life and have acquired eternal life, mankind will constantly receive cover for their shortcomings as long as they avow them, from the Ransom paid by Christ. That wondrous process is clearly explained in *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance), written for those who fear the Lord.

As soon as those who dwell on Earth have sufficiently developed the dispositions of the Kingdom of God to make it possible, all who are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come out, for our dear Saviour also paid the Ransom for them. They will rise from the dead and will also come to judgement, that is, to divine judgement. So, they will also have to face the education of the Kingdom of God in order to obtain lasting life by learning righteousness.

In Revelation, we are told that some will rise to life and others to judgement. Those who rise to life are those who take part in the First Resurrection. They have associated in God's Work by introducing the Kingdom of God on Earth, laying down their lives as part of the Ransom with their Master for mankind.

As we can see, mankind's judgement has nothing in common with God's judgement. Mankind's judgement condemns and causes suffering. It punishes and sentences to death both the judge and the judged. God's judgement, on the contrary, forgives, reconciles and delivers. It places mankind at the benefit of the Ransom paid by our dear Saviour. He is the Merciful Judge who pays for the guilty, to restore to them the possibility of going ahead to eternal life. That is their destiny. That wonderful Judge speaks to their hearts, showing them the way of justice, of wisdom and of divine love, inviting them to achieve what is proposed in the Bible: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind," and: "Love your neighbour as yourself." [Love God above all and your neighbour as yourself] ... "Do that, and you will live." ... "Choose life, so that you may live." To choose life, is to become a righteous man who is able to keep going by living up to divine justice which is made manifest in love.

"Be glad and rejoice forever in what I create." Isaiah 65: 18

The large fire at the Notre Dame cathedral in Paris on the 15th of April 2019, was so significant that it not only shocked the people of France, but of the whole world. Upset by the extent of the damage, people donated over one billion euros in three days, for its restoration. Famous billionaires donated up to 200 million euros. That quickly caused a controversy, especially among those who have long been worried about social inequality in the country.

The poor (who have been fighting for a small increase in their income and for an improvement in their living conditions) and those who constantly work for charities

(that care for the sick, the disabled and the homeless), have good reason to be bitter when they see that there is no money for their concerns, but that massive amounts of money are collected for a building.

Several people have pointed out the "double standard" of politics, which is obvious here. It is difficult to deny that in our society, stones are more important than people. Of course, the Notre Dame cathedral is a cultural inheritance. But isn't humanity itself the most important inheritance, and if there isn't enough money for everyone, shouldn't people have the priority over stones. The fate of the poor and the unfortunate, moves the hearts of our multimillionaires less than that of stones. But it is a good opportunity to polish one's image and to present oneself as a benefactor in the eyes of the people. Some people believe that, but others don't...

Even if we can understand the pain of those who are attached to this historical building — which is an architectural masterpiece, and which is a display of humankind's art and admirable abilities — we would nevertheless like to make a comparison with the Temple of God, as it is described in the Bible, and see how it is appreciated by the God of Heaven Himself.

The Holy Scripture tells us that God (the Most High) does not live in temples made by hands (Acts 7: 48), and that his Temple is his people. Apostle Paul clarifies: "Do you not know that you are the Temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?" (1 Corinthians 3: 16). To the Ephesians, he explains: "Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Cornerstone. In him, the whole building is constructed and rises to become a holy Temple in the Lord. And in him, you are also being built together to become a place where God lives through his Spirit" (Ephesians 2: 20–22). Apostle Peter, for his part, invites his brothers and sisters in Christ: "As you come to him [Jesus Christ], the Living Stone — rejected by people, but chosen and highly honoured by God — you also, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house." 1 Peter 2: 4 and 5.

In reality, we give importance to physical temples or churches that are built by human hands, but God builds his Temple that is completely spiritual. And the latter is not visible, because the stones that God uses are those that are rejected or despised by humankind. Apostle Paul tells us that God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 1 Corinthians 1: 27.

Today, we find ourselves in the time of the introduction of new things. We therefore do not need to be surprised by anything. The former things will pass away, and all things will become new and especially true (Revelation 21: 4 and 5). Stones, no matter how admirably arranged they are, cannot symbolize God's true Temple. Even in view of Herod's magnificent temple in Jerusalem, Jesus explained, after his Disciples pointed out its buildings to him: "Do you see all those things? Truly, I tell you, they will be completely torn down. Not one stone will be left in place" (Matthew 24: 2). That happened because the Israelites were not faithful to their God or his law. God therefore could not protect them or their temple, which was completely destroyed by an enemy.

That is also how it is in our days. One certainly cannot expect God to protect a church in which disgraceful and scandalous conduct flourishes, which is coming to light today, even though it has always existed, as our Lord explained: "There is nothing covered that will not be uncovered, and no secret that will not be revealed" (Luke 12: 2). Apostle Paul rightly said: "God's Name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you" (Romans 2: 24). And for that reason, not only can the blessing not be displayed, but the curse is also attracted.

We have now arrived at the day when, as our Lord announced: "The stars will fall from the sky [Heaven]" (Mark 13: 25). That means that all religious, military and civilian authorities, which were respected and revered,

are exposed and demasked, and lose all the influence, authority and credibility that they had among humankind. Current events will open the eyes of an increasing number of people, whose anger will increase so much that they will no longer want to be baptized.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews, reports the Almighty's following words to us: "Once more, I will not only shake the Earth, but Heaven as well" (Hebrews 12: 26). But that means today's Heaven and Earth, which means the religious, civilian and military institutions and the one who established them: the "prince of this world" (God's Adversary, Satan). Because the New Heaven was formed by the Lord himself during the Gospel Age. It consists of the true Church of Christ, which was always small, hidden and a mystery, but which worthily and faithfully fulfilled its ministry.

Those who form it have suffered persecution in order to give a testimony to the Truth. They fulfilled their priestly ministry by blessing their enemies and by paying for the guilty. Most of the time, they were persecuted by religious people whom they had demasked by the light of their testimony. They also forgave, returned good for bad, and followed the unwavering example of their Master. Those true Disciples of Christ gave marvellous comfort to the unfortunate on Earth. As well, they were the "light of the world", even if the world in general did not know or recognize them. They shared the fate of their Master, which was often hate and scorn, by uniting their lives with his and finally also dying the same death, the death of sacrifice, as the Ransom for the sins of the world.

But the false church, instead of giving its life for humankind, persecuted all those who did not agree with it. It started and fought the bloody Crusades (a series of religious wars from the 11th to the 17th centuries). It started and continued the Inquisition (a group of institutions to combat heresy, from the 12th to the 19th and 20th centuries), which committed abuse, torture and executions. It banned the reading of the Bible for centuries. It deceived people by selling "Indulgences", which means that it sold divine forgiveness through the blood of Christ, which was given freely to humanity. And it condemned to death all those whom it said were heretics. That is why the Bible speaks about it in these terms: "In her was found the blood of prophets and saints" (Revelation 18: 24). And further: "Her sins are piled up as high as Heaven, and God has remembered her crimes." Revelation 18: 5.

Today we are experiencing the Day of Equivalents, which means, the time for reaping what was sown. Let us therefore not be sad or complain, because we will also experience other very different events that will lead to the end of Satan's kingdom, including his religions that he uses to deceive people, to create divisions among them, and to eventually separate them from God.

Let us much rather rejoice that God has built the walls of Jerusalem, the true one, the Salvation of all the nations. For it is said that all the nations shall be comforted in Jerusalem, like a mother comforts her child (Isaiah 66: 3). Apostle Paul also clarifies: "The Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother" (Galatians 4: 26). That "new mother of humanity" is therefore the entire Church, composed of 144,000 Disciples of Christ, as John's Revelation shows us. Revelation 14: 1.

That New Jerusalem was disregarded by the world in general and especially by religious people, but the gift of its life, which contributed to cover the sins of humankind, is an agreeable fragrance to the Lord God. For that reason, He invites us all to not be sad, but to sing about his Vineyard, about the Vineyard whose Keeper He is, because He waters it and protects it day and night, so that no one harms it (Isaiah 27: 2 and 3). And He tells us: "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her" (Isaiah 66: 10). "Be

for the whole of his stay in those parts, the newcomer had the privilege of being Mr X's particular guest.

The young man was a landscape photographer. He was going all over the place taking pictures of all the wonderful views he could find. He would come in rather late of an evening. The hotelkeeper had taken a great interest in him. He would wait up for him and serve him personally for the sake of that short contact with Mr Alexander (F.L. Alexander Freytag), as he called him by his Christian name.

The young man only talked about serious things. One of his favorite subjects of conversation was the "science of life". He would communicate his hopes with infectious enthusiasm. He would speak about the future, when there will be a New Earth with no poverty, no sickness, no suffering and no pain, and on which all people are happy.

The hotelkeeper was skeptical but basked

in the influence emanating from that young man. His new young friend did not hang back in the matter of making his hopes and convictions known. He used to distribute a printed leaflet titled "The Sower", which he had written, and which explained the wonderful ideal that filled his heart. He even gave a lecture in his room. Several of the hotel guests attended: especially one, René, a 17-year-old lad, very delicate in health, who felt drawn to serious things. He was greatly interested in Mr Alexander's vibrant enthusiasm when delivering his testimony concerning his convictions. He responded wholeheartedly to that wonderful message which declared that one day there will not be any sick or unhappy people and that Earth will once again become a Paradise. The atmosphere created around him by Mr Alexander touched him and did him a great deal of good. He lost no opportunity to be in his company.

Unfortunately, young René had to go away

with his parents and his sister. On his return to the town of Y, in which his father had a big business, his ailment grew worse. He began to decline visibly, and his thoughts would often turn to Mr Alexander. If only he could have a little conversation with that wonderful friend, and enjoy for a little while that warm and affectionate atmosphere that did one so much good, just to hear him talk with such convincing assurance about those wonderful prospects for the future. René had tried to tell his parents about it all, but they had no time to listen. They were, above all, business people.

Lucy, his sister, loved her brother very much. She would often spend an afternoon with him. Every day, he was declining a little more.

On one of her visits, he asked: "Lucy, do you remember Mr Alexander whom we spent time with in Briançon?"

"Yes," said Lucy, "I remember him very

well, because he was so different from the rest of us. He seemed to me to live in much loftier regions than we did."

"That's just it, Lucy: he introduced a radiant hope into my heart. There will be a New Earth on which nobody dies and everybody is happy. You see, Lucy, I feel I'm going to die, but I'm leaving with hope in that New Earth. I'm sure that if I'd been able to stay with Mr Alexander, with his advice, I would have been able to get over the ailment which is getting me down. But always remember that we shall all come to life again and meet on the New Earth where everything will be splendid."

Shortly after that, René did indeed breathe his last. The last thing he said to his family who were all gathered around his bed, was: "Goodbye, till we meet in the Kingdom of God, on the New Earth, where we shall not die any more, and where everybody is happy!"

At the time, the loss of her brother caused

glad and rejoice forever in what I create, for I will create Jerusalem for happiness and her people for joy." Isaiah 65: 18.

The children whom it brings into the world, were also known in advance and revealed by the holy Prophets. They represent the first signs of the New Earth where justice (righteousness) dwells, as Apostle Peter says (2 Peter 3: 13). The Prophet Joel describes to us the power of its testimony and the authority that the Almighty has personally invested it with, in order to establish his Kingdom of peace, happiness, life and freedom over the whole world: "Like a mighty army ready for battle. At the sight of them, the nations are in anguish, and all faces turn pale. ... They storm the city; they run along its walls. They enter all the houses, climbing like thieves through windows. They make the Earth shake and the Heavens tremble. The Sun and the Moon go dark, and the stars stop shining. The LORD thunders commands before his army. His forces are beyond number. It is a mighty army that obeys his orders. The day of the LORD is great and terrible. Who can endure it?" Joel 2: 5-11.

That symbolical and expressive language shows us that in the face of the testimony of the Truth brought by that Host (Army) of the Lord, no error, no impurity and no injustice can endure. The Almighty explains through this Prophet: "I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the level. Hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and water will flood the hiding place" (Isaiah 28: 17). The Apostle Peter confirms: "The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. The Heavens will pass away with a great noise, the elements will be destroyed by intense heat, and the Earth and everything done on it will be burned up." 2 Peter 3: 10.

Therefore, today, only one thing is crucial, the following exhortation that he also addresses to us: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what sort of people should you be in holy conduct and godliness, looking forward to and hastening the coming of the Day of God!" (2 Peter 3: 11 and 12). And the only call that we should follow and wish to comply with, is undoubtedly this one: "Come out of her [Babylon], my people, so that you do not share in her sins or receive any of her plagues" (Revelation 18: 4). Let us together much rather build the New World, which will be united as brothers and sisters, and which will be infinitely more beautiful, bigger and more powerful than all the cathedrals and temples in the world.

A touching story

In the French-language newspaper *L'Express*, published in the city of Neuchâtel in Switzerland, we read the following true story, titled "The wisdom of a dog", from the reader Mr T.H. Bahy of the town of Hauterive:

While I was walking behind a house in a mountainous village in the canton [state] of Valais [in Switzerland], my head was momentarily at the same height as the patio.

Suddenly, an enormous Appenzell Mountain Dog — with raised black hair, and barking — lunged at me, but its strong chain managed to hold it back just a few centimetres from my face.

Because I know animals well, especially dogs, I began to severely scold it: "Quiet. Settle down. That's enough. Sit," I said to it and firmly stared at it. When it stopped growling, I spoke gently to it: "Come here. Good dog. Give me your paw. (And so on)." Its anger soon stopped, it became calmer, and it even began to wag its tail.

The weather was hot, and there was no shade on the concrete patio. I immediately saw that the animal was thirsty and continued to speak to it. Almost all dogs on farms or in the countryside, suffer from thirst. How many times have I stopped to give those poor animals

water, and every time they showed me their happiness after they previously wanted to bite me!

This powerful dog looked at me, and we began to understand each other. Suddenly, it ran to the other end of the patio, to its kennel, and to my surprise, it brought me an old metal bowl that it held with its teeth because it had become hot in the Sun.

After I filled up the bowl with fresh water from a nearby well, I put it down on the ground for the dog. The dog went to the bowl to quench its great thirst, but first quickly gave me its paw! My joy in seeing it drink was as great as its refreshment.

Wasn't it smart to get its bowl and give it to a stranger like that? In my opinion, it was smarter than its master...

We are very happy to know that there are many qualified people who can recognize and appreciate the intelligence of animals. More than ever, we understand that humans can be a constant cause of terrible suffering and distress for animals.

Therefore, we are even happier to highlight events such as the one mentioned above. We often receive really moving reports. But we also hear about different situations in which some species of animals suffer shocking torture.

How pleased we are to know that in the near future, God's plan to introduce the Restoration of All Things will be accomplished, which will not only be deliverance for humankind, but also for the entire animal kingdom!

How many touching and encouraging scenes are communicated to us, which show us the gratitude that can develop in an animal's heart! If humans could also show gratitude for all the benefits they receive, how much better would their lives be!

We report these events, in this way, with the wish to touch the hearts of those who are capable of learning magnificent lessons for their own happiness. Let us never forget the Law of Equivalents, which states that a person reaps what they sow. All suffering that is inflicted by wickedness or for money, brings an equivalent by worsening the terribly deformed sentiments and character. In all respects, this proverb is true: "Wicked people earn empty wages" (Proverbs 11: 18). On the other hand, it is good to remind oneself that "good is never lost".

Let us take those valuable lessons to heart, so that they encourage us and lead us to follow the Universal Law of altruism.

We admire You, our Creator!

In the French online newspaper *Futura Sciences*, an article on the 24th of May 2019 mentions the newest hypotheses from scientists about the origin of water on Earth:

Does water on Earth come from Theia, the "proto-planet" [the large solid orbiting astronomical body] that gave birth to the moon?

Where does most of the Earth's water come from? Probably not from "planetesimals" [small solid orbiting astronomical objects], because they are too dry. A team of scientists think that they have found the answer — or rather, the astronomical body — without which the Earth would not have become inhabitable: Theia. Surprisingly, that protoplanet, which would have created the moon, did not come from the inner Solar System.

In Greek mythology, Theia was a Titan [a god] and was the daughter of Uranus (Father Sky) and Gaia (Mother Earth). She and her brother Hyperion produced the offspring Selene (the goddess of the moon) and also Helios and Eos. Theia is a well-chosen name for the protoplanet, which is estimated to be the size of Mars, and whose collision with Earth about 4.4 billion years ago, would have given birth to our natural

satellite, as is understood according to the dominant theory of its origin.

For the team of scientists from the University of Münster, in Germany, who investigated the origin of the Earth's water, that astronomical body [Theia] undoubtedly did not come from the Asteroid Belt [between Mars and Jupiter], as is often supposed, but from much further, beyond the orbit of Neptune. Rich in water, it would have watered our then-dry planet during that gigantic collision. If so, then it may be said that that was a very beautiful gift to the early Earth, which thus became fertile ground where life thrives.

If that is how it turns out, then that astronomical body [Theia, the impactor] would be a relative of Ceres, which is a "dwarf planet" near us, which has been in the Asteroid Belt for billions of years, and which some suspect of coming from the edge of the Solar System...

Water that comes from the edge of the Solar System

Not all water on Earth comes from Theia, but a large part does, according to the authors of the study that was recently published in the online scientific journal Nature Astronomy. To reach that conclusion, the scientists examined the element "molybdenum" (Mo), whose isotopic composition allowed them to trace it. "The molybdenum isotopes...represent a 'genetic fingerprint' of material from the outer and inner Solar System," explains Dr Gerrit Budde of the Institute of Planetology at the University of Münster. Does it come from carbonaceous meteorites that are known to contain water (they are the ones that would have watered the Earth) or from non-carbonaceous meteorites that are drier because of the Asteroid Belt, inside the Frost Line [the Ice Line of the Solar System]?

The scientists discovered that on Earth, molybdenum's isotopic composition is clearly not typical of the inner Solar System. It is in between, which means that part of it came from the edge of the Solar System. And because this metal is attracted to iron, they think a lot of this metal is in the Earth's core. "The molybdenum that is accessible today in the Earth's mantle, therefore, originates from the late stages of Earth's formation, while the molybdenum from earlier phases is entirely in the core," explains Dr Christoph Burkhardt, co-author of the study.

The scientists assume that there was a bombardment of carbonaceous chondrites [meteorites] after the first stages of Earth's formation. And that would coincide with the meeting of the early Earth and Theia, which would therefore be a protoplanet from the outer Solar System, and whose position was dislodged by the migration of giant planets.

If this hypothesis is correct, it means that we once again owe a lot to the moon (as always and again today). Without Theia, Gaia (the Earth) might never have been habitable.

Those considerations contain many hypotheses, and they seem to deal with a science-fiction film rather than a plausible scenario... How much effort do our dear scholars go to to explain to us a creation without a Creator! With those silly explanations, it certainly requires a greater "faith" in scholars and their statements, than faith in God... We are happy to be some of the children whom the Lord Jesus spoke about when he said: "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, and have revealed them to little children." Matthew 11: 25.

The psalmist, who certainly had a childlike heart, expressed in a psalm his infinite admiration for the Almighty's work: "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good. His mercy lasts forever. Give thanks to the God of gods. ... Give thanks to the Lord of lords. ... To Him alone Who does great wonders. ... To Him Who wisely

Lucy great sorrow. But she was engaged to a very rich young man, and shortly thereafter, they got married and left for South America, and she still had all the illusions of her 20 years of age.

The first years of her married life were very happy ones. She had two children: a boy whom she called René, after her brother, and a little girl whom she called Gertrude. Happiness appeared to have established itself in her home. But alas, one day, her husband was brought home dead, killed in an accident. That was a terrible blow, and it was followed soon after by a second: her little boy passed away in an epidemic that made a lot of victims in the region.

Only her little Gertrude was left, and it was on her that she centered all her affection. She was now a pretty little girl of nine. One day, as she was playing in the grass with her dog, her mother called her. She was an obedient little girl, so she tried at once to get

up and run to her mother. To her great astonishment, she was quite unable to do so. All strength had left her legs. She was taken to the best specialists in the country, but there was nothing to be done. She began to get worse and worse.

Lucy was persuaded by her friends that in Europe she would definitely find a prominent medical man capable of curing her little girl. So, she made up her mind to undertake that long journey with her child.

But it was of no use. All the cures prescribed and faithfully followed, were of no avail. And besides, Gertrude, who was born and had lived all her life in a land of enchantment, amidst an exuberant plant life, was bored to death in Europe. So, Lucy decided to return home.

A few days before their departure, as she sat on the terrace of the little seaside villa she had been renting, her maid, Marianne, came to her and said: "Madam, here's a very

interesting book that a young woman has brought to the door."

Lucy gave the maid a little money, saying: "She's probably a poor woman, Marianne. Give her this money, but I don't want the book."

In a little while, the maid returned with the book in her hand: "The young woman wouldn't take the money without leaving the book. She insisted, saying it would be a wonderful adviser for madam."

"I've got no use for it," Lucy answered impatiently. "You can keep it."

"Well," thought Marianne, "if madam has no use for the book, it interests me. That agreeable young woman said it contained some magnificent things and a power of joy, of hope and of healing. Who knows? With that book, I might be able to console madam and...perhaps...cure Gertrude. I shall read it and see what it's all about."

A few days later, all three began their ocean

voyage home. Aboard ship, Marianne had plenty of time to read her book. The very first lines of the preface made her heart vibrate: "No more anguish, no more fear, no more enemies, no more cares, no more sickness, no more death!" She was a simple and upright soul, and she had a warm heart into which the Truth sank with great ease.

As she went on reading, her heart expanded. "It's so wonderful, it must be true!" she thought to herself. "I have here a treasure with which I'm going to be able to console madam. But I must go about it with tact and a deal of patience. God will help me, because I intend to live to do good, as the Universal Law teaches."

Our travellers got home and were at last settled in again. Marianne was doing her best to become amiable, to develop agreeable manners and to please her mistress. She had always been rather abrupt and even ungracious. Now, she was becoming gentle

made the heavens. ... To Him Who spread out the land on the waters. ... To Him Who made the great lights. ... The sun to rule by day. ... The moon and the stars to rule by night." Psalm 136: 1-9.

In the Book of Job, we can read: "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding? ... Who shut the gates to hold back the sea when it burst out of the womb, when I made clouds to be its clothes and wrapped it in thick darkness, when I established its boundaries, put its bars and doors in place, and when I said: 'You can come this far, but no further. Your proud waves stop here?'" Job 38: 4-11.

And in the Book of Proverbs, we can see the glorious actions of the divine Creator when He prepares the Earth until it is ready to maintain life and to receive those who should have been its royalty: humankind. We read there: "I was there when He established the heavens, when he stretched out the sky over the surface of the sea, when he established the clouds above and created the springs that fill the ocean, when He set boundaries for the sea so that the waters would not disobey his commandment, and when He marked out the foundations of the earth." Proverbs 8: 27-29.

The Book of Genesis shows us: "And God said: 'Let there be an expanse between the waters, to separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the expanse and divided the waters under it from the waters above. And it was so. And God called the expanse 'sky' ['heavens']. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said: 'Let the water under the heavens be gathered in one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry ground 'land' ['earth'] and the gathered waters 'seas'. ... And God said: 'Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to divide

the day from the night, and let them be signs to mark the seasons, days and years. Let them serve as lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth.' And it was so. God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He also made the stars." Genesis 6-16.

The Earth — with its infinite variety of plants, its enchanting landscapes and its animals — is a tremendous masterpiece of the Almighty. But the perfect proof of his art, the highpoint of his creative science, definitely is humankind — perfect in beauty, in proportion, in abilities and in intelligence — gifted with all the physical senses that enable it to move and to find its way in its surroundings — capable of thinking and speaking — gifted with a conscience and especially with a spiritual sense with which it can receive divine waves that emanate from its Creator and with which it can also transmit them in the form of gratitude and love.

Most of our scientists deny the existence of a Supreme Being as the Author of everything that exists on Earth and in the universe. However, with all their knowledge, their abilities and all their intelligence, they cannot even create a blade of grass. They cannot create the smallest living cell, even if they put all the necessary atoms together. Despite all their studies, they are still not able to understand the human brain... They nevertheless dare to claim that everything came from nothing, without the intervention of a higher intelligence. If we were to tell them that a computer or a robot equipped with Artificial Intelligence (AI) made itself, they would certainly deny that and say that they made it. And they are furthermore very proud of it. But humankind — who is infinitely superior to all machines, and who is additionally gifted with sensitivity by which

it can perceive and express feelings — according to their opinion, was created by itself! We cannot imagine anything more absurd...

Humans come from apes, according to their Theory of Evolution... However, apes are still apes, they have not developed any further, and they still have not learnt to talk or to build houses, cities, schools... Humans even put them behind bars, be it in a zoo or in a laboratory in order to torment them, all for useful goals...

The truth is that humankind, through its selfish spirit, is insensitive and inaccessible to the influence of God's Spirit. It therefore cannot perceive and say, like apostle Paul, that "his [God's] invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen and understood by what has been made since the creation of the world" (Romans 1: 20). We can only agree with this explanation in the Holy Scripture: "The fool says in his heart: 'There is no God'" (Psalm 14: 1). To that, we say with the psalmist and with full admiration: "You established the earth, and it endures. Your laws remain true to this day, for all things serve you" (Psalm 119: 90 and 91). Furthermore: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky shows the work of his hands. Day after day, they pour out speech; night after night, they display knowledge. They speak without a sound or a word; no sound is heard from them. Their message goes out to the whole world, and their language to the ends of the earth. God created a home for the sun in the sky. It is like a bridegroom coming out of his room. It rejoices like a strong man running a race. It rises at one end of the heavens and follows its course to the other. Nothing can hide from its heat. The law of the LORD is perfect and refreshes the soul. The teachings of the LORD are true and make ordinary people wise." Psalm 19: 1-7.

and respectful, and Lucy was quite surprised. Lucy thought: "I wonder what's come over Marianne? It's strange the way she's changing. She's always good-tempered, bright and contented. She's gaining poise. There is something about her, something indefinable that does one's heart good. And she talks in a way that is quite distinguished. It's most extraordinary!"

Without quite realizing it, Lucy began to seek out the companionship of her maid, basking in the beneficial influence that emanated from her. Marianne was jubilant. She thought to herself: "With a little further effort on my part, the conditions will be ripe for me to tell her about the wonderful message that is transforming my heart."

Then, one day, it was Lucy's 29th birthday. That morning, she was very thoughtful, remembering the kindness and affection her husband used to show her every time her birthday came round. She was thinking: "It's such a bore: I shall be having some so-called friends come for dinner, who'll wish me Happy Birthday and say all sorts of things that they don't mean and that leave an empty feeling in my heart."

Just then, Marianne knocked on the door. She was a highly skilled needlewoman and had made her mistress an exquisite hand-embroidered tray cloth, very artistically designed, as a birthday present expressing her affection and esteem.

Lucy was deeply touched by that gesture of affection in which she could feel all Marianne's kindness of heart, and devotion.

"How charming of you, Marianne," she exclaimed. "You can't think what pleasure your kind thought gives me! But, tell me, how is it that you've changed so much lately? You used to be so abrupt, and frequently cross. And now, you're so thoughtful and obliging, and cheerful in everything you do, and even kind and affectionate!"

"So, madam has noticed that I've changed?" the maid asked, brimming over with joy.

"I certainly have, Marianne. One couldn't fail to notice."

"Well, it's all thanks to you, madam!"

"How so? Thanks to me! But I haven't done anything!"

"Oh yes, madam, you did. Don't you remember the book the evangelist brought to the door before we sailed, and which you gave me?"

"I do remember something vaguely."

"Well, I've read that book, and it's simply wonderful. It opened up magnificent prospects to me. I'm exerting myself to live up to what it teaches, and I'm becoming quite a different person."

"So I perceive, Marianne. You must show me that book."

Marianne hurried off to fetch her precious

book and quickly returned with it in her hand.

Lucy casually read the title: The Book of Remembrance, *The Message to Humanity, The New Earth*.

"Hello!" she exclaimed, "I seem to have come across that expression before: the New Earth. Now, where have I heard that? Oh, now I remember! It was René, my brother, who used to tell me about it. He got it from Mr Alexander in Briançon. I wonder who the author of this book is? Let's see. Why, it's the very man, Mr Alexander (F.L.A. Freytag). What a coincidence! Can it be possible? That young man with such a noble bearing did my brother so much good."

All those past events came back to her mind, particularly René's last farewell: "Good-bye, till we meet...on the New Earth."

Here, Marianne ventured a word: "If only madam knew the wealth contained in that book! It paints the Almighty so wonderfully, in quite different colors from what we are used to. I used to be afraid of God, but now I'm learning to love Him, to feel He is my Father. I trust in Him, and that is giving me greater vitality. I'm sure that if madam would apply herself to following the indications given in that book, we shall, between us, be able to cure Miss Gertrude. As I understand the matter from that book, what she needs is a joyful atmosphere, all optimism and a great deal of affection, so that her nerves can relax to the full. We must instill, into her heart, the hope of the Kingdom, and teach her the science of life. In that book, there is advice for the sick. It shows that we make our own happiness or unhappiness, with the sentiments we cultivate. Above all, we must teach the young girl to love God, and endeavor to instill, into her, the hopes and the joys of the Kingdom of God. How wonderful it would be if she were to get well!"

Lucy was watching her maid with admiration and very great thankfulness. Impulsively, she grasped both her hands, and said: "It is you who are my one real friend, not all those others who have nothing for my heart. You love me in the right way, and I have again discovered, in you, the influence that used to cling to the author of that book, whom I had the good fortune to know. It is because you have immersed yourself in his thoughts, that you possess that beneficial power. It was that glorious hope that sustained my brother. I'm going to do my best to live up to all this too. And we shall make the attempt together to cure my darling Gertrude with the advice given in that precious book, with the assistance of the Almighty and our joint efforts. You give me faith that fills me with enthusiasm. I would also like to know that wonderful God and to be initiated into the hopes of the splendid New Earth, believed in by Mr Alexander and my brother, René.

News in brief of the Reign of Justice

Once again, the Family of Faith in Germany, together with delegates from Switzerland and Austria, had the pleasure of meeting at the Sternberg Castle Congress. In the course of this gathering, the Lord gave especially important instructions which we are happy to share with the Family of Faith over the whole world.

The Lord's Messenger gave particular details on Apostle Peter's recommendation in his First Epistle: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time." Here are some important points:

"What prevents us humbling ourselves sincerely is inordinate slowness due to the powerful hold of the world's spirit, especially conspicuous in our conceit! Were it not for that pride, our reactions would be quite different!

Pride is a dreadful sentiment which gives off an offensive smell. A prideful person can be detected at a distance. He is always contrary. He is never satisfied; he always has something to moan about. He is vexed by the least thing. The least breeze makes him waver, and doubt fills him with bad thoughts. He considers that everything others do is bad, and that only what he does is good.

As soon as we have the least aptitude, we feel superior. Some find it easy to deliver the message in the meetings, and so think themselves spiritually superior. But that counts for nothing in God's sight. Only the heart's condition matters and will enable Him to exalt us when the time comes.

To set up the Kingdom of God in and around us, we need enthusiasm, and enthusiasm is the upshot of sincere efforts. It is enthusiasm that renders the programme attractive, but it is unfortunately in short supply, both in our groups and on our stations. Why? Because we are not grateful enough or eager enough to do what the Lord recommends.

If we were true, we would fear nothing and no one, because we would have boundless trust in God. Having put all things into God's hands, we would not be afraid of losing anything at all. Nothing must have the power to sway us, neither father, mother, child nor anyone else. Only the Almighty and his beloved Son must be able to influence us.

Let us chop all claims and the infernal conceit which makes us cheat, even in sanctification meetings. Do we really tell the whole truth? Do we acknowledge our main fault, the one that weighs us down and is the most urgent to discard? If we did, we would make far quicker headway."

That masterly exposé, which induced self-analysis in the audience, ended with these encouraging words:

"Reaching transparency of the heart and true humility, demands many lessons, repeated and superimposed. We need to humble ourselves constantly and to reject every scrap of selfishness. The secret is: 'Let us humble ourselves under God's mighty hand,' and: 'Learn from me, because I am gentle and humble.'"

On the Sunday, we were exhorted by Jude who said: "I was constrained to write to you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once and for all delivered to the saints." The Faithful and Wise Servant magnificently depicted what true faith is. He said in particular:

"What we are sorely short of is true faith. Without it, you can receive the clearest explanations but not really understand them. Faith mostly depends on divine sentiments lived up to. Faith is a gift that no one can communicate to us except God. He gives it to those who are sensitive enough to receive it. Then, it is up to each person to cultivate it for himself. No artifice, no intelligence and no reasoning of any kind can increase faith. What is needed is virtue.

Faith is the beginning of the relations we can have with God. But it must grow, and it does grow when we fight against ourselves with energy. What prevents our faith from blossoming out is lack of respect for the Almighty and for our brothers and sisters. For faith to grow, we have to live virtuously and to hasten the Day of God with holy conduct and godliness. There must be no roundabout ways, no substitute, no reticence, and no lies, whether great or small, only the pure truth, and we must especially have the courage to tell it to ourselves.

We have to break free from all sorts of devilish charms, the Adversary's pitfalls, and resistance, preoccupations, fears, worries, agitation, doubts, compromise, pride and disobedience. They are so many chains that we have to break once and for all.

That is why I exhort God's dear people to be faithful and watchful, persevering in having holy conduct, discipline, obedience and true respect in God's House.

One who is docile and does not insist on opening a door that the Lord closes, and closing a door that the Lord opens, is sure to meet with success. We must fight honestly: the degree of our joy reveals the degree and the value of honest efforts."

Plenty of judicious advice was given, and in vibrant testimonies, the assembly showed a sincere determination to take the kind exhortations to heart.

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