

THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

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Founder: F.L.A. Freytag

The habits that kill, and those that cure

ANYONE with a little shrewdness is able to perceive that mankind's way of living is not as it should be. They realize that, after all, everybody could have a much more agreeable existence. There is everything to make well-being and prosperity possible. But there it is, people have habits they are not willing to part with. The way they look at things is quite wrong, and they are unwilling to change it: that is what is leading to the forthcoming disaster.

The fact is that people are accustomed to the way things go on in the world. They have never seen anything else, and it never enters into their heads that existing conditions could be changed. They follow the ancient rut, as their fathers did before them, hence conditions as they are today. People are all for various improvements which they think will make their own interests prosper. This enables ambitious people, those who like to rule, to form parties and to draw the proletariat along with them, whom they lure with dazzling attractions. The truth is that those promises lead them to disaster instead of promoting prosperity.

It is certain that there will always be attentive ears when it is a matter of profit to be obtained or material prosperity to build up. As a matter of fact, since men are all selfish, they are irresistibly attracted by anything that promises to bring in profits. The masses of the people, especially those who are mostly in straightened circumstances, are fascinated by the idea of anything that will improve things for them. So, when they are harangued about defending their interests, they are easily drawn along. They very readily follow those who promise them the Moon and the stars. There have been many experiences of this kind in the human race, and the result has always been disappointment. Every hope has faded away.

As we mentioned above, human beings agree willingly to certain reforms which they think may be to their advantage. They gladly hail changes which they hope will improve their lot. Yet they are most unwilling to change their habits. This is why they refuse to consider the radical reform of the present social order. They will not change their way of life. They will not learn to regard their fellow man, whomever or whatever he may be, as a brother to love and to devote oneself to. They will have nothing to do with such an ideal. They are accustomed to living after their selfish principles,

and they have no wish at all to turn their steps on to any other road.

Everybody in the world is accustomed to go in for half-measures. They will practice brotherliness up to a point, but will never go beyond what is usual. That is the custom. To proceed along different lines would seem strange, it would be going too far and would denote a lack of intelligence. Such a mentality is the result of being hedged in by horizons so near that they set a narrow limit to their view. The conditions in which they move are entirely false, and therefore, their mistaken conception of life leads them into a situation, without issue, in which the world today is struggling like a fly in a spider's web. So, it is high time to pull ourselves together, and once and for all, to face the opposite direction: only thus will real brotherhood, the only source of true prosperity, come into being.

Their selfish habits are shackles which hold men helpless, and like a chain which holds a ship to its moorings, is snapped by the swell of a violent storm, so will the chains of their habits break to nothing less than the deep swell of tribulation. Yet the Kingdom of God is so simple and so understandable. All the habits and all the prejudices encrusted in the hearts of men in the course of centuries, should melt before its admirable logic and kind enlightenment, like the snow melts in the radiant light of the Sun.

Mankind are able to see clearly for themselves that they are unable to stay alive on Earth. As, unknown to themselves, they are imbued with "the hope of eternity", they look for what they call "the salvation of their souls". They expect they will find it in one or another of the world's religious institutions. Meanwhile, they all go into the grave, into destruction, without obtaining, in their hearts, any real understanding of what their destiny is, and consequently never having had any certainty of the Salvation promised to them. Yet, in the setting up of the Kingdom of God, mankind could find real safety and real Salvation, in which they will not be disappointed. However, mankind are struck with blindness. As the Bible tells us: "Darkness covers the Earth, and gross darkness the people."

Mankind do not know that eternal life on Earth is possible for them. They are ignorant of the fact that they can avoid dying if they will conform with divine ways. They have not been initiated into "the science of life". They do not know that man's body works quite altru-

istically. Their habits and their wrong ideas are poison to their organism. Their ill-balanced minds and their selfishness have a very unfortunate influence on their whole being, and this leads to disaster in their bodies. The human body can have a continued existence only in an atmosphere of selflessness, and if mankind did not do violence to their bodies by depriving them of this atmosphere, they would obtain unlimited service from them. That is what we demonstrate in the book *Eternal Life. Man's Destiny*.

A child does not remain a child forever. He develops to manhood. Therefore, inherent in himself, there is everything indispensable to his development. Of course, the atmosphere in which the lives of men unfold, is exceedingly unfavorable, being contrary to the Kingdom of God. This renders all sorts of accidents possible, even in the period of the child's development.

Contrarily, the man who takes the precaution of getting into the atmosphere of the Kingdom of God, is at the benefit of wonderful protection. This protection comes from the influence of God's Spirit, whose very essence is altruism, and since the working of the human organism is also altruistic and therefore in perfect accord with that Spirit, if any man will place himself under that influence, he will be happy and viable, for his whole being will bask in an atmosphere which is the only one that suits it and for which it has been designed.

Sad to say, as a general thing, selfishness prevails from the top to the bottom of the social scale. Selfishness is both taught and practiced. Can the capitalist be expected to live altruistically? Of course not: he is out for his own interests because self-interest is the very foundation on which the habits of men are built up. Those habits are fixtures in the hearts of men, and prevent them drawing near to the Kingdom of God. Could a landowner be expected to give up his property? Of course not: yet to do so is one of the conditions essential to becoming a child of God. The workman struggling to improve his lot and to defend his rights, is he to be expected to give up the idea of the advantages he longs for, for the purpose of frankly and openly accepting the conditions of the Kingdom of God, which include the denial of self? No: he stands up for his rights today, just as he did of old in the days of ancient Rome.

That mentality and those habits are clearly shackles, very powerful shackles indeed. They hold human society enthralled and hold it back from every noble and generous impulse. Those age-old habits — which descend from father to son, and which have become a part of the very structure of man — enslave him. What then is man's true destiny? It is to attain the glory and

A wonderful ministry of reconciliation

NIGHT has fallen. The town clock struck ten a while ago. Mariette is pacing backwards and forwards, the length of the corridor. She opens the door on to the landing and stands listening... All is silence.

"Very well! This is the last time. I've had enough of it, and my mind's made up!" exclaims the young woman as she slams the door. "I didn't get married to be on my own every evening and to have to put up with an individual who's hardly ever sober! When I think of the example there used to be at home: a model father and such a kind mother, so dignified... But she, I know, would never for an instant have tolerated the treatment I'm getting from my husband. I don't expect him to be a saint, but I did hope that he would at least act properly and that we would be able to get on together and live happily..."

I'm fed up. I'm still quite young, I shall start out again on my own. I've had enough of waiting for him every evening like a silly fool, and of getting his dinner for him, and sitting listening to his grumbling, bad tempered as he always is. No, really, this is the end!"

Then, Mariette goes to bed. She cannot sleep, for she goes on turning those resentful thoughts over in her mind, and the bitterness gets worse and worse.

It is almost midnight when she hears her husband's uncertain steps in the entrance hall. The hall is quite dark, and not finding any light, he vents his bad temper.

Mariette's bedroom door is partly open. Hearing him, she feels this is the last straw and shouts at him in return: "You can get your dinner yourself. I've had enough of living with you! You needn't think I'm going to put up with it any longer. I've made up my mind. Do you hear, Marcel? This is absolutely final!"

Her husband is taken aback by this unex-

pected outburst. He is not accustomed to so much acrimony, so much heat. He is silent for a while, and then his own anger flares up: "Well, if that's the case," he shouts back at her, "I'm going back to those who love me." Saying so, he goes out again, slamming the door.

Now it is Mariette's turn to be taken aback by the turn matters have taken. Nothing of this sort was on her mind. What she intended was a stormy argument, in the course of which, she could have pointed out to her husband, at great length, how reprehensible his behavior was. After which, he would have acknowledged his fault, asked for her forgiveness and mended his ways.

Having got over her first astonishment, the young woman sits up in bed and starts thinking. The indignation she has been feeling dies down gradually and is replaced by some anxiety. She begins to be worked up by a whole muddle of thoughts.

She starts thinking over the fairly recent past. First, there were their courting days, when it seemed that no one's happiness could be as great as theirs... Then, their first years of married life, and the agreeable harmony which reigned in their home. And finally, the birth of baby Claud, his death at the age of fifteen months, and Marcel's deep sorrow, which nothing was able to console. Soon after, there came the arrival of the undesirable cousin who used to drag Marcel out in the evenings, and Marcel gradually acquiring the habit of coming home late with more drink aboard than was reasonable.

"After all," her thoughts run as the tension of her nerves gradually relaxes, "the poor man doesn't often come home late in that condition. Apart from that, he is really kind to me, never lets me go short of anything, and always tries to please me. He's been putting money aside to buy me a beautiful dress for Christmas, and he was really looking forward

freedom of children of God, and eternal life on Earth. But because men are going in the opposite direction, they die like flies. Death, "the great mower", dispossesses them of everything they think they own. Capitalists, landowners, proprietors of every description, kings, princes, ministers, farmers and workmen, all go the same way. It deprives them of everything they possess. Selfishness does its work and reduces them all to silence, in spite of all that they may claim.

Mankind are accustomed to that working of the Law of Equivalents, which overtakes them all without fail. They cannot conceive of anything else and must willy-nilly suffer the evils their misconduct gives rise to.

It is selfishness that, without their realizing it, has thrust mankind into being enemies of each other. Be they heathens, Muslims or nominal Christians (by which we mean, belonging to one or another of the Christian denominations), they are all alike. Wherever selfishness reigns, even in seeking Salvation in the Christian Heaven, or any other kind of heaven, only disaster can be the result.

Today, mankind have come to the culmination of the trouble they have made for themselves. The Almighty allows them to have their own experiences. But the time is coming when those who rely on violence, those who seek dominion and those who give way to pride, will be like stubble. Such a first-rate clean up is the automatic result of the Law of Equivalents at work. When it does take place, those of mankind who are well disposed will gladly accept the Kingdom of God with its basic formula given by Christ: the denial of self, submission to the divine conditions, possessing nothing of one's own, and amiable acceptance of the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. Those who conform will be able to subsist and to pioneer the Kingdom of God on Earth.

That wonderful Kingdom is the harvest of the Ransom paid by Jesus Christ who laid down his life for mankind, together with the Royal Priesthood which has associated with its Master. This is the glorious Kingdom prophesied of by the prophets. It is being introduced now by God's true children for the benefit of the dying and groaning creation. In the course of the Restoration of All Things taking place in this fashion, the ancient selfish habits will disappear from the hearts of men who will be educated along divine lines. New habits will take their place, altruistic ones this time. In the Kingdom of God, which is going to last forever, people will learn to love one another truly as brethren who are earthly sons of God. They will render glory to the Lord and to his Son, the Author of the Salvation of all mankind. And so, they will be able to abide on Earth forever, and the Earth will become the Almighty's wonderful footstool.

Who are "the misfits"?

The French magazine *Point de Vue et Images du Monde* tells the following story, written by Trémolin:

Bonnie and the children

I was walking down a street one morning last year, when a man ran off after throwing something into a dustbin. What was he afraid of? I opened it and found...a tiny dog. A three-month-old puppy, all gruff, ears hanging down, and yellowish. It must be part Golden Retriever. What should be done with it? I was holding the puppy in my hand, when a chorus of squeals made me turn around.

"Oh, sir, would you show it to us?"

It was eight kids: five boys and three girls, between seven and ten years old. Eight hands that shyly stroked the little animal. Why was there something in those

children's eyes that worried me? Something unusual and concerning, which made me feel uncomfortable.

Behind them, a young woman waved to me. I put the puppy down, and the eight little ones knelt down and stroked it. I approached the young woman. She whispered: "They are maladjusted children in my care. They have exacerbated sensitivity, fear of everything, and perhaps a need for affection. They are very difficult ones. I've had them for two months, and I don't know what to do to balance what is not working in them."

The kids were playing with the little dog. Then a little girl stood up: "Can we keep it, miss? We'll look after it!"

The eight faces looked at us, with tears in their eyes.

I felt the young woman waver. What was she going to do with this dog? She mumbled: "But...the gentleman?" But I understood, as she did, that to refuse them this dog would be very serious for these kids in distress. She gave in, and the children jumped for joy and bickered over who would carry the puppy.

A month later, I coincidentally met the young lady again. She came up to me and said: "It's amazing! Ever since they've had 'your' dog, they called it Bonnie, they've been transformed. What was 'blocked' in them has been released. They love her, take her everywhere and play with her. They're lively and interested in a lot of things. I even have the impression that these children will be able to go back to school if the improvement continues. Thank you!"

The young lady had to go, and I forgot about the adventure. Last week, I walked past the local primary school in my neighbourhood at finish time. A yellowish dog was sitting on the pavement, with the serious air of a Golden Retriever.

The door opened, and eight kids ran out before the others and threw themselves on to the dog, kissing it and saying: "Hello Bonnie." They then all walked off together, with their school bags dangling around their legs, being led by the dog that responsibly walked in front of them.

Were they the same children...? I followed them. They walked into an entrance with their dog. I asked around: it was the entrance to an institution for maladjusted children.

Then I understood. Bonnie picked them up at the school gate, the children she had saved by giving them her dog affection. And eight "very difficult" kids were now living like all other little children in France, because they had been allowed to love a dog.

A dog? No, simply to love.

This story, a simple animal story, apparently banal to the superficial reader or to those indifferent to the misery of others, is of great interest to those who have kept an altruistic sensitivity. The latter, who rejoice over everything that can contribute to restore balance and to produce zest for life, find, in these experiences, things for their faith in a future recovery. Their hope for a return to peace and harmony announced by the Divine Word, is thus revived. Without any certainty being firmly established in their heart, they indistinctly see the possibility of an earthly Paradise, where the most pleasant sights will have replaced all the present anomalies, and where true love will allow the blossoming of all human faculties.

Because, as the last sentence of the interesting story summarizes for us, love is the only way to the normal development of human intelligence. This is clearly shown in the Book of Genesis. By practising gratitude and applying oneself to love God above all and one's neighbour as oneself, man would have been enriched with a knowledge that would have led him to eternal life. The opposite happened. Ingratitude aroused an unhealthy curiosity in man, which made him a sinner and a dying being. Set on a path of darkness and ruin — difficulties, sufferings, tears and misfortunes of all kinds could only be his share.

The most serious aspect of the situation is that —

separated from his neighbour by immense pride, and limited in his discernment — man adapted himself as best as he could to this state of things. Successive generations became accustomed to not only think that it has always been so, but considered themselves to be on the way to a better life and to perfection...

So much so that, in our time of accelerated evolutionary progress, many children, already victims at birth of the physiological damage inherited from their parents through an unnatural life, are considered "maladjusted". It is conceivable that with a highly stressed nervous system, these poor little ones cannot keep up with the infernal pace imposed by modern life, and that the fragility of their brain does not allow the assimilation of all the complicated things that the word "education" means.

On the other hand, a peaceful life in close contact with nature is most favourable to them. As the experience in this French magazine shows, it is sufficient for these young children just to have been interested in a puppy which, growing up with them, becomes the object of their care and affection, to expand faculties while their brain seemed to be closed to any progress.

The misfortune is that, as soon as possibilities appear, they become the object of exploitation, and it will be necessary to go through the process of intellectual overloading which will consequently lead to a deplorable mental state.

That leads us to think, in view of what society is showing us, that "the intelligent" are much more to be feared for the security and future of mankind than "the misfits". The words of Christ become clearer and clearer: "Blessed are the poor in spirit...the meek...", i.e. those whose faculties remain tuned to the lessons and instructions of nature. The Bible also says: "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the strong."

How we rejoice over the day, and it is near, when divine light will drive out darkness, and when knowledge of the Lord will enlighten everyone's heart! The minds of all will be opened to the wonders of Creation, and a progressive sensitivity will reveal to all the greatness of the mystery of life.

When mankind have been introduced to true science by the Salvation Work of Christ and the Chosen Ones (the Elect), they will be able to fathom the depth of these words from a hymn by the Faithful and Wise Servant: "Stronger than death is love so deep."

A lesson in humility

The Bible and the men of God, who preceded us, give us helpful instructions if we take them to heart. For us, they are examples through the sentiments they displayed. David, the king of Israel, became one of them. But the Book of 2 Samuel, chapter 11, mentions the adultery that David committed with the wife of Uriah, one of his army's best soldiers, and David's murder of Uriah.

About a year later, the Prophet Nathan, on the behalf of the Lord, went to David to make him understand that he has seriously sinned against the Lord (2 Samuel, chapter 12). To do that, Nathan told David a parable of a rich man who, because he did not want to use any of his own sheep or cattle, took the only lamb of a poor man, to prepare a meal for a guest.

On listening to that story, David became very angry and said that the rich man deserves to die and that he must repay four lambs for it. Then, Nathan said to David: "You are that man!" Here, one must consider the mental state of David during the months that followed his misdeed until the intervention of Nathan. It is shown to us in these words of Psalm 32: 3 and 4: "When I kept silent [about my sin], my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. Day and night, your hand

to giving it to me! When I come to think of it, there are plenty of wives much worse off than I am. Why did I blow up the way I did? Now, as touchy as he is, he more than likely won't come back! Should I be any happier for it? Could I possibly part from him, get divorced and marry again, perhaps someone worse? Oh, I couldn't. How stupid of me to fly off so senselessly! Now, the harm is done. How am I going to mend things? What if he really never comes back? How terrible, how frightful that would be!"

Now she feels that, at the bottom of her heart, she loves her husband dearly, and that to part from him would completely spoil her life for her.

Those painful thoughts plague her until the dreary morning, for Marcel has not returned, and Mariette spends the day in deep anxiety. Marcel has his midday meal at the canteen, but will he come home tonight? The young woman waits in breathless expectation: nine

o'clock...ten o'clock...eleven o'clock...midnight...no one. She is desperate. She sobs into her pillow, while listening for the slightest sound, and hoping all the time to hear her husband's footsteps. But she hopes in vain.

Then a whirl of dismal thoughts invade poor Mariette's mind. Among others, there comes the memory of days long past. She is at her father's death bed, and he is giving her his last words: "My child, your mother has gone before me to her grave, and I am about to join her. You will be left with no visible support here below. But always remember that there is One Above Who will support you. Take Him for your Guide and your Support, as your mother always did. He will never fail you. And always remember this profound truth: you cannot reap anything except what you have sown. So, if you want to reap happiness, you must sow good things."

Becoming more and more desperate, Mariette thinks: "Oh dear, now I'm reaping

what I've sown! I've forgotten God and have shaped my life without a thought of Him! I haven't sought to do good, but only my own will. And now, I'm being punished as I deserve. It's enough to make me tear out my hair with despair! It's the irremediable harvest of what I've sown. Now, I know that Marcel will never come back! This is my punishment!"

It is evening once more, and once more, the hopeless waiting. Mariette tries to pluck up the courage to make the big effort to meet her husband as he comes out of the factory, but she cannot face the possibility of him turning his back on her, or the mockery of his mates. It seems to her that everybody must know all about their quarrel.

She spends a night, if possible, even more agitated than the one before, and as the suggestion bearing on her mind intensifies, she begins to be convinced that all is at an end. She spends the whole of the next day in tears.

On that very day, Francine, an evangelist

of the Kingdom of God, is carrying out her mission in that area of the town. It is her first day out after a bad attack of the flu, which has left her very weak. Towards the end of afternoon, she is feeling very tired and thinks she has done enough for that day and it is time she went home. However, she thinks better of it and scolds herself: "Don't you be so lazy! At least go and see if there's anyone home in this last house."

That is the very house where Mariette lives. The evangelist rings the bell. Mariette wipes away her tears and tries to pull herself together. Nevertheless, Francine perceives at once that she is in the presence of someone who is having a bad time. Being an evangelist at heart, she feels no more fatigue, but only an impulse to help and to comfort.

"I am bringing Good News, a wonderful message of hope and consolation from the Almighty," Francine says in tones of greatest kindness.

was heavy on me. My strength was drained, as in the heat of summer."

When Nathan explained to David that he himself was the person in the parable, David humbled himself and said: "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied: "The LORD has forgiven your sin. You will not die. Nevertheless, because, by doing this, you have shown utter contempt for the LORD, the son born to you will surely die." That actually happened.

David's humility is reported in Psalm 51, which is known as a "repentance psalm", and which is the favourite psalm of the Huguenots (a group of French Protestants).

David knew the joys of divine communion, and he had just spent months without it, which was the greatest distress for him. Here is the plan of that psalm: verses 1 to 6: the confession. David does not try to minimize his mistake. On the contrary, he declares that it is big. To hope for divine forgiveness, it is not enough to admit half or three-quarters of one's mistake, but the whole mistake. He then asks for grace, by counting on divine mercy. He confesses that he sinned against God and recognizes that he was born in iniquity and conceived in sin. He thus associates himself with, and implicitly declares that he also has a share in, the original sin of Adam.

Verses 7 to 12: David asks for cleansing. Recognizing one's mistake is the first step to humility. It is followed by the request for forgiveness. But to appear before God again, the sinner must be cleansed, because the mistake represents a stain that prevents one from feeling divine communion.

Verses 13 to 17: David is committed to publicly praise the Lord and sing about his mercy. Briefly said, he gives a testimony to those who ignore that God is good.

Verses 18 and 19: these verses are a prophetic statement and are not meant for the Jerusalem of David's time. The Jerusalem that is in question here, is formed of the true Church of the Living God, who was called during the last 2,000 years to follow in the ministry of our dear Saviour on Earth. The walls of this Jerusalem represent the Salvation of all humankind.

Let us be inspired by David's humility. Even if we have not killed anyone, we nevertheless often sin against the Lord, Who has done such great things for us. Let us not be content with a vague regret of our mistake, but humble ourselves sincerely and completely under the mighty hand of God. If it is necessary, let us do it openly in front of those who are close to us and especially in front of those whom we have failed. Let us earnestly ask for the cleansing of our sins through the merits of Christ, and let us give, to those around us, the testimony of divine mercy. Let us also be very grateful for grace and for divine forgiveness. And let us especially forgive our fellow person's mistakes towards us. We will thus be completely restored into God's grace and can fulfil our ministry to the glory of God.

Whom can one trust?

In the French newspaper *Ouest-France* on the 24th of November 2021, in the section "Readers' Mail", there was an article by Arnaud Platel, with the heading:

Building a France of trust

Society: That is the vision that we must have for our country, because most of our fractures have their origin in the following question: "Should I trust others, or not?"

On the 9th of October 1981, the "Badinter law" abolished the death penalty in France. Our country then became the 36th state in the world and the last country within the European Economic Community to make this decision. Forty years later, a potential candidate for the 2022 presidential election says he is "philosophically" in favour of reintroducing the death penalty.

Beyond the question of the death penalty, what is emerging in this typically French debate — according to an Ipsos poll in September, 50% of French people want the death penalty to be reinstated — is a division within an electorate that defines itself politically according to faith in human nature.

In his speech to the Senate in September 1981, Robert Badinter [a French lawyer and politician] affirmed that the abolition of the death penalty was the choice of those who "do not want to despair over humankind forever". However, that is not the choice of another part of the population who, while not necessarily in favour of the return of capital punishment, remains guided by its mistrust of others.

The same survey tells us that for 77% of those questioned, "one can never be too careful when dealing with others", while 23% of those questioned think that "most people can be trusted". These same proportions also contrast those who think that "France is in decline" (75%) and those who do not think so (25%).

It is as if there were "a three-quarter France" whose view of life would only need to be changed in order to permanently destroy this pessimistic mood on which the darkest political offers thrive.

An unemployed person would then no longer be considered as a welfare recipient, but as a potential worker. A foreigner would no longer be seen as a profiteer, but as an ambassador of the advantages of our country. A civil servant would no longer be regarded as a privileged person, but as a guarantor of the common interest.

That is a pious hope in the short term if we want to be realistic, but a real challenge for those who have the ambition to mend our fractures and who understand that most of them find their source in the following controversy: "Should I trust others, or not?"

The vision that we must therefore have for our country, is that of "a France of trust". There is nothing angelic about this objective, as it cannot be established without firmness towards anyone who is not worthy of it. That implies giving sufficient means to the police and the justice system, to protect the weakest and to punish criminals and delinquents, regardless of their connections. But with a different philosophy than that which guides the proponents of expeditious sanctions: trust is built, it is not imposed. And even less so with the guillotine or the electric chair...

If each and every one of us has a role to play in achieving this, it is up to the public service to ensure its maintenance. On the condition, however, that it is accessible (it is not acceptable that more and more health-care units and post offices are closing in France), that it is equitable (it is not acceptable that the school system is a sounding board for social inequalities) and that it is effective (it is not acceptable that the justice system does not have sufficient means to punish more quickly).

It is about our "social contract" and therefore the trust that we can have in ourselves, in others and in the future of France. This France which, although forged by antagonisms, nevertheless remains the bearer of a universal ideal.

The above text shows a certain goodwill and the wish to do some good, but it unfortunately does not show how to achieve that reality. In fact, to establish a trust relationship, it needs a solid basis. Now, this basis does not exist among humankind, because we are all imperfect. People can make promises and commitments, but despite their goodwill, they are often incapable of keeping them.

In France, like many other countries, the population has been deceived and disappointed by unkept promises. Even among political leaders who want to serve their country, there is, despite everything, dominating selfishness. One thinks, above all, about oneself: self-interest takes priority over the needs of the community. That mostly leads to great difficulty in keeping com-

mitments, because it also happens that those who take over power have direct hostile and belligerent intentions. A look at history is enough to see how nations have often been deceived, exploited and abused. One who asks for trust must earn it.

In the example mentioned in the article, we are reminded that capital punishment was abolished in France in 1981, but that now, 40 years later, 50% of French people want it reinstated. It is certainly not the pure desire to execute their fellow citizens, which makes people in favour of it, but rather a feeling of insecurity. People feel powerless in view of violence and do not know how to combat it.

As already mentioned, human beings, as sinners, are not infallible, and one generally does not easily trust someone whom it is known can make mistakes or who might fail in their duty.

On the other hand, capital punishment is enforced to dissuade malefactors from committing crimes. In countries where it was abolished, life sentences are imposed. However, these procedures, as we will see later, are imperfect because they have been applied by imperfect people who themselves — perhaps to a lesser degree than those whom they are condemning — are lawbreakers.

In fact, the Holy Scriptures teach us that there is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One Who is able to save (James 4: 12), namely, the Almighty. That means that only the Lord God can judge and absolve. And this function must be left to Him. The passage that we have just mentioned from the Book of James, continues: "Who are you to judge another?" We are not entitled to judge and even less to impose a chastisement, a punishment, on our fellow person. When dealing with capital punishment, it is even worse, because in this way, one is not practising justice, but committing a sin before God. Then, there are two evildoers instead of one. The one who committed the misdeed, and the one who judges the malefactor.

In fact, all humankind are sinners and are under the Law of Equivalents, which means that the wages of sin is the death of those who commit it. In a certain way, we are all condemned to death. It is therefore understandable that a condemned person cannot impose a condemnation on their fellow people. Such a condemnation has no value before God.

However, it pleased God to save humankind from the condemnation that burdened it. That is the first part of God's Judgement on sinful humankind, a judgement that is not a punishment, but a remission of punishment. By God giving his beloved Son — who took the place of the guilty, and who endured the equivalent of the committed sins, and death for them — mercy triumphed over judgement. The death sentence has thus been cancelled, and humankind can return to its destiny: eternal life. That is the wonderful Good News of the Gospel, which informs us that Christ's blood flowed so that we no longer have to suffer or die. Redeemed humankind must then go through a new education in order to learn and apply the principles of life — altruism — love for their fellow person.

All humankind will learn to love each other. By virtue of Christ's Sacrifice, those who have descended into the grave will come out and benefit, for their part, from the new education that represents the second part of God's Judgement for the good of humankind. One class of people have already gone through this education under the merits of Christ. The formation of those elite of humanity, occurred during the Gospel Age: since the coming of our beloved Saviour to Earth, until nowadays. Those human beings who were found worthy to belong to that class of people, will form the true Church of Christ, and reign with him in Glory.

Through the ministry that our dear Saviour faithfully fulfilled on Earth, he overcame the world, the Adversary and death. The Almighty gave our Judgement to him,

Her voice is warm, affectionate and soothing. Besides, there is something about her that reminds Mariette of her mother. "Please come in," she says.

There is an influence about the evangelist that does Mariette good. She feels as if a wave of infinite kindness is enfolding her, and so she starts to cry. In spite of herself, unable to help it, she tells Francine all her trouble and all her anguish, and concludes, in a small voice: "So, you see, I've been ungrateful. I've forsaken God, and He is punishing me. It's terrible. I've been sowing bad things and am reaping unhappiness. I've got nothing left to hope for."

Her visitor kindly takes her hand and says: "Don't you believe it, my dear. Your situation isn't as hopeless as you think. Above all, don't get it into your head that God punishes. He is far too noble and too wise to do such a thing. All He does is comfort, encourage, bless and mend. What proves it is that He sent me to

reassure you and do you good. Of course, we reap what we have sown, as your father told you. But this is only the effect of the Law of Equivalents. What makes our misfortune is our perverted character. To change it, we have to attend our dear Saviour's wonderful school and follow his kind teachings. It is never too late to start. We can always mend the harm we have done, and then start sowing good things to reap a profusion of joy. I shall be glad to assist you along this road, as I myself have been assisted."

Mariette hangs on Francine's lips, and the light of hope is once again shining out of her eyes.

The evangelist resumes: "My dear, all is not lost. God has sent me to tell you so and to reassure you. You can understand for yourself that the thing that holds you back from making the first move towards reconciliation, is just pride. It is probably the same thing that is keeping your husband from coming

home. What is more, he might be thinking that you meant what you said, and he might not dare to come home. So, it is up to you to make the first move. In that way, you will start sowing good seed at once, so that you may reap blessing."

After all the anguish she has been going through, Mariette is prepared to do anything, and exclaims: "Oh yes, I want to do that. But I can't do it on my own. Please help me. Would you be so kind as to come with me to his work, when they all come out? Please do!" "Most willingly," answered the kind visitor. "But let us wait till tomorrow. I shall call by for you in the late afternoon. If your husband hasn't come home by then, we'll go together to meet him."

After an ardent prayer, placing all things in the hands of the Almighty, the evangelist says good-bye to Mariette, in whose face, new hope is shining.

Francine has hardly stepped on to the street

when she passes a tall young man who stops and hesitates in front of the house she has just left, as if he is making up his mind to go in. Then, with a shrug, as if to say: "What's the use?" he goes on his way, venting a deep sigh.

The evangelist understands. She retraces her steps and approaches the young man: "Is your name Marcel?"

"Yes, it is," he answers with a look of astonishment.

"May I walk a few steps with you?" Francine asks.

He hardly dare refuse. Then, she talks to him with all the kindness at her command. At her first words, he is deeply moved, and little by little, as the influence of the evangelist's words unfolds him, a ray of joy lights up his face, which a while ago was so sad.

Then, they have a long conversation, at the end of which, full of joy and gratitude, Marcel says to the evangelist: "How shall I ever thank you enough for having so kindly reasoned

and he faithfully carried it out, not by presiding in a court and sentencing the guilty, but by taking their place and enduring the punishment intended for them. From now on, there is no more condemnation that could exist against us if we fulfil the conditions to inherit Salvation. And we know that the time is near when the effects of our dear Saviour's Sacrifice will manifest for the good of all humankind. That will be the Restoration of All Things, announced by the prophets and in Acts 3: 21.

An assessment of nuclear reactors

The following partly reproduced article, which was published in the French newspaper *Ouest-France* on the 22nd of December 2021, deals with the controversial subject of nuclear reactors, especially with a new generation of reactors called EPR, which have greater performance than their predecessors.

Nuclear power:

The EPR in Finland finally goes into service.

Built by Areva [a French nuclear-power company], it is the third of its kind, in the world, to start, 12 years late. That is good news for the French nuclear industry, says Mr Jacques Percebois, a specialist in energy law.

What is the EPR (the European Pressurized Reactor) [also known as the Evolutionary Power Reactor]?

It is a third-generation reactor, which is similar to the 56 existing reactors in France. The difference is its greater power, between 1,600 and 1,700 megawatts (MW), compared to 1,450 megawatts for the most powerful "classical" reactors. An EPR is more secure, but also more complex to build.

The EPR Olkiluoto Nuclear Power Plant, in Finland, started at night, between Monday and Tuesday. In January [2022], electricity production will initially be at 30%, and in June [2022], normal capacity should be reached. Why this delay?

There is an increase in power. It is like a dam: to test its resistance, it is not filled up all at once. These are very useful precautions. The six-month delay is quite normal. In commissioning, it is better to be cautious and not to rush the steps. The new reactor will have to work normally, all eyes will be on it.

It is the first EPR in Europe and the third in the world, after the two Chinese EPRs at the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant. Could there be any effects on European electricity production?

On the European level, it is very little, it will only ease the electricity market a little when the demand increases. The main effect is for the French nuclear industry and for Areva. It will send a good signal.

The EPR in Finland has had a 12-year delay, and the EPR in Flamanville [in France], which is due to be commissioned in one year, has had a 10-year delay. Are these projects, despite everything, a success for Areva?

The EPR in Finland and the EPR in Flamanville, are the first, and have served as examples. Some people said they would never work. What we need to remember is the feedback from experience. All manufacturers share technical information. The entire industry has an interest in making this work. With the delays in the EPR, it is now believed that it is not necessary to build such complex reactors. "EPR 2" ("New Model EPR") reactors, which are a bit simpler than the EPR reactors in Finland and in Flamanville, will be preferred. From now on, we will proceed faster: between 6 years (according to the optimists) and 8 years (according to the pessimists).

We are facing a big problem. The demand and the consumption of energy are constantly increasing, but the production of electrical energy by nuclear reactors is not without consequences for the environment. Therefore, more efficient nuclear reactors are built. According to figures from France in 2020, there were 4 power stations that produce 1,450 megawatts (MW) per year, 20 power stations that produce 1,300 MW, and 32 power stations that produce 900 MW.

According to figures from France at the end of 2016, the total amount of radioactive waste is 1.5 million cubic metres (m³).

The construction cost of an EPR is estimated to be 7.5 billion euros. The budget for the EPR in Flamanville was originally 3.3 billion euros, but was increased to 12.4 billion euros. Its commissioning was planned for 2012, but was delayed by 11 years.

Those few figures make us think, especially when we consider an energy transition. The transition from the current electrical production to an environmen-

tally friendly solution, also poses problems. The "production coefficient" of an EPR is about 90%, or 1,440 MW per year on average. That of an offshore wind turbine is 30%, or 0.6 MW per year on average. To produce as much energy as one 1,600-MW EPR, it requires 2,400 large 2-MW wind turbines, which is the number that could be lined up, next to each other, between the French coastal cities of Nice and Perpignan (475 kilometres) and around the French island of Corsica (325 kilometres), a total length of 800 kilometres.

To consume less electricity is one solution, but not enough on its own. When we consider how harmful the radioactive waste is that is produced by nuclear power stations, we can ask ourselves why we would consider building even more powerful ones. It is obvious that the world is at a dead end and that it can only be led out by the introduction of God's Kingdom on Earth. Some will say that that is a Utopia, but it isn't, because this Kingdom will follow our current society in the near future. This Kingdom will never be conquered, as expressed by the prophet (Daniel 2: 44), and will bring the solution to all problems. It is not based on money, but on the Ransom that was dearly paid for our benefit by the Sacrifice of our dear Saviour's life. This new dispensation was foreseen long ago by the Lord, because when humankind fell into sin, it was announced that the descendant of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent (Genesis 3: 15). Our dear Saviour came, in his time, to largely fulfil that promise, and now the Universal Law is given to all people who aspire for a better world.

We rejoice over those glorious prospects and invite everyone to join the programme of the Restoration of All Things, by uniting to form a nation of brothers and sisters who love each other. Our dear Saviour said to his first disciples: "The Kingdom of God is among you" (Luke 17: 21). That Truth is still valid today. If we seek to achieve true brotherliness and sisterliness, by living the principles of the Universal Law, we will have the joy of participating in the introduction of God's Kingdom on Earth. There, there will not be any energy problems or any other type of problem. It will be bliss for all, under the guidance of the Lord and of our glorious Saviour, his beloved Son.

with my wife? What a memorable lesson for me, forever, I can assure you. It's impossible for me to put into words what I've been going through in these last few days. I also had good parents, who gave me an excellent set of principles, which I have failed to follow. But my wife and I are going to start all over again, thanks to your very kind advice. What a wonderful mission you do, to go to the assistance of poor people, like us, in our deep moral wretchedness! We should never have been able to overcome our wicked hearts by ourselves. But God came all the way to meet us through your intervention!

And now, since you are the reconciling angel whom the Lord has sent to us, would you be so kind as to weld the last link between my wife and I, and then guide us on this new path, along which we can become truly happy, this time with lasting happiness? I can quite understand that the condition for the future is that God should be with us."

A gentle knock on the door is heard by Mariette. She opens it and comes face to face with her husband. They fall into each others' arms, and she softly cries on Marcel's shoulder: a silent language, more eloquent than the most splendid words.

Then, Marcel asks the evangelist to pray to the Lord for his blessing on this new phase starting for them.

Before leaving, Francine says: "It's almost the end of the year. We shall be having a meeting with the small Family of Faith in this region, and you are kindly invited to it."

"With all our heart, and with all our gratitude, we shall be there," say both husband and wife.

It's New Year's Eve, and Mariette and Marcel are present at the small meeting. They are both deeply moved, won over by the delightful atmosphere that presides at the family gathering of these idealists who have rallied to *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance). They are all bearers of "the message of reconciliation", which springs from the Saviour's Cross, that message of peace, which soon will bring all mankind together with "the family fluid" and the irresistible influence of the Kingdom of God. Marcel and Mariette join these good people in singing with all their heart and with conviction:

*Trusting, we accept what's hidden,
What the New Year shall provide:
God assureth peace from Heaven
If we by his law abide.*

*May our hearts keep the impression
Last year's blessings there did leave.
Future ones, with great affection,
From the Lord's hand to receive.*

*We possess this full assurance:
All things our great good have wrought.
Jesus, with the vast abundance
Of his love, is our support.*

Since that memorable evening, our two young friends have never failed to turn up at the meetings. An atmosphere of joy and peace now reigns in their home. They employ all their spare time in doing their share in bringing the message of reconciliation to all who have ears to hear and hearts to understand the language of the Father's House. They are even contemplating freeing themselves completely from worldly obligations, so that, under our dear Saviour's guidance, they may also become ministers of reconciliation on behalf of groaning and dying humanity, the suffering race, who so greatly needs to be comforted by the Kingdom of God.

News in brief of the Reign of Justice

At the end of the year, we will once again have the joy of celebrating the birth of our dear Saviour on Earth. It represents, for us and for all humanity, the birth of Salvation, through the Sacrifice he made of his life for the benefit of sinners, whom we are. In Cartigny, we will read out one of the dear Messenger's sermons, from which we happily share some passages in this column with our dear readers:

Today, in the city of David, there was born for you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2: 11.

"We have, before us, a magnificent text, encouraging to the highest degree. The shepherds who heard it were enthusiastic about it. But now, it is a matter of making sure that everything that the Lord places within our reach for our happiness, can benefit us, because we make good use of it.

All of Christendom celebrate Christmas in

their own way, but they cannot do anything with it. It is like someone who receives colossal wealth, but who is unable to put it to good use. So, it is of no use to them.

It is now a matter of knowing what we can do with the Salvation in Jesus Christ, we who know the Truth. Everything depends on our zeal and our sincerity. Some may value it highly, others less so, and others not at all. In any case, this immeasurable wealth has been given to us to introduce God's Kingdom on Earth, and to hasten it. That is the purpose. If a Saviour is born, who is Christ the Lord, it is to introduce the Kingdom of God. It is not for anything else that Salvation was brought. ...

Simon, Anna and others were seeking Salvation... They made great efforts and were able to see the birth of Salvation. It was the same for the Wise Men. But for each of these seekers of Salvation, there were trials and difficulties to overcome.

For Mary and Joseph, it was the same. Both had the wish for Salvation in their hearts. Mary was visited by the Angel Gabriel. She became pregnant, according to the angel's statements, but at the same time, incisive trials began for her and Joseph. For Joseph, it was a matter of knowing whether his faith would survive in the face of the difficulty. As we know, he wavered for a moment, because he had decided to leave Mary secretly. The Adversary thus succeeded in weakening him a bit with his diabolical influence... The Lord came to his assistance with ineffable tenderness. An angel appeared to him in a dream and said to him that the child Mary was carrying in her womb was from the Holy Spirit. Thus, Joseph's faith was wonderfully revived and strengthened, and he was able to drive out of his heart all suspicion and any hesitation.

Of course, when we read the marvellous story of the birth of our dear Saviour, we do not consider everything else associated with that principal event. We do not think about the faith that had to be shown by Joseph and Mary. In fact, she faced a big question mark: what was Joseph going to do? Was he going to abandon her? There were therefore very difficult moments for both of them. ...

That is the fight of faith, and it certainly was not a small matter for those who were involved. They were, at that time already,

witnesses of, and collaborators on, the establishment of God's Kingdom on Earth. It was a huge favour...but, as also for us, it was attached to conditions, to acts of faith, and to the absolute wish to serve the Lord at all costs. ...

The Kingdom of God and its introduction must have the very first place in us. Only thus can Salvation become effective in our soul. Without that, it always remains theoretical. ...

We have now come to the time when Babylon will completely collapse. Its end has come. It is the true children of God who bring about its fall through their sacrifice, lived without restriction. The question now is whether we are one of them, dear brothers and sisters! Do we shorten the Distress? Do we activate humankind's Deliverance, and are we establishing God's Kingdom? ...

The wonderful star has appeared in our heart through *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance), brought by the Faithful and Wise Servant. He has torn away the curtain that covered the people. He has unveiled everything and revealed the mystery. He has shown the Truth as it is. ...

For us to be able to usefully collaborate on the birth of Salvation all over the world, this Salvation must be born in us, so that we can make it understandable and tangible to humankind.

We should therefore ask ourselves: 'Is Salvation beginning to be born in me? Am I beginning to live: "Christ in me, the hope of glory," be it heavenly as a Consecrated, or earthly as a member of the Host of the Lord?' That is the programme that is placed in front of us and that we want to achieve with all our heart. Then, the sublime and final Christmas will be fulfilled in Heaven and on Earth, to the glory of the Lord and of his beloved Son, our dear and glorious Saviour."

We send everyone our best wishes of blessing for the year's end, with the wish for the Kingdom of God to be established over the whole world, as the fruit of the effort of the heart of all those who will have participated in it.

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