



FRANCE AND GOD

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CHAPTER 3

Who would we be to judge our fathers of whom we are not necessarily worthy?

Provided that we never do worse than them!

Were they worse than others?

Now that we have seen the result of this human utopia of building a perfect people without God, we will try to understand why and how such confusion might crept and go until become established in the twentieth century, that saw us born.

The theory goes back to antiquity, since Plato, around 387 BC, was already dreaming of the ideal city, but a major factor prevailed for the setting up of such a system. It originates from the preconceived idea that has prevailed for a long time and still remains today in various circles: "God had first instituted monarchy as a mode of government".

It emerges indeed sometimes the idea that everything rises or was risen a day against monarchy, was born of a human uprising, therefore carnal.

It is certainly undeniable that during the various French revolutions and around the world, many circumstances have not necessarily been conducted according to the rules established by God. We could also add, the revolutions were they really essential, since various syntheses show us that they are generally, I quote "only parentheses of the history", and that they recreate generally after a more or less long time systems similar to those of which they precipitated the fall.

These systems having then adapted to the new norms of dominant ideology, are sometimes radically opposed to precedents, and the analogy does not blatantly appear to the mass of those who do not seek comparative analysis. However, they produce an imbalance equal to the first, whose victims have changed sides.

Although other concrete examples are easy to take all over the world, we will say that that of Russia, of which we have just seen the result concretely, is enough for us to realize how, with initially praiseworthy intentions, it is possible to behave as badly as the one we fought before through a revolution. Would that mean, however, that all that took part in the fall of monarchy was against the will of God?

We will look together at what could have caused God to do this, and since the God of Christians is "Jehovah I Am", namely the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we will refer what the Bible tells us about the history of its chosen people, Israel. We will not examine what led God to choose this people more than another; we will simply say that we needed one and that it was this one.

It is not to extract a personal Glory from a banal human level that God wanted and still wants to manifest Himself to us. He wants to guide us in all things not for Him, but just for us. He pursues the intention to give us a dimension impossible to reach without Him, so that we live happily and in

peace, already on this earth. If that had been a simply individual level, in the person of the Christian or the Hebrew, God would not necessarily have taken this example at the level of a nation. He would have just shown us His greatness through certain humans. It is quite different, however, because when we deepen the history of Israel, told through biblical texts, we quickly realize that this story is the epitome of our personal inner conflicts, and so it is easy to transpose the lived experiences of the people towards the human. The one being the reflection of the other, it is obvious that the converse is true, and we will see it further.

To be used as an example was not always easy for the Hebrew people, as it is not always easy for a man, as close to God as he is, to serve as a good example and to be followed. There is on the one hand, the observer who would wish to receive only good examples of the one who is used for the demonstration of the power of God. It relates to idolatry. Then there is the one who is observed who would like to be only a perfect example, without having to repent of anything, second idolatry. When God, however, sends a perfect man like Jesus Christ, His son, nobody wants to practice according to the right reference, and many who claim to belong to Him boast of reacting to his opposite. What do we have to do?

The reality is indeed quite different, because the example of this reference is not enough. No one, indeed, can follow this reference until the end, the heart of each being to be first of all transformed by God through repentance and faith. So we have in Jesus Christ the example of to which we must strive toward the dimension without ever being able to reach it.

This is how we find in the biblical narratives of the history of Israel, the very example of what we are today, at the individual or collective level and the example, good or bad, arises a teaching to do or not to do. It is the eternal alternative of good and evil, in the individual or collective field! It is not however the successes that shape us the most, because failures are more profitable to us if we know how to extract the right lessons. It is in this that history must speak to us, and in particular that of this Hebrew people.

We will therefore take the time to make a little historical reminder of the Old Testament, which will allow everyone to better situate the context of the establishment of monarchy in Israel.

The first period of God's action is that of the beginnings during which the fall of Adam arrived. Adam and Eve tempted by Satan in the covetousness of knowledge, reach a dimension to which they were not yet prepared. From their union are born Cain, who will become a farmer, and Abel, a shepherd of small cattle. Cain, jealous of God's favorable look on Abel's offering, kills him. This example is certainly one of the most fundamental, since it highlights from the first steps, the need not to act on our own to cultivate our "earth" our soul. God shows us here that nothing can be perfect coming from our human dimension, and to be pleasant to Him, if not what comes directly from Him. This act is therefore the first prefiguration of the crucifixion of Jesus, by his "brothers descendants of Abraham", whose attitude was only "religious".

In this first period, which lasted from 4004 to 2234 BC, there was then the flood and the ark of Noah, then the dispersion of the races, so that the man, made in the image of God, people all Earth.

The second period is that of the Patriarchs, since Abraham recognized as the friend of God for the faith he manifested towards Him. Having preceded the promise of God for his descendants, by an extramarital union with one of his wife's maidservants, he gave birth to Ishmael. Very late in her old age, however, Sarah will bear the child of the promise of God, Isaac. This promise did not stop at this only descendant, but at the multitude as numerous as the sand of the sea, to which Abraham will have given birth. This is how every Christian finds himself by his faith, included in the lineage of Jesus Christ, and receives for adoptive father Abraham, as well as for brothers Isaac and Ishmael. Abraham, however, was tested by God, to the point of having to pass Isaac after his obedience to God.

From Isaac was born Jacob, from whom twelve sons were born. He was also called Israel after struggling with God and being found victorious (see Genesis 32-25 / 32). His penultimate son, Joseph, the dearest to his heart because first born of the wife he cherished, was sold by his brothers to merchantmen Madianites, Ishmaelite (descendants of Abraham by Keturah Ishmael) who went to Egypt. By the hand of God, he became the Pharaoh's right hand as governor of Egypt and was used by the LORD to feed his family during a famine occurred in Israel. He gathered and

installed Jacob his father, his brothers and all their family in the plains of Goshen, in the north of Egypt.

This second period lasted from 2348 to 1706 before Christ.

The third period is that of the life of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They will gradually be enslaved by Pharaoh and his entourage, for a total duration of four hundred and thirty years.

After all these years, and many cries of the Hebrews held captive, God used Moses to free His people.

He was born in 1571 BC., during a period of extermination of children under two years of age, following the announcement of a liberator of the Hebrew people. He was put by his mother in a wicker basket according to the waters of the Nile, and gathered by the daughter of Pharaoh. Thus, during the first forty years of his life, Moses became "prince of Egypt", but during the next forty years he learned to become a simple servant of God. Accompanied by Aaron his brother, he then announced successively to Pharaoh the ten plagues of Egypt.

Each of these plagues was in fact a divine demonstration of the greatness of "the LORD". That is why the ten plagues of Egypt became so important in the eyes of Pharaoh and his people, since they were highlighting the balance of power between the Lord and the idol worshiped in Egypt, corresponding to the plagues. The plague of frogs was related to the god of fertility, the waters of the Nile changed into blood, the god of waters, to name but a few. At the tenth plague, the death of the first born, this one represented the sovereignty of God in direct relation to that of a human born Pharaoh. This is why the incumbent Pharaoh drove the Hebrews away, giving them plenty of gold to see them go. It is the exit of Egypt with the crossing of the Sea of Reeds in 1491 BC.

Everyone knows the different miracles that God used to bring out of Egypt, his people oppressed by centuries of slavery. So that the youngest do not assimilate it to any televised soap opera, let us read or reread together this passage in which all this people, cornered between the sea and its exterminators, witnessed what still astonishes us today: *(Exodus 14-15 / 31) And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.*

And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

Still forty years of life in the desert, but also miracles repeated, and Moses died without having entered the land of the Promised Land. This third period lasted from 1706 to 1451 BC, and ended with the crossing of the Jordan from this Hebrew people, led by Joshua. It is the entry into the land of Canaan (1451 BC), the Promised Land. Conquest of 1451 to 1444 BC.

The fourth period, which is of particular interest to us, was that of the "Judges". These judges were used by God to "judge Israel", that is, its deeds. They were there to lead the people of Israel to the respect of the law given to Moses that God might make them victorious when they followed His commandments, as He had promised in this law. In this, the Judges were spiritual leaders and intercessors, for the whole people and for themselves with God. They were not sovereigns, this part returning to "the LORD". They remained no less men, subject to their own human nature, identical to ours, therefore imperfect.

They succeeded one another from 1394 to 1095 BC during three centuries, and were fourteen from the first Othniel to Samuel the last.

For those who would have read the whole book of the judges, it is obvious that at the first synthesis, we would be tempted to draw the hasty conclusion that the people of Israel never walked in the ways of God. These narratives indeed put forward much more the disobedience, causes of reprimands, than periods of peace, which are mentioned only with a few words between two paragraphs, for example "and Israel, lived in peace for forty years".

It also emerges of that the people whose God is the driver, would always want to stand out victorious of all situations, whatever its mistake. He would then consider that God is the best of kings, just as each of us would like to follow God, provided we are not made in His image, but even though it is he who is made to ours. Our bad image would then be the right, as we so often believe in our sincerity while wage war against our fellow men.

If we today as Christians or Christian nations are not more often winners of our bad attitudes, then do not be surprised that Israel had not been it there is a few thousand years ago. Rather than calling itself into question, and letting God act in His promises as He had announced and regularly demonstrated, it would be easier for the Israelites to look for the wrong example through their neighbor. To an immense supernatural power, but invisible, it was more conceivable for them to trust a human power which extolled itself by violence and domination, and whose sovereign was elevated to the rank of a visible god.

In those times when television and mobile phones did not exist, the example was not far from them. Since more than a thousand years before the time of which we speak, there existed throughout the world several monarchies based on the divine and immortal nature of their sovereign, such as in China, the Maya and what's more in Egypt. Pharaonic Egypt, instituted by Menes who held under a yoke the kingdoms of low and high Egypt, in the period between Adam and Abraham, about 1000 years before Moses, about 1500 years before the end of the period of the Judges, to which we are referring to.

Powered by God's intentions towards him, Abraham and his Hebrew servants, whose nomadic origins passed through present-day Iraq, had prospered to the point of becoming the people implanted not far from that Pharaonic Egypt. Confronted with its cohesion despite its growth, all of this people would have the choice to continue to give the utmost confidence to "The LORD", the God of Abraham of Isaac and Jacob as it had done until then in spite of all its vicissitudes, or to take model on the habits and customs which they knew well of its powerful neighbor. The whole of the tribes constituting the Hebrew people knew all the better all the practices and structures of this one since their ancestors had endured several centuries of slavery from which God had just made out some hundreds of years earlier.

Let's look at what happened then: *(1 Samuel 8-1 / 9) And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beersheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.*

Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

*And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: **for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.** According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, **so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.**//*

This text does not require any comment, as for the institution of the monarchy by God, at least that of Hebrews and Christians. Of the gods there are indeed many through idolatry, because there are even many more than declared religions.

On the other hand, there is what we must keep in mind as the guiding thread of our reflection through the phenomenon triggering the rejection of God, following all injustice inflicted on His behalf by oppressors who represent Him, as had become the sons of Samuel. These future judges on Israel acted shamelessly in corrupt attitudes, but it was God who was held responsible by their observers. If the LORD did not mention it, it is because the elders, themselves corrupt, did not come towards Samuel to seek justice for the misdeeds of his sons by a justice to which God would have responded positively as in the case of Eli, but to replace Him, Himself, by a human king.

In spite of all the miracles performed before their eyes before and after their exodus of Egypt, these ancient among the Israelites, of a nature identical to ours, could not refrain from grumbling against the LORD, their Liberator, and not against the sons of Samuel in the present example, which had placed them under the wrath of God. For us who change our political orientation every five or six years, how can we not understand that after three hundred and fifty-six years of institutions and these twelve judges, their lack of faith was not going to push them to replace God (King Divine over Israel) by a human king as it existed among their neighbors?

Here we find a very ordinary human need for visible references, on which man can naturally rely without his faith intervening. In spite of the supernatural that their fathers had lived and the warning they received then, the Hebrews believed more in man than in God and therefore took the risk of creating an institution imperfectly in conformity with the will of God. An institution that was going to govern their entire country, their life context, have a profound impact on the lives and evolution of their children.

Through the mouth of the prophet Samuel, God had warned them that monarchies were going to make to them live and that we can see today. Can the description given by God seem exaggerated to us faced with the abuses of all the various kingships in all times and throughout the world? *(1 Samuel 8-10 / 22) And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.*

Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.//

Perhaps the Israelites had some fears in this, but each in his human presumption that had removed him from God, did not he hope to benefit of it better than his neighbor? And then, does the image of human greatness, which represents the king's splendor to which the simple man easily identifies himself with him, do not glorify him a little?

In this kind of collective or personal introspection, how much could we advance motives all worse than the others, before which we ourselves are so weak?

These passages make clear the permissive will of God, to let each one its free will to follow or not His advices, even for the people He has chosen. This permissive will, perhaps exists only to better show its error to the man. What choice do we leave indeed to God to bless us beyond our expectations, if we refuse to follow Him for lack of confidence in Him? Will He abandon us? Will He destroy us to show us His power and love for us? After our stubbornness we weep, and often we hear from the mouths of the most obstinate to act only their own way, "if God existed how he could allow that?" But what about us?

What are the parents who, forced by the stubbornness of their children, have never had to use this kind of method of "do not touch otherwise you will burn yourself" once, twice, three times and finally, the "If you burn yourself, do not come to complain..." What else to do? And God says likewise! Although He wants to avoid us all these setbacks that we often spend, whether in an individual or collective attitude, He is powerless to our deafness and our fears. So there is nothing surprising that in the deposition of a monarchy God does not intervene as we would wish. When we choose and impose our will on God, He will content with our decision until we are fully willing to turn to other paths, in the utmost repentance. This is so with any form of individual or collective sin.

We can discern the very essence of God's desire to bless us all, even if it may seem paradoxical at first sight. Yet it is a fundamental situation, both in individual and collective blessing, in which God wants to intervene for our good. Let's read the story of Jacob's struggle to receive the blessing of God: *(Genesis 32-25 / 32) And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.*

And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

*And he said, Thy name shall be called no more **Jacob, but Israel** ¹: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.*

And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.//

1) Israel signifies: It struggles-god, which is interpreted from this passage as: He struggles with God, although the translation: God's Struggle (for him) is also possible.

God's will to fill us with all his blessings may be even less obvious to some after reading this text, but it is the attitude of heart in which He expects us, to be able to bless us. God wants to give us absolutely all these blessings, without we are losing any of them, just as incredible as it may seem. This is a fundamental expectation of God towards us, because it is much deeper than the simple desire to meet a need. To a past need, succeeds indeed another need, but to a blessing obtained in the search for the will of God, by our communion, in the very intimacy of God, and so often in the questioning led by God of our bad attitudes that at this level there is no more a vague capricious mind that always demands more effortlessly, one day in a sense, the next day the opposite according to the perception or mood of the moment. On the contrary, there is the attachment to keep pure this blessing which does not remain on a human, but divine level. The respect of what God has given is all the greater because we truly realize that it is not us who have "deserved" it, but that it is He who has do us the honour of bestowing it despite all our mistakes.

It is for this or at least for a small part of this that God asks us for an investment that is sometimes so "fierce" to bless us. It is almost always when we have overcome our physical, mental or spiritual resistance that at the moment we are letting go, the thing is fulfilled to our astonishment. It is also in this personal investment to be covered with the very nature of God in the image of Jacob, that one discovers all the beauty of living faith in the communion of God. It goes without saying that if the thing is already difficult at the individual level, it is all the more so collectively.

No, I assure you, it is not God who limits man, but quite to the contrary the man who limits God!

Look at nowadays, how many keep an object near them as a "lucky charm". This will obviously not be the case for all, but if this exists for some as fetishism, is there not in others the fact of placing firstly sexuality or money before God? Would this a social problem? I have met it at all social levels, and not necessarily the lowest, because idolatry can be in anything.

This evil is certainly one of the most widespread sins on our planet, and always puts God in the second, see the Nth rank. It is it who brings to certain the conviction that God is an unhealthy heresy to which man attaches himself for fear of death. Thanks, I already gave!

I do not condemn those who act so, for if I were to do so, I would condemn myself, who for many years had been one of the main defenders of this last thought. I believe that just as I did not perceive the difference of it yesterday, many unfortunately confuse God and religions. They say they represent God on earth, but this is still idolatry. They certainly make known their interpretation of the divine law, and in this they are good, but when they impose for their profit, their greatness, their power, their supremacy, they do what God does not allow Himself by Love for us.

Does idolatry emanate only from those who have never seen God at work or can it persist? Can it be reborn in those who have lived some of the most spectacular miracles of all humanity, and therefore in all of us?

Let us return to these Hebrew slaves and to their exit from Egypt. We will say, "they believed", and we may add, many of us believed. They had seen and they were going to see again. Three months after the departure from Egypt, and already many tribulations, the people led by Moses arrived at Mount Sinai, where God was going to manifest Himself to it to communicate the "Ten Commandments". They all had a great fear of God and asked that only Moses should attend this "show". It lasted six days, and at the seventh Moses went up to the LORD. He stayed there for forty days to finally come back down with the Stone Tables, the Tables of the Law, and there what did he find?

(Exodus 32-1 / 8) And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.//

We must once again remember how, in the eyes of the peoples of the time, the miracles performed by God through Moses, in relation to the ten plagues of Egypt, might have appeared important. They were all supernatural manifestations demonstrating the divine power, to better manifest to the world of yesterday and today, the immeasurable dimension of God in relation to the one that man reproduces in idolatry. This is also why among all the miracles performed by the LORD, which the Hebrews may have witnessed, whether it is in Egypt before leaving it, in the desert after coming out from it, or later on crossing the Jordan or the capture of Jericho, all had

been of an exceptional size, so that His people might have more confidence in Him than in any other god of human nature.

Three hundred and fifty-six years after their exodus from Egypt, it would not be enough for this people to keep God as King and ask for a human dimension.

The generations had succeeded one another and the parents had witnessed all the miracles that God had done for their people, but some were eighteen, twenty-five, thirty-five or forty years old. At all these ages, I said for my part, "God never existed, Jesus was an extraterrestrial", so who would I be to say of them that they were unbelieving idolaters?

They had been drinking, eating, working, harvesting, so many benefits that appear to us as coming so easily from ourselves. It was my case before God be intervened in my life. I attributed to myself all the glory of all my results, without realizing that the very circumstances of my birth in a place such as France had never depended on my choice.

We are at the benefit of God's grace and His promises made to all who behave and have behaved one day according to His ways, of whom some of our ancestors are part. God already promised it in Horeb in the Ten Commandments: *(Exodus 20-5 / 6) for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

Because I had the good fortune to be born in this blessed country of God, that is France, I thought me was a superior being without even realizing that it was precisely that the Grace of God, but in no way thanks to me. This grace already goes back to many centuries for our beautiful France, and even if it was transmitted to us by a monarchy, which perpetrated certain false ideas that the Hebrews had given rise to, it is still true that we are still today, under the effects of this grace of God.

The Merovingian Gaul



At the death of Clovis, the Frank kingdom is located on the territory of present-day France with two differences: the coastal strip from Marseille to the Pyrenees belongs to the Visigoths while the north-east of the kingdom extends beyond the Rhine.

A Grace of God, which concerns all these men who could be these Merovingian kings, and even before them these little-known monks such as Saint-Martin, craftsman of the rural apostolate in Gaul in the fourth century. They created a rooting of Christianity of the most precious for our country still today, because it was they in the person of Clovis, who gave France to God, as was the case of Armenia in the third century. If we are today in favor of the blessing they brought to France, we have to know not to dissociate ourselves from it, and let us look without condemning certain errors which we inherited through a small page of history.

These Merovingian kings, of whom Clovis belonged, descended from the family of Merovech, a more or less legendary little Frankish chief. They drew their strength from their supposedly divine origin and their warlike virtues. The very name of Clovis (that is, Louis) means "famous in combat".

Like the Pharaoh, Clovis was certainly reputed by the Frankish people, from divine birth, but unlike the first who witnessed of so many miracles without being converted, he converted to the Christian God to whom he simply believed without miracles. Is not it beautiful?

The Merovingian monarchy¹ was going to make only a few improvements of the pagan rites of the time, because it was widely shared between idolatry, profit and craving for power, but it was going to allow the establishment of a Christian base of civilization, supported especially by a whole monastic system.

The Merovingian lineage lived its real limits through the victory of Pepin II, also known as Pippin of Herstal, **mayor of the palace**² of Austrasia, on his of Neustria rivals, at Tertry, near Saint-Quentin, in 687. Recognizing, in theory, the authority of the Neustria king Thierry, III, whom he had put to flight, and without encumbering himself in Austrasia with a particular king, Pepin II restored the unity of the Frankish kingdom for his own profit and in his person. From Austrasia, which he did not leave, he let live in Neustria, in the valleys of the Seine and the Oise, the normal residence of Frankish sovereigns since Clovis, ghost kings he installed at his discretion on the throne, slowly letting the prestige of the royal race dissipating.

- 1) Merovingian dynasty of Frankish kings reigned from 481 to 751
- 2) Mayor of the palace: Highest dignitary of each kingdom of the Frank kingdom during the Merovingian period, Neustria, Austrasia, Burgundy. At first, he was used as steward of the king, but gradually he substituted himself for the king.

It is not without reason that the papacy, threatened by Byzantium or the Lombards, appealed in 739 (only sixty years later) to the mayor of the palace Charles Martel, who had just won over the Arabs the famous victory of Poitiers in 732 rather than to the King of France. If the appeal was ineffective on this date, it was heard in 754, since the king had slowly been deposed from his kingdom. It sealed then the alliance of the two spiritual and temporal forces of the West: The Papacy and the future Frankish Monarchy.

The Carolingian Empire Partition



This map shows the various possibilities of sharing: the one that Charlemagne foresaw in 806 and the one adopted by his grandchildren. The Treaty of Verdun in 843 with the "Lorraine corridor" of Lothaire will be the germ of all the wars of the classical and modern era.

The kingdom of which Charles Martel had secured the government was therefore and remained until his death a weak and even very fragile unity, of which only the presence and the personal action of the chief, everywhere and at every moment, managed to safeguard the cohesion. This is what had discovered the two sons of Charles Martel, Carloman and Pepin (future Pepin the Short), between whom the mayor of the palace, like a king, had shared the kingdom shortly before his death, which occurred at Quierzy in 741.

So they thought it prudent to put a little light on the legitimate representative of the Merovingian house, Childeric III. This simulacrum of kingship was the seeds of its abolition, since King Childeric himself proclaimed in his deeds and writings that he owed to Carloman mayor of the palace his dignity: "Childeric, king of the Franks, to the eminent Carloman, mayor of the palace, which established us on the throne ..."

In the year 751, the moment was at last most favorable to renounce the Merovingian fiction. With the support of the Pope, from whom Carloman and Pepin the Short had approached on the occasion of the restoration of the Frankish Church undertaken by St. Boniface, Pepin the Short convened the assembly of all the people in power of the kingdom to Soissons, in November 751. He got there made elect himself king of the Franks, and by a ceremony hitherto unknown in Gaul, **he was made sacred with holy oil by the bishops present, led by St. Boniface.**

The Church therefore consecrated the coup d'état, and evangelization progressing more rapidly than ever, ensured his success. Nevertheless, a solemn confirmation of the decisive option taken by the bishops gathered at Soissons did not seem superfluous.

The opportunity arose when, in 754, the pope, pressed by the advance of the Lombards towards Rome, came to Ponthion himself to France, to find the new king to implore his intervention in Italy. After having obtained from Pepin the Short the written promise to give him the Exarchate of Ravenna and to assure him the peaceful possession of the Duchy of Rome, **the Pope Etienne II personally proceeded, in the abbey church of Saint-Denis, to the renewal of the Sacrament of Pepin, and the coronation of his sons Charles, the future Charlemagne, and Carloman his younger. A monk of Saint-Denis, perhaps a witness of the event, added that "the same day the Sovereign Pontiff blessed the Queen Bertrade, Pepin's wife, and defended all, under pain of prohibition and excommunication, to dare for ever choose a king born of a blood other than that of these princes, whom the divine piety had deigned to exalt and, through the intercession of the holy apostles, to confirm and consecrate by the hand of the blessed pontiff, their vicar "**

The monarchy from Divine right was born. He who, in the eyes of the Merovingian families, could have appeared as an usurper, was now becoming as the elect of the God of the Christians and his descendants with him.

Through these historical reminders, our aim must not be to discredit any Christian denomination, but rather to make us the advocates of the main actors of these founding times. I will say as for me, thank you Lord for avoiding me this particularly difficult period that was this part of our history. It is indeed easy for us to forget that after the Roman domination we had come down again very low, especially in the north of our beautiful country where this influence had been less felt, and where the Celts had more marked their footprints.

Those who had to make the decisions did not have the perspective we have. All these men were only humans, more or less subject to each other's preconceived ideas. The Holy Spirit was certainly there to avoid mistakes as He is for each of us, but we must recognize that the dose of confidence, the dose of faith, can vary enormously in some decision-making according to our understanding. Their error was obviously unjust in front of God, for the primitive paganism attached to a monarchy on the sole condition that it be of a divine nature, was thus replaced by a monarchy of divine right by scholars supporting a form of idolatry made in name of the Eternal God.

Let us not forget that the LORD's wish was that men should keep Him as King. This digression was probably no worse than that of His people to which He had manifested Himself, especially since through His permissive will, God had indicated the king of his choice whom He had anointed for this function by the prophet Samuel, as we read in 1 Samuel 8. That certainly did not went as far as the dimension in which God raised this human being to a level equal to His by a divine nature, but this choice of God could appear to some who had not gone so far as to deepen the true reason for the institution of kingship over Israel by God, as being "the institution voluntarily chosen by God to represent Him on His people", therefore all peoples.

What was better to do? Nothing! The divine anointing, moreover, would have been of the most normal in the Christian dimension, if it had not made of them, in the eyes of men, characters of a divine character, and brought them only the approval of God. to behave well in their duties towards

the people "itself of God". It is therefore not the anointing of God on royalty that is to be contested, but the use that was made by these kings who were only men.

God had announced it from the beginning, knowing in advance the outcome of this structure, knowing that even if men rejected Him then, He will not reject them and will do everything to enlighten them. We will therefore confine us to hypotheses of mismanagement of the context, and come as an advocate of our brothers like Jesus asks us, rather than as accusers, because we could otherwise find many bad reasons.

These men and these kings sinned undeniably by raising too high an institution that God would have wished to establish only on the human scale of men relying on God, as was the case of the Judges on Israel. But to what dilemma were these representatives of the Christian faith confronted?

Perhaps they had only two solutions to their mind? In the first, they met the requirements of the civilization of the time which was led by kings on condition that they only be of divine nature, Christian or not, as it was initially the position of the Merovingian; in the second they raised their king to the divine dimension under the cover of the LORD. In the first, they continued to be governed by kings with uncertain and often barbarous customs, in the second the compromise ensured the safeguarding of Christian values. This accommodation was certainly going to turn out over the centuries, as an element of collective confusion of which it was going one day have need to be lift the veil, between the behavior of kings of France and the image they then gave of God. What God had allowed at His people to whom He had so powerfully manifested Himself, He was going to tolerate it from a people who had only heard about Him.

This emphasizes once more the true nature of God who does not institute rules and laws to crush offenders, for in this case God "stepped aside" once more in front of the "necessity" of circumstances. It is indeed not necessarily good to bring rules to the person who can not receive them and put them into practice. This is how God began to manifest Himself to Abraham, before arriving several centuries later to dispense His Law to Moses.

God can certainly ask some people a lot of constancy in their own life, but to show a great tolerance towards those who do not know Him perfectly and come to Him, He knows how to be patient while waiting for our openness to new understandings.

Would this mean that He is satisfied with a first advance as a definitive thing? Certainly not, because the Bible is very clear about this! Certain texts, such as the parable of the barren fig tree in the New Testament, show that there is indeed a time for everything, and that there is not in this, two sets of rules. God is God, the same yesterday today and forever (*Luke 13-6 / 9*) *He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.//*

God acts in the same towards the peoples, and that is why we have to work in tolerance of human understanding, waiting for the day of his blessing. **Our purpose was only to put behind us the preconceived idea of the voluntary institution of the monarchy by God, when in fact it was only a second-best solution tolerated by God.**

Let us not forget in this context, that if some peoples have lived kings, kings have lived peoples. We dwell easily on the plight of the oppressed people, sometimes making too hastily of these kings of tyrants. It is not our responsibility to condemn men, even if some of their actions may have been "reprehensible". How much I realize today that I have not always manifested myself, the form of respect for others that it was sometimes necessary to these kings, while I did not have the tenth of the greatness that was bestowed upon them. Perhaps this respect existed in some of these kings and lords only by a need for personal survival? Without people there are indeed no more kings! But in others it was in my opinion, of the order of a dimension given by the spirit of God. This dimension of the Spirit of God is certainly accessible to everyone who looks for it, but as it was not always my case, and not the case of everyone, this deserves to be emphasized to the advantage of these kings.

Jesus said, and we will come back to it, that it was more difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, than for a camel to go through the hole of the needle. It was certainly not a

sewing needle, which would have definitively closed the door of the kingdom of heaven to the rich, but of the low door by which one could enter the sleeping city at night. This required a man to bend down to enter, and it was very difficult for a camel to go on its knees, which prevented brutal invasions. Let us therefore perceive that wealth can become a handicap, and that for these rich kings and multiple powers, it was more difficult for them than me, of modest social class to behave well. Of course, I do not say so to condemn myself, nor to congratulate them for their mistakes, but so that everyone may examine himself before judging these "accursed" kings and lords. No! These kings were only men with all the faults we all can have, so let's look at one of them, Charlemagne, who was perhaps the greatest.

It would have been all the easier for him to fall into pride, that he had been crowned king from his earliest childhood at a time when it did not exist. He was indeed a man of the most brilliant and brother in Jesus Christ. He was able to manage the physical efforts by huge rides throughout Europe, intellectual necessities by a self-taught culture for the level DEUG or license of high school of today, and the spiritual putting in practice being constantly driven by a faith to upset the mountains. He lived, however, in an environment in which the intellectual culture had very little consideration, but that brings still more Glory to God, in the use He made of him. Some parts of his life obviously remain in the shadow, and may suggest that he was certainly not perfect, but we could almost say fortunately, because we could otherwise be ashamed of the little we do, especially brought back to the knowledge and means of our time.

If we look at all the exchanges that he had through Europe, and all the institutions he created or attempted to create politically, him, the unifier to federate Europe before the time, and this without a mobile phone or personal plane, we must admit that his faith was from nature divine. Be careful, however, to give only to God all Glory, who gives according to his will to him who wants to follow Him. We are not to elevate the man to the heavenly level of God, but to recognize in spite of all how much God wants to give us His nature and how much He can give a particular energy, vigor and intelligence both intellectually and spiritually to the one who wants to do His will.

How many have perhaps received so much during the centuries without really making the best use of it, whereas Charlemagne seems to human sight have used in a real common sense. This is all the more surprising for the time, even if he was probably not perfect?

He was indeed the initiator of an intellectual renaissance for both laity and ecclesiastics, the defender of Christian morality, just as he was of faith both on the battlefields and in theological debates, unifying the Christian people. This notion of the Christian people, Alcuin¹ put it forward in the months preceding the advent to the Empire. Two years later, he used the phrase "Iniperium christianum" (Christian empire) to qualify an empire which could not be contented itself, to be Roman, since he did not include all of the old Empire's lands. And even Alcuin specified his thought well when he called Charles "Rector and Emperor of the Christian people".

- 1) In Latin, Albinus Flacus, Anglo-Saxon religious scientist, born in York towards 735, deceased in Tours in 804, master of the palatine school founded by Charlemagne, he played a capital part in the Carolingian rebirth.

Charles was at once the successor of Constantine and David in their eyes. David whose name he had taken in the literary games of the Palatine Academy but all of whom knew that he was the "Priest King" instituted by God to lead the chosen people and which was already held, in the days of the Merovingian, for a political model.

Already in 614, a council compared Chlothar II to a David in the service of the people of God, and Pepin the Short did not disdain that the pope itself qualified him as New David. When Paulinus of Aquileia described Charles as "king and priest, and very wise governor of Christians", he justified the amalgamation of the Frankish people and the Christian people, as that of the royal function and the priestly function. In all this we can see the search for biblical references more prophetically attached to the person of Jesus than to that of a human king. That is why there would be much to say about this amalgam between the king's function and that of priest as we might see it about King Saul in 1 Samuel 13, but despite their error and idolatry, sincerity of these people is probably not to call into question. Thus, at the coronation of the emperor there was the attribution of

prophecies concerning the coming of Jesus to the very person of Charlemagne, and that he was read Isaiah (9-5/6):

The Empire was laid on his shoulders;
And it is named:
Admirable adviser, strong God,
Eternal Father, Prince of peace.
And to give an endless peace
To the throne of David and his royalty,
To establish it and to strengthen it in law and justice.
Right now and forever,
This is what the zeal of the LORD of armies will do.

The idealism of some was perhaps not the most fair before God, but others were probably the most sincere, because it was indeed a Christian empire that cared for Charles at the meeting of March 802, when he thought it necessary to send the Missi Dominici¹ to remind the whole empire of **the truths of the faith, the demands of morality, and the personal and social duties of the Christian**. And St. Augustine's familiar did not fail to conjure up the concern for the city of God and that of a terrestrial city, in which we began to find this notion of state, which ancient Rome called *Respublica*.

1) Special envoys of the Carolingian kings, who were in twos, possibly three, one of the clergy and a layman, to ensure the control and supervision of the local authorities.

He was certainly a ruthless warlord, as we could see otherwise, but had he in the context of the time other possibilities to put in his quiver? How would he have had to parley with these more or less bloodthirsty barbarians he was confronted with? With them, should he have had to start "to look sternly", before acting?

In the same sense of still not playing the role of the accusers, we will therefore say that it is easier to criticize since his warm armchair, than to take quick initiatives in the field against barbarian invaders, without fear and without law. We should also add to these external invaders, internal uprisings manipulated by tyranny envious ones, whose sole purpose was to monopolize sometimes a whole population to their only glory and no longer that of God. If it was not yet a question of establishing a democracy, which current government would not choose the solution of the least evil?

It is enough for us to look at how the entire Christian base world, and many Muslim peoples have stood up against Mr. Bin Laden's terrorist actions, to realize that if the United States, had been ruled by Charlemagne, we would have certainly found very few differences in conflicts. In the eyes of certain, the fact of having to slice the heads, as was forced to do Charlemagne himself, may possibly appear to be more barbaric than get drop "clean" bombs by soldiers. They reach ninety-nine times out of a hundred times their objective, but he used the means at his disposal to defend the same ideal of liberty and morals as ours. Let's look at his work in complete serenity, as the work of a heart truly turned to God, whom God used greatly, even if he was perhaps not sanctified absolutely according to the perfection of God? Who can today claim to be perfect, if not the fool who admires himself in his egocentrism?

No doubt he has created institutions that today may seem obsolete for some, and for others tyrannical, but the whole of the man and his work are yet of such diversity that it demonstrates the hand of God on him.

In all humility and respect, we can therefore praise the faith of a brother in Christ that God used at best for His Glory, as he could do with some of us if we accepted it. We can certainly make mistakes of youth but when we are sincere and true, God blesses if we repent.

Before this repentance, however, He nevertheless tries to prevent, in order to bless everyone personally and for eternity, but also to bring His work even further. It is thus allowed us to think that if Charlemagne had simply received the royal anointing without being made of him a subject of veneration, the beginning of federalism which he had carried out would have been perhaps

materialized. A few centuries after this time, do not we begin to see the appearance of the Swiss Confederation, by descent of this model of structure?

The fact of having elevated a little too high their "nature" of king, only accentuated the carnal dimension of the man already too inclined toward power, authority power, domination and pride. What was going therefore facilitate the power for a time was going to turn against them, who were going for some to take themselves for demigods, see... How indeed a child, from sincere but carnal nature, will he contradict those who from his earliest childhood put him on a pedestal? How this one will be able later make the difference between his happiness of conquering, so much his neighbors he will always find warlike, than his "people" he will always find too unsubdued to fulfill his own desires? How will he not think himself is God when all the respects are due to him, and that nothing can exist to question him or almost?

It seems to me that if it had been so for myself who knew not to be of divine birth, I would always believe myself to be superior to many others because God would have blessed me through my social position. Perhaps I am of a too weak spirit or on the contrary too pretentious, but for my part I do not see anything which can bring a child born in the difficult condition of pretender to the throne, to the compassion of his neighbor as Jesus taught us!

Nor is it to him that we will blame the fault, but to our nature. Kings do not form alone. They are initially children like the others, even if the fate has destined them for a different position. The die of their future is cast, man has made these kings gods or almost god; as long as those make headway, by the assimilation of each to share the "greatness" of its king, everyone is getting a return, even if in this, God becomes more the servant of the king, than the king servant of God.

It would had been necessary to possess such a dose of humility to be a good monarch according to God, that we could have seen God working through him, rather than seeing a great man. For France, as for so many other countries, even if it was so for some kings, it was often the opposite. The god idol that men had created themselves, to the detriment of the only God who could guide them, was therefore going to turn against them over the centuries.

A meteoric ascent, motivated by the faith of a man in the course of one or two generations, was to follow a slow descent into the abyss of the monarchy and thereby to the eyes of men: The image of "God".

Let us indeed look at the majority of his successors, who would not have to conquer, but to reign to preserve "their" acquired privileges to the detriment of the greatness of God. Through their behaviors, what image of God would those who reigned give to their observers, since everyone considered that it was from God that they extracted their "nature".

God is less feared often, because invisible with the eyes of the ones haven't got faith, while these kings possessed dissuasive soldiers. These kings were going to be given to God, an image of a tyrant to many men, sometimes even a sanguinary tyrant. Many of us, rather than judging the bad acts of these kings covered with the anointing they had received from the Holy God and three times Holy, were going to discredit God himself, to whom this institution had been falsely attributed.

From what anointing had God really endowed these kings with? Was not this the one that every man receives when he marries, for example, and that he makes the decision to cherish his wife, to provide for his needs, and to behave as a good father, attentive to the needs of his family?

If it was not this anointing that these kings and their subjects interpreted to obtain from God, as it was for the judges established by God to represent Him, but that of "demigods" to whom all was permitted, it is not surprising that they received according to their works already on this earth. What husband can afford to behave indefinitely as a tyrant in the couple? God will always end up taking care of the woman, if it is to God in Jesus Christ that she addresses herself, because no institution prevails over an only soul before God.

The men, by their interpretation of the laws, have often done the opposite, because pursuing their own aims and not that of God. All that these kings were then wasting on their extravagance in the face of the misery of the people, it was for this people, God who took them from them. Over the centuries, who, indeed, was going to continue to believe in this love God? This God of whom Jesus tells us in (*John 3-14/18*) *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.//

How will we be able to continue to believe in this God of love ready to sacrifice Himself so that whoever, that is to say me, that is to say thou, that is to say you, can live in peace and harmony with each one, because victorious of sin, when you see that his "equivalent " on earth adopts an attitude so opposed, so-called approved of God? If we still believe the slightest bit in this God, what image will we have at least of Him?

Then, by the "banal" error of interpretation of some no more blameworthy than others, on the fact that God had not instituted kingship over men, but had accepted to His detriment that men should choose kings other than Him and whom He was going to bless however, those who put kingship in place as coming from God, have discredited God. The misfortune is not that these men made this mistake, but that those who followed them perpetrated it and thus gave reason more to the man than to God whom they represented.

These behaved in the image of the Pharisees in the time of Jesus, and in order not to lose their place in their "synagogue", become the church or the monarchy, they preferred to crucify God, Father, Son and perhaps for some, the Holy Spirit.

They were certainly no worse than others as men, but because of what they perpetrated, some great human utopias were going to be born. We're getting there.