

LAND&LIBERTY

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message from the honorary president

The COVID-19 crisis is forcing many of us to review priorities and reconsider what we value most - what is really needed for the health and happiness of all? Turning to Henry George for help I remembered him asking in *The Science of Political Economy: Why is it that some things always co-exist with other things? And that some things always follow other things?* And his answers: *The Mohammedan will answer: "It is the will of God." The man of our Western civilisation will answer: "It is a law of Nature."* And then *The phrase is different, but the answer one.* On checking this I noticed that in the previous paragraph he had quoted the Bible: *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* This led me to reflect upon what George might have thought as he wished or hoped very strongly for a particular outcome or situation and recited the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Here our common root and that it is limitless pervading the universe and everything in it and is beyond conception or thought is acknowledged and revered.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

The hope and desire that our 'man-made world' should be in harmony with the will of God or the law of Nature.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Recognising that our needs can only be met from all that nature provides - the economic term for which is land!

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Acknowledging the social nature of Man and linking it with the golden rule - do unto others as you would be done by. Particularly relevant today as the need for debts to be forgiven and for creditors to give up the claims that bind them, their debtors and the whole society of which they are a part. This principle is repeated later: *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* For me this highlights a link between claims, debt and the use and abuse of land.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Highlighting the ego driven dangers that we face and the protection that is available if we treasure that which is permanent and limitless rather than that which is transient.

Our COVID-19 'enemy' has destroyed no house, vehicle, shop, office, factory, machine, tool, clothing, seed or stock or any of the real wealth or capital of our nation. Materially all remains much as before the lock down but the ability of many to pay rent and other financial obligations has been reduced so most economic concerns revolve around the relations between debtors and creditors.

The government's current strategy may not help here since it involves the creation of more debt as it seeks to fund this war by the creation of new money as debt in order to 'preserve jobs' by making loans to employers and pay furloughed workers 80% of their normal pay. It seems to me people's real need at this time is their daily bread i.e. essential wealth not more debt and money, much of which must be passed on as rent or mortgage payments to creditors. Creditors whose essential spending is a fraction of their total spending and who thusly stand to accumulate the most cash during the crisis.

David Triggs

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