

Unprecedented Declaration

Mathew 1:13-18

1. These verses are concerned with the situation six months before Jesus crucifixion. First, Jesus asked his disciples who the people had considered Jesus to be. To this their answers were various. But a more important question came next “Who do you, think I am?”

Nobody else can be delegated to answer for me in accepting the Messiah and God. A signature on paper does not work. Only acceptance deep in the mind can work. It is a pledge made face to face with each other, and one on the level of life.

We should know why Jesus did not ask that question to his disciples until two and half years after the start of his public ministry. The image of Jesus we have today is not the same as the real person of two thousand years ago. The writers of Gospels had directly or indirectly modified his image, and two thousand years of Christian history have modified it further.

2. The disciples might have had more difficulty in accepting Jesus as the Messiah, because at that time they had no support of gospels or centuries of Christian history. The reality at that time was as follows:

Jesus taught something new, not based on the existing religious order.

He pushed his disciples to abandon their previous foundations such as family, occupation, etc.

His Sermon on the Mount concentrated on the narrow path, the sacrificial way of life, and self-dedication with no concern for today’s subsistence.

He said that he had come to give the sword, and that the relationship between father and daughter and the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law would be broken.

He called many people the descendents of the serpent.

He said that to heed his words was the same as building a house on the rock.

He said that he was the master of the Sabbath.

3. To Jesus' question, Peter's answer was a really great declaration, truly the proclamation of a believer, beyond reasoning. Could we also make such a proclamation? No matter how far from our own idealized image the reality of Christ may be, we have no other choice than to make the historical proclamation and follow him just as Peter showed us through his own crucifixion.

O God, help us to go beyond the visible world, hear your voice, be your witnesses, and dedicate all for Your Providence!