

II

The Purpose of Messiah's Coming and
the Necessity of the Second Advent

Everything was made according to the Divine Ideal of creation and it needed a certain length of period for growth to be made perfect. Man, one of the creation, could not be made apart from this principle. It is true that the fall of Adam and Eve took place not after perfection but in the process of growing. If they had fallen after perfection we could not rely upon the omnipotence of God. If there is still a danger of the fall even after perfection we should not hope for a perfect salvation.

God's ideal in the creation of man was to see that Adam and Eve grew gradually till they were made perfect and became fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it. (Gen. 1: 27-) Because they fell before they reached the standard of perfection, a savior became necessary to bring fallen men up to that standard. Therefore the goal of salvation that the fallen mankind

looks for is to reach the standard of perfection and accomplish the divine ideal of creation. Jesus also aimed at perfection and said, "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Math. 5:48) Then what does it mean to be perfect?

If Adam and Eve had not fallen they would not have needed a saviour Jesus or even prayers. They lived with God and their life itself was prayer and faith. If this were so the children of the perfect man would be able to go to heaven without needing a saviour. Now in what state do Christians remain today? The life of a believer is that of battle. It is a ceaseless battle between man and satan. St. Paul confessed the bitter struggle of his inner life. "I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members. Wretched men that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:18-24) St. Paul clearly recognized the bitter activity of original sin within his body. The closer he came to Jesus the fiercer the battle between spirit and body grew. This is the life of a true Christian. Paul was great in confessing it straightforwardly. St. John also said, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (I John 1:10)

Why must the children of fine Christian parents believe in Jesus personally for their salvation? This is the evidence that the original sin inherited from Adam always exists in us and leads us to evil. It is true in our experience that the spirit belongs to God and the body

belongs to Satan, therefore we always sigh saying, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Math. 26:41) Now who can say that he has reached the standard of perfection that God had set up in creation? St. Paul frankly confessed that it was impossible for him. Then it must be said that the salvation by the cross of Jesus is not perfect.

The significance of the coming of Messiah should be understood before we discuss the matter further. The coming of Messiah was foretold by the prophets before He was born and testified by John the Baptist when He appeared. The fact that John the Baptist was selected before his birth and trained in wilderness gave the impression that he was the greatest prophet of all. Hereby the priests and scribes wondered if he was the Messiah to come. Undoubtedly it was the divine providence to set up such a great and highly recognized figure like him, so that the people would listen to his testimony and receive Jesus as the Messiah.

If they had known the will of God and received Jesus as the Messiah they would not have crucified him. Their only hope was that the Messiah would come and save them from the suffering under the domination of the Roman Empire. Because they did not know he was the Messiah they crucified him. But St. Paul knew that Jesus should not have been crucified as the suffering servant but should have accomplished the salvation of men in life as the Lord of Glory. "None of the rulers of this age understood this; for it they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory!" (I Cor. 2:8)

There is no doubt that the cross of Jesus was the result of the historical error of Israel.

The salvation by the cross of Jesus resulted from the unbelief of the people and thus God's secondary dispensation was accomplished.

Then what was God's first dispensation in sending Jesus? It was the perfect salvation which was to fulfill the purpose of God's creation and restore fallen men to the original nature, so that they could be perfect as the heavenly father is perfect. God would have failed if the divine purpose of creation were never accomplished and fallen men remained forever as they are.

Then what is the whole and perfect salvation? The fall of man was both spiritual and physical. Therefore the salvation should also be both spiritual and physical. Perfect atonement both in spirit and body was the purpose of God's providence, and He desired to accomplish it without the crucifixion of Jesus.

Due to the unbelief of Israel the body of Jesus was handed to satan and accordingly the bodies of mankind were destined to remain under satanic dominance. The hereditary sin which originated from Adam still flows down in mankind generation after generation, and every child of even the finest Christian must believe in Jesus personally on account of the hereditary sin. Christian life is that of denying the body. The purpose of denying flesh is to separate satan who works within the flesh. Therefore fasting and prayer are the means to throw away jealousy, selfishness, and lust. As long as there are the elements of sin to fight, salvation is needed, and we cannot say He restored to the original state of creation.

By handing over his body to satan Jesus could not accomplish the salvation for the body.

He only accomplished the spiritual salvation by resurrection which was God's secondary dispensation, and bodily restoration is still left on earth unaccomplished. Hence His Second Coming becomes necessary. The state of the fallen man is like that of a drowning man, drinking water and holding breath. To rescue him thoroughly one must lift him out of the water and bring him to land where he was before he was drowning. Jesus had come as a saviour to rescue such a sinner. Nevertheless only his head is lifted above the water surface and he is struggling to maintain breathing. But his body is still in water and is suffering. Nonetheless he thinks he is saved completely. He needs another salvation which will take him out of the water and restore his original state. This is the task of the Lord when He comes again.

Let us read the Gospel from a different point of view keeping in mind that Jesus had not come to die on the cross. If his suffering was a predetermined will of God his last prayer offered in Gethemane, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Math. 26:39) could be nothing but the disclosure of human weakness. Having been stoned Stephen died peacefully praying for his enemys. So were other saints who were martyred for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Much less how would the saviour of mankind offer such a prayer knowing the cross was, the very purpose of His coming? Indeed the death of Christ resulted from unbelief and rebellion of Israel against the divine providence.

If he had accomplished the purpose of his

coming without dying on the cross, mankind would have had perfect salvation both in spirit and body, putting off the original sin, and being restored to the state of original man and a sinless world as well. He knew what it meant to die on the cross against the divine intention and what would result from it.

Firstly it meant He could not fulfill what His Father had committed to Him, and the fulfillment of God's ideal for creation would be delayed. This was a great grief and sorrow to God and to the saints in the world of spirits who had laid the foundation for Jesus to accomplish his mission in perfection. Secondly He must come again and suffer so much to complete the remainder later. Thirdly, Israel had been especially trained and prepared through a long period of suffering for the coming of the Messiah and now they would not receive Him and rejected Him. Consequently the nation and the Holy Temple would be deserted and cursed by God forever. Fourthly, His disciples and their subsequent followers would need to bear the cross to the end of their lives and suffer from sin following after their suffering Lord until He comes again to accomplish the perfect salvation and restoration of the whole universe. If He had fulfilled God's providence as the Lord of Glory, the Kingdom of Heaven would have been established on earth in His life time. Since He knew all the outcome He could not but pray "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

If the cross were an established fact Judas Iscariot would be a very necessary figure. But Jesus said, "The Son of man goes as it is written

of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born! (Math. 26:24)

If the cross were the very purpose of His coming the people should not believe in Jesus. If they had believed, who would have crucified Him? But He often rebuked the people for their unbelief and said, "Then he began to upbraid the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. 'Woe to you, Chorazin! woe to you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.'" (Math. 11:20-24)

As he drew near Jerusalem on a colt, he wept over it, saying "would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes.... because you did not know the time of your visitation." (Luke 19:41)

Since they did not know the day of the coming of Messiah the ruin of the nation and the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem resulted.

It was not God's will to let Jesus die on the cross and let his followers bear the hardship of the cross. The affliction of the cross that we bear is to wipe out our sins that crucified Jesus who came to fulfill God's will in life, thus

he only accomplished spiritual salvation by his resurrection after the suffering on the cross.

We have to take the cross in order to receive the grace of spiritual salvation. The suffering of the cross that we bear results from the sin of unbelief which was the cause of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Then we must consider why there were prophecies regarding the suffering of Christ. Adam lost faith and fell into the satanic world, and it is entirely up to man's free determination whether he believes God's providence or not. It was God's predetermination and promise for Moses and his people that God would lead them to Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey under the leadership of Moses, but when the people rebelled against God, He allowed them to perish in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb. He selected the people and trained them through all kinds of temptations in order to exalt them to be the people of the eternal kingdom of God. Even this definite predetermination and promise was not fulfilled because the people did not walk in accordance with His will. Such illustrations may be found many times in the history of Israel. The providence of salvation through Jesus Christ is only one of the cases.

The purpose of sending Messiah was to restore the ideal world of creation; the Garden of Eden; but He also foresaw the possibility that the people would not believe and Jesus would die on the cross. This is the reason why God gave two lines of prophecy. The prophecies of Isaiah chapters 9, 11, and 60 would have been fulfilled if they had believed in Jesus.

Namely, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace; of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time forth and for evermore." (Is. 9:6-)

"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fating together, and a little child shall lead them..... They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Is. 11:6,9) "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you..... Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far, and your daughters shall be carried in the arms. Then you shall see and be radiant, your heart shall thrill and rejoice; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you..... Foreigners shall minister to you; for in my wrath I smote you, but in my favor I have had mercy on you. Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut; that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. The sons of those who oppressed you shall come bending low to you; and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet; they shall call you the City of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel..... Violence shall no more be heard in your land, devastation or destruction within

your borders; you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise. The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night; but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.....The least one shall become a clan, and the smallest one a mighty nation; I am the Lord; in its time I will hasten it."(Is.60)

Because they did not believe in Jesus the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 53 was fulfilled. Namely, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb." Due to their unbelief unfortunately, the latter prophecy was fulfilled and the former was left unaccomplished, and so the Lord must come again in two thousand years in order to fulfill his first dispensation.

Then why did He not make it clear in the Scriptures about the perfect restoration? He had yet many things to say to his disciples, but knew that they could not bear them that time and said, "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth." (John 16:12) The purpose of his coming was also a secret that he could not announce. Christianity started as a pure evangelical movement, not a grave hardship under the oppression of the Roman Empire and the persecution of the Jewish people. How much more difficult would it have been if he had announced the establishment of a Christian kingdom on earth. Of course the kingdom of Jesus was to be established only by means of divine love, truth, and power and not by any political, military force or human elements. However.

the Roman Empire would never have allowed and tolerated it. Therefore Jesus did not utter what his disciples and His generation could not bear.

I have now made clear the purpose of the coming of Jesus which indeed had been the mystery kept in the bosom of God until present time. So far the word was understood from the view point that his crucifixion was God's primary providence, and the Scriptures were interpreted in that light. But now the hidden meaning of God's providence is disclosed and the real purpose of sending Messiah becomes clear. When the Jews stuck firm to the traditional faith they did not want to listen to the new message of Christ. So Jesus said, "New wine is put into fresh wineskins and so both are preserved." (Math. 9:17) "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it. God hides these things and reveals them to babes." (Math. 11:25) Let us be humble before God and upon our hearts to receive what the Lord reveals to us today.