

## The Cross: God's Will or Man's Failure?

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"O my Father, if it possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."  
(Matt.26:-39 )

**Could Rev. Moon be right when He said Jesus' death on the Cross was not God's Will, but a tragic mistake?**

**The cross: God's will or man's failure?**

*The Story of Jesus*

I have heard many stories and read many books about Jesus, including recently published books, such as "Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth" by Reza Aslan and "Killing Jesus" by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard. I have also seen many movies, such as 2004's "The Passion of the Christ,"

which caused a huge retaliation from Jews all over the world because it portrayed them as vengeful and "Christ Killers," and "Son Of God," which was released in March 2014.

No story has ever touched me the most with its clear-cut new truths on Jesus' life than the one told by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, in the Divine Principle, Mission of The Messiah chapter. It has the most thought-provoking truths on Jesus' story, and it is so shocking that many Christians consider it as blasphemy. Why? Because what Moon was preaching was seen by most Christians as unorthodox and a threat to the validity of their traditional teachings.

As a Muslim, it was hard for me to hear Jesus' story for the first time. It was so painful and powerful, that I found myself weeping uncontrollably and drenched in tears for Jesus. Jesus was truly misunderstood by the very people who were being prepared to receive him. No one understood his messianic mission, not his mother, half-brothers, or disciples. Even John the Baptist, who was the greatest prophet who ever lived, didn't truly believe in Jesus.



Divine Principle revealed an important new truth that was hidden in the Bible: there was a conflict between John the Baptist and Jesus. The problem was in regards to Jesus' crucifixion. Before we move on to the Christian's views on the messiah's mission, let us first understand the Jewish concept on the messiah and the role he was expected to fulfill.

According to Judaism, the word "messiah" in Hebrew means "the anointed one," and usually signifies a king. The chosen people of Israel believed in word of God as it was revealed through the prophets. God promised them he would send

them a king and savior. Such was their messianic expectation. God sent this messiah in the form of Jesus Christ. "Christ" is the Greek word for messiah.

However, the Jews misunderstood the messiah's role and what He was meant to fulfill. They thought only about their own suffering, struggles and wars and only thought of the messiah as a warrior king who would lead them in a final war that would destroy their enemies once and for all, making them the rulers over all the nations on Earth. But the messiah came not as the powerful warrior king the Jews hoped for, but as a simple uneducated man from a humble family from Nazareth.



Christians, on the other hand, have traditionally believed that Jesus was the expected messiah God promised to send to the chosen people, and His sole mission was to die on the cross to save mankind from sin; this is what God originally planned.

No, it was not! According to Moon's revelation, crucifying Jesus was a tragic mistake. The crucifixion was because of the sheer ignorance of the Israelites concerning God's dispensation. In a sense, both the Jews and Christians have misunderstood the true purpose the Messiah came to fulfill.

God truly loved his chosen people, the Israelites. They were to be the foundation for the coming of the Messiah. Many times, God prophesied the coming of the messiah, and he warned the people to prepare for his coming. God even sent the prophet, John the Baptist, to prepare the faithful for the eminent coming of the messiah. John was to submit himself to Jesus and lead his followers to accept and follow him.

Tragically, however, the much-prepared people, including John, failed to recognize Jesus as their messiah. Jesus did everything he could to convince the Israelites that he was the messiah, son of God, but his words fell on deaf ears. He was mocked, sneered at, had stones thrown at him, branded a blasphemer and, ultimately, crucified. Ironically, the Roman rulers of that time knew he was innocent (Luke 23:14-16; Jn. 18:38; Matt. 27:19-23; Matt. 15:10-14), and those who found him guilty were the Jewish leaders and his own people. They were the ones who insisted that Jesus must die. Why?



First, Jesus' said in the Bible that God's will was clearly for the chosen people to accept and believe in Jesus and receive salvation (Jn. 6:29, 10:37,38). The Bible said "he came to his own home, and his own people received him not" (Jn. 1:11). The Apostle Paul testified that "none of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of the glory." (1 Corinthians 2:8) Also, the night before Jesus was betrayed, He spent several agonizing hours in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying desperately: "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here and watch with me ... My Father, if it is possible, let this cup (death) pass from me" (Matt. 26:38, 39). Who could

have known God's will for the Messiah better than Jesus himself? From this Bible verse, it's very clear that death on the cross was not God's plan for Jesus. Again, if Jesus' death on the cross was predestined, why would Jesus say to Judas Iscariot: "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" (Matt. 26:24). Again, how can we explain Jesus

crying out on the cross: “My God, my God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?” (Matt 27:46).



If the crucifixion was truly God’s original will for Jesus, then Jesus should have felt a sense the joy and victory on the cross, having successfully completed his mission. One question remains. If the Jews were wrong to sentence Jesus to death and Christians were wrong to believe that his death was God’s plan, then how can Moon’s new revelation explain the mystery behind Jesus’ death? If it was not God’s will, than whose? According to the secret Moon decoded in the Bible, Jesus’ death is related to three main issues:

1. The Israelites saw Jesus as a heretical zealot and a rabble rouser, who was bent on destroying Jewish law. This was the main point of Aslan’s book. As

Aslan noted in the book’s introduction:

“ First century Palestine, an age awash in apocalyptic fervor. Scores of Jewish prophets, preachers, and would-be messiahs wandered through the Holy Land, bearing messages from God. Jesus’ time was the age of zealotry — a fervent nationalism that made resistance to the Roman occupation a sacred duty incumbent on all Jews.” ( Zealot, by Raza Aslan)

2. Jesus’ unknown biological father. Many Israelites of his time questioned whether his birth was legitimate. Jesus accused the Pharisees for trying to kill him; and their response was telling: “*we were not of fornication; we have one father, even God.*”(John 8:41)



3. John the Baptist and the return of Elijah (Malachi 4:5-Luke 1:17 - Luke1:68-79 - Matthew 3:4-II Kings 1:8-Matt. 3:3 ). But the most damning issue was John the Baptist’s denial he was Elijah;” I am not Elijah” (John 1:19-23) Worst! John made Jesus appear to the Jewish people as a liar and turned them against Jesus! failure to support Jesus’ mission and join his flock. John truly was the greatest prophet God sent to testify to Jesus but unfortunately he turned out to be least among prophets (Matt.9:-15)