

A New Take on Eschatological Concerns

The Completion of God's Purpose of Creation

Consequences of the Human Fall

God's Work of Salvation is the Providence of Restoration

Please read for me

Since we're living in the Last Days right now the apocalyptic verses come to mind and seem to negate this assertion; because nothing drastic happened yet, right? The Messiah didn't come on the clouds, the sun and moon didn't darken and the stars didn't fall from heaven.

I wanted to share a different take on the 'Last Days' such that we can connect with the reality of this time that we're living in and formulate a relevant response. The following is taken from the Exposition of the Divine Principle in the chapter dealing with eschatology (last days) where these apocalyptic verses are mentioned and more meaningful ('prosaic' doesn't quite cut it) explanations are offered from the usually accepted way of taking the words literally. There are many passages in the Bible that are decidedly figurative, right? For example, Jesus said that he came to cast fire on the earth and wished that it was already kindled. (Luke 12:49) Yet, there is no record in the Bible of Jesus starting literal fires.

Here is the excerpt for you:

We dwell in ignorance of history, uncertain about its origin, the direction in which it is heading, and its final destination. Concerning eschatology, or the doctrine of the Last Days, many Christians believe literally what is written in the Bible: "the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire"; (2 Pet. 3:12) "the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from heaven"; (Matt. 24:29) and "with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet . . . the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." (1 Thess. 4:16, 17) One

pertinent question for Christians is whether these events will take place literally or whether the verses are symbolic, as are many parts of the Bible. To address this issue, we should first understand such fundamental matters as the purpose of God's creation, the meaning of the human Fall, and the goal of the providence of restoration.

The Completion of God's Purpose of Creation

We have discussed how God's purpose in creating human beings was to rejoice with them. Thus, our purpose of existence is to bring joy to God. What must we do to bring joy to God and fully manifest our original value?

Created beings other than humans are endowed with the innate nature to grow to maturity naturally and become object partners which bring God joy. Human beings, on the other hand, can become true and authentic object partners who bring joy to God only through their free will and free actions. They cannot become the object partners who inspire God with joy unless they understand His Will and make effort to live accordingly. Hence, human beings are endowed with emotional sensitivity to the Heart of God, intuition and reason to comprehend His Will, and the requisite abilities to practice it. A person who relates with God in this manner will attain perfection of his individual character. Adam and Eve prior to the Fall, as well as the prophets of every age, had some ability to converse with God because they had these innate faculties.

The relationship between God and a person who has attained individual perfection can be compared to that between the mind and the body. The body is the dwelling place of the mind and moves according to the mind's direction. Likewise, God abides within the mind of a fully mature person. Such a person becomes a temple of God and leads his life in harmony with His Will. A perfect individual is fully attuned to God, just as the body resonates with the mind. For this reason it is written, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16) and "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." (John 14:20) A person who has perfected his individual character becomes a temple of God, and the Holy Spirit abides within him. Living in oneness with God, he acquires a divine nature. Thus, it is impossible for him to commit sin or to fall.

A person who has perfected his individual character embodies total goodness and fulfills the purpose of creation. If a person embodying total goodness could fall, this would lead to the illogical conclusion that goodness contains the seed of its own destruction. Moreover, if human beings, who were created by the omnipotent God, could fall even after becoming perfect, we would have reason to doubt the omnipotence of God. God is the absolute and eternal

Subject. To give Him true joy, His object partner must necessarily also be eternal and absolute. For these reasons, a person who has perfected his individual character can never fall.

Had Adam and Eve reached perfection, being thereafter insusceptible to sin, they would have borne good children and founded a sinless family and society in complete concordance with God's blessings. (Genesis 1:28) They would have founded the Kingdom of Heaven, which consists of one great family with the same parents. The Kingdom of Heaven has the form of an individual who has achieved perfection of character. Just as the members of the human body are coordinated in horizontal relationships with each other and move as one in response to the vertical commands of the brain, in this society people will form cooperative horizontal relationships with each other and live together in tune with the vertical directions emanating from God. No one will harm his neighbor, since if one person were to suffer pain, everyone in this society would experience the Heart of God who shares in that person's grief.

Regardless of the purity of the people of this society, if they were living in primitive circumstances like cavemen, this could not be considered the Kingdom of Heaven which both God and human beings desire. God gave us the mandate to have dominion over all things. Hence, to realize the ideal of creation, people of perfected character should advance science, harness the natural world, and create an extremely pleasant social and living environment. This will be the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Once people have attained full maturity and enjoyed life in God's earthly Kingdom, then when they shed their physical bodies and pass into the spirit world, they will form the Kingdom of Heaven in heaven. Accordingly, God's primary purpose of creation is to build the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Consequences of the Human Fall

Human beings fell while they were immature and still in their growing period. We have already clarified why the growing period was necessary and what the evidence is for the conclusion that the first human beings fell while immature. Due to the Fall, human beings could not become temples of God; instead, they united with Satan and became his dwelling places. They failed to cultivate the divine nature; instead, they acquired an evil nature. People with evil nature have propagated evil through their children, constituting evil families, evil societies and an evil world. This is the hell on earth in which we have been living. In this hell, we cannot properly form cooperative horizontal relationships with one another because our vertical relationships with God have been severed. We perform deeds harmful to others because we cannot feel the pain and suffering of our neighbors as our own. Once people have

accustomed themselves to living in hell on earth, when they end their physical life, they naturally enter hell in the spirit world. We have not built the Kingdom of God, but instead established the sovereignty of Satan. For this reason, Satan is called the “ruler of this world” (John 12:31) and the “god of this world.” (2 Corinthians 4:4)

God’s Work of Salvation is the Providence of Restoration

The sinful world brings humankind sorrow and causes God to grieve. (Genesis 6:6) Would God abandon this world in its present misery? God intended to create a world of goodness and experience from it the utmost joy; yet due to the human Fall, the world came to be filled with sin and sorrow. If this sinful world were to continue forever in its present state, then God would be an impotent and ineffectual God who failed in His creation. Therefore, God will save this sinful world, by all means.]

This is quite a different view, is it not? That human history started badly means that a 'last days' is inevitable and the providence of restoration has been to make a 'new' start. It is this that we need to connect with and come to understand the constraints that God had to deal with to effect the restoration of mankind without interfering with our own portion of responsibility. This is why God appeared to be powerless (and yet is not) and why satan (using physical power through oppressive, restrictive government), conversely, seems to be so powerful. As I mentioned in an earlier essay the problem of the fall does seem to be an impossible one to resolve and it is an awesome miracle that complete restoration was made possible by our Heavenly Father. Praise God!!!

Again, thank You for reading this. If you have comments or criticisms please write me.

Andrew Derricutt

Further Reading: or use the ‘READ MORE’ button
Meaning of the 'Clouds' Upon which the LSA Will Come
Meaning of the 'Fruit' in the Fall of Man
Meaning of the Commandment ‘Do Not Eat’
Eschatology - The Meaning of the Last Days

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