

in Isa. 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." The verse continues, stressing the deity of the God-man: "And the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The miracle of the God-man is unique in the world's history.

Mr. Steele:--But why should God have performed this particular miracle? Is there any real purpose in it?

Dr. MacRae:--Yes, indeed, God never performs miracles simply for show. There is always a vital purpose in them. There must be a good reason for the miracle of the God-man. And indeed, examination of the Bible soon shows us what the reason is.

We noticed two weeks ago that God created man as a perfect being, upon a world that was free from sin. Then man turned away from God and fell into sin. Soon the earth became full of violence. Ever since, man has been bringing wickedness, greed, misery, and destruction into this wonderful world that God created. Sometimes we marvel that God does not sweep the whole wicked business out of sight and put an end to it. God however is a being of infinite love and compassion. He looked at the creatures whom He had made, and His marvelous love showed itself in a determination to save them from the fate that they richly deserved. Just how could this be done? God must be just or He would not be God. A just God cannot simply ignore sin. The penalty for sin must be paid. No one but the infinite God could pay such a penalty. If a man were to suffer for all eternity he could only pay for his own sin, not for that of anyone else. Only God is able to satisfy justice--to pay the penalty of sin. If this penalty is not paid man must suffer eternally.

Mr. Steele:--But how could God be just and Himself pay man's penalty?

Dr. MacRae:--That is the problem. The sin has been done by man, and man must pay the penalty. It would be unjust for it to be paid by any other than a member of the human race. Yet man has not the power to pay it. No man could atone for his own sin, to say nothing of the sins of others. So God provided a remedy that solved what would be absolutely impossible without the miracle working power of God. Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity became man. He is God and has God's infinite power, He is man--part of the human race--and therefore can properly represent man in paying the penalty.

This is why we have the miracle of the God-man. Jesus Christ as a real man died on the cross for our sins. Jesus Christ as a sinless man, the only sinless one who ever lived, did not deserve to die. Jesus Christ as the infinite God can make a perfect sacrifice. His suffering can mean more than the suffering of all the world could possibly mean. The penalty is paid by the infinite power of the mighty God, but it is paid by man--by a member of the race that deserves the punishment. Thus the miracle of the God-man, wonderful as it is, is not an end in itself. It has a purpose, the purpose of making it possible for men to be saved. Because of it, it is possible, as St. Paul points out in Romans 3:26, that God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

Mr. Steele:--Then, Dr. MacRae, if I understand you correctly, the miracle of the God-man is not illogical at all.