

GOD'S ABSOLUTE SELF-COMMUNICATION

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The highest point of the realisation of the human person is the coming of Jesus in the world. He is the one who “embraces and exhausts all past, present and future reality [...]”¹ Jesus is the existence of God in the world. This existence of God in the world took place through the Incarnation of Jesus the Saviour. Jesus is the Saviour in the absolute sense because He appeared in time and space as a signifier of the beginning of God's Absolute self-communication, which is moving towards its final goal.²

In Jesus, the absolute self-communication of God has taken place irrevocably and absolutely. This does not mean that salvation in the world and in the spiritual subjects only began with Jesus, because it has always been coexistent with the history of humanity and the history of the world. Jesus is the historical subjectivity through whom the absolute self-communication of God to the humans and to world history can be recognised unambiguously as being irrevocable.³

Jesus is the Saviour in the sense that “through him this self-communication can be clearly recognized as something irrevocable, and in him it reaches its climax, in so far as this climax must be thought of as a moment in the total history of the human race and in so far as this climax is not simply identified with the totality of the spiritual world subject to God's communication of himself [...]”⁴

However, even if this self-communication is free on the part of God and on the part of human beings but Jesus is the event and the point in which God's self-communication becomes irreversible, absolute, total, and irrevocable. In Jesus, God's self-communication not only reaches its real essence but also reaches its breakthrough. This however does not mean that the history of self-communication has reached its end or its conclusion, because we are still

¹ Cf. Karl RAHNER, *Knowledge and self-consciousness of Christ*, in Karl RAHNER, “Theological investigations, Volume 5, Later writings,” London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966, 174.

² Cf. Karl RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, in Karl RAHNER, “Theological investigations, Volume 5, Later writings,” London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966, 174.

³ Cf. RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, 174-175.

⁴ Karl RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, 175.

living in history in its different pluralities. In Jesus, the self-communication of God has not reached conclusion but has become irreversible.⁵

We can thus say that “the fact of this self-communication is already given unambiguously, and the success, the victory and the irreversibility of this process has become manifest in and in spite of this on-going dialogue of freedom. It is precisely this beginning of the irreversible and successful history of salvation which we are calling the absolute saviour, and hence in this sense this beginning is the fullness of time, and it is the end of the previous history of salvation and revelation which was, as it were still open.”⁶

What has become irrevocable and irreversible in God’s historical self-communication in Jesus is the communication itself but also the acceptance. God’s self-communication in Jesus has its real essence as dynamism, historical movement, or as a creative potency that is moving towards its goal through the power of the goal that moves the historical movement towards itself. This is true even of Jesus Christ, through whom the self-communication of God to the human beings is “borne [...] prior to the event of its irrevocable coming to be in the saviour.”⁷

History can be understood as a single history moving towards its goal of *causa finalis*. In this sense, the goal is not something that is only reached in history or that the goal is not at hand but it is the cause of the movement. In the same way, the whole movement of the history of God’s self-communication moves towards its goal or its climax through Jesus who is the absolute saviour.⁸ “This Saviour, who represents the climax of this self-communication, must therefore be at the same time God’s absolute pledge by self-communication to the spiritual creature as a whole *and* the acceptance of this self-communication by this Saviour; only then is there an utterly irrevocable self-communication on both sides, and only thus is it present in the world in a historically communicative manner.”⁹

If Jesus is the absolute Saviour in whom God’s self-communication becomes irrevocable, it means that God has become a historical moment in the history of salvation in the world and in so doing; God has become the climax of the history of the cosmos and acts in it.¹⁰ Like all of us, Jesus as a spiritual, human, and finite subject received God’s self-communication in grace but the difference with other human beings is that, in Jesus, the cosmos

⁵ Cf. RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, 174-175.

⁶ Karl RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith, An introduction to the idea of Christianity*, translated by William V. DYCH, London, Darton Longman and Todd, 1978, 194.

⁷ RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith*, 194.

⁸ Cf. RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, 175.

⁹ Cf. RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, 176.

¹⁰ Cf. RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, 175-177.

world reached the climax and became conscious of itself and of its coming to the immediacy of God. This is possible because in his obedience, prayer and free acceptance of death, Jesus accepted God's grace conferred on Him through God's self-communication and in so doing, He also accepted the immediacy of God which He possessed even as a man on earth.¹¹

¹¹ Cf. RAHNER, *Christology within an evolutionary view*, 176-181.