The Sermon by Rev. Dr. Yugo Suzuki

9/6/09 **"Jesus Is the Fulfillment of God's Dream" Isaiah 11: 6-10**

When our moral foundations are shaken to the core, we lose the direction of life.

During W.W. II, the Japanese people were indoctrinated with the ideology that the emperor was divine and that the Japan was fighting for the emancipation of Asia from the colonialism of the Western powers.

When they found out that the emperor was human after all and that the Japanese imperial army had committed atrocities in China and the Philippines, they fell into a terrible moral confusion.

In the aftermath of war, a young man wrote in his diary the following desperate words. "I do not know what is good and what is bad any more. Everything I believed in has proven to be a gigantic lie."

2700 years ago, a similar spiritual phenomenon prevailed among the Hebrew people. The kingdom of David that was supposed to be indestructible was now in total disarray. The great palace and awe-inspiring temple were in ruins. The people lost the direction of life.

It was to these people that prophet Isaiah spoke. God did not give up on them. No, God was dreaming a dream. It was: "The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain."

Isaiah is saying that God's dream for us is for the strong and weak to come together, for the mighty and the humble to live in harmony, and for the rich and the poor to help each other in mutuality and love.

Is this nothing more than meaningless rhetoric? Is it a pie in the sky that has nothing to do with our world torn by war and blood shed?

No, it is not. Why? Because this glorious dream of God was realized in perfect form in human history. Once in human history, the perfection of reconciliation and peace appeared in Jesus of Nazareth.

The Japanese young man whose diary I quoted in the beginning of this sermon understood this. He later became a Christian and furthered his study to be a medical doctor specialized in treating victims of the atomic bomb.

He wrote the following words in an article published in a Christian magazine. "I lost the meaning of life in the aftermath of war. I could not find anything that was true and lasting. My inner being was completely torn apart. But in Jesus, I found what is good and true. He gave me the strength to live again. He taught me what it means to live as an instrument of reconciliation and peace. That is a marvelous dream of God for us. I cannot think of a gift more marvelous than that."

God's marvelous dream was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It was realized in this Christian medical doctor. Do not forget: It can be realized in you and me.

There is no gift more marvelous than that.

Thanks be to God.