

The Son of Man

In speeches concerning Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ frequently used this appellation so as to emphasize the reality that He incarnated and became man. He is the Son of God born of the Father before all ages, and He Himself is the Son of Man born of Virgin Mary in the fullness of time. He took a full human nature from her through the action of the Holy Spirit.

The Son of God, the Logos has two births: the first from the Father according to His divinity, and the second from the Virgin Saint Mary according to His humanity; He Himself and no other.

Therefore our teacher Saint Paul the Apostle said, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*" (Heb 13:8). Implying that He, Himself Who was born of the Father, Himself came to the world to fulfill salvation, Himself will come to judge the living and the dead and reign forever.

Our Lord Jesus Christ used the expression 'Son of Man' in aspects related to His divine nature, similarly, He used the expression 'Son of God' in aspects related to His human nature. He meant to emphasize that once He was incarnate and became man for our salvation, He Himself, the Son of God, became the Son of Man simultaneously.

For example, concerning Himself He said, "*The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.*" (Lk 6:5), "*No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven*" (Jn 3:13). When the Jews, reasoning in their hearts said, "*Who can forgive sins but God alone?*" (Mk 2:7) He answered saying, "*But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins*" (Mk 2:10).

On the other hand He said, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*" (Jn 3:16). In this case He used the appellation 'Only Begotten Son' for Himself in an aspect related to His crucifixion according to the flesh. Unless He incarnated and became the Son of Man it would have been impossible for Him to be crucified according to His divinity. He was crucified according to the flesh and committed His human spirit into the hands of the Father, while His divinity was not separated neither from His body, nor His human spirit, not for a second nor a twinkling of an eye.

How wonderful the following phrase is, "*For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost*" (Mt 18:11). It is the only begotten Son of God Who came to fetch and save that which was lost. In spite of this fact He was interested in using the appellation 'Son of Man' that we might understand that He Himself is the God incarnate. Saint Paul the apostle said, "*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh*" (1Tim 3:16). The church, in its midnight praises, chants these beautiful concepts concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. For example, {*He did not cease to*

be divine, he came and became the Son of man, for he is the true God, who came and saved us }.

In other words when the Logos, the Son of God, came and became the Son of humans or of man, He continued to be as He was before without alteration, the real God Who is One with His father and the Holy Spirit. He Himself was incarnate and became flesh for our salvation.

In the midnight praises we also say, {*He shone in the flesh, taken from the Virgin, without the seed of man, in order to save us*}. The incarnate God is the One Who shone, however, when He manifested in the flesh, He shone in the flesh. In His mysterious nativity He became incarnate without the seed of man and was without sin. He is holy, void of evil, impurity, and the natural tendency towards sin, its weaknesses and defects, in an unutterable perfection. He said, "*He who has seen Me has seen the Father*" (Jn 14:9). Besides, concerning Him, the following is said, "*The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light*" (Is 9:2), "*That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world*" (Jn 1:9), "*In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.*" (Jn 1:4).

The expression or appellation 'Son of Man' when used for the Lord Jesus Christ does not reduce His status. On the contrary, its use was not required unless He wanted to emphasize His incarnation. It is a well known fact that any man is a son of man, so it is evident that no man needs this appellation. However, the Lord Jesus Christ frequently gave Himself this title, or it was said of Him in the Holy Bible, so that we comprehend the significance of His manifestation in the flesh.

His manifestation in the flesh is unlike His Old Testament apparitions, where He took the form of man. The New Testament apparition is accompanied by a real incarnation, in a nature similar to ours, without sin.

In the story of the Patriarch Jacob it was mentioned that "*a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.*" (Gen 32:24). This was simply an apparition of the Lord Christ in the Old Testament, exclusive of the incarnation.

Similarly, He appeared to our father Abraham accompanied by two angels, in the form of three angels. He also appeared to Manoah in the form of man. At various times and in various ways He appeared in time past to the fathers. However, these apparitions were not real incarnations, but just temporal manifestations for a certain purpose.

Nevertheless, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ from the Virgin Saint Mary, was a manifestation as well as a real and perfect incarnation, meaning: in a full human nature, and a natural perfect unity, with His Divinity. This is the Hypostatic Union that the fathers of the church spoke of and defended. It is expressed in the prayers of the celebrant priest during the encircling of incense, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever in one hypostasis we worship Him and glorify Him.*"