

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE HYPOSTATIC UNION OF THE TWO NATURES

#### IN THE ONE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

According to the Teachings of Holy Scripture, the two Natures, the Divine and the human, were united in one Person in the Eternal Hypostasis of God the Word, Who, at His Incarnation, took up the human nature in the holy womb of the Ever-Virgin Mary,<sup>1</sup> the Ever Blessed Theotokos. The human nature did not pre-exist but became Hypostasis in the Incarnated Word.

Holy Scripture bears witness to this hypostatic union of the two Natures in Christ, either indirectly or directly. Indirectly, it is evident when ascribed to the Son of Man Divine Attributes, which are not human, as well as to Christ as the Word and Son of God, by means of birth and human descent, a body that suffers in addition to suffering by the shedding of blood accompanied by death. Directly, Holy Scripture gives witness of this union when it proclaims that the Word became flesh, having emptied Himself and taking the form of a servant.

The early Holy Fathers, in order to express this Union, used terms that were inaccurate although they explained these terms in an Orthodox way. St Ignatius the Theophorus used the expression “clothed in flesh”<sup>2</sup> to describe the One Who was in the Virgin’s Womb, Who was an offspring of King David and Who was Born of the Holy Spirit: our God, Jesus, the God Who became Flesh.

St Irenaeus spoke generally of the Union while Tertullian spoke about “co-mixture.”

St Gregory of Nyssa and St Gregory of Nazianzus referred to “mixture” and excluded any possibility of change or confusion of the two Natures in Christ and correctly concluded their opinion that the Union was achieved “without any mixture or confusion” in the one Person.

St Hippolytus referred to “collision and mixture,” as well as to the Word having vested the Holy Flesh. He also uses the prototypical phrase: “...the Flesh by itself without the Word could not become Hypostasis, because it had within the Word its composition.”

St Athanasius the Great of Alexandria clearly exalted the unchangeable and insoluble Union of the two Natures, although he described the Word as having “vested flesh” and referred to the human Nature as “House,” “Temple,” “Garment,” “Uniform” and “Attire of the Incarnated Word.”

St John Chrysostom spoke of the “relevance,” “dwelling,” “inhabitation,” “tent” and “dressing” of the Divine Nature in the Flesh and through flesh. He clarified these terms so as to exclude any misinterpretation.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Plato of Moscow, *Orthodox Teaching*, p. 115. Kefalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 74-75. Frangopoulos, *Christian Faith*, pp. 134-137. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, pp. 78-79, 148.

<sup>2</sup> St. Ignatius, *To Smyrnaeans*, 5, 2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 111.

The Holy Fathers, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ecumenical Synod, used different terms such as: “union,” “relevance,” “contract,” “union by synthesis,” “synthesis,” “co-mixture,” “mixture,” “inhabitation” and many others, which were used in an orthodox understanding and manifested the Union in the one Hypostasis or Person of the two Natures, not externally or morally connected, but naturally and essentially United, without any confusion or mixture, perfectly preserving their own Attributes.

This real and Hypostatic Union of the two Natures in Christ, was renounced by the heretic Nestorius, who, due to the influence of the theories of Aristotle, supported the opinion that true nature co-exists as a personality; hence the human Nature in Christ consists of a personality. Consequently, the Union of the two Natures in Christ is a union of two Personalities, which is achieved through the moral entrance of the one into the other, resulting in one moral Personality. It is a Moral Union, and not a union of two Natures in one Hypostasis. In this Moral Union the two personalities exist separately as two “egos.” Henceforth, Nestorius concluded by not calling the Holy Virgin Mary “Mother of God” (“Theotokos”) but “Mother of Christ” (“Christotokos”) and used the terms “well pleased,” “inhabitation,” “relevance,” and “relative union.”

St Cyril of Alexandria opposed the teachings of Nestorius. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synods the Truth of the Doctrine concerning the Hypostatic Union of the two Natures in Christ was clarified. According to this Doctrine, which surpasses all human understanding, the two Natures were united in the one [Personality of Christ] being undivided and inseparable, so that one and the same Son and Word of God would simultaneously be God and Man, whereas on the other hand, unchangeably and without confusion, the Incarnated Word would be perfect God and perfect Man, “...without departing from the Divine Nature’s simplicity...” or its infinite Perfection. Neither would “... the human nature...” be absorbed by the Divine Nature, nor would it be “...changed into Divine Nature or dissolving into non existence...” However, neither by mixture nor confusion of the two Natures would there be “...something synthetic resulting from the two.”<sup>3</sup> This Doctrine was even more clearly defined when the heresies of Nestorianism,<sup>4</sup> Monophysitism<sup>5</sup> and Monothelitism<sup>6</sup> made it necessary for the official declaration and clarification of this Doctrine.

The terms “Nature” and “Essence” on the one hand, and the “Hypostasis” and “Person” on the other hand, became synonymous. The Union of the two Natures or Essences in the God-Man was determined as a “...Union by Hypostasis...” and the Incarnated Word was proclaimed as being “...two in Natures, but not in Hypostases...” when the two Natures, the Divine and the human, united undividedly, unchangeably and without any mixture in the one Person of Christ.

Nestorianism was opposed by the Archimandrite Eutyches although he came to an opposite conclusion by characterising the Union of the two Natures as being a mixture consisting of the human Nature having been completely absorbed by the

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<sup>3</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the two natures, against Monophysites*, III, 47, 3, in Migne, P.G., 94, 988.

<sup>4</sup> Kefalas, *Synods*, pp.118-121.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, pp.141-143.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, pp.160-162.

**Divine Nature.** Thus the heresy of Monophysitism appeared. An essential role in the correct and orthodox opinion opposing this heresy, was that of the Epistle of Pope Leo I addressed to Flavianus of Constantinople. In his letter, Pope Leo I exalted the unconfusion of the two **Natures** in Christ, which the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod declared as an unchangeable, undividable and inseparable **Union** in the one **Person**.

**Leontius Byzantius**<sup>7</sup> struggled against the heresies of the Nestorians and Monophysites who determined that the human **Nature** in Christ was **Hypostatic** in the Word. From Monophysitism derived Monothelitism, which was supported by Sergius of Constantinople and accepted by Pope Honorius. This heresy was opposed by Sophronius and Maximus and was finally condemned by the 6<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod in Constantinople (680 A.D.)<sup>8</sup>

The basis of the theoretical justification of the two **Wills** in Christ was the principle: “*What is different in essence, is different in will and in energy.*” Since in Christ we have two **Essences** or **Natures**, we also confess that the two **Wills** and **Energies** are different. Furthermore, the expression concerning “...*the new Godly Energy...*” was accepted not as a synthetic energy that is composed of **Divine** and human **Energy** but for the exaltation of the **Unity** of the **Person** of Christ **Who** is one and the same **Who** wants and acts in a **Godly as well as a human way**.

This **Union** is an unapproachable and inconceivable **Mystery**, really new and unknown even to the **Angels**. It is a **Union** of the two **Natures** in one **Godly Person**, **united** without confusion, undividedly and inseparably.

### **1. The Teachings of Holy Scripture Concerning the Hypostatic Union of the Two Natures in Christ**

The **Hypostatic Union** of the two **Natures** in Christ is testified to in Holy Scripture either indirectly or directly, especially in the New Testament. It is testified to indirectly when **Christ**, as the Son of God and as God, is ascribed with actions and sufferings that are completely alien to **His Divine Nature** although natural to the human **Nature**, or vice versa, when **Divine Attributes** are ascribed to the Son of Man that are unnatural to the human **Nature**, whereas it is directly testified to in a few verses that clearly proclaim that the Word became Man by emptying Himself and taking the form of a servant.

Beginning with the indirect Testimonies that assure us that “...*concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh...*”<sup>9</sup> He “...*the Eternally Blessed God...*” descended “...*according to the flesh...*”<sup>10</sup> from the “...*Israelites...*”<sup>11</sup> and is the **Blessed** “...*seed of Abraham...*”<sup>12</sup> The Son of God **Who**, at the fullness of time, was sent by the Father and “...*was born*

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<sup>7</sup> Leontius Byzantius, *Against Nestorians and Eutychians*, Homilies I-III; *Against Nestorians*, Homilies I-VII, in Migne, P.G., 86, 1268-1768.

<sup>8</sup> Kefalas, *Synods*, pp. 164-169.

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 1:3.

<sup>10</sup> Rom. 9:5.

<sup>11</sup> Rom. 9:4.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. 9:7.

of a woman...”<sup>13</sup> **therefore** was a descendant of Abraham. Hence, although He is “...the Word of Life...”<sup>14</sup> He “...was manifested...”<sup>15</sup> in the midst of men and the Holy Apostles “...have seen Him with their eyes and their hands handled Him...”<sup>16</sup> “... being found in the appearance as a Man.”<sup>17</sup> Thus to Christ, as the Word and Son of God and God, **is** ascribed birth and human descendant, life and a human body **that** suffered and faced death, **which was capable of** suffering and shedding of blood.

Jesus the Son of Man, as God **Who** existed “...before Adam was...”<sup>18</sup> “...is the same yesterday, today, and for ever.”<sup>19</sup> He pre-existed and came “...into this world to save sinners...”<sup>20</sup> He “...gives **Eternal Life**...” to His sheep and no one can “...snatch them out of...” His **Hands**.<sup>21</sup> In the Epistles of St Paul, Jesus **Christ** is called “...our Lord Jesus Christ...” fifty times. He was “...highly exalted...” after His Resurrection above “...those in Heaven, and those on earth and those under the earth...”<sup>22</sup> as the Christ “... **Who** is over all, the **Eternally Blessed God**...”<sup>23</sup> **Who** sits on the right hand of God<sup>24</sup> and **Who** is “...far above all **Principality and Power and Might and Dominion**...”<sup>25</sup> and is worshipped by all the **Angels**.<sup>26</sup> He sent the Holy Spirit to His Disciples<sup>27</sup> and through **Him** one sees the Father because He is in the Father and the Father in Him,<sup>28</sup> for they are One.<sup>29</sup> He is “...the **Only Begotten Son Who** is in the **Bosom of the Father**...”<sup>30</sup> “...for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”<sup>31</sup> He **Who was** touched by St Thomas and bears the prints of the nails on His **Hands and Feet**, is our Lord and God.<sup>32</sup> **By** “...looking for the **Blessed Hope and Glorious Appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ**...”<sup>33</sup> we await **Him** as “...our true God...”<sup>34</sup> “...**Who** is the **Eternally Blessed God**.”<sup>35</sup>

From the above Biblical verses and many others, it is **obvious** that the **One Whom** St Paul calls “...the **Man Christ Jesus**...”<sup>36</sup> has **Divine Attributes** and **Who** not only as Man is perfect but as God is truly the One “...**Who** came down from **Heaven**...”<sup>37</sup> and as the Son of Man, **dwelt** among men in the **Flesh**, simultaneously

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<sup>13</sup> Gal. 4:4.

<sup>14</sup> 1 John 1:1.

<sup>15</sup> 1 John 1:2.

<sup>16</sup> 1 John 1:1.

<sup>17</sup> Phil. 2:8.

<sup>18</sup> John 8:58.

<sup>19</sup> Heb. 13:8.

<sup>20</sup> 1 Tim. 1:15.

<sup>21</sup> John 10:27-28.

<sup>22</sup> Phil. 2:9, 10.

<sup>23</sup> Rom. 9:5.

<sup>24</sup> Mark 16:19.

<sup>25</sup> Ephes. 1:21.

<sup>26</sup> Rev. 5:11-14.

<sup>27</sup> John 15:26.

<sup>28</sup> John 14:9-10.

<sup>29</sup> John 10:30.

<sup>30</sup> John 1:18.

<sup>31</sup> Col. 2:9.

<sup>32</sup> John 20:27-29.

<sup>33</sup> Tit. 2:13.

<sup>34</sup> 1 John 5:20.

<sup>35</sup> Rom. 9:5.

<sup>36</sup> 1 Tim. 2:5.

<sup>37</sup> John 3:13.

being in Heaven as “...the *Only Begotten Son of God...*”<sup>38</sup> “...Who is in the *Bosom of the Father.*”<sup>39</sup> Christ Himself, whenever He spoke of Himself, confirmed that the *Only Begotten Son of God* is the same as the *Son of Man*.

The *Hypostatic Union* of the *Divine* and human *Natures* of Christ is evident in the Biblical verses of St John 1:14: “...And the *Word became flesh and dwelt among us...*” and in *St Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians* 2:6-7: “...Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.” St Paul proclaimed the *Eternal pre-existence* of Jesus Christ as being in the form of God by *Nature* and not by robbery, stating that He emptied Himself [of His *Divine Majesty*] by coming in the likeness of men. One must note that in the first verse the words “...and the *Word became flesh...*” is equivalent to “...the *Word became Man...*” as Holy Scripture usually refers to “*flesh*” as being the whole “*man*.”<sup>40</sup> He became *Flesh* “...without changing *His Essence* into *flesh...*” “...for the *Divine Essence* is beyond any change...” “...but taking up...” human nature, “...that *Essence* remained untouched.”<sup>41</sup> In other verses Christ is presented as “...coming in *flesh...*”<sup>42</sup> and that “...He came forth from the *Father* and had come into the world...”<sup>43</sup> by “...coming down from *Heaven.*”<sup>44</sup>

St John Chrysostom commented that “...the *Son of God* did not grab the *Principal*, but had it by *Nature*, permanent and secured. He was not afraid to descend from the *Rank...*” so He emptied Himself, taking up “...what He was not and becoming *flesh* He remained *God*, being the *Word.*”<sup>45</sup> Thus after the *Incarnation* “...He has two forms. For the *Son of God* being *Man* and *God* did not dissolve the *Divine Form*, neither being *God* rejected the *human Form.*”<sup>46</sup>

## 2. The Teachings of the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists

In the *Teachings* of the *Apostolic Fathers* one clearly finds the *Doctrine* concerning the *Hypostatic Union* of the two *Natures* in Christ, although they ignore the exact *Doctrinal* term that declares this *Union*. Thus in the *Epistle of Barnabas* it is specified that “...the *Lord...*” Who “...submitted to suffer for our souls...” “...is *Lord of the whole world*, to *Whom* God said at the foundation of the world, ‘Let Us make man according to Our *Image and Likeness*’” and “...the *Son of God*, *Who* is *Lord* and is destined to *Judge* the living and the dead.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> John 1:14-15.

<sup>39</sup> John 1:18.

<sup>40</sup> St. Athanasius the Great, *To Serapion II*, § 7; *Against Arians*, IV, § 30, in Migne, *P.G.*, 26, 620 and 388.

<sup>41</sup> St. John Chrysostom, *To John 1:14*, in Monfaucon, v.8, p. 74.

<sup>42</sup> 1 John 4:2.

<sup>43</sup> John 16:28.

<sup>44</sup> John 6:41.

<sup>45</sup> St. John Chrysostom, *To Philippians* 2:6, 7, in Montfaucon, v. 9, pp. 282 and 285.

<sup>46</sup> St. Athanasius the Great, *Fragments from the Against Arians*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 26, 1256.

<sup>47</sup> *Barnabas*, 5, 5 and 7, 2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, pp. 167 and 170.

St Ignatius the **Theophorus** of Antioch used the term “...clothed in flesh...”<sup>48</sup> signifying the **Incarnation** of the Lord. He explained that “...there is one **Physician**, **Who is both flesh and spirit, born and unborn, God in Man, true Life in death, both from Mary and from God.**”<sup>49</sup> “For our God Jesus the Christ was conceived by Mary according to God’s Plan, both from the seed of David and of the Holy Spirit. He was **born and was baptised...**”<sup>50</sup> and His suffering is “...the suffering of God...”<sup>51</sup> as His **Blood** is “...the **Blood of God.**”<sup>52</sup> Thus it is made clear that He **Who** was **Crucified** for us is God’s “...**Son, Who is His Word...**”<sup>53</sup> “...**Christ our God...**”<sup>54</sup> “...**Who was of the family of David; Who was the Son of Mary; Who was really born, Who both ate and drank; Who was really persecuted under Pontius Pilate; Who was really crucified and died while those in Heaven and on earth and under the earth looked on; Who, moreover, was really raised from the dead when His Father raised Him up.**”<sup>55</sup>

According to *The Epistle to Diognetus*, “...the omnipotent Creator of all, the invisible God...” “...sent to men...” “...the Designer and Creator of the **Universe Himself...**” “...by **Whom** all things have been ordered and determined and placed in subjection...” **God** “...sent Him as a Man to men...” “...as a king might send his son who is a king, **He sent Him as God.**”<sup>56</sup> **God** “...did not hate us, or reject us, or bear a grudge against us; instead **He was patient and forbearing; in His Mercy He took upon Himself our sins; He Himself gave up His own Son as a ransom for us.**”<sup>57</sup> **Jesus Christ Who** was crucified for us and was sent as a Man, is one and the same with the Creator and Provider and Preserver of all things.

According to “*The Shepherd of Hermas*,” “...the Son of God is far older than all **His Creation**, with the result that **He was the Father’s Counsellor in His Creation...**” and “...**He was revealed in the last days of the Consummation; that is why the Door is new, in order that those who are going to be Saved may enter the Kingdom of God through It.**”<sup>58</sup>

According to the Apologists, “...the Lord Jesus Christ...” is “...the Son of the High God...” **Who** “...came down from **Heaven for the Salvation of men...**”<sup>59</sup> **Who** “...was born from a **Holy Virgin without seed and imperishably took up Flesh...**” **He is** “...the Word of God...” **Who** “...became Man for the human race...” “...**Who was born according to the Will of God and Father...**” “...and becoming partaker of our passions...” in order “...to heal them.”<sup>60</sup> “**He pre-existed...**” as “...the Son of the Creator of all, being God and becoming Man through the Virgin...” “...suffering the same as us, having flesh as man born from men.”<sup>61</sup> Hence **the Holy Gospel proclaims**

<sup>48</sup> St. Ignatius, *To Smyrnaeans*, 5, 2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 111.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, *To Ephesians*, 7, 2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 88.

<sup>50</sup> St. Ignatius, *To the Smyrnaeans*, 18, 2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 92.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, *To the Romans*, 6, 3, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 104.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, *To the Ephesians*, 1, 1, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 86.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, *To the Magnesians*, 8, 2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 95.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, *To the Romans*, Introduction, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 101.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, *To the Trallians*, 9, 1-2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 100.

<sup>56</sup> *The Epistle to Diognetus*, 7, 2 and 4, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, pp. 300 and 301.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 9, 2, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 302.

<sup>58</sup> *Shepherd of Hermas*, Parable 9, 12, 2 and 3, in Light foot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 272.

<sup>59</sup> Aristides, *Apology*, 15, in **B**, v. 3, p. 147.

<sup>60</sup> St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *1 Apology*, 63, §§ 4 and 10. Ibid, *2 Apology*, 6, § 5 and 13, § 4; Ibid, *Dialogue* 48, § 2-3, in **B**, v. 3, pp. 195-196, 203, 207 and 250-251.

<sup>61</sup> Tatianus, *Homily to the Greeks*, § 21, in **B**, v. 4, 256.

“...that God has become in the likeness of Man...” He Who “...is God and perfect Man, assured us that He has the two Essences of His Deity and His humanity.”<sup>62</sup>

### 3. The Teachings of St Irenaeus, Tertullian and St Hippolytus

The Ecclesiastic Scholars who followed after the Apologists, St Irenaeus, Tertullian and St Hippolytus ascribed more accurate expressions to the Doctrine of the Hypostatic Union of the two Natures in the one Person of Jesus Christ.

St Irenaeus spoke of “...the Union of the Word of God with His Creation.”<sup>63</sup> This terminology is used by later Fathers<sup>64</sup> although it does not express the Hypostatic Union alone but can be used to describe the meaning of the Moral Union (e.g. the union of man and woman in marriage or our Union with God [in Holy Communion]), as well as that of the mixture of two different elements (e.g. the wine and water [for Holy Eucharist]). St Irenaeus, and particularly Tertullian, used the terms “*commisti*” “*commixtus*”<sup>65</sup> and “*commixtio*,”<sup>66</sup> meaning “mixture” as applied by the great Holy Fathers.<sup>67</sup> Although these terms express the close, undivided and inseparable Union of the two Natures, they do not exclude the confusion, change and synthetic result of something new. St Irenaeus, Tertullian and St Hippolytus, as well as the rest of the Holy Fathers, further explained this Union and Mixture of the two Natures, determining in an orthodox way the Doctrine of the Hypostatic Union.

St Irenaeus declared the faith “...in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who was Incarnated for our Salvation...”<sup>68</sup> Who not only simply dwelt in the Man Jesus but being the exact Word, the Only begotten Son of God, was Incarnated for us in such a way that the Son of the High God and the Son of David is one and the same Person.<sup>69</sup> And our Lord “...Jesus Who suffered for us, Who dwelt in us ... is the Word of God...” “...the Only Begotten Son Who, according to the pleasing Will of the Father, became Man for men...”<sup>70</sup> and becoming as we are, although remaining God Almighty and Unspeakingly having His Generation,<sup>71</sup> became visible, He Who is

<sup>62</sup> Meliton Sardeis, Extract 7, in Migne, *P.G.*, 5, 1221.

<sup>63</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, IV, 33, 11 and III, 18, 6, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 1080 and 937. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 333-334, 242.

<sup>64</sup> St. Athanasius the Great, *Epistle to Epictetus*, § 9, in Migne, *P.G.*, 26, 1065. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechesis*, ch. 10 and 11, in Migne, *P.G.*, 45, 41 and 44. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epistle* 101, in Migne, *P.G.*, 37, 181 and 188.

<sup>65</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 19, § 1, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 938. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 243-244.

<sup>66</sup> Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 21, in Migne, *P.L.*, 1, 457; and *Ibid*, *Adversus Marcianem*, II, 27, in Migne, *P.L.*, 2, 345. St. Hippolytus, *About Christ and Antichrist*, IV, in *B*, v. 6, p. 199.

<sup>67</sup> St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Homily* 45, § 11, in Migne, *P.G.*, 33, 633. *Ibid*, 2 *Apology*, § 23, in Migne, *P.G.*, 35, 431. *Ibid*, *Homily* 38, § 13, in Migne, *P.G.*, 36, 325. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechesis*, § 35, in Migne, *P.G.*, 45, 66. *Ibid*, *Against Apollinarius*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 45, 1275. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Against Nestorius*, book I, ch. 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 76, 33. *Ibid*, *Treasure*, 24, in Migne, *P.G.*, 75, 399.

<sup>68</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book I, ch. 10, § 1, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 549. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 64-65.

<sup>69</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 16, §§ 1-3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 919-922. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 230-233.

<sup>70</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book I, ch. 9, § 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 541. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, p. 63.

<sup>71</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book IV, ch. 33, § 11, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 1080. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 333-334.

Invisible, conceivable He Who is Inconceivable and suffering, He Who is above all suffering and the Word Man, resuming all things to Himself,<sup>72</sup> “...in order that as the Word is the Prince in the Heavenly and Spiritual and Invisible, likewise for Him to have the Dominion among the visible and bodily.”<sup>73</sup>

Thus “...the *Carnation*...” was “...the pure *Birth of the Word of God*...” and those who renounce it “...are ungrateful to the *Incarnated Word of God Who, for this reason ... became Man, in order that man, by vesting the Word, enjoys the Adoption and becomes a son of God.*” Thus Christ had a double *Nature*, “...as *Man, in order to be tempted, likewise as the Word in order to be glorified; the Word being peaceful when He was tempted and crucified and dying, being related to man in being victorious and patient and being Raised and lifted up.*” Hence the Son of God, our Lord, being the Word of the Father as well as the Son of Man because He was from the *Ever Blessed Virgin* Mary who had her generation from men and who was human, was born in accordance to man and thus became the Son of Man.<sup>74</sup> Proclaiming elsewhere that the *Union* of the two *Natures* in the one *Hypostatic Person* of Jesus Christ *classifies* those who divide the Lord into two different *Hypostases*<sup>75</sup> as blasphemers.

St Hippolytus, stressing the *union* of the two *Natures* in Christ, *asserted* that Christ “...coming into the world as God, was revealed in *flesh.*” “For the bodiless Word of God vested the *holy flesh* from the *Virgin [and] as a vested Bridegroom [He assumed] the suffering on the Cross.*” He continues: “...in order to mix our mortal body to His own *Power*”. He achieved this “...by mixing the mortal to the *Immortal* and the weak to the *powerful* in order to *save the lost man*...” Using the terms “mix” and “mixing” he stresses the undivided and inseparable *natural* and *essential* union.

The *prototypical explanation* that “...the *flesh on its own without the Word could not exist, for it has its existence in the Word*...” *belongs to St Hippolytus*. In other words, the central line of the *Doctrine of the Hypostatic Union*, according to *which* the *Incarnated Divine Nature* was not incarnated in a human hypostasis *that* already pre-existed but *that* the human nature became *Hypostasis* in the *Word of the Hypostasis of the Word*, which was already *Hypostasis*. St Hippolytus used the terms “mix” and “mixture” *excluding* any confusion or change or alteration of the two *Natures*.<sup>76</sup>

The expressions of Tertullian *being exact and accurate, were* adopted by the Holy Ecumenical Synods. According to Tertullian, we see double the *Natural* condition *that* is not confused but united in the one *Person of the God and Man Jesus*. *Furthermore, the attributes of each Essence remain* unharmed and *act according to* its

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<sup>72</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 16, § 6, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 925-926. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 234-235.

<sup>73</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 16, § 6, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 925-926. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 234-235.

<sup>74</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 19, §§ 1 and 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 939 and 941. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 243-244 and 244-245.

<sup>75</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 16, § 5, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 925. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 233-234.

<sup>76</sup> St. Hippolytus, *To the heresy of Noetus*, 15, 17; *Ibid*, *About Christ and Anti-Christ*, 4; in *B*, v. 6, pp. 19, 20-21, 199.

own attributes such as the virtues, the works and the signs.<sup>77</sup> It is obvious, when Tertullian uses the terms “*commixtio*”, “*mixtus*” and “*commisti*”, he wants to express the inseparable and undivided union of the two natures, and under no condition the mixing or confusion or their synthetic change.

#### 4. Complete Clarification of the Union of the Two Natures and Accurate Terms

The heresy of Apollinarios<sup>78</sup> made it necessary to completely clarify the manner of the Union of the two Natures in Christ, thereby gradually establishing more accurate terms in order to explain this Union.<sup>79</sup> St Alexandros the Great of Alexandria, in his letter to Alexandros of Constantinople, spoke of the “...*Unchangeability of the Word*...” at the Incarnation and introduced the term “*Unchangeable*,” which subsequently the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod of Chalcedon accepted.

St Athanasius the Great of Alexandria, explaining the unchangeable union of the two Natures that are hypostatically united in the God-Man, observed that “...neither *is man the Son of God*...” nor did God abolish “... *the Divine Form; nor being God [did He renounce] the human form*.” In the God-Man “...two things were united; two in one. For neither God the Word is divided from the *body*, nor do we see two Sons and Christs, but the Son of God Who is before all ages and in later times became perfect Man.” Hence the human Nature of the Lord, although “... *being from the Creation*...”, “... *became flesh*...” Consequently, “...*when we see that body*, we do not refrain from *worshipping the Word or*, wanting to worship the Word, we do not depart from the *flesh*.”

The Body became God’s Body, for the Word of God at the Incarnation did not “...*inhabit a Holy Man, but the same Word became Flesh*...” and “...*being truly the Son of God, became also the Son of Man*.” And “...*the Son of God, Who was before Abraham, was not different from the one after Abraham, but He was the same Who asks ‘Where is Lazarus placed?’ whom He Divinely Raised*.” From the beginning “...*the Flesh became the Word’s and not any man’s*...” and “...*by unconfused Natural Union*...” the human Nature became the Flesh of the Word. Thus the Lord was Incarnated “...*not showing change in the Deity*...” but “...*receiving everything from the Virgin, everything which God at the beginning used for the creation of man without sin, natural birth and inseparable Union, a new Creation from the Virgin’s Womb He raised Himself*.” Because the Flesh is not of the same Essence (*Omoousios*) as that of the Divine Nature, the Union with the Divinity was made “...*Hypostatic. For the Consubstantial (Omoousion) to the Consubstantial Union by Hypostasis was by Nature*.” For this inseparable “...*and undivided*...” and by Hypostasis Union “...*the Son Who suffered was not different from the One Who suffered. For the Word was not different from Him Who took up death and suffering*...” but “...*He Who is confessed ... truly suffered and is without suffering*...” “...*in order to be truly Man and truly God*.” According to the above, St Athanasius elsewhere referred to the Word as “*vested flesh*” or of the Word’s “*Communion and Union*” with the Body, describing the human Nature as being the “*House*,” “*Temple*,”

<sup>77</sup> Tertullian, *Adversus Praxeam*, XXVII, in migne, P.L., 2, 215.

<sup>78</sup> Kefalas, *Synods*, pp.111-112

<sup>79</sup> Lossky, *Theology*, pp. 95-100.

“Instrument,” “Vestment,” and “Garment” of the Incarnated Word.<sup>80</sup> However, these terms under no circumstances were used by St Athanasius to express the external but not the Hypostatic Union of the two Natures in Christ.

Didymus the Blind proclaimed in an orthodox manner that this Union of the two Natures in Christ exist as “...other and other...” not “...another and another.” They are two different Natures in the God-Man, not two different Persons, although the different Natures exist in one and the same (Person.) Concerning the Lord’s human Nature, Didymus observed that “...according to the *Economia*, the Word of God became *Flesh unchangeable and completely and truly*; as one Person said to be *Divine and human*.”<sup>81</sup>

St Gregory of Nyssa and St Gregory the Theologian of Nazianzus, so as to explain the Union of the two Natures, used the terms “mixture,” “physique” and “commixture.” Nevertheless St Gregory of Nazianzus determined that “...this new mixture of God and man...” in order to be “...one from two and through one two...”<sup>82</sup> although “...the natures are two, the sons are not two, nor are they two gods.” In the Saviour it is distinguished as being the “...other and other, those of which the Saviour consists, and not another from another.” Determining this he observed that we should confess that the Holy Trinity is “...another and another, in order not to confuse the *Hypostases*...” but never the “...other and other...” because the one Essence in the Trinity is “...one in the Three and the same in the Deity.” On the other hand, it is stressed that this “...mixture in one...” of the two Natures was not made for confusion of change. But the Incarnated God is “...suffering in *Flesh*, without passion in the *Deity*, describable in *Body*, indescribable in *Spirit*, He Himself earthly and *Heavenly*, visible and *intellectual*, containable and *uncontainable*.” Henceforth, he who does not “...worship the *Crucified*, let him be anathema and let them be with those who killed God...” as he is condemned and the other, who “...does not take in consideration as the *Theotokos* the *Holy Mary*.” This name is to be properly addressed to the Mother of the Lord because “...no man was formed...” in her, in order that “...afterwards God will vest...” him. For this will not be “...a birth of God, but avoidance of birth.” St Gregory clearly determined that by saying “mixture,” does not mean confusion and change, but Union inseparable from the two Natures, the human never having received its own hypostasis, but from the beginning within the Virgin’s Womb was united hypostatically with the Incarnated Lord and remaining forever united. St Gregory renounced everyone who would deny “... the holy flesh” or say “the *Deity* stripped from the *body*.”<sup>83</sup>

St Gregory of Nyssa unmistakably distinguished the Attributes of each of the two Natures of Christ. “The humanity (of Jesus) was raised after the *Suffering* and through the Lord, became the *Christ*...” when “...He was *raised* on the right hand of God and became, instead of the subject, *Christ the King*, instead of the humble the

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<sup>80</sup> St. Athanasius the Great, *Fragments from Against Heresies*; *Ibid*, *To Adelphius*. § 3; *Ibid*, *The volume to Antiochean*, § 7; *Ibid*, *Against Apollinarius*, Homily I, §§ 10 and 12, and Homily II, §§ 2, 5 and 6; *Ibid*, *Against Arians*, Homily II, § 69; *Ibid*, *To Epictetus*, §§ 9 and 10; *Ibid*, *Against Arians*, Homily III, §§ 34, 52 and 53; *Ibid*, *To Adelphius*, §§ 3 and 4; in Migne, 26, 1256, 1076, 804, 1109, 1140, 1113, 1333, 1140, 293, 1065, 396, 397, 433, 1068 and 1076.

<sup>81</sup> Didymus the Blind, *About the Trinity*, III, 12; *Ibid*, *To Psalms*, in Migne, P.G., 39, 860 and 1232.

<sup>82</sup> St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Homily II Apology*, § 23, in Migne, P.G., 35, 432.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, *Epistle 101 to Cledonius*, in Migne, P.G., 37, 180.

Highest, instead of the *Man the God*.” St Gregory emphasised the state of each Nature’s Attributes which influenced one another before the Ascension and Deification. “The Divine does cry for Lazarus, for the tears are the quality of man...” “What was pierced with the nails? What form was struck during the sufferings?” He concluded that “...because of the Union and commonality of the two Natures, the Master took up the Wounds of a servant and the Servant was glorified in the Master’s honour.”<sup>84</sup>

St Epiphanius, stressing the wholeness and the immixture of the two Natures in their essential union observed that “...the Word becoming flesh...” did not change “...being God...” neither was “the Divinity ... changed into humanity...” but “...the same Hypostasis of God the Word included man to be Hypostasis...” not “...dwelling in man as speaking, dwelling and in power and acting in the Prophets, but ... became flesh.” Likewise He did not “...suffer alteration...” but “...completely Incarnated...” “...took up the whole man...” and “...regenerated the flesh to Himself...” uniting the humanity and the Deity “...in one holy union...” in such a way that “...the Lord Jesus Christ is one and not two, the same God, the same Lord, the same King.” He suffered the Passion “...in reality, in the flesh and in the perfect Incarnation He united it to the Deity, but not changed (so as) to suffer, being without suffering and unchangeable.” Thus Christ suffering in the flesh for us remained “...without suffering in the Deity...” without being “...separate man...” and separate Deity but instead the Deity being united with the man, without suffering due to the purity and incomparability of the Divine Essence.<sup>85</sup>

St John Chrysostom appeared to use the common terms that were used in the Antiochian School. He spoke of “connection,” “inhabitation,” “dwelling” and “vestment” of the Divine Nature “...in the flesh...” and “...through the flesh...” but he clarified these terms so as to exclude any misinterpretation or misunderstanding. “The Word became Flesh...” without diminishing “...His own Nature from this descent...” and without the Divine Essence falling into flesh, “...but remaining what It is, likewise He took up the likeness of a servant...” and “...became the Son of Man, being the pure Son of God.”

The Divine Essence remained “untouched” because It “... was beyond any change.” And explaining the Biblical term “...and dwelt among us...”<sup>86</sup> he deduced that through this, “...the change of that which is unchangeable...” is excluded. The Holy Father concluded his thoughts by stating: “I said ‘another’ according to the Essence; for in the Union and in the connection One is the God Word and the Flesh, being without confusion, neither diminishing the Essences, but through a Mysterious and unspeakable Union.” He then remarked that the Word “...through all inhabits the tent...” for He vested our flesh, not abandoning it, but having it with Him forever. Elsewhere he clearly expressed the orthodox opinion concerning the “emptying” of the Word: “Remaining what He was, He took up what He was not, and becoming Flesh remained God, being the Word.” Interpreting the Apostolic expression “...was found as Man...” he adds: “...And correctly he said ‘as Man’; For He was not One of the many, but as the One of many. For God the Word became Man, not changing in

<sup>84</sup> St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*, Homily V, in Migne, P.G., 45, 705 and 697.

<sup>85</sup> St. Epiphanius, *Ancyrotus*, 75 and 119, in Migne, P.G., 43, 233 and 236; *Ibid*, *Short true homily about faith*, § 17, in Migne, P.G., 42, 813.

<sup>86</sup> John 1:14.

*Essence, but appeared as man.*” Thus exalting the immixture and **unchangeability** of the two **Natures**, he stressed their real **Union by** concluding: “...*One God, one Christ, the Son of God. When I say, the One, I mean the Union, not a mixture of this Nature in the other.*”<sup>87</sup> In his letter to the **Monk Caesarios**, he **commented** that in Christ the **Attributes** of each **Nature** are connected and because of this “...*it is said that He suffered and did not suffer, suffering in Flesh, but not suffering in the Deity.*” For “...*the Divine being in the Nature of the Body is one Person.*”<sup>88</sup> This **Person** is known “...*not in one Nature, but in two perfect Natures...*” **although** without confusion and united undividedly. For, if in Christ was only one **Nature**, how could the “...*immixture, how the undivided...*” exist in Him? How would **it** be possible to spare **the Union** since it is impossible for the one **Nature** to be united or confused or divided? Whosoever renounces the human **Nature** “...*holding only the Divine, they renounce our Salvation.*” Whosoever holds only the human **Nature**, renounces the Divine. Only then **is** the **Union** saved, when and after the unity the **Attributes** of both **Natures** are saved. For, otherwise we would not have had **Union** “...*but confusion and diminishing of the two Natures.*”<sup>89</sup>

## 5. The Heresy of Nestorius

The real and **Hypostatic Union** of the two **Natures** was renounced by Nestorius<sup>90</sup> who became **Archbishop** of Constantinople in the year 428 A.D. **His** letters and fragments of his Homilies were **preserved** in Greek, Latin and Syrian, and were published by F. Loofs,<sup>91</sup> as well as the **Book** of Heracleides of Damascus, which was written as his Apology when he was exiled and **which has been preserved** in a Syrian translation. This document was published in French in 1910 by F. Nau.

Nestorius and his teacher, Theodorus of Mopsuestias, were influenced by Aristotelian philosophy **that held** the opinion that wherever true and real nature **exists, a person** co-exists. Consequently **he believed** the human **Nature** of Christ consists of an individual **Person**, having an individual **Hypostasis** and **Ego, independent** of the Hypostasis of the Word of God, in order for it to exist. “*The humanity is complete and has no need of this union with the Divine Nature in order to be a Man.*”<sup>92</sup> According to Nestorius the **union** of the two **Natures** with the two **Persons** is not accomplished naturally but **merely** by good will and willingly, **and** for this reason **one moral Will** exists in them. “*We see that they have one Will and Energy and Dominion, which is manifested in equality.*”<sup>93</sup> Through the moral infiltration of the two **Persons**, the **Divine** and human, **they result** in one moral **Person, Whom** Nestorius called a “...*Person of unity.*” **This Person** was the result of the moral **union** and not the **Person** of the Word of God **Who** took up human **Nature**. The **Person** of **unity** does not consist of the **union** of two **Natures** in the one **Hypostasis**, which, according to

<sup>87</sup> St. John Chrysostom, *To John*, Homily 11, §§ 1 and 2, in Montfaucon, v. 8, pp. 73-75. Ibid, *To Philipians*, Homily 7, §§ 2-3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 62, 232.

<sup>88</sup> St. John Chrysostom, *To Caesarius*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 52, 756.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, *To Hebrews*, § 1, in Montfaucon, v. 12, p. 37. Ibid, *To Genesis I*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 49, 352, 358, 360. Ibid, *To the betrayal of Judas*, § 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 49, 386. Ibid, *To Isaiah 7:6*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 56, 85-86.

<sup>90</sup> Kefalas, Synods, p.118-121.

<sup>91</sup> F. Loofs, *Nestoriana fragmenta vatia*, Halle, 1905.

<sup>92</sup> Heracleides, in Trempelas, *Dogmatique*, v. II, p. 96.

<sup>93</sup> Loofs, *Nestoriana*, p. 224.

Nestorius, exists as individual Persons and Hypostases. They are the result of the infiltration between them and the use of one another whereby the Word uses the Person of the humanity and vice versa. The Person in Jesus Christ's human Nature uses the Divine Person. Neither the Divine Nature alone, nor the human Nature consists of this common Person of union. Although it consists of the synthesis of the two Persons whereby the two Persons continue to exist on their own as Persons in such a way as being subject to the Person of the union as its synthetic elements. Generally speaking, Nestorius distinguished the "...natural Person..." Who is identified by Nature or Essence and the "...Person of union..." who in reality was something fictitious and deceptive, something by name and technical,<sup>94</sup> who had the two Persons, the Divine and the human, united by the good pleasure and common love. The Will of the Word and the will of the man were united by common love in one Person, hence the union of the Incarnation is unnatural although a union of good pleasure and willingness.

From the moment that Nestorius supported the concept that the Person of the Word and the Person of the man exists as individuals, two egos distinguishing one from the other exists. Their union was not natural and essential but only moral and willing. It was not possible to ascribe to God the Word, the Attributes and Energies of the human Person, nor to the human Person the Divine Attributes of God the Word. No one could possibly say that the Word was born from the Virgin Mary and that He suffered and died. Hence Nestorius refused to call the Holy Virgin Mary *THEOTOKOS* ("God-bearer" or "Mother of God").<sup>95</sup> The "antidosis" (exchange) of the Attributes that Nestorius accepted was only on the hypothetic Person of the union, in other words, in relation to the names "Christ," "Son" and "Lord." The terms that Nestorius preferred with which to express the union of the two Natures, were the same as Theodorus of Mopsuestias: "good pleasure," "inhabitation," "connection" and "relative union."

St Cyril of Alexandria countered Nestorius and his heresy by proclaiming that "...it was not that at first a common man was born of the Holy Virgin and afterwards the Word came down upon Him."<sup>96</sup> It was impossible for the human Nature to have its own hypostasis or to be a separate person. The Word, without being changed into flesh, or being changed into a whole man, was united "...within Him by Hypostasis unspeakably and beyond any conception..." "...within her womb..." "...taking up flesh and intellectual soul..." and "...became Man..." "...not only by will or good pleasure..." as Nestorius asserted. The difference between the two Natures was not refuted for the sake of the Union, but because they consisted of the one Lord and Christ. It is said that the Union of the Word with humanity is "...from the womb..." and the Word was "...born in flesh as familiarising the birth of flesh." Thus we say that the Word suffered and was raised, not because God the Word suffered in His own Nature or because of "... wounds or piercing of nails..." but because "...the Divine is without suffering" as it is also bodiless. We say this "... because He suffered these in His own Body and the Word, without suffering, was within His Body that suffered." And because St Cyril believed that the term "...one Nature of God the Word

<sup>94</sup> Theodorou, *Christological*, p. 28.

<sup>95</sup> Mansi, v. IV, p. 1099.

<sup>96</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle to Nestorius*, IV, in Migne, *P.G.*, 77, 45. Ibid, *Homily against those who do not want to confess Theotokos the holy Virgin*, § 4, in Migne, *P.G.*, 76, 260. Ibid, in Migne, *P.G.*, 68, 1005

*Incarinated...*” originated from St Athanasius, he adopted it in an orthodox manner. By means of this term St Cyril meant that “...the common Nature...” of the Divinity “...is seeing as a whole in the Hypostasis of the Word...” (one Nature of God the Word) “...Incarinated.” In other words, having the human Nature not as an individual Hypostasis, but “...in hypostasis...” in the one Hypostasis of the Word. Opposing the common Person of the union that Nestorius supported, St Cyril declared the Hypostatic union and characterised it as an “empty-voice” to appoint each member and to place “...man and God as being joined to one another in the unity of value and authenticity.”<sup>97</sup> He rebuked as error the teaching that “...God the Word inhabited, as in a common man who was born of the Holy Virgin...” as a result of which Christ would have been a God-bearing Man (*Theophorus*). If in Holy Scripture it is written that “...the Word dwelt among us...” and that in the Christ the whole Godhead dwelt bodily, we must understand that the Word became Flesh. Consequently, we do not accept “...that the way of the dwelling and inhabitation was equal in the Christ, as it said about the Saints...” but we do believe that “...He was united by Nature and that the inhabitation was accomplished without being changed into Flesh...” just as “...the human soul inhabits its own body.”

St Cyril, explaining this image, observed that “...as the body is different from the soul but comprises one man...” who is from two elements, “...likewise from two perfect Hypostases of God the Word and of humanity...” is “...one Christ Who exists in the same God and Man together.” Besides, in the unity of soul and body, in order for them to comprise the man, “...the soul familiarises itself with all things of the body...” although, because of its spiritual nature, “...it remains without participating in the body’s passions...” Likewise “...the body moves according to natural desires and feels the unity...” of the soul that exists in the body. If the body is wounded “...it is altogether in pain...” including the soul, “...as a member of the same body that suffers...” but if the soul was of an individual nature, it would not suffer. Likewise in the God-Man “...the Word familiarises Himself with those things of its own Flesh; that is, its own Body and not an alien...” body. Because Divine Nature cannot suffer, God the Word did not feel the pain that was brought upon His human Nature, although united with it. Instead His “... human Nature suffered without the Divine suffering.” It familiarises “...the weakness of the Flesh as its own Body...” and “...notifies...” the united human Nature as being its own Energy of the Godly Power that exists in the Word.

St Cyril characterises as natural, real and true, the unity of the two Natures and drops “...the term of connection as not being enough to signify the union...” renouncing those who join the Hypostases of the Man and the Word “...through connection according to the value; in other words, the authenticity and dominion...” of Moral Unity, which comprises the third Person according to Nestorius, “...for the equalization does not unite the Natures.” Neither must we consider this union “...as relative communion...” because we are joined with Christ as one spirit with Him.

“...But we do not call the Word ‘God or Master of Christ,’ in order not to divide into two the one Christ.” It would be ridiculous “...and even irreverent...” to say that the Word Who was united hypostatically with the flesh “...is His own servant and

<sup>97</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle to Nestorius* 4, in Migne, P.G., 77, 45. St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the difference between union and carnation*, III, 55, 11, in Migne, P.G., 94, 1025. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle to Nestorius* 3, in Migne, P.G., 77, 109 and 112.

Master.” Also “...we do not say concerning Christ: We honour Him *Who vests that which was vested, to worship the invisible seeing the visible...*” because he who says *such things*, “...divides Christ again into two...” when He is the one God-Man and “...knowing Him as Man and as God, but denying the *union*.” St Cyril, referring to the natural unity, meant “...the real [*union*], which does not confuse the *Natures*...” nor mixes them in order to alter them, making “...each one to be different to what they are.” When he said that “...the Word became flesh...” he did not mean that confusion, connection, change or alteration occurred. “For we know that the *Divine and Supreme Nature* does not accept any change.” The Word became “...Son of Man by remaining what He was...” so that He is eternally the same, “...perfect in *Deity* and perfect in *Humanity*, the same being understood as in one *Person*...” without ignoring the difference of the two *Natures* or by being confused or mixed.<sup>98</sup>

St Cyril’s struggle against Nestorianism, which divided the Theologians of Antioch and Alexandria, resulted in peace that was brought about by the terminology of John of Antioch and the Bishops under St Cyril of Alexandria: “We confess our Lord Jesus Christ, the *Only Begotten Son of God, perfect God and perfect Man ... Consubstantial (Homoousion) with the Father, the same according to the Divinity and consubstantial to us according to the humanity. For two Natures were united. For this reason we confess one Christ, one Son, and one Lord. According to the Union without confusion, we confess the Holy Virgin to be Theotokos, for the God Word took up flesh and was Incarnated and from the time of the Conception uniting to Him the Temple which He received ...*”<sup>99</sup>

## 6. The Heresy of Monophysitism

Nestorianism was opposed by the Archimandrite Eutyches<sup>100</sup> of Constantinople who ended up on the opposite side by characterising the *Union* of the two *Natures* as a mixture, in which the human *Nature* was completely absorbed by the *Divine Nature*.<sup>101</sup> Supporting the opinion of St Cyril according to which “...one *Incarnated Nature of the Word*...” exists within Christ, he confessed one Hypostasis and one *Person* in the *Incarnated Word* and although accepting that “...the Lord was from two *Natures* before the *Unity*...” he insisted that “...after the *Union* one *Nature* existed in Him...” but refusing to accept that “...the *Body of the Lord* and our God was *homoousion* with ours.”<sup>102</sup> Thus, from Eutychianism came Monophysitism, which proclaimed the teaching of the one *Nature* in Jesus Christ after the *Union*.

Fundamentally important to Orthodox Teachings was the letter of Pope Leo I, addressed to Flavianus of Constantinople the main points of which are the following:

1. One and the same is truly the Son of God and truly the Son of Man.

<sup>98</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle to Nestorius III*, in Migne, P.G., 77, 112. Ibid, *To Theodoretus*, ch. 3 and 1, in Migne, P.G., 76, 405 and 396. Ibid, *Epistle to John of Antioch*, in Migne, P.G., 77, 180. Ibid, *Against the defamations of Nestorius*, III, ch. 6, in Migne, P.G., 76, 85.

<sup>99</sup> Mansi, V, pp. 781 and 783. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle to John bishop of Antioch*, in Migne, P.G., 77, 177.

<sup>100</sup> Kefalas, *Synods*, pp.130-131.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, pp.131-132.

<sup>102</sup> Mansi, VI, pp. 741 and 744.

2. The **Attributes** of each **Nature** and **Essence** are conserved in the one **Person of Jesus Christ**; in other words, the **Majesty** of God took up the humbleness of humanity; the **Almightiness** of God took up the weakness and the **Eternal God** mortality.
  
3. Because each **Nature** preserves its own **Attributes** and as the likeness of a servant was not wiped out by the **Likeness** of God, **similarly** the **Likeness** of God was not **diminished** by the likeness of a servant.
  
4. Each of the two **Natures** act as their own in communion with one another: the **Word** acting **according to the Nature of the Word** and the **Flesh** acting **according to the nature of the flesh**.
  
5. Because of this **unity** of the **Person**, which must be considered for both **Natures**, it is written that the **Son of Man** came down from **Heaven**. The **Son of God** took up flesh from the **Virgin** from which He was **Born**; and again, it is said that the **Son of God** was **Crucified and Buried**. He did not suffer these in His **Deity** according to which He is the **Only Begotten Son** of the **Father**, **Co-eternal** and **Consubstantial** to the **Father**, but only in the **weakness** of the human **Nature**.<sup>103</sup> Finally, **Pope Leo I** expressed his surprise concerning the foolishness and irreverent confession of **Eutyches** according to which, before the **Union**, the **Lord** had two **Natures** but after the **Union** only one.

Mogilas commented that “...*Christ suffered on the Cross according to the Flesh and not according to the Deity. For the Deity did not suffer, was not nailed on the Cross nor was spat upon or mocked, nor died ... But the Deity, taking up the Humanity, was never separated from it, not at the time of the Passion nor at death on the Cross, nor after death. Although the Soul was separated from the Body, the Deity was never separated from either the Body or from the Soul for the reason that, at the time of death, the Hypostasis of Christ was one and the same.*”<sup>104</sup>

The 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod (451 A.D.) declared the **Doctrine** of the **Union** of the two **Natures** in **Christ** and proclaimed against the heresies of **Docetism**, **Arianism** and **Apollinarios** by decreeing: “*We confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, perfect in Deity and perfect in Humanity, truly God and truly Man, the same from intellectual Soul and Body, Substantial to the Father according to the Divinity and consubstantial the same to us according to the Humanity...*” Against the **Nestorians** and **Monophysites** they declared: “*...(Born) from Mary the Virgin, the Theotokos, according to the humanity, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only Begotten, being known in two Natures, unconfused, unchanged, undivided, inseparable; not anywhere retracted the difference of the Natures because of the Unity, but rather each Nature saving its own Attributes and in one Person and one Hypostasis, and not being divided into two Persons.*”<sup>105</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Mansi, V, p. 1366. Leon of Rome, in migne, P.L., 54, 763.

<sup>104</sup> Mogilas, I, 46, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 615.

<sup>105</sup> Mansi, VII, p. 116. See also the Pedalion for the text, pp. 241-243.

These terms of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod was supported by Leontius Byzantium, especially against the Nestorians and Monophysites who asserted that the human Nature of Christ was something without Hypostasis.<sup>106</sup> Leontius accepted that the Nature exists not without itself but in its own parts, proclaiming that “...non-hypostatic nature or essence cannot ever exist.” Nature without hypostasis comprises a subtraction and a fine idea. When we ascribe to Christ human Nature, we are forced to accept in Him a human Hypostasis. This is a serious error because between hypostasis and non-hypostasis, is “en-hypostasis,” which is non-existence on its own, but existing in another and consisting of something whole.. Thus the Humanity of Christ is Non-hypostasis because it exists. It does not exist on its own, but is “en-hypostasis,” because it exists in the Word Who assumed it as His own. Therefore belonging to Him, He gave its own Hypostasis. It is En-hypostasis, since “the en-hypostasis manifests that which does not exist, which has its existence in something else and is not seen in itself.” To clarify this differentiation, Leontius used examples and comparisons such as the example of the lit candle that unites two elements into the one burning flame<sup>107</sup> and also especially that of the unity of the soul with its body.

This union was used as an example of the hypostatic union because:

- a) The soul is essentially united with the body, as the two Natures are united in the Word.
- b) In man the soul preserves its own spiritual attributes while the body preserves its own physical attributes. Likewise in the Incarnated Word each Nature preserves its own Attributes and characteristics.
- c) The union of the soul and body in one person and in one hypostasis being the one man, leads us to the concept of the Union of the Word and the human Flesh that Christ took up, in the one Person, one Hypostasis.

Leontius, in using the above example of the soul and body, warned that one must be very cautious because from this unity in men, not only one person or only one man is derived, but a type of human nature of which many people partake (i.e. humanity is many people). In Christ this does not happen. From the union of the two Natures, no other nature is derived that could be called a “type of Christ” and which could be transmitted to others, resulting in “many Christs” similar to the one human nature that exists in many men. Christ is one alone and absolutely unique. He is not one Nature but one Hypostasis Who is unique and Who cannot be reproduced. Through this statement Leontius refuted the Nestorians, pointing out that the Word being perfect, took up perfect human nature. This nature does not exist on its own, but exists in the Word to Whom it belongs and Who gives existence to it. He told the Monophysites that if the personal characteristic of the human nature is “...the logic, it is also mortality...” that is found in Christ. Hence, we are forced to accept that human nature is in Him and consequently that Christ has two Natures.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Leontius Byzantium, *Against Nestorians and Eutychians*, in Migne, P.G., 86, 1277, 1280, 1301, 1344. Ibid, *Against Severus*, in Migne, P.G., 86, 1917, 1921, 1928

<sup>107</sup> Leontius Byzantium, *Against Nestorians and Eutychians*, in Migne, P.G., 86, 1280, 1277 and 1304.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, in Migne, P.G., 86, 1277, 1944, 1317, 1320.

## 7. The Heresy of Monothelitism

The heresy of Monophysitism troubled the whole Byzantine Empire in the East and created dangerous divisions between the citizens of the State. In order for reconciliation and peace to be restored to both parties, bringing the Monophysites of Armenia and Syria closer to the State and the Church of Constantinople, Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople proposed acceptance of the one Energy in the God-Man as a formula of unity to Emperor Heracleius. With the support of Cyrus and Macedonius of Antioch, Patriarch Sergius managed to obtain the cooperation of Pope Honorius, whereupon the “Report” (“Ekthesis”)<sup>109</sup> was prepared in the year 636 A.D. It was signed by Emperor Heracleius in 638 A.D. and was accepted by the majority of the Bishops of the East who declared: “We confess one Will of our Lord Jesus Christ the true God, as there was no time when the Intellect of His Flesh acted separately and against the Will of the God Word with Whom it was united by Hypostasis, but whenever and whatever God the Word wanted.”<sup>110</sup> Thus Monothelitism<sup>111</sup> (“One Will”) as well as Monoenergism (“One Energy”) was born.<sup>112</sup> Monoenergism maintained the belief that the human Nature of Christ became some kind of instrument without any of its own energy, being under the dominion of the Word, restricted and controlled by a pure, dynamic condition, never expressed and active.

St Sophronius of Jerusalem and St Maximus the Confessor contested these heresies. The teachings of Monothelitism were first condemned by Pope Martinos I in 649 A.D. and then by the 6<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod of Constantinople (680-681 A.D.)<sup>113</sup> that also condemned Sergius and Pyros, the Patriarchs of Constantinople, as well as Pope Honorius. The Holy Fathers of the Synod made the following declaration: “We confess that two natural Wills are in (Christ) and two natural Energies, undivided, unchangeable, inseparable, unmixable, according to the Teachings of the Holy Fathers; and two natural Wills not contrary, certainly not as the irreverent heretics said, but consequently His human Will which did not contradict or fight, but rather submitting to His Divine and All-powerful Will; for it was necessary for the Will of the flesh to move, and to be subject to the Divine Will according to the all-wise Athanasius.”<sup>114</sup>

St Maximus the Confessor philosophically opposed the teachings of Monothelitism by distinguishing the “natural Will” (“θέλημα φυσικόν”) and the “proverbial Will” (“θέλημα γνωμικόν”),<sup>115</sup> literally establishing the true Teaching. Pope Agathon, addressing his letters to Emperor Constantine Pogonatos, also used these terms.<sup>116</sup> St. Sophronius was the first to condemn the heresy of Monothelitism by means of his enthronement letters that he sent to Pope Honorius, Sergius of Constantinople and all the other Patriarchs.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Kefalas, *Synods*, pp.162-163.

<sup>110</sup> Mansi, X, p. 996. Cf. Makarios of Antioch, in Hardouin, *Acta Counciliorum*, v. III, p. 1172.

<sup>111</sup> Kefalas, *Synods*, p.160-161.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, p.161.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*, pp.165-169.

<sup>114</sup> Mansi, XI, 637.

<sup>115</sup> St. Maximus, *To Marinus*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 91, 12, 21, 153, 192, 308.

<sup>116</sup> Mansi, XI, 234-315.

<sup>117</sup> Mansi, XI, 461-509. Migne, *P.G.*, 87, 3148-3200.

The reasoning that was applied to the condemnation of Monotheletism was completed by St John of Damascus who explained it as follows: According to the Holy Gospel of St Mark 7:24, our Lord, while visiting "...Tyre and Sidon... entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden." Considering that the Divine Will of the God-Man is "...Almighty..." and therefore "... cannot commit errors even if He wanted to..." "...as Man wanting, [He] could not..." whereas whatever He Wills as God, nothing can prevent the realisation of His Almighty Will. The Lord was "...with Will and at the same time Man." Furthermore, the Lord at Golgotha "...said 'I thirst'<sup>118</sup> and they gave Him 'sour wine' mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it."<sup>119</sup> Therefore, because the Deity is without passion, the Lord did not thirst as God but "...as Man..." and as Man He refused to drink after testing what was offered to Him. Consequently He was "...with Will as well as Man." St Paul said that the Lord "...became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."<sup>120</sup> The obedient "...of the truly wanting is obedience, not that which does not want. For the irrational..." which is deprived of will is not "...obedient but we should rather call it disobedient." The Lord as Man "...became obedient to the Father, not as His Divine Nature became..." obedient, "...but as Man."<sup>121</sup> Furthermore, in the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed to His Father: "...if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I Will, but as Thou Will."<sup>122</sup> He was to drink the cup of death not as God but as Man. Although "...as a Man He wants the cup to pass..." He added "...but not as I Will, but as Thou Will..." thereby manifesting the two Wills – His own Will and the Will of the Father - being "...contrary one to the other, as the Father wanting Him to be crucified, He not wanting." Thus the Lord in this case experienced "...the opposition from the Flesh." For Christ to become obedient "...the Will of the Flesh must move to be obedient to the Divine Will." According to Pope Agathon the two Wills of Christ are revealed by His statement: "I have come down from Heaven; not to do My own Will, but the Will of Him Who sent Me..."<sup>123</sup> In the Epistle to the Hebrews the Lord says to His Father: "Behold, I have come to do Thy Will, O God..."<sup>124</sup> and "...yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered."<sup>125,126</sup>

The basis for the theoretical justification of the Doctrine concerning the two Wills of Christ was the principle that just as "...the Essence is the same, ... the Will and the Energy are the same; whatever of the Essence is different... the Will and Energy differs." Since in Christ we have two Essences or Natures, different to one another, "...seeing the difference of the Natures we confess together that the Wills and

<sup>118</sup> John 19:28.

<sup>119</sup> Mark 15:23. Matth. 27:48.

<sup>120</sup> Phil. 2:8.

<sup>121</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the wills and freewills of the Lord*, III, 48, 15, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 1040-1041. Matth. 27:34. Phil. 2:8.

<sup>122</sup> Matth. 26:39. Mark 14:36.

<sup>123</sup> John 6:38. John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 14:31.

<sup>124</sup> Heb. 10:9.

<sup>125</sup> Heb. 5:8.

<sup>126</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the wills and freewills*, III, 62, 18, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 1073, 1076. St. John Chrysostom, fragment from "Father if it is possible", in the 8<sup>th</sup> Act of the 6<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod, in Mansi, XI, p. 373. St. Athanasius the Great, fragment from the "Now My soul is troubled", in the 14<sup>th</sup> Act of the 6<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod, in Mansi, XI, p. 597. Bartmann, *Theologie Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 384.

*Energies are different.*<sup>127</sup> Man is “...by nature with will...” “...moving according to his will as master...” and being made “...in the **Image of the Blessed and Supreme Deity**” **Who** “...is independent by **Nature and Will**.” And the man as the image of God is “...independent by nature and will.” This exists in all human beings and characterizes them as persons”. **The Lord** “...taking up our nature...” “... became (man) by **nature with will**.”

The main basis of the argument of the Monothelites was that the acceptance of two **Energies** in Christ introduce division in Him **that** leads to the acceptance of two **Wills that are** “...opposite to one another...” **and** which would be irreverent to accept **with regard to** the Incarnated Word. For this reason the Monothelites argued that the natural movement of the human **Nature** in Christ became “...whenever and whatever and inasmuch **as** God the Word wanted.” The human **Nature of** Christ was to the Word whatever our body **is** to the soul by which it is dominated, decorated and guided according to its will. Likewise in the God-Man, the human **Nature** was something “...**always** God-moved and led in everything by the **deity of the Word**.”

Against this **Monothelitic** opinion, St Maximus opposed the differentiation between “*the natural will*” and “*the sentient will*.” The “*natural will*” is brought automatically towards the good, free from any error and oscillations. We must notice that “...speaking about the natural **Will**, we say that it is not by force but by independence...”<sup>128</sup> certainly because error and sin is excluded from Him. **We** must then understand that He moves in a higher freedom. God **freely** wants according to this way. For “...being by Nature good and by Nature Creator and by Nature God, He has no need of these things.” **However**, Supernatural Independence is ascribed to Him. Besides, the “*sentient will*,” being subject to error, moves according to logical reasons and observations, and presupposes in him who wants examination, wavering and hesitation, “...demand and want...” afterwards, which follows “...*the free will which chooses between this or that*.” These derive because the one who wants, does not have direct and complete knowledge **of** the character of the object, to which it is led. This is **purely** human and for this reason incomplete and subject to errors. After this differentiation, St Maximus observed that **since “free will” and “independence” consists of elements and characteristics of human nature, if** the Incarnated Word truly took up this nature, He took it up with “*independence*,” free from “*want*” and “*faults*” of fallen man. The Lord had “*natural Will*” but not the “*sentient will*.”<sup>129</sup> As St John of Damascus **commented**, the Lord “...was not only a fine **Man** but simultaneously God...” “...free from the need of thoughts and discussion and will and judgement and naturally having the familiarity towards good and the alienation towards evil.” The **Hypostasis Union** of the human **Nature** with the **Divine Nature** was free from any errors, enjoying the **Light of Supernatural Knowledge**, “...having by **Nature** the good, by **Nature** He had the Virtues...” and

<sup>127</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the wills and free-wills of our Lord Jesus Christ*, III, 58, 14, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 1033.

<sup>128</sup> Epistle of Sergius to Cyrus of Alexandria, in Mansi, XI, pp. 533 and 536. St. Maximus, *To Marinus*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 91, 12 and 21. St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the wills and free-wills of our Lord Jesus Christ*, III, 58, 14, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 1041.

<sup>129</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the wills and free-wills of our Lord Jesus Christ*, III, 58, 14 and 15, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 1041 and 1044. St. Maximus, *To Marinus*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 91, 73. *Ibid*, *Dialogue to Pyrrus*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 91, 301 and 308.

according to the Prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah: “...for before the Child shall know good or evil, He refuses evil, to choose the good.”<sup>130</sup>

Jesus Christ had **no need to consider His Will in order to act**, neither to balance the “*pros and cons*,” nor to be influenced by anything external. The good always **emerged** automatically and **since before** the beginning **He** was led towards good without any obstacles. Consequently, accepting the human will in the God-Man, we are **distanced** from the danger of facing any contradiction or clash between the two **Wills of Christ**. Two **Wills** are distinguished in Jesus Christ **although** “...one and the same...” “*He ... wants according to each Nature...*” “...*Godly and humanly...*” “...*not only wanting what is natural to God...*” but wanting “*what is natural to the human nature*”<sup>131</sup>.

The one Jesus Christ, as perfect God and perfect Man **did not behave merely** “... as simple *Man...*” nor was His behaviour **Divine only** because He is not “...a naked God.” However His human **Nature is humble although it is** “...not without the... *Divinity...*” for when He suffered on the Cross, the Lord as Man **also had** “...the *Deity ... united within Him, remaining without suffering and working the Salvation.*” When again the **Divinity** in the God-Man “...was working the *Godly Wonders...*” He was acting “...not without the *Flesh...*” but “...through touching and word and such things He worked the *Wonders.*” Speaking of the God-Man **Energy**, we mean “...the two *Energies of the two Natures...*” of the God-Man. In other words, “the *Divinity’s the Divine, the humanity’s the human Energy...*” unmixed and unchangeable but inseparable “...because one is He *Who acts Divinely and humanly.*” **According to this** opinion we speak of “...*Deification of the Will...*” of Christ **and we** do not accept change of “...the natural movement...” from which this **Will** is. We must never forget that this movement of the human **Nature** of Christ is “...united to His *Divine and Almighty Will...*” and consequently, we confess that the human **Will** of the God-Man always remains and becomes “...the *Will of the Incarnated God*” Who **Deifies** the **Flesh**, not “...changing its own *Nature or its natural Attributes, which remain after the Union, and both Natures not connected and untouched.*”<sup>132</sup> As we proclaim the Saviour to be of two **Natures**, likewise He is of two **Wills** and two **Energies**. We know that the **Will** of humanity submits always to the **Will** of the **Deity**, according to **Christ’s words**: “Let it be not according to My *Will* but to *Thine.*”<sup>133</sup>

## 8. Mystery **Great and Inconceivable but not Illogical**

Finally, we must never forget that the **Hypostatic Union** consists of a great and beyond any conception **Mystery** and the **manner** of the Incarnation is not **at all** possible **for our limited mind to understand**. Thus Leo the Great **stated** that the human

<sup>130</sup> Is. 7:16.

<sup>131</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the wills and free-wills of our Lord Jesus Christ*, III, 58, 14, in Migne, P.G., 94, 1036, 1037, 1044. Ibid, *Exposition. About the energies in our Lord Jesus Christ*, III, 58, in Migne, P.G., 94, 1045. St. Maximus, *Dialogue to Pyrrus*, in Migne, P.G., 91, 308.

<sup>132</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the wills and free-wills of our Lord Jesus Christ*, III, 58, 14, 15, 19, 17, in Migne, P.G., 94, 1044. Ibid, *Exposition. About the energies in our Lord Jesus Christ*, III, 59, in Migne, P.G., 94, 1052, 1056, 1057. Ibid, *Exposition. About the God-Man energy*, III, 63, in Migne, P.G., 94, 1080, 1081. Ibid, *Exposition. About the deification of the human flesh and will of the Lord*, III, 63, in Migne, P.G., 94, 1069.

<sup>133</sup> Kritopoulos, ch. 3, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 518.

language cannot explain the **Union** of the two **Natures** in one **Person**, unless it is conceded **to** by faith.<sup>134</sup> Nothing in nature is similar to the supernatural union that remains unique, **being** a **Mystery** to which no image of this world can relate. Only once in the supernatural order it met in the Incarnated Word.

Truly, the **Union** of **Divine Grace** with the faith of the Faithful and the inhabitation of God **within them**, according to **Christ's statement**: "...*And We shall come and make Our home in him...*" is not essential and hypostatical but moral, through which the Faithful becomes "*Theophorus*" (God-bearer) but never "*God-man*." The union of the soul with the body that was used by the **Holy Fathers** as an example to explain the **Mystery** of the **Hypostatic Union**, remains weak and under a thick cloud. In man, soul and body, **which are our** two elements, are united to make one nature, whereas in Christ two **Natures** are united in one **Person**.

Since one accepts this **Mystery** in good faith and **with** piety, then one will understand that it is beyond any word **of explanation although** it does not contradict logic. Thus:

a) The unchangeability of the **Deity** is preserved untouched **by** this **Union**. For the Word of God does not lose anything nor **does it add anything to it in order** to become more perfect. The Word became **Man** "...*without changing the Nature of His Deity into the Essence of the Flesh, nor [did] the Essence of His Flesh change into the Nature of the Divinity.*"<sup>135</sup> According to the observation of St Augustine, the Word was not changed through the taking up of man's nature, as members of a body do not change when they are vested with cloths, although **the human Nature that** was taken up was **United indescribably** with **His Divine Nature**.<sup>136</sup>

b) **The Incarnation** is **not** contrary to God's simplicity, for the human **Nature** does not enter into the **Divine Nature** as something **that** completes it but **conversely** the human **Nature**, not having with this **Union** its own Hypostasis, is completed by the **Personality** of the Word, **which** becomes *en-hypostasis* in Christ. The phrase used by the **Holy Fathers**, "...*one Hypostasis of the Son of God synthetic...*" or "...*of Christ...*"<sup>137</sup> must not be understood **as being** that the Word became synthetic of two parts. The **Divine Nature** of the Word by nature is simple and non-synthetic. It must be understood that the simple **Person** and the non-synthetic **Hypostasis** of the Word unite two **Natures** and only in relation to the two **Natures** is a **Hypostasis** synthetic. In other words the **Hypostasis** and the **Person** of the Word born from all **Eternity** from the Father is not the result of the **Unity** of the two **natures** but pre-exists from all **Eternity** and in time unchangeably took up human **Nature**.

c) From the human **aspect** there was no obstacle **preventing** the realisation of this **Supernatural Union**. **Certainly** the human **Nature** as mortal, is **greatly distanced** from the **Divine Nature**. **Although** this distance is humanly impassable and impenetrable, the **Infinite God** when He **wants, can** bridge this chasm in such a way

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<sup>134</sup> Leon, the Great, *Sermo XXIX*, 1, in migne, *P.L.*, 54, 226.

<sup>135</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the two natures, against Monophysites*, III, 47, 2, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 988.

<sup>136</sup> St. Augustine, *Lib. de diversis quaest*, 83 and 73, in migne, *P.L.*, 40, 85.

<sup>137</sup> St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the two natures, against Monophysites*, III, 47, 3 and 4, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 993. *Ibid, Exposition. About the way of the antidosis*, III, 48, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 997.

that the spiritual nature of man has the possibility of being united with Him. Man was formed by God in His **I**mage and his soul is spirit created by the Spirit of God. The **U**nion of the two **N**atures in Christ **was accomplished** “...by the soul which stands between the *Deity* and the *Flesh*.” The fact that human nature, when it was taken up by the Word and Son of God, was deprived individually from its own hypostasis and became en-hypostasis in the **P**erson of the Word, **is not deprived of** anything from **its** fullness **or** wholeness. On the contrary, through the **u**nion with the Word, it became a more perfect individual **P**erson, taking up all human nature and **consequently** presented the perfect **M**an **W**ho was made according to **H**is Creator **W**ho formed **H**im.