

JESUS, SON OF MAN

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? " (Matthew 22:41-45).

How could the Messiah be both the Lord and the Son of David? If He is the Lord, then He is the Son of God, but if He is the Son of David, then He is the Son of Man. Within the pages of Holy Writ, Jesus is referred to both as the "Son of God" and as the "Son of Man." The term "Son of God" refers to His deity or divine nature, while the term "Son of Man" refers to His humanity.

Uniquely, John begins his gospel record establishing the deity and humanity of Jesus. In chapter 1, verse 1, John records, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is a clear reference to the divine nature of Jesus. However in verse 14 of the same chapter, he makes a clear reference to His human nature, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Jesus was all God and all human simultaneously. As a man and woman produce a child, the child has some of his father's traits and some of his mother's. These traits make a unique, distinct, single individual. So it is with Jesus. As the Son of God, He has the divine traits of His Father, and as the Son of Man, He has the human traits of His mother. Together, these traits make an unique, distinct, single individual — Jesus, the Christ who is fully God and fully man. Paul affirms He was fully God, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). And Paul also affirms He was fully human, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

JESUS BECAME FLESH

Though Jesus was with God and was God (John 1:1), He became flesh and dwelt among men (John 1:14). One of the marvelous parallel passages that speak of Jesus becoming flesh is Philippians 2:6-8. Here Paul wrote,

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the

likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

"Who, being in the form of God" is present tense. Jesus did not cease being deity when He became flesh. He has the nature or essence of God. However, He "emptied Himself." Emptied Himself of what? His divine nature? No! He voluntarily emptied Himself of the glory He had with the Father in eternity, and in contrast to being in the form of God, He took on the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.

Jesus personally attested to His humanity. Jesus used the term "Son of Man" almost exclusively when speaking of Himself. Each time He used the Koine Greek term "anthropos" which means He was the Son of Mankind. He did not use the term "aneer" which means an adult male because this term would mean He was the Son of a specific man — Joseph. The Old Testament prophet Ezekiel was also addressed by God ninety-three times as the "son of man." This served to identify the prophet as a fellow sufferer with captive Israel. Ezekiel was to feel their sorrow, suffering, and grief (Ezekiel 4:1-8). When Jesus used the same term to identify Himself, He is wanting mankind to understand the same lesson as Ezekiel's peers were to understand. Thus, Jesus is "touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15), and has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4).

Others also attested to the humanity of Jesus. John the baptizer said of Jesus, "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me" (John 1:30). On the day of Pentecost, Peter said, "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs..." (Acts 2:22). Paul wrote, "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" (Romans 5:15). Finally, John, the apostle, wrote, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (1 John 4:2).

JESUS LIVED IN THE FLESH

Since men are creatures of time and place, then by becoming flesh, Jesus took on Himself these same characteristics. As the Son of Man, Jesus became a creature of time. He rose from sleep in the morning (Mark 1:35). He preached, performed miracles, and journeyed through the day. He fed the multitude with five loaves and

two fishes in the evening (Matthew 14:15). And He prayed and taught at night (Luke 6:12; John 3:2). Also, as the Son of Man, Jesus became a creature of place. He was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1). He lived in Nazareth (Matthew 2:23). He labored in Galilee (Matthew 4:23). He journeyed in Samaria (John 4:4). And He died in Jerusalem (John 12:12).

Furthermore, as the Son of Man, Jesus had the same emotions, frailties, and limitations as all humans.

- He became hungry (Matthew 4:2).
- He became weary (John 4:6).
- He became thirsty (John 19:28).
- He sorrowed (Matthew 26:38).
- He wept (John 11:35).
- He had a troubled soul (John 12:27).
- He was moved with compassion (Matthew 9:36).
- He became angry (Mark 3:5).
- He showed affection (John 21:20).
- He loved (John 11:3).

Though His mother was a virgin, yet like all humans, He experienced the natural birth process (Matthew 1:23). "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Galatians 4:4).

Jesus also had a normal human upbringing. Luke records, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). He "increased in wisdom" means He grew mentally. "Stature" refers to Him growing physically. Jesus also grew in favor with God, that is, He grew spiritually. And He grew in favor with man which means He grew socially.

Finally, like all humans, Jesus was tempted. The Hebrew letter says, he "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). How can this be? James says "God cannot be tempted with evil" (James 1:13). Since Jesus was tempted, then He must be man. If Jesus had only the human traits of His mother, He would have given in to temptations, but since He learned obedience from His Father, He did not succumb to temptation. He was without sin!

- 2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
- 1 Peter 2:22 "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
- 1 John 3:5 "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin."

JESUS OFFERED HIS FLESH

The letter to the Hebrews states, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the

body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). Also from the letter to the Hebrews, we learn Jesus was not of the nature of angels but was of the seed of Abraham (Hebrews 2:14-16). In fact, He was "made a little lower than the angels." Why? "For the suffering of death" . . . that He "should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). Thus, as our High Priest, He offered the perfect sacrifice for sins.

Also, as our High Priest, He makes intercessions and mediates for us. Jesus ever liveth to make intercessions for those who come unto God by Him (Hebrews 7:25). An intercessor is one who pleads with a person, either for or against another. Thus, Jesus pleads with God for His brethren. Furthermore, Paul states, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). A mediator is "one who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or form a compact, or for ratifying a covenant." Jesus mediates between God and man that we might be reconciled back to God. As the Son of God who is without sin, He is able to go before the Father, and as the Son of Man, He understands our weaknesses and frailties. Therefore, He is the only one who is truly qualified to intercede and mediate for mankind.

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession" (Hebrews 4:14). Thus, to encourage us as Christians, the writer of Hebrews made several contrasts between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Jesus. Let's notice a few:

- The Levitical priests were active for a short time and then died, whereas Jesus continues forever and has an unchanging priesthood (7:23-24).
- The Levitical priests entered a shadow of the Most Holy Place once a year, whereas Jesus entered the perfect tabernacle once and forever sits at the right hand of God (8:1; 9:11,12,25; 10:12).
- The Levitical priests continually offered sacrifices, whereas Jesus offered sacrifice once (10:1,10-12).
- The Levitical priests offers sacrifice first for their own sins and then for the people, whereas Jesus was sinless and only offered a single sacrifice for the sins of the people (7:27; 9:28).
- The sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood could never take away sins, whereas Jesus made one sacrifice for sins forever (7:11; 10:11,12).

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is

the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1).

Conclusion

When Jesus went back to heaven, He did not cast off His humanity. Not only is Jesus the Son of God, He is still the Son of Man. As the Son of Man, God has ordained Him to judge the world in righteousness. To the Athenians, Paul said,

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30,31).

Also, as the Son of Man, "the man Christ Jesus" continues to mediate for us (1 Timothy 2:5). In fact, He is the only mediator though some men may claim otherwise. Jesus Himself said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). There is salvation in no other! "...There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12)! If we reject Jesus, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:26)!

Can we help but marvel at the love of the Savior who willfully became flesh to make the ultimate sacrifice for sin that we might live through Him? "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matthew 13:54-55). Do you believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh and is the Son of the living God? Then, repent of your sins (Acts 17:30), confess the Son of Man before men, and He will confess you before the angels of God (Luke 12:8), be baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27) wherein is salvation (2 Timothy 2:10), and God will add you to His church (Acts 2:47). Jesus said, "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" Do you need a Savior? Jesus, is the Savior of the world for the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins! (Matthew 9:6). ■

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International Bible Studies
Tract Series