

THE DIVINITY OF JESUS

Jesus is the Messiah, God Incarnate. This truth, revealed by the Books of the New Testament, is the basis of our faith. Yet, we still find some people, all along the centuries, who seek to destroy this doctrine, by basing themselves on the Gospels. The "Nicolaitans" (Revelation 2,6), "Arius" of the IIIrd century AD, and "Jehovah's Witnesses" are of this number. The principal verses on which they rely on to negate Christ's Divinity, are the following:

1. John 14,28: "For the Father is greater than I", says Jesus: He is not therefore God, since he is inferior to him.
2. Acts 2,22: "Jesus... this **man**..."
3. Romans 5,15: "... that divine grace, coming through the one **man**..."
4. 1 Timothy 2,5: "... there is only one mediator... a **man**, Christ Jesus.

They conclude by these verses, that the Christ is a man, thus not God.

1. Answer to the first point

John commences his Gospel as so:

"In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. . . The Word was made flesh, he lived among us. . ." (John 1,1-14).

The Word of God, Jesus, by his incarnation, lowers himself to man's level by taking on a human body. This human condition is inferior to the divine nature, but does not cancel it. Jesus is therefore man and God. He is God incarnate. Jesus is therefore right to say that the Father, as the Eternal Spirit, is much greater than Him as a created earthly body.

This is what Paul explains to us, in his letter to the Philippians 2,6-11:

"His **state was divine**, yet he did not cling to **his equality with God** but emptied Himself to assume the condition of a slave, and become as men are; and being **as all men are**, he was humbler yet, even to (*to God's plan*) accepting death, death on a cross! But God raised Him high and given Him the **Name (divine) which is above all other names**, so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld **should bend the knee** at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as **Lord**, to the glory of God the Father."

2. Answer to the other points

Jesus is really **man**. But this doesn't mean that He is not God who takes "the condition of a slave to behave as a man", as Paul says in the preceding text. Jesus is both God **and man**. His divinity is evident in several evangelical texts:

1. He is the Word of God incarnate, as John reveals (John 1,1-14).
2. Jesus says that He existed even before Abraham (John 8,56-59). His glory was by God's side "before the world ever existed" (John 17,5).
3. The Jews understood that Jesus would present Himself as God's **equal** and will not deny it (John 5,18 & 10,33).

4. To Philip who asked Him: "Show us the Father", Jesus answers: "Who saw Me saw the Father! How can you show us the Father?" (Jean 14,8-9).
5. Thomas recognizes Jesus' divinity after His Resurrection and tells Him: "My Lord **and my God**" (John 20,27-29).
6. "... the Christ is above all, God blessed eternally" (Romans 9,5).
7. "...In Him (*Jesus*), in bodily form, lives divinity in all its **fullness**" (Colossians 2,6-9).
8. "God made the centuries by Jesus" (Hebrews 1,2) "... Jesus is far above the angels" (Hebrews 1,4) ... "When God brings the Firstborn into the world, He says: Let all the angels of God worship Him" (Hebrews 1,6). This contradicts the Jehovah's Witnesses, who claim that Jesus is the incarnation of the Archangel Michael, since "Jesus is far above the angels" who, moreover, should "worship him".
9. St. Paul also says: Jesus' dignity is greater than that of Moses'. It is as much as the "difference between the honor given to the man that built the house and to the house itself... but God built everything that exists..." Jesus is therefore the "Constructor" of Moses and of the whole Universe (Hebrews 3,3-4), and the Constructor is none other but God.
10. "While we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus." (Titus 2,13).

3. The Messiah's Divinity in the Old Testament

1. The necessity for the coming of God Himself on earth was strongly felt by the prophet Isaiah in the VIIIth century BC. Thirsty for this coming, he exclaims:

"Oh, that You would tear the heavens open and come down!" (Isaiah 63,19).

The names attributed to the Messiah by Isaiah reveal His divinity: "Eternal Father" and "Mighty God" (Isaiah 9,5).
2. The prophet Ezekiel saw the Messiah in the appearance of a **human being** who had the aspect of God's glory (Ezekiel 1,26-28).
3. The prophet Micah in the VIIIth century BC., reveals that the days of the awaited Messiah goes back to the day of Eternity (Micah 5,1).