The Virgin Mary, *Theotokos*, and Christ, true God and true man. The mystery of Incarnation according to Cyril of Alexandria
La Virgen María, *Theotokos*, y Cristo, verdadero Dios y verdadero Hombre. El misterio de la Encarnación según Cirilo de Alejandría

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Abstract: The 5th century controversy of Bishop Nestorius of Constantinople and Bishop Cyril of Alexandria centred on the Person of Jesus Christ: To what extent is Jesus human? To what extent divine? And to what extent and how are His humanity and divinity united? Christ has two natures. Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine. If Jesus was only human, Cyril urged, and God was elsewhere, the Incarnation, the Word became flesh (human indeed), would be meaningless. On the other hand Nestorius refused that Jesus is a God too, when he questioned the use of *Theotokos* (Θεοτόκος) in the veneration of Mary, the mother of Jesus. This led to a greater dispute about his Christology, specifically, his conception of the unity of the divine and human natures of Christ. In this controversy Cyril of Alexandria became his most outspoken opponent. Cyril underlined that Christ is human and God at the same time. He

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has two natures in the unity of person (*Hypostasis*). Cyril emphasized the unity of Christ and his divinity, he held that Christ "was at once God and man," and without "any mixture or blending." In this way he preserved the distinction between the two natures which became so important in the definition of Chalcedon. Cyril urged that Jesus Christ is at once God and man, and he is "in the likeness of men" since even though he is God he is "in the fashion of a man". He is God in an appearance like ours, and the Lord in the form of a slave.

Resumen: El polémica del siglo V entre el obispo Nestorio de Constantinopla y el obispo Cirilo de Alejandría se centró en la persona de Jesucristo: ¿Hasta qué punto Jesús es humano? ¿En qué medida es divino? ¿En qué medida y cómo su humanidad y su divinidad están unidas? Cristo tiene dos naturalezas. Jesucristo es a la vez plenamente humano y plenamente divino. Si Jesús fuese solo humano, argumentaba Cirilo, y Dios estaba en otro lugar, la Encarnación, la Palabra de Dios hecha carne (humana, en veerdad), carecería de sentido. Por otro lado, Nestorio negaba que Jesús es Dios también, cuando cuestionaba el uso del término *Theotokos* (Θεοτόκος) en la veneración de María, la madre de Jesús. Esto condujo a una discusión aún mayor sobre su cristología, específicamente, sobre su concepción de la unidad de las naturalezas divina y humana de Cristo. En esta controversia Cirilo de Alejandría llegó a ser su rival más abierto. Cirilo subrayaba que Cristo es hombre y Dios al mismo tiempo. Él tiene dos naturalezas en la unidad de la persona (*Hypostasis*). Cirilo enfatizaba la unidad de Cristo y su divinidad, sostenía que Cristo "era al mismo tiempo Dios y hombre", y sin "ninguna mezcla o fusión". De esta manera preservaba la distinción entre las dos naturalezas que adquirió tanta importancia en la definición del Concilio de Calcedonia. Cirilo insistía en que Cristo es a la vez Dios y hombre, y en que él es "semejante a los hombres", pues, a pesar de que es Dios, existe "en forma de hombre". Él es Dios en una apariencia como la nuestra, y es el Señor en la forma de un esclavo.

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I. Introduction. The christological controversy between Nestorius of Constantinople and Cyril of Alexandria

St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, glory of the Eastern Church and celebrated champion of the Virgin Mother of God, has always been held by the Church in the highest esteem. He was defined by Eulogios of Alexandria as "the guardian of the exactitude",[2] the guardian of the true faith. Anastasios Sinaitis called him as "the seal (*Sphragis*) of the Fathers".[3] These phrases describe the characteristic feature of Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria constant references to earlier ecclesiastical authors (including, in particular, Athanasius), for the purpose of showing the continuity with the tradition of theology itself. He deliberately, explicitly inserted himself in the Church's tradition, which he recognized as guaranteeing continuity with the Apostles and with Christ himself. Venerated as a Saint in both East and West, in 1882 St Cyril was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIII.[4]

In 428-430 Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria became embroiled with Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, who was preaching that Mary was not the Mother of God since Christ was Divine and not human, and consequently she should not have the word *Theotokos* (God-bearer) applied to her.[5] The bishop of Constantinople was an Antiochian in Christology.[6] He was influenced by

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[2] FOTIOS OF CONSTANTINOPLE, *Myriobiblos,* 230, PG 103, 1053.

[3] PG 89, 113. Abbreviations: PG: *Patrologia Graeca. Cursus Completus*, publ. J. P. MIGNE, Paris 1857-1912.

[4] See BENEDICT XVI, Pope of Catholic Church, *Catechesis − Saint Cyril of Alexandria*, *www.totus2us.com/…church/st-cyril-of-alexandria*

[5] SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *The Ecclesiastical History,* VII, 32: "…Mary was but a woman; and it is impossible that God should be born of a woman. These words created a great sensation, and troubled many both of the clergy and laity; they having been heretofore taught to acknowledge Christ as God, and by no means to separate his humanity from his divinity on account of the economy of incarnation, heeding the voice of the apostle when he said, 'Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh; yet now henceforth know we him no more' (Corinthians 5,16). And again, 'Wherefore, leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.' (Hebrews 6,1). While great offence was taken in the church, as we have said, at what was thus propounded, Nestorius, eager to establish Anastasius' proposition − for he did not wish to have the man who was esteemed by himself found guilty of blasphemy − delivered several public discourses on the subject, in which he assumed a controversial attitude, and totally rejected the epithet *Theotoxos*".

[6] "Antioch became a centre of Christian learning and the Antiochene school of theology, which flourished in the third and fourth centuries was particularly renowned. Unlike the

the teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia.[7] Quite early in his reign, he was called upon to give his opinion on the suitability of *Theotokos*[8] (the woman who gave birth to God) as a title of the Blessed Virgin and supported that it was of doubtful propriety unless *Anthropotokos* (the woman who gave birth to man), was added to balance it. He insisted that the title *Christotokos* (the one who gave birth to Christ) was more preferable as begging no questions. God did not take origin from a creaturely human being, and for this reason the

school of Alexandrian, which interpreted the Bible allegorically and in accordance with speculative philosophy, the Antiochene school expounded the Scriptures in conformity with their historical and literal meaning. The biblical commentaries composed by this school in the fourth and fifth centuries", Stylianos Papadopoulos, *Patrologia* II, Athens 1990, 566-574.

[7] Following the basic patristic principle that "what is not assumed is not redeemed," GREGOIRE OF NAZIANZUS (Epist 101, Ad Cledonium, PG 37, 181D-184A). Theodore of Mopsuestia, as theologians of the Antiochene school, emphasized the humanity of Jesus Christ, the Alexandrian his deity. Theodore of Mopsuestia held that Christ's human nature was complete but was conjoined with the Word by an external union. Theodore maintained against the Apollinarians that Christ had a real human soul, not that the Word took the place of the human soul. Only in this manner could the human soul be redeemed. Theodore's Christology exercised a more direct and eventful influence on the doctrine of his (mediate) disciple Nestorius. Theodore vehemently refused the use of the term *Theotokos*, long employed in ecclesiastical terminology, because Mary was strictly speaking *Anthropotokos*, and only indirectly *Theotokos*: "It is folly to say that God was born of the Virgin', he states. 'He was born of the Virgin who has the nature of the Virgin, not God the Logos. He was born of Mary who was of David's seed. It was not God the Logos who was born of woman but he who was formed in her by the power of the Holy Spirit. 'One can call Mary the *Mother of God*, or more accurately, *Theotokos*, in the metaphorical, non-literal sense of the phrase, just as one can call her the *Bearer of Man* − ἀνθρωποτόκος. She naturally bore a man, but God was in the man she bore, as he never had been in anyone before. It is perfectly clear that under 'unity of person' Theodore understood only the completeness of deified and grace-impregnated humanity. One must not conceive of perfect nature as being impersonal (ἀπρόσωπος) he supposed. Consequently, in so far as humanity was complete in Christ, he was a human being. Moreover, the nature of the Logos is not impersonal. But in the Incarnation the "unity of harmony" and the 'connection of honour' is established and in the sense of a certain new 'unity of person'." (THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA, *Fragments of De Incarnatione*, PG 66, 981BC). Georga FLOROVSKY, *The Byzantine Fathers of the Fifth Century,* Paris, 1978, p. 238. See Basilius STEFANIDES, *Ecclesiastical History*, Athens, 1959, p. 194 -210.

[8] "The disputed title *Theotokos* was widely accepted in the Alexandrian school; it followed from the *communicatio idiomatum*, and expressed the truth that, since His Person was constituted by the Word, the Inarnate was appropriately designated God." (John N. KELLY, *Early Christian Doctrines,* London 1968[4], p. 311).

word *Christotokos* would be better taking it all around. For supporting his theory, Nestorius urged on his congregation that Mary bore a mere man, the vehicle of divinity but not God.[9] He argued that in the case of the term *Theotokos*, he was not opposed to those who wanted to say it, unless it should advance to the confusion of natures in the manner of the madness of Apollinarius or Arius. Nonetheless, he had no doubt that the term *Theotokos* was inferior to the term *Christotokos*, as the latter was mentioned by the angels and the gospels.[10] Also he said that "the term *Christotokos* kept the assertion by both parties to the proper limits, because it both removed the blasphemy of Paul of Samosata, who had claimed that Christ the Lord of all was simply a human being, and also flees the wickedness of Arius and Apollinarius."[11]

The Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation, the manhood united by God the Son to His own self, was to Nestorius, Apollinarianism or heretic mixture. Nestorius said so. In his letter to Pope Celestine he told of the "corruption of orthodoxy among some" and thus described it:

> It is a sickness not small, but akin to the putrid sore of Apollinarius and Arius. For they mingle the Lord's union in man to a confusion of some sort of mixture, insomuch that even certain clerks among us, of whom some from lack of understanding, some from heretical guile of old time concealed within them are sick as heretics, and openly blaspheme God the Word Consubstantial with the Father, as though He had taken beginning of His Being of the Virgin mother of Christ, and had been built up with His Temple and buried with His flesh, and say that the flesh after the resurrection did not remain flesh but passed into the Nature of Godhead, and they refer the Godhead of the Only-Begotten to the beginning of the flesh which was connected with it, and they put it to death with the flesh, and blasphemously say that the flesh connected with Godhead passed into Godhead.[12]

Cyril reacted with a severe way. He underlined that Christ is God and Human at the same time. For Cyril, the Christological argument was mainly about soteriology, redemption and worship, and this was why Cyril reacted so strongly against Nestorius teaching. Cyril believed that Nestorius teaching epitomized in his attack on *Theotokos*, presupposed a merely external

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[9] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Adversus Nestorium,* I, A, ACO, t. 1, I, 6, 18: 27-40, 19: 1-43, 20: 1-5, 37: 9-42, 38: 1-43, 39: 1-38, 40: 1-12 (=PG 76, 25A-28D, 72A-77D, 120A-D).
[10] *III Epistula Nestorium ad Celestinem*, Loofs, Nestoriana, 181-182.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Concil. Eph*. P. i. c. 16.

association between an ordinary man and the Word. From this point of view the Incarnation was not a real fact. It was a simple illusion, a matter of "appearance" and "empty words".[13] If Christ's passion, sufferings and saving acts were not those of the Word incarnate but of a mere man, there was no redemption for mankind race.

At the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus in 431 and Cyril managed the Nestorius' teaching to be condemned as a dangerous heresy. This was the most important moment of Cyril's life. He had managed to defend the true faith against the Nestorian heresy successfully. He was known widely for saying, "as two pieces of wax when fused together make one, so too he who receives Holy Communion is so united with Christ, that Christ is in him and he is in Christ."[14]

II. The *prosopon* of God Word
II.1. *The Word has the same substance with the Father* [homoousion to patri]

Cyril urges that the incarnate Word had two natures, the divine nature and the human one: "He was in the likeness of men since even though he was God he was in the fashion of a man. He was God in an appearance like ours, and the Lord in the form of a slave."[15] The divine nature of Christ is not only the nature of the second Person of Holy Triune God but also it is the divine nature of the three Persons of God, God-Father, God-Word and God-Spirit. "The unity and the *homoousion* of the divine nature is underlined into the clause: God Father and God Son are one in nature."[16]

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[13] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Apologeticus pro XII capitibus contra Orientales*, PG 76, 324AB.

[14] "ὥσπερ γὰρ εἴ τις κηρὸν ἑτέρῳ συναναπλέξας κηρῷ, καὶ πυρὶ συγκατατήξας, ἕν τι τὸ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἐργάζεται, οὕτω διὰ τῆς μεταλήψεως τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τοῦ τιμίου αἵματος, αὐτὸς μὲν ἐν ἡμῖν, ἡμεῖς δὲ αὖ πάλιν ἐν αὐτῷ συνενούμεθα." (CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA*, Commentarii in Joannem*, X, 2), P.E. PUSEY, *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in D. Joannis evangelium*, Brussels 1965², vol. II, 542: 24-28 (=PG 74, 341D).

[15] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Quod unus sit Christus*, SC 97, 316^17-22 (=PG 75, 1261C)

[16] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate,* PG 75, 181D.

In Cyril's essay *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, it is emphasized that Jesus Christ is a true God. He is *homoousios* to the Father[17] and He exists eternal with the Father and He is born primordial (pro-eternal) by the eternal and unborn Father.[18] *Logos* created the invisible and visible world with God Father. A specific time He became truly human in the womb of *Theotokos*. The divine Word became true human with flesh and blood "not merely as willing or being pleased" ("*οὐ κατά θέλησιν μόνην ἤ εὐδοκίαν*").[19] On this point Cyril referred to Theodorus' of Mopsuestia teaching, which had been adopted by Nestorius. Cyril explained clearly that the only begotten Son, born according to nature of God the Father, came down, and was incarnated, he partook of flesh and blood like to us; he made our body his own, and came forth man from a woman, not casting off his existence as God, or his generation of God the Father, but even in taking to himself flesh remaining what he was.[20]

In *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, Cyril argues the *homoousion* between the Father and the Son with direct or indirect way. He declares that "*Logos* of God is Live and active"[21] and explains that *Logos* is Life because of His divine nature. If someone denies Word's pro-eternal birth by his Father, he makes a serious mistake because it is a wrong and unsound conclusion.[22]

Cyril underlines that the Son and Logos of the Father-God "is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power" [Greek: *apaugasma*].[23] In Cyril's *Thesaurus*, it is written that the Sun cannot be separated from its light and there was no

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[17] "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (Jn 1, 1-3).

[18] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, SC 97, 288[10-13] (=PG 75, 1248A)

[19] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. I1 ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 45C.

[20] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. I1 ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 45B.

[21] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, SC 97, 218[36-38] (= PG 75, 1208A). Hebr. 4,12.

[22] *Ibid.*, SC 97, 218 (= PG 75, 1208B).

[23] *Ibid.*, SC 97, 248 (= PG 75, 1225A). *Quod unus sit Christus*, SC 97, 314, 316 (= PG 75, 1261A). Cf. "The word "apaugasma" is derived from "Wisdom of Solomon", 7, 26. There it is written that: "For she (=wisdom) is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness". In Greek, the accurate meaning of the word "apaugasma" = brightness is difficult to be explained either as in active or passive meaning. Its active one is *brightness* and its passive is reflection". (Chr. VOULGARIS, *Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews,* (in greek), Athens, 1993, p. 109).

time that the Sun was without light, so there was no period of time that the Father-God was without the Son-God. The Son and the Father are two separate *hypostases* but They have common *physis*, nature, *ousia*. The latter referring to the reality common to all two and the former *hypostasis*.[24] The term "*apaugasma* of the Father"[25] –brightness of the Father– is used by Apostle Paul and Athanasius the Great. By this phrase "*apaugasma* of the Father", Cyril means that the divine Word is the divine brightness, the divine light of the "imaginary" Sun, the Father-God. If it is accepted that the God-Father is the Sun, the God-Son is the radiance of the glory of God and the divine light which comes from the Father. And as the light of the Sun cannot be subsequent the Sun, but the both of them are simultaneous; The Son of God is pro-eternal like his Father and *homoousios* to Him and he is born divinely primordially.[26]

The patriarchate of Alexandria underlines continuously that the common nature, the identity and the unity of the Son-God's divine *ousia* with his Father; The two Persons are easily defined by the properties of fatherhood and sonship. The Son is real God, because if the Father has truly begotten the Son, the Son must therefore have the same nature. By the simple fact of showing himself to be a Son, the Son reveals the Father in Himself, and vice versa.

> How is it possible for the Son not to be truly God, he who introduces, with himself, a knowledge of the Father, and who, in a inverse manner, is also introduced as Son thanks to the name of the Father? In effect, they must necessarily be in another, since this characteristic appertains to relative nouns.[27]

"Thus it is together that we understand who the Father is and who the Son is."[28]

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[24] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 12, PG 75, 184AB.

[25] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, SC 97, 248 (= PG 75, 1225B): "Τὸ δὲ ἀπαύγασμα τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ τῆς οὐσίας ὁ χαρακτήρ, ὁ φέρων τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ... ".

[26] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Quod unus sit Christus*, SC 97, 512, 514 & 394 (=PG 75, 1361B & 1352C).

[27] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 32, PG 75, 485B.

[28] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Commentarii in Joannem*, Pusey, vol. 2, 667-8.

The Son of God is naturally God, because He is born pro-eternally by the Father.God and He is truly human, because He is born in a specific time by Virgin Mary.[29] Cyril explains the *homoousion* between the Father-God and the Son-God by using not only the biblical words[30] such as, *the express image of His person*, the *perfect imprint, the Light-being, the out-raying or radiance of the divine*,[31] but also phrases of the predecessors Fathers[32] of the Orthodox Church, who likens the relationship of the Father and the Son with the relation of the speech and the mind, the river head and the river.[33]

As we see, Cyril insists on the *homoousion* between the Father-God the Son-God, he cannot bear that some people (=Arians and Nestorians) are foolish enough to bring down the Word and Only Begotten Son of God from his supreme station. They reduce Him from equality with God the Father by denying his consubstantiality and refusing to crown him with a perfect identity of nature.[34]

It is very important for Cyril to speak about the truly Godhead of the incarnate Word. It was a significant and critical matter in 4th century. Arius[35]

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[29] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, SC 97, 248 (= PG 75, 1225B). Cf. also CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 13, PG 75, 213C: "Ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς φύσιν ὑπάρχων, Υἱός ἐστιν ἀληθινός, ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ Θεός ἐστιν ἐκ Θεοῦ γεννηθείς".

[30] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 12, PG 75, 177C.

[31] Hebr. 1:3, Rom. 1: 23, 8: 29, Cor. I 11:7, 15: 49, Cor. II 3:18, 4:4.

[32] Cf. ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, *Contra Arianos,* 4, 27. 4,29. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS, *In sancta Lumina,* 12, PG 36, 348B. DIONYSIUS AREOPAGITIS, *Divinia Nomina*, 2,5 PG 3, 641D.

[33] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 12, PG 75, 181A.

[34] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Quod unus sit Christus*, SC 97, 306, PG 75, 1256C.

[35] Arius denied Christ's Godhead and supported that Christ was the first "thing" that God made. "Such is the genuine doctrine of Arius. Using Greek terms, it denies that the Son is of one essence, nature, or substance with God; He is not consubstantial (*homoousios*) with the Father, and therefore not like Him, or equal in dignity, or co-eternal, or within the real sphere of Deity. The Logos which St. John exalts is an attribute, Reason, belonging to the Divine nature, not a person distinct from another, and therefore is a Son merely in figure of speech. These consequences follow upon the principle which Arius maintains in his letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, that the Son 'is no part of the Ingenerate.' Hence the Arian sectaries who reasoned logically were styled Anomoeans: they said that the Son was 'unlike' the Father. And they defined God as simply the Unoriginate. They are also termed the Exucontians (*ex ouk onton*), because they held the creation of the Son to be out of nothing." (W. BARRY, "Arianism" *In The Catholic Encyclopedia.* Robert Appleton Company,

was one of heretics who had denied the divine nature of Christ. His teaching caused turmoil within the Church. Besides, if Christ has not been perfect God addition to perfect man, then it would be impossible for Christ to save from the sin and the death the human race. Moreover the incarnate Word was not a common Christ, because of his apostolic function, or because he was like prophets. He is the only Christ and Son, who is the Lord made man, the Only Begotten of God made flesh.[36]

II.2. *The unchangeable and eternal divine nature of the Word*

The *Logos* of God, as the second person of the Holy Trinity is characterised by Cyril "the Son of the Father by nature and for us *Logos*",[37] "the God Word from God".[38] Also, Cyril teaches that the existence of the Son is over the time, over the ages.[39] The Father is pro eternal and the Son is *homoousios*[40] to Him; consequently, the Son has unchangeable and eternal divine nature.[41] In order Cyril to substantiate the existence of the Word's eternal nature, uses the phrase from the David's psalm: "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."[42] The word *today* doesn't have the meaning of a specific moment of the time, because for God everything is in an eternal present, "in all centuries".[43]

The eternal and the unchangeable of the divine nature of the God is documented in another passage of David's Psalm:

New York, (1907). Retrieved June 16, 2012 from New Advent: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01707c.htm. Cf. St. PAPADOPOULOS, *Patrologia* II, Athens, 1990, pp. 114-115.

[36] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Quod unus sit Christus*, SC 97, 342, PG 75, 1276B. Psalm 104:15. Hab. 3:13.

[37] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Libri quinque contra Nestorium*, PG 76, 20C.

[38] *Ibid.*, PG 76, 40B.

[39] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De recta Fidei*, PG 76, 134C.

[40] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, SC 97, 306 (=PG 75, 1256C). CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 10, PG 75, 140B.

[41] Cyril of Alexandria, *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, SC 97, 244 (=PG 75, 1221D).

[42] *Ibid.* Psalm 2:7. Heb. 1:5, 5:5. 2 Sam. 7:14**,** Acts 13:33**.**

[43] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De Incarnatione Unigeniti*, SC 97, 410 (=PG 75, 1309BC).

> They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.[44]

Besides the passage from this psalm, Cyril uses a lot of other biblical passages in order to prove with conclusive evidence the unaltered and the everlasting of the Son's divine being. He draws his arguments from Paul's words:[45] "Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever", David's,[46] prophets Baruch's[47] and Malachi's[48] and Luke's gospel,[49] so he manages to explain the "ἀϊδιότητα" of the God's Word.

III. Christ, the incarnate God's Word
III.1. *The mystery of the* **Logos'** *Incarnation*

As God the Son was eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. When man sinned and became guilty in front of God, man's sin marred on him the image of the Creator God. The Holy Spirit undigested from him. Death and decay came to the world and immediately the kingdom of Satan and sin began to exist. The above exposition also testifies to the soteriological necessity that, for Cyril, the Son of God must actually come to exist as man. No form of Adoptionism, which allows a merely moral union between the divine Son and

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[44] "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail". (Is. 51: 6). Psalm 102: 26-27, Heb. 1:11.

[45] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 13, PG 75, 212A. Heb. 13:8.

[46] "Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands.They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. But You *are* the same, And Your years will have no end. The children of Your servants will continue. And their descendants will be established before You." (CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 13, PG 75, 212AB). Psalm 102: 25-28

[47] "You sit enthroned for ever, while we are perishing for ever." (CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 13, PG 75, 212B). Baruch 3:3.

[48] "The Savior told 'No; I, Yahweh, do not change; and you have not ceased to be <u>children</u> of Jacob'." (CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 13, PG 75, 212B). Malachi 3:6.

[49] "See by my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have." (CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubtantiali Trinitate,* 13, PG 75, 212B). Lk 24:39.

the man Jesus, would suffice. Therefore, the Word should be born as a perfect man, *asporos*, remaining perfect God, in order to save the mankind from original sin and to reopen the doors of Paradise and of communication with God the Father.

The incarnation of the Word was the way for the whole human race's salvation. Of course God could have saved the human beings with thousand other ways.[50]

> The Only Begotten did not become man only to remain in the limits of the emptying. The point was that he who was God by nature should, in the act of self-emptying, assume everything that went along with it. This was how he would be revealed as ennobling the nature of man in himself by making {human nature} participate in his own sacred and divine honors.[51]

Only through the salvation in Jesus Christ, the rational creature could get rid of death and be worthy of the Kingdom of God, again. Thus with the incarnation of His Only begotten Son of God, the man transformed. But the restoration of man and the compromise of the world with God was impossible to conduct with the death of a common man. The incarnation and death of the Son of God would become the real bridge between man and God.

If the coming of the Lord in the flesh did not take place, the Redeemer did not pay Death the price for us, and did not by Himself destroy the reign of Death. For if that which is subject to Death were one thing and that which was assumed by the Lord were another, then neither would Death have stopped doing his own works, nor would the suffering of the God-bearing flesh have become gain for us. He would not have destroyed sin in the flesh; we who had been dying in Adam would not have been made alive in Christ, that which had fallen apart would not have been repaired; that which was shattered would not have been restored; that which had been alienated from God by the deceit of the serpent would not have been made God's own again.

The Incarnation is the descent of the eternal Word of God into human conditions and limitations in order radically to alter and restore them, without annihilating them. God remains God and his manhood is manhood still, but

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[50] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Quod unus sit Christus*, SC 97 434 [21](=PG75, 1321C).
[51] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

now charged with divine power and capable of restoring to fullness of life the believer who shares in it sacramentally. So "*the Word was made Flesh*", "*The Word was made* Man." And in thus speaking seeing that the Divine Scripture overtimes calls the whole creature by the name of flesh alone, as in the prophet Joel: *I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh.* But comprehending the whole by the part, evangelist John names man from the flesh: for thus it was right and not otherwise. Man is a creature rational, but composite, of soul that is and of this perishable and earthly flesh. And when it had been made by God, and was brought into being, not having of its own nature incorruption and imperishableness –for these things appertain essentially to God Alone–, it was sealed with the spirit of life, by participation with the Divinity gaining the good that is above nature.

Cyril underlines in all of his essays that the divine Word had no need whatsoever to appear as man. Two conclusions thus followed inevitably about the incarnation:

> firstly that it was an entirely free act of divine power, a *Charis*, or gracious act, of God. Secondly, that it was not for God's benefit but mankind's. Thus the incarnation was a restorative act entirely designed for the ontological reconstruction of a human nature had fallen into existential decay as a result of its alienation from God.[52]

III.2. *Virgin Mary is* Theotokos *and not* Christotokos

In the time of St. Cyril of Alexandria the most important fact that caused many troubles to the Church was Nestorius of Constantinople's refusal to accept that Christ is real God –the eternal Son of God– and at the same time is real man (with body, soul and mind –νους). Nestorius' fear of confusing the two natures of Christ led him to be very reluctant to call Mary as *Theotokos*.[53]

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[52] J. A. MCGUCKIN, *St. Cyril of Alexandria. The Christological Controversy. Its History, theology and texts,* pub. Ej. Brill, New York, 1994, p. 184.
[53] "The term *Theotokos* – Θεοτόκος – does not mean the same as '*Mother of God*' in English or the common Latin translation. In English one must translate *Theotokos* as 'Bearer of God'- The correct Latin would be *deipara or dei genetrix*, not *Mater Dei*. Had Nestorius been more prudent he would have realized that the term *Theotokos* had a comparatively long usage – it had been used by Origen, by Alexander of Alexandria, by Eusebius of Caesarea, Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Cyril. In the Latin West Tertullian had used the term *Dei Mater* in *De patientia* 3, and Ambrose also used it in his *Hexaemeron* V, 65. (*Patrologia Latina*. 14, 248A). More significant is that the

He believed that Mary was a human being and God cannot be born of a human being.[54] Cyril denied the rejection of the term *Theotokos* for Virgin Mary and its replacement with the words *Christotokos* or *Anthropotokos*. Mary bore in a fleshly manner the Only-begotten Word of God made flesh (body and soul). The *Logos* was united with human nature hypostatically, and with his human nature (his flesh) is one Christ, Emmanuel, the same God and man.

The disallowance of the term *Theotokos* and its supersession only with *Christotokos* created problems with the salvation of human race. If Mary bore only human Christ, in an indirect way there was a denial that Christ was God too.[55] In this point Christ would be one more of the saint people of Israel.

Antiochene theologian Eustathius (bishop of Antioch from c.324 to 330), so often considered a forerunner of Nestorius, had some remarkably un-Antiochene tendencies in his Christology, one of which was the use of the term *Theotokos*. If there is a theological difference, however slight, between *Theotokos* and *Mother of God*, then there is certainly serious theological implications between *Theotokos* and the term favoured by Nestorius – Χριστοτόκος – *Christotokos*. But there is even a difference between *Theotokos* and *Mother of God*. Why would one want to stress the difference between *Theotokos* and Mother of God. Is it not becoming overly minute, insignificant, something that in reality is the same thing? But the fact is that there is a grammatical and conceptual difference between the two terms. If the Greek theologians had intended the diminished meaning of *Mother of God*, then they easily could have completely avoided Θεοτόκος by employing always the term μήτηρ θεού, a term readily at their disposal and one, which they did use at times. But the point is that for them there was a difference between Θεοτόκος and μητὴρ θεού. The term *Mother of God* has no specificity –by and of itself but within the thought world of Christian Trinitarianism it could grammatically and conceptually mean that the Blessed Virgin is the *Mother of God* the Father or of God the Holy Spirit. But the term *Theotokos* has specificity because of the "*tokos*" –by and of itself it can only refer to *Bearing God the Son*. The English term is too abrupt, not precise enough, and does not have the internal integrity that *Theotokos* has. Further, the English term has a tendency to bring into prominence the glory of Mary's motherhood, whereas the Greek term focuses attention on the Godhead of him who was born. And the Greek term *Theotokos* protects in and of itself the revealed fact that Christ was very God who became man and, in assuming manhood from the Virgin, lost nothing of the Godhead, which was his eternally. Conversely, the term *Theotokos* protects the revealed fact that he who was born of the *Theotokos* must have been man as well as God. The point of the term *Theotokos* is not as abstruse as many historians of Christian thought assume." (Fr. George FLOROVSKY, *The Byzantine Fathers of the Fifth Century*, trans. Raymond Miller, *et al.*, Vol. 8, in *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, Vaduz: Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1987, p. 223).

[54] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. I ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 41C.
[55] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Quod unus sit Christus,* PG 75, 1273A.

From this matter of view the incarnation became an illusion and the redemption of the human race was undermined, since Christ's sufferings were not those of the Word God incarnate but of one who was a mere man.[56] In the incarnation of the Son of God the most important role belonged to *Theotokos.*

Cyril used the term *Theotokos* for the Virgin Mary as the Great Athanasius, predecessor to the throne of Alexandria had done before: "Our father Athanasius of the church of Alexandria... called the Virgin Mary as *Theotokos.*"[57]

> A common man was not first born of the holy Virgin, and then the Word came down and entered into him, but the union being made in the womb itself, he is said to endure a birth after the flesh, ascribing to himself the birth of his own flesh.[58]

Because the two natures being brought together in a true union, there is of both one Christ and one Son; for the difference of the natures is not taken away by the union, but rather the divinity and the humanity make perfect for us the one Lord Jesus Christ by their ineffable and inexpressible union.[59]

By this presupposition, the term *Theotokos*[60] declared the hypostatic union of the godhead and the manhood in one person, Jesus Christ. Of course he claimed that the Virgin Mary should be called *Christotokos* only if this term was related to *Theotokos*, *Christotokos* and *Theotokos* at the same time. Cyril's letter to the Monks of Egypt emphasized the unity of Christ as divine and human as justification for *Theotokos.*[61]

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[56] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. I ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 236.

[57] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. ad Monachos Aegypti,* PG 77, 13BC. Prbl. ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, *Contra Arianos III,* PG 77, 349C, 385AB. ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, *Dialogus de Holy Trinity,* V, PG 28, 1272B..

[58] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. II ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 45C.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] From the time of Gregory of Nazianzus at least the bishops of the capital seem generally to have accepted the *Theotokos* without any doubt. The T*heotokos* was a powerfully evocative term which belonged to the "language of devotion". (BETHUNE-BAKER, *Nestorius and his Teaching,* pp. 56-59).

[61] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. ad Monachos Aegypti,* PG 77, 20D.

Cyril rejected Nestorius' accusation of not understanding the real meaning of the Incarnation according to the patristic teaching.[62] He stressed him that the Only begotten Word of God, was incarnate and made man,[63]

> That was, taking flesh of the holy Virgin, and having made it his own from the womb, he subjected himself to birth for us, and came forth man from a woman, without casting off that which he was; but although he assumed flesh and blood, he remained what he was, God in essence and in truth.[64]

He was a perfect man with body (*sarx*) and soul (*nous*) and was born by the Virgin Mary. So it was obvious that the holy Virgin Mary didn't give birth of a common man in whom the Word of God dwelt,[65] lest Christ be thought of as a God-bearing man, for all of this the holy Virgin should be called Theotokos.

At last, when Cyril had managed to refute Nestorius' teaching through his letters and theological works, he underlined that in Christ his two natures were united hypostatically. And since the holy Virgin brought forth corporally God made one with flesh according to for this reason the Virgin Mary should be called *Theotokos*, not as if the nature of the Word had the beginning of its existence from the flesh. Cyril required Nestorius to accept the 12 Anathemas, proposed by Cyril and accepted by the Council of Ephesus. The first of them was: "If anyone does not confess that Emmanuel is God in truth, and therefore that the holy virgin is *Theotokos* (for she bore in a fleshly way the Word of God become flesh), let him be anathema."[66]

The fact that Cyril put as the first anathema the acceptance of the title *Theotokos*, it showed clearly that the term *Theotokos* was very significant on the teaching of Christology. The rejection of the term put on a danger the teaching or the hypostatic-natural union of the two natures in Christ. If there was not a hypostatic union of the Godhead and the manhood in Christ, the redemption of the human race from the shackles of death and sin would be impossible. Also the man could not come near to God again.

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[62] NESTORIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE, *Epist.* II *ad Cyrillum,* PG 77, 49B-57B.

[63] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. III ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 109C.

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. III ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 112A.

[66] *Ibid,* PG 77, 120C.

III.3. *Jesus Christ, one person with two natures* (Physeis). *Real God and Real Man at the same time*

Christ is *Theanthropos*, God incarnate. The term is a word-key to the understanding the mystery of the Incarnation, the unity of the created and uncreated. Just as God and man at the same time, Jesus could to succeed the humankind reconnection with God and thus create the New Creation and the new man. Christ showed to human being such a man that had to be done. Christ managed the ultimate purpose of humanity, deification to be carried out and led man within the Holy Trinity. "The incarnation gives man the possibility of the objective salvation. It is the foundation of our belief.[67] After all, this desire is none other than the revival of the goods characteristics of the primitive situation with, more fundamental, the communion of God's actions and the recruitment of holiness, thereby making salvation.

Patriarch of Alexandria, Cyril, notes that Christ, the incarnate God, intersects and at the same time unifies the history. He shows the new man in His own flesh. The intimate union of the two realities as a salvific act or life-giving transaction. The power of the one heals and transforms the fallibility of the other. The fragile passivity of the other makes possible a revelation of the incomprehensible power of the one in a suitably *fragile* and approachable medium for other fallible and fragile human beings.[68]

Christ, as far as the nature of divinity, is invisible, but He is visible, with the divine glory, "when He became man."[69] After the incarnation, God remained, consubstantial with the Father. However, he was, at the same time perfect man, consubstantial with other people, but not to sin "...Immaculate Emmanuel... without knowing quite a sin."[70] The sinlessness of the Incarnate Word is not morally but highly physical and ontological. Rightly, then, He is

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[67] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Commentarii in Joannem,,* 4, 2', Pusey, vol. I, p. 535[2-3] (=PG 73, 584B).

[68] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Commentarii in Joannem* 11, 11 Pusey, vol. II, p. 733[20-21] (=PG 74, 557AB). CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate* 18, PG 68, 1089B.

[69] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Contra Julianum imperatorem,* 10, PG 76, 1016A.

[70] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate* 15, PG 68, 953B. Cyril of Alexandria, *Contra Nestorium,* 3, 2, ACO, vol. 1, 1, 6, p. 59[22-24] (=PG 76, 128A).

called messiah because it is the mediator between God and men to discover the will of the First and the salvation of the last.[71]

Christ would not be true and "perfect" God and "perfect" man at the same time, he would be a mere tool of the Deity, a God-bearing man. He underlined with passion that Christ was not a God-clad man, nor did the Word of God merely dwell in a man, but rather that He was made Flesh, or Perfect Man, according to the Scriptures.[72] Cyril made use of the words "Christ" and "Son" on purpose, in order to make obvious to Nestorius that the first one referred to the humanity of Jesus and the second expressed his deity as the Word of God. There was a real union of two natures, "hypostatic union". This term was introduced for the first time by Cyril's Christological teaching, in order to Nestorius' falsehoods.[73]

Cyril was fully conscious of the necessity of positing the union of incarnation at the level of person, not that of the nature. As in the Trinity there were not three natures and three persons –which would be tritheism– or one nature and one person in different three modes of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit –which would be modalistic monarchianism–, so in the incarnation there was one person, but two natures. The bishop of Alexandria tried to explain that neither the divine nature overwhelmed the human, nor the human and divine natures juxtaposed. The two natures found their union in the one divine *hypostasis* and yet maintained their distinction. In Cyril's words:

> The natures, however, which combined into this real union were different, but from the two together is on God the Son, without the diversity of the natures being destroyed by the union. For a union of two natures was made, and

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[71] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *De sancta Trinitate dialogi,* 1', SC 231, 405[26-30] (=PG 75, 693BC). *Commentarii in Joannem* 11, 11, Pusey, vol. III, σ. 5[1-7] (=PG 74, 565D).

[72] See a very similar expression in a little treatise of S. Athanasius on the Incarnation, quoted by S. Cyril, de recta fide to the Princesses Arcadia and Marina, p. 48 a c, and in S. Cyril's Defence of his eighth chapter against the strictures of the Eastern Bishops, p. 178 b and c. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, Scholia on the incarnation of the Only-Begotten. LFC 47, Oxford (1881) pp.185-236. A library of fathers of the holy Catholic church: anterior to the division of the East and West, vol. 47, p. 206-207.

[73] Andrew THEODOROU, *The Christological terminology and the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria and of Theodoret of Cyrus,* Athens, 1955, p. 81.

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> therefore we confess One Christ, One Son, One Lord... two natures, by an inseparable union, met together in him without confusion, and indivisibly.[74]

In Christ's person, there was a true union –hypostatic– of the two natures and this followed from the *Exchange of Properties* or *Communion of Idioms.* By this way someone could understand that Christ suffered and rose again; not as if God the Word suffered in his own nature stripes, or the piercing of the nails, or any other wounds, for the Divine nature is incapable of suffering, in as much as it is incorporeal, but since that which had become his own body suffered in this way, he is also said to suffer for us; for he who is in himself incapable of suffering was in a suffering body. In the same manner he himself had suffered death for people, not as if he had any experience of death in his own nature (for it would be madness for someone to say or think this), but because his flesh tasted death. In like manner his flesh being raised again, it is spoken of as his resurrection, not as if he had fallen into corruption (God forbid), but because his own body was raised again.[75]

The divine Word became true human with flesh and blood "not merely as willing or being pleased" ("*οὐ κατά θέλησιν μόνην ἤ εὐδοκίαν*").[76] On this point Cyril referred to Theodorus of Mopsuestia's teaching, which had been adopted by Nestorius. Cyril wrote that it would be "absurd and foolish", to say that the Word who existed before all ages, coeternal with the Father, needed any second beginning of existence as God.[77] Mary didn't give birth of a mere holy human, but She gave birth Christ, the one person of the incarnate deity. In Christ, there was a hypostatic union of Godhead and manhood. This meant that Godhead and manhood took place dynamically because there was only one individual subject presiding over the both, the person of Christ.

Cyril proposed the concept of hypostatic union to summarise his central objections to Nestorius' theories:

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[74] St. Luke, vol. 1, serm. 1,i cf. Scholia, 200. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. LV- In Sactum Symbolum,* PG 77, 304A. *Epist. XXXI (XXIX) ad Maximianum Constantinopolitanum Episcopum,* PG 77, 152AB. *Epist. XL (XXXV) ad Acacium Melitinae Episcopum,* PG 77, 200A. *Epist. XLVI (XXXIX) ad Succensum epistola I,* PG 77, 232A,C. *Epist. L (XLIV) ad Valerianum Iconiensem Episcopum. De Verbis Incarnatione exegesis,* PG 77, 260C.

[75] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. I1 ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 48B. Hebr. 2, 9.

[76] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. I1 ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 45C.

[77] *Ibid.*

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Rather do we claim that the Word in an unspeakable, inconceivable manner united to himself hypostatically flesh enlivened by a rational soul, and so became man and was called son of man, not by God's will alone or good pleasure, nor by the assumption of a person alone. Rather did two different natures come together to form a unity, and from both arose one Christ, one Son. It was not as though the distinctness of the natures was destroyed by the union, but divinity and humanity together made perfect for us one Lord and one Christ, together marvellously and mysteriously combining to form a unity. So he who existed and was begotten of the Father before all ages is also said to have been begotten according to the flesh of a woman... If, however, we reject the hypostatic union as being either impossible or too unlovely for the Word, we fall into the fallacy of speaking of two sons. We shall have to distinguish and speak both of the man as honoured with the title of son, and of the Word of God as by nature possessing the name and reality of sonship, each in his own way. We ought not, therefore, to split into two sons[78] the one Lord Jesus Christ.[79]

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[78] In this point, Cyril rejected Diodorus' of Tarsus teaching about the two Sons. Diodore claimed that the divinity must be compromised if the Word and the flesh formed a substantial (or hypostatic) unity analogous to that formed by body and (rational) soul in the man. In his reaction, his own theory led him into holding them (the divine and the human) apart and thus he was led to distinguish the Son of God and the Son of David. He said that the Holy Scriptures draws a sharp line of demarcations between the activities of the two Sons. Otherwise, why should those who blaspheme against the Son of Man receive forgiveness while those who blaspheme against the Spirit (the Holy Spirit) do not? Diodore of Tarsus that the Son of God is not the son of David; there are two sons. He depended on the teaching of Jesus Christ when He said, *"And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven" (Lk 12: 10).* Diodore said that blasphemy against the Son of Man is not considered blasphemy against the Son of God because Jesus said that blasphemy against the Son of Man will be forgiven, and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not. The Holy Spirit is God; the Lord Jesus Christ explained that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not forgiven because it is blasphemy against God. Since Jesus is not God, blasphemy against the son of man receives forgiveness. Through this trick, and cunning interpretation, he sub-graded, or subordinated the Son of God to the son of man. He said that they have a relationship together, or that they are linked to each other by some type of conjoining or indwelling. Blasphemy against the son of man is not against the Son of God. This distinction between the two sons is the core of the teaching of Diodore of Tarsus. Prbl. Vlassios FEIDAS, *Ecclesiastical History,* A', Athens, 1992, pp. 591-592. Vasileios STEFANIDIS, *Ecclesiastical History,* Athens, 1995, pp. 194,195. Andrew THEODOROU, *The Christological terminology and the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria and of Theodoret of Cyrus,* Athens, 1955, pp. 15-17.

[79] CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *Epist. I1 ad Nestorium,* PG 77, 48B. See also: *Cyril of Alexandria, Epist. III ad Nestorium*: "Rather we deprecate the term of 'conjunction' (*synapheia*) as not having sufficiently signified the oneness. But we do not call the Word of God the Father, the God nor the Lord of Christ, lest we openly cut in two the one Christ, the Son and

By the recruitment of human nature, body and logic soul, the Divine Word Incarnate put again the man to the realm of grace of the Holy Spirit. Thus the split between God and man is lifted and the possibility of deification and likeness to God is provided to man. After the union of two natures in Christ, they (natures) cannot exist such as "ἰδιοϋπόστατες" and divided, that do not exist separately, as special substances. Thus, the two natures of Christ, after the hypostatic union, do not exist as separate, independent and *afthypostates*, since the two natures status became the Word.

Hence the union of the Word with the human nature may be not unaptly compared with our condition. For as the body is of other nature than the soul, yet is one man produced and said to be of both; so too out of the Perfect Person of God the Word, and of manhood perfect in its own mode, is One Christ, the Same God and Man in the Same. And the Word, as Cyril says, makes its own the sufferings of Its own Flesh, because Its own is the Body and not another's: and It shares with Its own Flesh the operation of the God-befitting might that is within It; so that it should be able both to quicken the dead and to heal the sick.

The Divine Paul writes: "Though there be gods many and lords many in heaven and in earth, yet to us One God the Father of Whom all things and we of Him, and One Lord Jesus Christ through Whom all things and we through Him." Yea and the very wise John said of God the Word, that "All things were made through Him, and without Him was nothing made"; and the blessed Gabriel declared the Gospel to the Holy Virgin saying, "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and, bear a Son, and shalt call His Name Jesus".

Since then the Divine Paul declares that all things were made through Jesus Christ, and the Divine Evangelist confirms the force of the sentence and preaches that He was God the Maker of all things, speaking truly, and the Angel's voice too points out that Jesus Christ was truly born of the Holy Virgin: yet we do not say that Jesus Christ was mere man, nor do we conceive of God the Word apart from His human nature, but we say that He was made One out of both, as God made Man, the Same begotten Divinely out of the Father as Word, and humanly out of woman as Man: not as though called to a

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Lord, and fall under the charge of blasphemy, making him the God and Lord of himself. For the Word of God, as we have said already, was made hypostatically one in flesh, yet he is God of all and he rules all."

second beginning of being then when He is said to have been born after the flesh: but begotten indeed before all ages, yet when the time came wherein He must fulfil the economy, born also of a woman after the flesh.

Therefore, albeit others are called by like name christs, yet is there One Jesus Christ through Whom are all things, not that a man was made Maker of all things, but that God the Word, through Whom all things were made, like as we took part of flesh and blood, and was called Man, yet lost not what He was; for so, so made in flesh is He rightly understood to be Maker of all.

Once for all in the last ages is God the Word said to have been made Man, and (as Paul said) was *manifested by the Sacrifice of Himself*. And what is the Sacrifice? He offered His own Body for us for an odour of a sweet savour to God the Father, and *entered in once into the holy place not by the blood of goats and bulls, but by His own Blood,* for so to them who believe on Him *obtained the eternal redemption.* Therefore very many before Him were saints but no one of them was called Emmanuel. Why? For not yet had the time come, when He was to be with us, i.e., to come in our nature through flesh, Who is superior to every creature.

One therefore is Emmanuel, for once was the Only-Begotten made Man, when He underwent fleshly Birth through the holy Virgin. For it was said to Jesus too, *I will be with thee,* yet was he not Emmanuel; He was also with Moses, yet neither was he called Emmanuel. As often therefore as we hear the name, *With us is God,* given to the Son, let us wisely conceive that not so was He with us in the last times, as He is sometimes said to have been with the saints, for with them He was as a helper only: but with us He was, because He was made like us, not losing His own nature, for He is unchangeable as God.

IV. Conclusions

Through his essays Cyril explains Christ is God incarnate (*Theos sesarkomenos*). Christ isn't only a divine person and no the incarnate God. Cyril declared that Christ is at once God and Man, and the union is real and concrete event, or we might say "a substantive reality" not a cosmetic exercise.[80] Emmanuel

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[80]John A. MCGUCKIN, *St Cyril of Alexandria, the Christological Controversy. Its History, theology and texts,* pub. E.J. Brill, N. York, 1994, p. 212. In the Third Letter to Nestorius, Cyril talked of

(God and man) is only Jesus Christ and His Incarnation gave us again the eternal life. Only Christ can save the mankind and for the Incarnation, only one person, Virgin Mary, *Theotokos*, is responsible for this Fact.

The unity of Christ is a notion of interchange and transformation, in which God has inaugurated its purpose for transfiguration. Cyril's Christology is certainly a paradigm for the life of each and every contemporary Christian of today. We uphold in every Divine Liturgy the ideas of union expressed by St. Cyril when we hear the hymn of the *only begotten Son and Word of God.* The unity of the two natures of Christ is an example of the relationship we ought to embrace with God. Cyril's Christological thought shows that God is not just united with a human being, but with all humanity.[81] For this reason the unity of Christ is a reflection of the relationship which was always meant to exist between humanity and God. Cyril throughout this treatise is quite successful as he clears up the meaning of the two natures of Christ within a paradoxical union.

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the hypostatic union as a "natural union", by which he meant a radically concrete union "such as the soul of man has with its own body."

[81] 1 Tim 2:5.