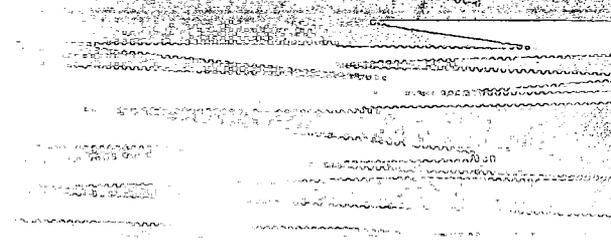
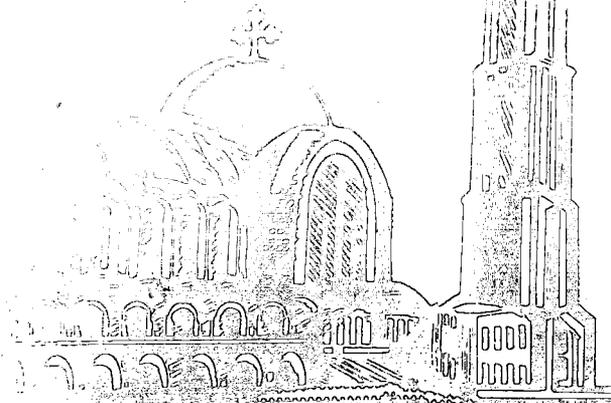


Man's deification!!

Part II

Partakers of the Divine Nature

H.H. Pope Shenouda III





See of St. Mark

Man's deification!!

Part II

Partakers of the Divine Nature

H.H. Pope Shenouda III

Name of the book : Deification of Man - Part II
(Partakers of the Divine Nature)

Author : H. H. Pope Shenouda III

Translated By : Dr. Wedad Abbas

Press : Egyptian Printing Co .

Edition : First –June, 2008

Legal Deposit No. : 10822/2008 .

I.S.B.N. : 977 – 17 – 5749- 0 .

E.Mail : elkeraza@Link.net

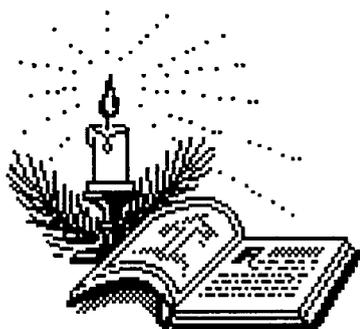
***H. H. Pope Shenouda III, 117th Pope and Patriarch of
Alexandria and the See of St. Mark***



*H. H. Pope Shenouda III, 117th Pope of Alexandria and
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark*

**"My brethren, let not many of you
become teachers, knowing that we shall
receive a stricter judgment. For we all
stumble in many things."**

(Jas 3: 1, 2)



[Remove away guilt by teaching]

Didascalía

The expression "Partakers of the Divine Nature"!!

**Was it God's will, since the time He created us, to
deify us?!**

Did the Lord Christ deify His human nature?!

**Do we partake of the Divine Nature through
adoption?!**

**Is the resurrection of the dead considered
partaking of the Divine Nature?!**

**Do we partake of the Divine Nature through the
Eucharist?!**

**Did God become Man so that man may become
god?!**

**Does the partaking of the Divinity appear in the
authority over the devils?!**

**Is holiness considered partaking of the Holy
Trinity?!**

**Is the hypostatic descending of the Holy Spirit
considered deification?!**

**Is grace considered partaking of the Divine
Nature?!**

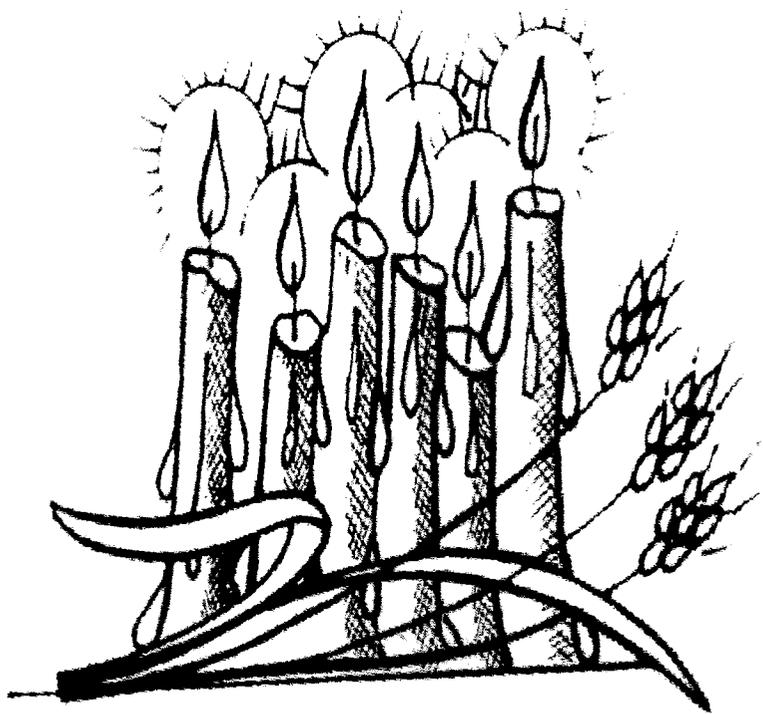
Introduction

In continuation of our previous book on "Man's Deification", we publish the present book on the same topic under the title "Partaking of the Divine Nature".

In this book we shall refute such a thought represented in a doctrine published by Dr. George Habib Bebawi in his book "St. Athanasius the Apostolic", as well as in another book by some monks of Amba Makkar (St. Macarius) Monastery under the name "The Orthodox Patristic Principles – Part 2".

Both are two branches of one school that translated the words of St. Peter the Apostle "Partakers of the Divine Nature" (2 Pet 1: 4) to mean taking the same Divine Nature, not merely acting and willing in conformity with the Divine Nature, for instance.





(1) The expression "Partakers of the Divine Nature"

Dr. George Habib Bebawi, in his book on "St. Athanasius", mentions this phrase in the titles of Chapters 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, and in the passage on "Partaking of the Eucharist", P. 214, with the details related thereto.

In P. 214, he says, "The fact of our partaking of the Divinity (!) is due to our receiving the heavenly Sacrament giving the eternal life."

In P. 138, he says, "... that we may be able to partake of the Divinity of the Word"!! How bold are the words!!

In P. 159, he says, "The connection between the Word Incarnate and those whose nature He has partaken that they may partake of His Divinity ..."!!

In his book on "Orthodox Patristic Principles – Part 2", the author mentions the phrase "Partaking of the Divine Nature" in Pages 11, 12, 35, and 45. And, in P. 10, he mentions "Our partaking of God", and "Our partaking of the nature of the Trinity". Again, in P. 11, he speaks about "the grace of deification in Christ" and in P. 12 about "partaking of the nature of the Godhead".

We cannot accept to partake of God's Nature and Divinity, whatever justification they may present by meanings and quotations.

I wonder what can they say in this respect?!

(2) Was it God's will, since the time He created us, to deify us?!

They say that man's deification was the divine purpose from the very beginning, meaning that God intended from the beginning to deify man, but when man sinned that came to naught!!!

This thought is of course unacceptable for the following reasons:

1. Had it been God's purpose from the beginning to deify man, He would not have created him mortal; for God warned man not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, otherwise, he would die (Gen 2: 17). It means that man had a mortal nature, and he died in fact.
2. Had it been God's will from the beginning to deify man, He would have created him infallible, i.e., not apt to sin. But actually he was, and he did fall in sin.
3. Had it been God's will to deify man, He would not have created him of dust combined with a substance (the flesh), whereas God is Spirit (Jn 4: 24). He could then have created man like the angels, for they are spirits (Ps 104: 4). Even those who were created spirits, some of them sinned!

The words of the Liturgy of St. Gregory: "You have blessed my nature in You" are not to be taken as a pretext; for blessing the nature is one thing, and deifying it is another different thing. So, God has blessed our nature, but did not deify it.

(3) Did the Lord Christ deify His human nature?!

- So many are the phrases in the book of Dr. George Bebawi about deifying the human nature and the flesh! In P. 137, he says, "The rising of the body is deification of the human nature". And in P. 133, he says, "Christ deified His body after death," **"He deified the body and made it immortal."** Again in P. 134, he says, "The deification of the body of Christ means making it immortal." And in P. 214, he says, "... the human nature that has been deified through the union." He also declares that the ascension of Christ is deification of His human nature (P. 134).

But it is evident that the Lord Christ took a mortal body, and died.

- In his book "Orthodox Patristic Principles – Part 2", the author repeats the same idea about the deification of the body of the Lord Christ (P. 59 – 70), under many titles reading: "Deification of the human nature of the Lord Christ".
- We believe that the Divine Nature of the Lord Christ has united with His Human Nature without transformation, meaning that **neither the Divine Nature became a Human Nature, nor the Human Nature became a Divine Nature. If that had happened, one of the two natures would have vanished.** The Human Nature continued human, and was not transformed into a Divine Nature, but it became glorified. So, the Lord Christ arose by the power of His Divinity, and ascended unto heaven by the power of His Divinity, not because the human nature was

transformed into a Divine Nature!! The human nature was glorified and transfigured in the Resurrection and the Ascension.

- More serious still is that in proclaiming the deification of the body of Christ they say: "The body which the Lord took from the Theotokos is our body" (P. 22)!!

(4) Do we partake of the Divine Nature through adoption?!

In the book "Orthodox Patristic Principles – Part 2), P. 25, the authors says:

"It was Christ who said to the Father "Abba" (Mk 14: 36), how then could our relationship with Him be metaphorical or symbolic and we cry out with the same words? How could we speak things we do not own nor granted? But the True Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, being the Son of the Father, **"has taken what is ours and given us what belongs to Himself,"** which is the Praise Song and Doxology of the Church. "He gave us to partake of His Sonship".

Our answer to this is that there is an essential difference between Christ's Sonship to the Father and our sonship to the Father.

That is why the Lord Christ is called the Only-begotten Son (Jn 1: 18; 3: 16, 18) (1 Jn 4: 9): because He is the Only-begotten of the Father's essence and nature. We, on the other hand, are children through adoption, by grace; and great is the difference between adoption and sonship. We are children through faith, as the Scripture says, *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."* (Jn 1: 18)

We also are children by love, as the Apostle says, "*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!*" (1 Jn 3: 1) We have received the Spirit of adoption "*by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'*" (Rom 8: 15)

We are not like Him, and will never be. He gave us a different sonship to the Father. He is Son by nature, whereas we are children by adoption, and adoption can never bring us up into deification.

We can never be equal to the Son. We can only be "*conformed to the image of His Son.*" (Rom 8: 29) We are created, but He is eternal. The created can never be deified, and the sonship given us is external, outside our nature.

Again in the book entitled "Athanasius the Apostolic" by Dr. George Bebawi, P. 134, the following is stated:

"The partaking of the Divine Nature is the obtaining of the gift of adoption through the Son. To deny this means an express return to Judaism."

On our part we do not deny adoption, but rather believe in it. We only refuse to say that adoption is a sign of partaking of the divine nature, or in other words that we are deified by adoption.

Judaism also does not deny adoption at all.

We read about Adam that he is "the son of God" (Lk 3: 38), and the offspring of Seth and Enosh were called the sons of God as mentioned in the beginning of the story about the great

flood: *"The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful."* (Gen 6: 2)

God even did not take away the name "children" from those who disobeyed Him, for in the beginning of the prophecy of Isaiah He said, *"I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against Me."* (Isa 1: 2) Isaiah himself testified saying, *"But now, O Lord, You are our Father."* (Isa 64: 8)

Since sonship to God is known from the olden times, we cannot then say that denial of adoption is a return to Judaism. For St. Paul the Apostle says about the Jews, *"... who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law ..."* (Rom 9: 4)

There in no relationship at all between adoption and deification. We say to God, "O our Father", and at the same time we say to Him: we are Your servants and Your creation. But we never say we are gods!

On the Last Day the Lord will say to every wise and faithful steward of His stewards, *"Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord."* (Mt 25: 21) It is clear: although the steward is good and faithful, he is still a servant and his reward is to enter into the joy of his Lord, without himself becoming a lord or a god, i.e., without being deified.

Therefore, children, be humble. And for the salvation of your souls I say to you: Do not be deified. Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think (Rom 12: 3).

(5) Is the resurrection of the dead considered partaking of the Divine Nature

The resurrection of the Lord Christ is an evidence of His Divinity, because He alone arose by His own will and by His own power, not by the power of anyone else. All those who arose from the dead arose by an external power. Likewise, the resurrection on the Last Day will be by a miracle from God Himself. It is not at all an evidence of the deification of those who will be raised by the Lord.

- **However, Dr. George Bebawi is of the opinion that the resurrection is a partaking of the Godhead!!**

In his book on St. Athanasius, P. 216, Dr. George Bebawi says:

"Partaking of the Divine Nature means partaking of eternal life and incorruption. This is partaking of the Divine Nature, for it is partaking of Christ the Risen from the dead." He further says:

"It is partaking of the Godhead, for eternal life is the life of God Himself."

- **Almost the same expressions are included in the book "Orthodox Patristic Principles – Part 2":**

In P. 46, the author states:

"Eternal life is the life of God Himself, and our partaking of this life is partaking of God Himself according to the words of John the Apostle." And also in the same book: "Eternal life is the life of God Himself. And if this is not partaking of the nature of God, what can it be?"

These words mean that partaking of eternal life is partaking of the nature of God, that is, a kind of deification!!

Again in P. 58 of the same book we read: "... in order that man may be granted to continue in immortality through partaking of the Godhead"!!

- **Our answer to those who hold this view is that the life of God is of His very nature, but our life is a gift from God by His grace. Therefore we should not take the gift as an evidence of deification!!**

We say in the Holy Liturgy: [He granted us eternal life.] And it is evident that those who are granted eternal life were, before the resurrection, dead; and death certainly contradicts deification. Also the Lord Christ says, "*Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*" (Jn 6: 54) This eternal life then is a gift from God.

Furthermore, the righteous who rise from the dead will dwell with God in the heavenly Jerusalem "*The tabernacle of God with men*" (Rev 21: 3) Of course God will not dwell with gods! For after the resurrection they will continue as human beings (men) as they were on the earth.

- **In P. 137 of the same book, they say that the resurrection of Christ is deification of His human nature.**

This view is theologically unacceptable. The human nature will continue a human nature after the resurrection. The Lord Christ, after His resurrection, kept His name "The Son of Man", as Stephen the Deacon saw Him while he was stoned (Acts 7: 56), and as John the Beloved saw Him in the Revelation (Rev 1: 13). Moreover, the deification of the human nature means that it has vanished, which is against faith.

(6) Does the partaking of the Divinity appear in the authority over the devils?!

This is clear in the book of Dr. George Bebawi, P. 137, where he says:

"The partaking of the Divine Nature appears clear in man's authority over the devil, and in heaven in the life of incorruption."

We say that overcoming the devil is a gift from God (Mt 10: 1), not deification of man. It is clear from the Book of Revelation that Archangel Michael prevailed over the devil and cast him out to the earth (Rev 12: 7- 9). Can we take this as an evidence of the deification of Archangel Michael as well?!

Actually so many saints prevailed over the devils, and many had the gift of casting out devils; have all of them been deified?! Prevailing over the devil can be realized through humbleness, not by deification.

(7) Do we partake of the Divine Nature through the Eucharist?!

- Dr. George Bebawi, in his book "St. Athanasius" P. 214, under the title "Partaking of the Eucharist is partaking of the Divine Nature", says, "Our real partaking of the divinity is due to our obtaining the heavenly Sacrament giving eternal life."
- In P. 216, he further says, "Here the partaking of the Divine Nature attains its goal for man, that is obtaining the immortal divine heavenly mysteries."
- In his book "Orthodox Patristic Principles – Part 2" P. 24, the author says: "Wonderful! Behold, we drink the divinity, mystically of course, and we drink the life-giving blood according to the grace."

It is strange indeed! The divinity is not to be eaten or drunk. The divine mysteries in the Sacrament of the Eucharist are not given us that we may partake of the divinity, God forbid! They are given as "salvation, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life to whoever partakes of them", and also as "purity of our souls, our bodies, and our spirits" as we say in the Holy Liturgy.

If the partaker eats and drinks the divinity, no doubt the partaker has become a god, and ought not worship the Holy Sacraments but the people ought to worship him!

If they say that there is a union between the divine nature and the human nature, this does not mean that man eats the divinity! We have an example from the Scripture: "*The life of the flesh is in the blood.*" (Lev 17: 11, 14) Whoever eats or drinks the blood does not eat the life with it!!

(8) Did God become Man so that man may become god?!

If these words were taken literally, the purpose of the incarnation would be the deification of man!! But it is well known that God became a Man to redeem man, not to deify him. This is clearly evident in the book of St. Athanasius "The Incarnation of the Word" and in the words of the Apostle about the Father that He "*sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins,*" and also the words in the Gospel of St. John: "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*" (Jn 3: 16) The purpose then was the salvation of man and taking away the punishment of eternal perdition. Therefore, it is better to say that God became the Son of man so that man may become the son of God, and the main reason for incarnation continues to be the Redemption. It should also be understood that man's sonship to God is different from Christ's Sonship to God.

The union between

The Divine Nature

&

The Human Nature

Preface:

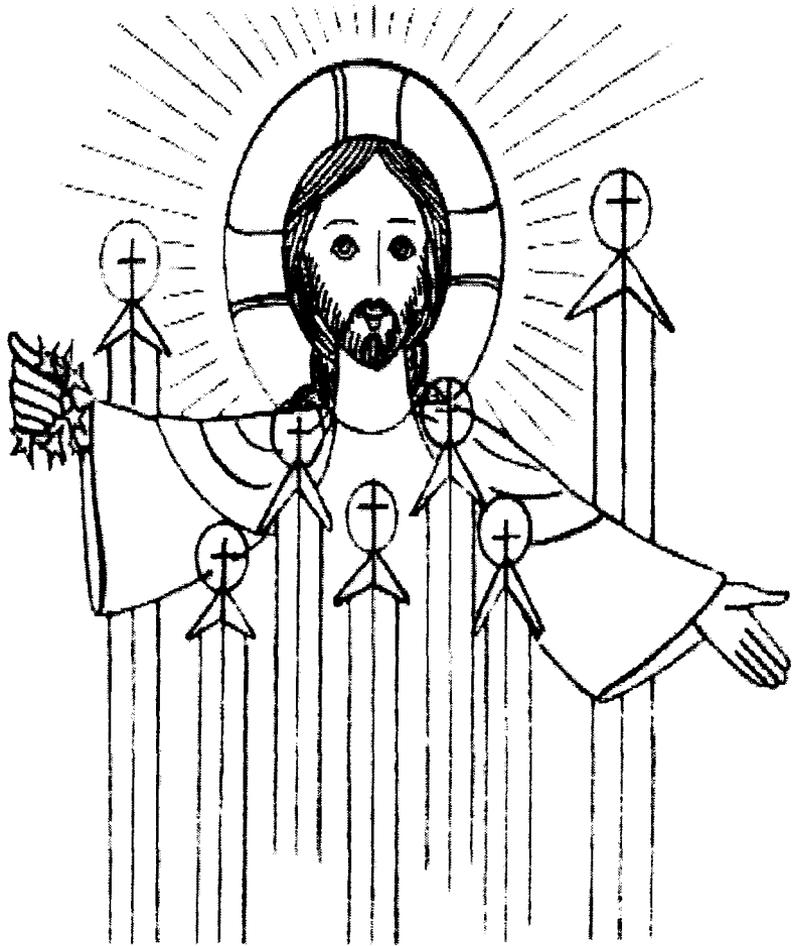
Some of those who proclaim deification of man (!!) do not understand properly the union between the Divine Nature and the Human Nature in the incarnation of the Lord Christ, glory to Him. Therefore I wrote this article to expound this fact to them, and also lest they be wise in their own sight.

We all believe in the union between the Divine Nature and the Human Nature, a union without separation for a single moment or a twinkling of an eye. We believe that this union is without mixing, blending, or change. What do the words "without change" mean? They mean that the Divine Nature was not changed or transformed into a Human Nature, but the Divine Nature maintained all its qualities and attributes, and the Human Nature likewise did not change or become a Divine Nature.

We shall give here various examples clarifying this point.

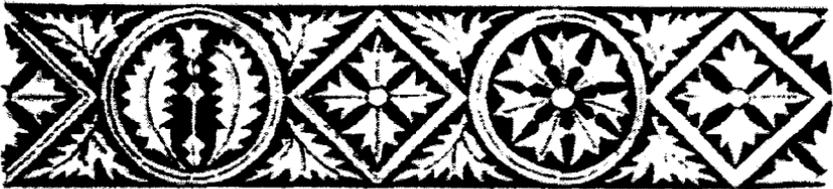
In spite of the unity between the Divine Nature and the Human Nature in the incarnation of the Lord Christ, we notice the following:

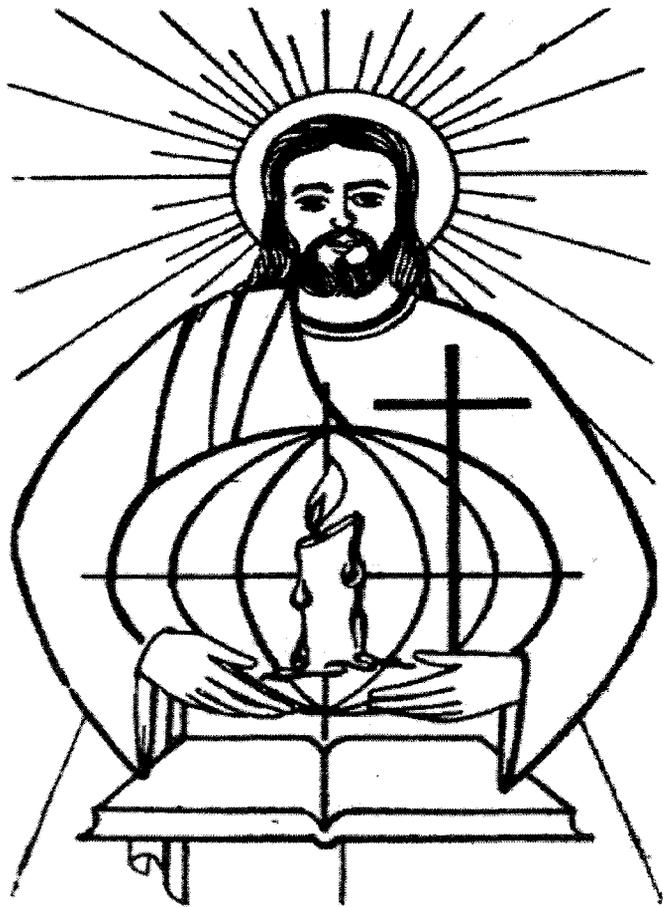
- **The Divinity does not grow or become stronger.**
- **The Divinity does not move from one place to another.**
- **The Divinity does not ascend unto heaven or descend unto the earth.**
- **The Divinity does not sleep or slumber.**
- **The Divinity does not get tired or suffer pain.**
- **The Divinity does not hunger or thirst.**
- **The Divinity does not die.**
- **The Divinity cannot be eaten or drunk.**



Introduction

In the union between the Divine Nature and the Human Nature in the Incarnation of the Lord Christ we notice that the union did not abolish at all the attributes of the divinity, but they continued. We nevertheless confess that the Divinity of the Lord Christ was not separated from His Humanity, not even for a single moment or a twinkling of an eye. This is the teaching of the Great Saint Cyril the Pillar of Faith.





(1) It is said that the Human Nature of Christ did grow

This is said about the Lord Christ in His childhood: *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."* (Lk 2: 52) It is also said, *"And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him."* (Lk 2: 40)

Yes, He grew in the body, that is, in the Human Nature, but it is impossible that the Divine Nature grows, because in Divinity He is in complete perfection, or absolute perfection, always.

The Divine Nature is united to the Human Nature without separation even for a single moment. However, the Human Nature grows but the Divine Nature does not grow, because the Divinity is characterized by not growing. But let not anyone in ignorance think that the difference between the Divine Nature and the Human Nature in this respect means a separation between both the two Natures!!

(2) It is said about the Lord Christ that He came to the world in the body and departed it in the body

The Lord Christ said to His disciples: *"I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."* (Jn 16: 28)

Of course the words *"I ... have come into the world"* are said about the Human Nature only, but as concerns the Divine Nature, we read that: *"He was in the world, and the world was made through Him."* (Jn 1: 10) And the same theological concept applies to the words *"I leave the world"*. The Lord

Christ said them about the body. But as concerns the Divinity, He said, "*And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age,*" (Mt 28: 20) and also, "*Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*" (Mt 18: 20)

So, there is no contradiction between the words "*I leave the world*" and the words "*Lo, I am with you,*" "*I am there in the midst of them*" The one was said about the Human Nature, and the other about the Divine Nature, without any separation between both Natures.

Beware then, my children, for the Lord Christ says, "*You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures.*" (Mt 22: 29)

(3) It is said that the Lord Christ ascended unto heaven in the body

This is what we say in the Liturgy of St. Gregory: [Upon Your ascension unto heaven in the body.] It is also said in the First Chapter of the Acts that He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight, and that He was taken up into heaven (Acts 1: 9- 11).

The Divinity, on the other hand, does not ascend or rise up into heaven.

He is present in heaven, on earth, and in between them. He does not move from one place to another, because He is present everywhere at the same time.

So, when we say about the Human Nature that He ascended in the body, and about the Divine Nature that He does not ascend, this does not mean at all that there is separation between both Natures! No doubt when the Lord Christ

ascended into heaven in the body, His Divinity was united with His Human Nature without separation. But the ascension is ascribed to the body, that is, to the Human Nature only, because the ascension is not a characteristic of the Divinity who is present everywhere.

He who has an ear, let him hear ...

**(4) It is said about the Lord Christ in many passages
that He slept**

This happened when He was in the boat and a great windstorm arose and the waves beat into the boat: *"He was in the stern, asleep ... and they awoke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?'"* (Mk 4: 37, 38) The same incident is also mentioned in (Lk 8: 23, 24).

Undoubtedly the sleeping was for the body, that is, for the Human Nature, because the Divinity does not sleep or slumber (Ps 121: 4).

But although the sleeping was for the body only, not for the Divinity, the Divinity was completely united with the Human Nature. An evidence is that He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, *'Peace, be still!'* And the wind ceased and there was a great calm, that they feared exceedingly and said to one another, *"Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"* (Mk 4: 39- 41)

Here the Divine Nature is united with the Human Nature without separation, but the sleep and awakening are ascribed to the body, because sleep is not a characteristic of the Divinity.

He who has an ear, let him hear ...



(5) It is said about the Lord Christ that He did hunger and thirst

In His fasting for forty days on the Mount of Tribulation, He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry (Lk 4: 2), and the same is mentioned in (Mt 4: 2): *"When He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry."*

He hungered in the body, and was tempted in the body, although His Divinity is united with the Human Nature, because when He rebuked Satan, saying, *"Away with you, Satan!"* Satan left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him (Mt 4: 10, 11).

However, the hunger is ascribed to the Human Nature, because hunger is not a characteristic of the Divinity. Moreover, that the Divinity did not hunger as well, this does not mean at all that the Divinity is separated from the Human Nature.

The same applies to the thirst of the Lord Christ, for on the cross He said, *"I thirst!"* (Jn 19: 28) The Divinity does not hunger or thirst, and therefore does not eat or drink, but this does not mean at all that the Divinity is not united with the Human Nature without separation for a single moment or a twinkling of an eye. The Divinity has His attributes and qualities which He did not lose by being united with the Human Nature.



(6) It is said about the Lord Christ that He was wearied

In His meeting with the Samaritan woman, it is mentioned that Jesus *"being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well."* (Jn 4: 6)

The Divinity does not weary. No doubt Christ wearied in the body, though the body is united with the Divinity.

The Divinity, though united with the body, did not relieve the body from its attributes or its weaknesses: the weary, the pain, the hunger, the thirst, the need for rest and sleep, the need for eating and drinking, because He took all the characteristics of our nature except for sin.

(7) It is said about the Lord Christ that He suffered

He Himself said to His disciples before the crucifixion, *"He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."* (Mt 16: 21) And after the resurrection He said to His disciples, *"Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day."* (Lk 24: 46) Again in the Epistle to the Hebrews we read that He suffered outside the gate (Heb 13: 12), and *"For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted."* (Heb 2: 18) Many also are the other verses about His suffering, including striking, whipping, crucifixion, nails, thorns, and many other things as mentioned in (Ps 22: 7-18)

In spite of all this the Divinity does not suffer. Whoever says that the Divinity suffers has fallen in a heresy. In all the suffering of the Lord Christ His Divinity was united

with His Human Nature without separation for a single moment or a twinkling of an eye.

(8) Christ also died in the flesh, but the Divinity never dies

Even in His death He was united with the Divinity and was never separated.

In the Prayer of the Ninth Hour, we address Him, saying, [You who tasted death in the body at the ninth hour ...] And in the Syrian Fraction of the Holy Liturgy we say about the death of Christ, [His spirit was separated from His body, but His Divinity was never separated from His spirit or His body.]

Death is characteristic of the Human Nature, not of the Divine Nature, but this does not mean at all that the Divine Nature was separated from the Human Nature.

In spite of the union between the Divine Nature and the Human Nature, the Divine Nature kept the divine attributes: does not weary, does not suffer, does not die, does not grow, does not ascend, does not hunger, does not thirst, does not sleep ... as we have already explained.

(9) The same applies to the Eucharist Sacrament: the Divinity is not eaten or drunk, in spite of the union between the Divine Nature and the Human Nature

When the Lord handed this Sacrament to His disciples, He said to them, "*Take, eat; this is My body ... Drink from it ... this is My blood.*" (Mt 26: 26- 28; Mk 14: 22- 24) He never said 'This is My Divinity'!

- St. Paul the Apostle also said, *"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"* (1 Cor 10: 15, 16) So, St. Paul taught us about the communion of the body and blood, not the communion of the Divinity as those who proclaim deification of man say!! Truly the Divine Nature was not separated from His Human Nature, but the Divinity is not eaten or drunk, for it is not characteristic of the Divinity.
- St. Paul the Apostle also in (1 Cor 11) repeated the same words of the Lord when He was handing that Sacrament to His disciples. Then he said, *"Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord ... For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."* (1 Cor 11: 27, 29) St. Paul did not mention at all the Divinity when speaking about the seriousness of partaking in an unworthy manner. He only said, *"will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord"*.
- **And in the Gospel of St. John, the Lord says about this Sacrament:**

"For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." (Jn 6: 55, 56) He did not say, 'eats and drinks My Divinity'.

It is because the Divinity is not eaten or drunk in spite of the unity between both. Do not then spread strange teaching not included in the Holy Scripture of the Fathers' Sayings!

The Fathers gave us as an example of the unity between the Human Nature and the Divine Nature the unity of the

heated iron with the fire, and also the unity between the spirit and the body. He who has an ear, let him hear ...

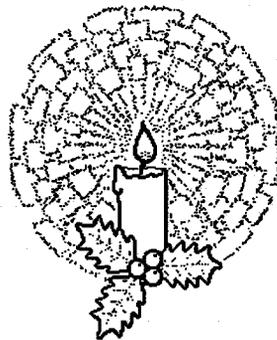
- The words of the Lord "*abide in Me, and I in him*" do not mean abiding in His Divinity! Those who ate and drank for the first time in the Lord's Supper, for instance, did not abide in Him; for some were afraid and fled, and one of them denied Him thrice, and all of them hid in the upper room fleeing from the Jews.

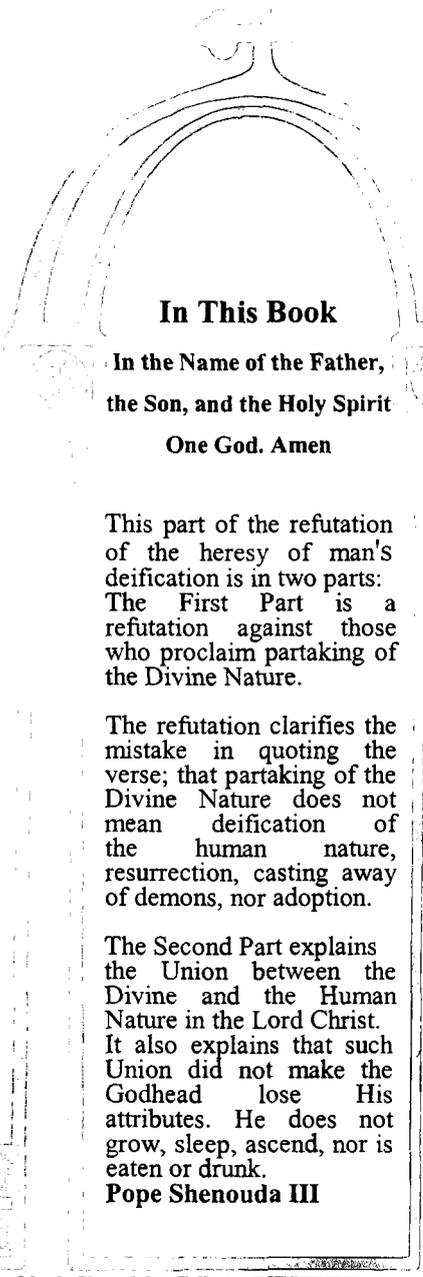
The Lord explained the words "*abide in Me, and I in him*" when He said to His apostles "*Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love.*" (Jn 15: 9, 10) He did not speak about abiding in His Divinity.

My advice to you, my children is: Be humble. Do not be deified. Do not think that you have become guardians over Orthodoxy or over the Fathers' Sayings!! Always remember the words of the Scripture:

"Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov 16: 18)

I still hold to the words of the Didascalia [Remove away guilt by teaching]. I still pity you, and would that you also pity yourself!





In This Book

In the Name of the Father,
the Son, and the Holy Spirit
One God. Amen

This part of the refutation of the heresy of man's deification is in two parts: The First Part is a refutation against those who proclaim partaking of the Divine Nature.

The refutation clarifies the mistake in quoting the verse; that partaking of the Divine Nature does not mean deification of the human nature, resurrection, casting away of demons, nor adoption.

The Second Part explains the Union between the Divine and the Human Nature in the Lord Christ. It also explains that such Union did not make the Godhead lose His attributes. He does not grow, sleep, ascend, nor is eaten or drunk.

Pope Shenouda III

