

## Study Paper No. 19

# The Chalcedon and Non-Chalcedon Debates *About* God the Word

Dear Friends,

M.C. Steenberg's analysis, both the historical & of the issue of Christology itself, is substantial, but let me add to that a clarification, If I may.

There are two similar expression: "the hypostasis of The Word en-hypostasize the humanity of Christ" and "The Word is the hypostasis of the humanity of Christ".

Of course in the similarity of their content someone can use these expressions interchangeably, in the same singular context that he implies. So, in these cases, we have to search what is the actual intention of the person that uses either of these phrases.

But, while these two expressions seem to declare the same thing, there is a significant deference in the context that: "hypostasis" is the subjective reality of existence and "nature" is the objective reality of existence of only one and identical being. We can not separate these two realities, nor can we unite them with others, isolated from each other, either naturally or hypostatically.

In this context, the phrase "the hypostasis of The Word 'en-hypostasize' the humanity of Christ" is literally implying that, the hypostasis of the Word as a pre-existing divine subjective reality hypostatizes the human nature of Christ, at a given time, while at the same time it carries over the respective divine objective reality of hypostasis, because there can be no separation between subjective and objective reality of being. If we deduct the divine objective reality, then the subjective reality must also vanish to nothingness.

If we analyse the phrase "the hypostasis of The Word en-hypostasize the humanity of Christ" we see that "the hypostasis of the Word" is the subject that "en-hypostasize" "the humanity of Christ". The meaning of "the hypostasis of the Word" is an indicative definition of the Word as a distinct hypostasis among similar others. Word is energetically en-hypostasize the human being of Christ, as an action/energy of the Personhood. In this context, Word as a subjective reality hypostatizes the nature of human being Christ, not as an esoteric/internal self-experience of being the objective created reality of the human natural reality of Christ, but as pre-existed divine subjective self-experience that takes the place of a missing human subjective self-experience. It is a divine personhood that acts in place of a missing human personhood.

In the context, starting from this one hypostasis of Christ as a hypostatical union (of a pre-existed personhood with a never-existed personhood), the

**incarnation is expressed as a union of two pre-existed natures that united in a complex one nature, that itself then resulted in the hypostatical union of the Word and of the void persona of human nature into one person, that is no other than Word.**

**In an analogy, to the use of "en-hypostasize" Christ, was the Greek ancient pagan god Jupiter. Jupiter was supposed to be a divine persona, who originated his hypostasis from his divine nature (essence), which he inherited from his father Cronus and from his mother Rea. From time to time, he supposedly assumed human & animal bodies to incarnate into self-alienated beings in order to associate with non-divine beings. He was carrying with him, both his divine hypostasis and his divine nature, embodied in a creature's body. For that when he was on earth, he was absent from his heaven residence of Olympus. (By the way, his absence made his wife goddess Hera to wonder of his loyalty! Ancient Greek people were very lusty people, so their deities were the same.)**

**Why do I bring up the issue of pagan deities, for I know that none Christian is accepting those superstitions? Because, it is an example of the use of "en-hypostasize" that shows vividly that this is not the case of Christ's incarnation!**

**St Athanasius the Great, living at a time when these ancient superstitions were believed by many, in order to show that the incarnation of God is not in the context of "en-hypostasize" he is saying: "For this purpose, then, the incorporeal and incorruptible and immaterial Word of God comes to our realm, howbeit he was not far from us before. For no part of Creation is left void of Him: He has filled all things everywhere, remaining present with His own Father. But He comes in condescension to shew loving-kindness upon us, and to visit us" – Specifying by these words that Christ's incarnation is not like Jupiter's incarnation 'en-hypostasizing'.**

**Because, Christ's incarnation is a non-logical proposition: "The Word is the hypostasis of the humanity of Christ". He is the subjective reality of human existence, and at the same time He is the subjective reality of divine existence, while at the same time He does split into two persons, because although these realities are self experienced according to the respective objective realities of divine nature and human nature, as esoteric/internal self-experiences of being, in two distinct realms, one created and the other uncreated, the cause of His existence as His self-awareness is not self-determined but He is determined from the Father as His Son.**

**The difference between "Word en-hypostasize ...", and "Word is ..." consist in the acceptance or the denial of one of the proposals that "Word becomes human", or that "Word is human". Of course we all know that humans are creatures, as they are created being. For any human being, there was a time that he/she was not, and a time after he/she became a being. There is the obligatory issue of evolvment in the human nature and personhood. A human being evolves from nothingness to perfection. Christ as "child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." (Luke 2:40). He was perfect as a human being in any way, both natural and personal. But He was not a perfect human baby nature that had**

a confined a perfect personhood, so that as long as the baby Jesus was growing the person Christ was in a stable perfect state.

St. Luke in order to show that Christ "grew and became strong and he was filled with wisdom" he immediately continues by presenting the instance in which Christ went to the Temple, where He spoke with the teachers of the temple "listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers". [In this instance](#) St Luke recites that "Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom..." At that point, St Luke presents that Christ was going with His parents to the Temple every year, but he had shown up to the teachers not until the age of twelve. This is presented as an evidence of His gradual development as a human being, as a whole embodied/person subjective and objective realization of being. As an evidence that, He was like one of us "humans".

St. Athanasius says on this issue (as I have submitted in an earlier post):

"For this purpose, then, the incorporeal and incorruptible and immaterial Word of God comes to our realm, howbeit he was not far from us before. For no part of Creation is left void of Him: He has filled all things everywhere, remaining present with His own Father. But He comes in condescension to shew loving-kindness upon us, and to visit us.....

He takes unto Himself a body, and that of no different sort from ours. For He did not simply will to become embodied, or will merely to appear . For if He willed merely to appear, He was able to effect His divine appearance by some other and higher means as well. But He takes a body of our kind, and not merely so, but from a spotless and stainless virgin, knowing not a man, a body clean and in very truth pure from intercourse of men. For being Himself mighty, and Artificer of everything, He prepares the body in the Virgin as a temple unto Himself, and makes it His very own as an instrument, in it manifested, and in it dwelling...

And thus taking from our bodies one of like nature, because all were under penalty of the corruption of death He gave it over to death in the stead of all, and offered it to the Father".

In this context, Christ's incarnation has a controversial/oxymoron scope: "He takes unto Himself a body, and that of no different sort from ours. For He did not simply will to become embodied, or will merely to appear . For if He willed merely to appear, He was able to effect His divine appearance by some other and higher means as well"... "And thus taking from our bodies one of like nature, because all were under penalty of the corruption of death He gave it over to death in the stead of all, and offered it to the Father"

Christ is the manifestation of the will of the Father, as an existential relationship between Father and Son. Both the divine nature and the human nature are irrelevant to this Life of Trinity. The cause of Trinity Life is the Father, not a natural "functionality". This uncreated relationship is not the result of existence of Persons, it is the identification of their existence with their Personhoods. The Father, the Son and the Spirit are "Who they are" for

**no other reason, but because the Son and the Spirit have as cause the Father, and the Father being without cause.**

**In this context, the hypostasis of the human nature of Christ has as the only cause the Father, and not the energy of the Son. The objective reality of both divine and human nature of Christ is not the cause of the subjective reality of His Sonship.**

**Christ's incarnation is not His action/energy of "en-hypostasizing" an impersonal human nature, which afterwards becomes His human self. It is the existential experiential union of two separate objective realities: that of created reality of Creation and that of uncreated reality of Trinity Life as they are realised by the Son Who has the experiential awareness of both of them at once. Because the one reality is uncreated and the other is created, the Son is the hypostasis of an uncreated divine nature and at the same time of a created human nature.**

**Word IS the hypostasis of His divine nature and He IS the hypostasis of His human nature while determination of his Personhood is not self-determined by Himself, but by Father. He IS the Son of God, and He IS the son of man. He IS experiencing both objective realities, having a Single Father.**

**To make it easier for us to understand, when he was talking about His Person, He spoke the language of Kings. He talked of Himself in the third person, like Kings do. "When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." (John 11:4) "For the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." (Mark 14:21). Also like kings do, when he talked of His natural will he used first person language: "Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."( John 19:28) Also like kings do, when He talked directly to His Father, he talked using first person language.**

**When a Prince talks, he says "the Successor wishes to go hunting" just like "a person that has a unique reference, which is the relation with the King Father". That is because the Princehood is a reality that he experience together with the reality of humanity, but it is not given by nature, but by his Father's will. But of course, we can not say that the Prince personality is en-hypostasizing the human nature. We can say that the same Person IS the human being and that the same one IS the Royal being.**

**God Bless us all. Taken from:**

**[Monachos.net Discussion Community](#) » [Doctrine and Theology](#) » [Christology Discussion Area](#) » 'Miaphysis'**

**Posted on Saturday, 11 June, 2005 - 4:45 pm.**