

THE NEW-AGE VIEW OF JESUS CHRIST

Brian Kingslake

Heaven and Hell

In this New Age we are liberated from inherited habits of belief and ancient anathemas. One result of this is that some thinking people are beginning to question the validity of Christianity, on the grounds that it seems to involve the worship of two Gods: (1) Jehovah the Father and (2) Jesus Christ the Son; or even three Gods if you include the Holy Spirit.

"Three Divine Persons, the Holy Trinity". Orthodox theologians insist that these three are One; but some priests and ministers in their prayers don't seem to think so: They address God-the-Father as "Thou", but refer to Jesus as "Him," as if He were not actually present in the situation; and they even urge Almighty God to do things "for the sake of the Son", almost as if Jesus were in opposition to the Fathers

There certainly is a problem here. (Some would call it a "holy mystery".) If God is Infinite and all embracing, as we believe Him to be, how could He have a Son? And if Jesus is His Son, aren't we all "sons of God", so how is Jesus different from us? This has led many Christians to regard Jesus as merely a good man, perhaps the best of all men, but only human like you and me. Others seem to deny the all embracing character of God-the-Father, since Jesus declared, after the Resurrection, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth". Yet artists still depict Jesus stretched out and nailed on a cross, apparently dead!

It is all very confusing. Yet I believe that a reasonable, logical and scriptural explanation of the whole situation has existed and been available for two hundred years, in the Writings of the 18th century scientist and seer, Emanuel Swedenborg, who claimed to be the pioneer of the "New Church" or New Age. His account of the matter is somewhat as follows:-

New Age

To begin with and basically, God is One. There can only be One God. He is Infinite and Eternal, a Being of Divine Love, Divine Wisdom and Divine Power. Secondly, true love is outgoing; it is active, not static. He who loves must have someone to love, outside himself, with whom he can establish a mutual love relationship. So God's Infinite Love required that He should create a finite universe, to be the object and recipient of His Love. How did He do this? By putting out Substance from Himself and then withdrawing Himself from it. . . a process which of course, we shall never understand in detail, since we are part of creation. The finite universe, once created, evolved according to its own laws through stages symbolized by the seven Days of Creation in Genesis Chapter 1, leading up to the creation of Man, self-conscious individuals, capable of receiving God's Love in freedom, and reciprocating it, thus realizing the "love relationship".

However unfortunately in the course of ages, members of the human race misused and abused their self conscious freedom, loving themselves rather than God, thus drifting further and further away from the Divine Father, until they almost lost contact with Him altogether. In Old Testament times, the Temple and Sacrifices provided a kind of link, but even these lost their efficacy as they tended to become mere lifeless ritual. The situation was so desperate that at last God took the amazing step of coming Himself into the finite universe, clothing Himself with a Human Nature like that of men, and gradually, step by step, through life, death and resurrection, making it Divine. Thus He acquired a permanent foothold in the human condition, and could empathize fully with man; while man, even in his fallen state, could reciprocally draw much closer to Him.

Equilibrium

Swedenborg calls this Human Nature which God took upon Himself, the DIVINE HUMAN or the DIVINE HUMANITY. Let us consider it for a moment, as it is the linchpin of the whole system. The Divinehumanity is fully Divine, of course, on God's side of the boundary between the infinite and the finite, not on man's side. Yet it is completely Human, extending down into the life and needs of man. It is God's aspect towards man, the aspect of God which man can see and understand and approach with love and worship. It is Immanuel, God with us.

Granted that God now has a Divine Human Nature, how did He acquire it? To be human, it had to be conceived and born by the instrumentality of a human mother and grow up among humans in this finite universe, suffering and being tempted in all points like as we are. The man thus born was, of course, Jesus son of Mary, whose life, death and resurrection are recorded in the Gospels. Jesus had no human father. God Himself set the process going in the virgin's womb which produced the Child; therefore the male elements in our Lord's heredity were Divine.

To put it in another way, His super-conscious Soul was God. However, the parts of His nature derived from His mother Mary were human, like those of any other young Jewish boy of the period. Thus He was 'tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin'. Alone He resisted the onslaughts of all the hells, the overwhelming evil influences within His own hereditary nature which had accumulated on the psychic level throughout the ages; and as He did so, He drove these evils out of His own nature and simultaneously of all human nature, thus redeeming mankind. His humanity was lifted up, over and over again, into His Divine soul, and was eventually absorbed into it, becoming Divine.

This could not happen with you or me or any ordinary man, because our souls are finite. They are finite vessels, (above our consciousness) designed to receive and hold God's life, as a glass holds wine; but they never blend with God. Jesus was not conscious of being so basically different from other people - certainly not in His childhood and formative years. Had He been conscious of it, His life's work would have been brought to an untimely end. He did, however, become progressively conscious of being the SON of God: that is to say, of having come forth from God, and of having a special relationship with God. In His more exalted states He was able to declare: "I and the Father are One". Note: He did not say, "I and the Son are One." This indicates that His consciousness was still on the human side of His dual nature. Even on the cross He prayed to God as to another Person, His final words being: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit". But while He was in the sepulchre, His humanity dissolved into the Divine, which was why His body was not found there. During the final forty days, the union became more and more complete, culminating in the Ascension. He had "come forth from the Father" and had now "returned to the Father", becoming One with Him. From then onwards, until today, and to eternity, Jesus Christ was, is, and is to come, THE ALMIGHTY. He had put off everything derived from His mother Mary. (She had served as a kind of matrix or casting, in which the Divine Humanity was cast). Jesus was now fully God and fully Man.

This coming into the world was not an afterthought on God's part. He is outside and above time and knew from eternity that He would eventually come into the world as a man. During the ages, this Divine Foreknowledge has leaked through into certain sensitive minds in the form of glimpses, intimations and analogies, often distorted. Egyptian priests imagined their gods coming to earth in grotesque animal forms. Hindus had their avatars, especially of Vishnu (who is supposed to have been incarnated ten times). Hebrew prophets were inspired to foretell the coming of their Messiah and even sensed that He would be born of a virgin. Greek poets delighted in picturesque tales of gods having sexual relations with women on earth, who gave birth to demi-heroes. All this, of course, was in the realm of myth ("Myths of Incarnate Gods"). However like most myths they reflected glimpses of deep level truth, preparing the world for the one genuine and authentic, epoch making instance of Divine intervention: the Infinite God becoming Man in Jesus Christ.

How do we understand the Holy Trinity? There is a Holy Trinity, of course; but it is not a trinity of Persons. A trinity does not consist of three similar things on the same level, but of one thing on three different levels. For example, a trinity is not three houses side by side, but one house with tile floors or storeys. A clover leaf with three lobes does not represent the Trinity, because the lobes are all on the same level; you would have to think of (1) the skeleton of the leaf (2) the sap and fibres, and (3) the skin. A single orange is a trinity, if you consider its pips, its flesh, and its skin. Three persons do not make a trinity, but one person does if you consider him on three levels. You yourself are a trinity: you have (1) a soul, above your consciousness; (2) a body; and (3) an out flowing sphere of life (your psychic influence, the work you perform). Even while Jesus was in the world, the Holy Trinity was in Him, His Soul was the Father (to whom He prayed). His Body was the Son; His outpouring Life was the Holy Spirit which He "breathed" on His disciples. As Paul declared, "In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily". After His Ascension and full union with the Father, the Holy Trinity changed somewhat, though basically it was still the same. The "Father" remained as the Inmost

Divine infinite and unbounded as before, the "Son" became the Divine Humanity; the "Holy Spirit" was the new powerful stream of life, pouring out from the Father through His Diving Humanity into the world. The terms, "Father, Son and Holy Spirit", found in the New Testament and appropriate while Jesus was in the world, have now become obsolete and can be dropped. The Holy Trinity resides in the Glorified Lord Jesus Christ.

Do not be concerned with the "Father/Son" relationship which existed while Jesus was in the world, and most important of all, do not concentrate your thoughts and emotions on Jesus hanging dead on the cross, nearly two thousand years ago. Today in this New Age we should worship Jesus as RISEN AND GLORIOUS - the One Only God, God in His human aspect, loving and approachable, forgiving and enheartening; God in focus for mankind.

We should address all our prayer to Him. Jesus is "the Way, the Truth and the Life".

Some extracts from Swedenborg's "New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrines" follow. The numbers refer to paragraphs.

290. Our concept of God is a concept of three aspects in one person when we think that the Father is in the Lord and that the Holy Spirit emanates from the Lord. In this case all three aspects are in the Lord: divinity itself, which is called the Father; the divine-human nature, which is the Son; and divinity emanating, which is the Holy Spirit.

291. Since all divinity is in the Lord, he has all power in heaven and on earth. This he himself tells us in John: "*The Father has given all things into the hand of the Son*" ([John 3:35](#)); again, "*The Father has given the Son power over all flesh*" ([John 17:2](#)); in Matthew, "*All things have been delivered to me by the Father*" ([Matthew 11:27](#)); and again, "*All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth*" ([Matthew 28:18](#)). Divinity is that kind of power.

292. People who suppose the Lord's human nature to be just like the human nature of anyone else ¹ are not taking into consideration that he was conceived by the Divine, nor are they pondering the fact that the body is for everyone an image of the soul. Nor are they considering that he was resurrected with his whole body, nor the way he appeared when he was transfigured, when his face shone like the sun.

Nor do they think about what the Lord said about believing in him, about his being one with the Father, about his glorification, and about his power over heaven and earth -that these are divine attributes and yet they are said of his human nature.

Nor do they bear in mind that the Lord is omnipresent even with respect to his human nature ([Matthew 28:20](#)), though this is the basis of belief in his omnipresence in the Holy Supper-omnipresence is a divine trait.

Perhaps people do not even consider that the divinity called the Holy Spirit emanates from the Lord's human nature, when in fact it does emanate from his glorified human nature; for it says, "*There was not the Holy Spirit yet because Jesus was not yet glorified*" ([John 7:39](#)).

293. The Lord came into the world to save the human race, which otherwise would have suffered eternal death. He saved it by gaining control over the hells, which were assaulting everyone who entered this world and everyone who left it. He also saved the human race by glorifying his own human nature, because this gave him the power to keep the hells under his control forever.

His gaining control over the hells and the simultaneous glorification of his human nature were effected by allowing the human nature that he received from his mother to undergo spiritual crises and by continuous victories in those crises. His suffering on the cross was his last spiritual crisis; in it he made his victory complete.

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