

# THE FOURTH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

## 1. The Monophysitism: Another Christological heresy

- a) *The Monk Eutyches taught heresy in Constantinople*
  - \* closely associated with Chrysaphius, the Chamberlain of the emperor
  - \* intended to speak against Nestorian heretics who continued as a separate community
- b) *Eutyches's heresy*
  - \* private interpretation & rational approach to the mystery of the Person of Jesus Christ led him to some of the following conclusions:
    - + "I worship one nature, that of God made flesh and become man"
    - + even though Christ took humanity from the Virgin, that humanity was not consubstantial with ours and entered in some way into the one nature of the Incarnate Word
    - + because his heresy taught that the divine nature ABSORBS the human nature, it is also called MONOPHYSITISM, from "mono"=one and "physis"=nature
    - + among the consequences of his heresy:
      - the human nature and its characteristics are suspended in Jesus Christ
      - without the human characteristics, Jesus is no longer fully man, like us
      - if Jesus is not fully man, then THEOSIS is no longer possible
- c) *The Robber Council: Ephesus 449*
  - \* was called by Emperor Theodosius who favored the Monophysite party
  - \* presided over by Dioscorus of Alexandria
  - \* among those attending:
    - + Juvenal of Jerusalem
    - + Flavian of Constantinople
    - + Domnus of Antioch
    - + representing the Episkopos of Rome:
      - Julius of Puteoli
      - the deacon Hilary (the future Episkopos of Rome)
  - \* from the 170 Episkopoi attending, 42 known for their anti-monophysite position were denied the right to participate
  - \* 111 Episkopoi out of 130 attending this council were forced to agree with the teaching of Eutyches and with the condemnation of his opponents, including Flavian of Constantinople.
  - \* the rest of the Church protested and a local council was gathered in Rome which condemned the council in Ephesus and branded it "the robber council".

2. The Fourth Ecumenical council: Chalcedon 451

- a) the heresy became a universal issue which required a universal council
  - \* some 500 episkopoi attended
- b) among those attending:
  - \* from the East:
    - + Anatolius of Constantinople
    - + Maximus of Antioch
    - + Juvenal of Jerusalem
    - + Dioscorus of Alexandria
  - \* from the West:
    - + Paschasinus, the legate of the Episkopos of Rome
- c) the Robber council was condemned
  - \* the episkopoi who had attended that council declared that they erred and begged for pardon
  - \* Dioscorus of Alexandria, Juvenal of Jerusalem and others were condemned because of their role at that council
- d) the council reaffirmed the Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed the decisions of the council in Ephesus in 431, the Tome of Leo and put together the Chalcedon definition:

"...following the holy Fathers, we all with one voice confess our Lord Jesus Christ one and the same Son, the same perfect in Godhead, the same perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, the same consisting of a reasonable soul and a body, of one substance with the Father as touching the Godhead, the same of one substance with us as touching the manhood, like us in all things apart from sin; begotten of the Father before the ages as touching the Godhead, the same in the last days, for us and for our salvation, born from the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, as touching the manhood, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, WITHOUT CONFUSION, WITHOUT CHANGE, WITHOUT DIVISION, WITHOUT SEPARATION; THE DISTINCTION OF NATURES BEING IN NO WAY ABOLISHED BECAUSE OF THE UNION, BUT RATHER THE CHARACTERISTIC PROPERTY OF EACH NATURE BEING PRESERVED, AND CONCURRING INTO ONE PERSON AND ONE SUBSISTENCE, NOT AS IF CHRIST WERE PARTED OR DIVIDED INTO TWO PERSONS, BUT ONE AND THE SAME SON AND ONLY-BEGOTTEN GOD, WORD, LORD, JESUS CHRIST..."

- \* among the very important points of the definition:
  - + the clear DISTINCTION between PERSON and NATURE and the affirmation that the Person of Jesus Christ is ONE, while the Natures of Jesus Christ are TWO.
  - + they insisted that Christ could not be divided or separated into two persons, nor is the distinction of the two natures abolished by the union; in the Person of Jesus Christ the two natures are UNITED but NOT MIXED, DISTINCT but NOT SEPARATE.
  - + by using a series of Greek negative adverbs (without confusion, without change, without division, without separation), they stressed their concern for the mysterious and incomprehensible nature of the subject they were dealing with.

### 3. The Dogmatic Consequences of the Chalcedon Definition

#### a) The COMMUNICATION of the Characteristics and Work

- \* the Characteristics and Work of one nature are communicated THROUGH ONE PERSON to the other nature WITHOUT THE TRANSFORMATION of one nature into the other.
- \* thus, the Person of Jesus Christ can be looked upon IN THE DIVINE NATURE given HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS AND WORK and IN THE HUMAN NATURE given DIVINE CHARACTERISTICS AND WORK:

#### + Examples showing The DIVINE NATURE given HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS and WORK:

- Hebrews 5,8:                   the Son of God suffered
- Romans 5,10:                   the Son of God died
- Romans 8,32:                   the Son of God delivered
- 1 Peter 3,18:                   put to death in the flesh
- Acts 20, 28:                   purchased with His blood

#### + Examples showing The HUMAN NATURE given DIVINE CHARACTERISTICS and WORK:

- 1 Corinthians 15,47: Man: Lord from heaven
- John 3,13:                      Son of Man: is in heaven
- Matthew 12,8:                   Son of Man is Lord
- Luke 5,24:                      Son of Man forgives sins
- Matthew 25,31:                  Son of Man will judge

#### b) The proper understanding of KENOSIS

- \* Kenosis: self-emptying
- \* it is the mystery by which the Son of God, of one essence with the Father, EMPTIED HIMSELF in order to ELEVATE, FILL THE MAN, as we read in:
  - Philippians 2,6-9: ("made Himself of no reputation" should be "emptied Himself")
  - 2 Corinthians 8,9
- \* the reverse of KENOSIS is THEOSIS

- c) *Mary is the Theotokos*  
 \* she gave birth to the Person of Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man  
 \* *Mary is not the origin of Divine Nature and she is fully human as we are*
- d) *The Savior is THE SINLESS ONE*  
 \* *The Person uniting God and man is without sin:*  
 - John 8,46  
 - 1 John 3,5  
 - 2 Corinthians 5,21  
 \* *He took our passionless inclinations, such as:*  
 - the need to sleep  
 - hunger  
 - thirst  
 - fatigue  
 - sadness, etc.
- e) *One adoration must be given to Jesus Christ*  
 \* we adore the Person uniting God and man  
 - John 5,23  
 - Philippians 2,9-11  
 - John 20,28  
 - Matthew 28,17