

It Is Written

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JESUS' DEITY WHILE ON EARTH

By Richard Thetford

The nature of Jesus Christ in the flesh has been debated since early times in the church. Varying ideas have been suggested. One of which is that Jesus, while on earth was just a man, an ordinary man like you and me. Such a unique thing as "God in the flesh" causes a sense of wonder. Yet in Matthew 1:23 it says: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Then John writes: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." These verses clearly show that Jesus was fully Deity and remained so when He dwelt here on earth in the likeness of man.

But some are not content with what the scriptures clearly say and want to know matters beyond what is revealed therein. In Deuteronomy 29:29 it says: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." We must learn that God has revealed unto us everything that we need to know to be able to have eternal salvation. There simply are some things that man will never understand (Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:33). Man has never been able to, or never will be able to, supply all the answers to why God did or did not do something. Therefore, when we look at "the Deity of Jesus", we must look at what is revealed and be content with a "thus saith the Lord" attitude on this subject.

Jesus Is God

Even though Jesus assumed the role of a servant and clothed Himself with flesh, He was nonetheless God, God in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16). Jesus Himself claimed to be the "existing one," the "I AM" (John 8:24; 8:58). Even the Jews recognized that eternal existence belongs only to God (Isaiah 43:10-11). When Jesus made the claim that He was in fact Deity, the Jews got mad and wanted to stone Him (John 8:59). They wanted to stone Him because He was claiming to be equal with God which they considered to be blasphemy. The Jews would have been correct in wanting to stone Jesus IF He were "merely a man" and not really God. But that was not the case. Jesus said: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). The word "one" means a united one. One not in person, but in essence or nature.

Jesus Was Deity On Earth

The attributes of His Deity were manifested while on earth. Notice that Jesus said: "...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9), "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30), and "...in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). Jesus plainly stated that His Father and He are ONE. Paul said that the fullness of the Godhead dwelled in Jesus while He was housed in the physical body. This can't be much plainer. Jesus was fully God while He lived on this earth.

We also can read where Jesus was omniscient (had divine knowledge) while on earth. Jesus knew people's thoughts (Matthew 12:25; Luke 6:8; John 6:64; 13:1,11). We know that He had to be God to be able to do this. Paul couldn't do this (Acts 24:16ff). Jesus was all-knowing because He could even remember being with His Father before He came to earth (John 17:5; Luke 2:49).

Jesus was omnipotent (all-powerful) while on earth. He had the power over disease and demons (Matthew 12:22), life and death (John 11:43), and over nature (Matthew 14:25). Was this something an ordinary human being could do? No. Only God could do these things.

Jesus allowed Himself to be worshiped (John 9:35-38; Matthew 2:11; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 28:9; Luke 24:52). At no time do you ever read where man accepted worship (Revelation 22:8-9; Acts 10:25-26; 14:13-15). Jesus never denied worship (because he was God), but man did. When Jesus came to earth He possessed all the attributes of Deity and lived as a man among the people. The Bible teaches it, and therefore we must believe it.

Holy, Holy, Holy

By Ken Green

“And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory’” (Isaiah 6:3)!

The very first rule, the commandment that earns the #1 spot, states who God is: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:2–3).

The world and much of the church have lost sight of this high and exalted view of God. We’ve grown cozy with God. We forget who He really is. We embrace the comfort of His nearness and ignore the fearfulness of His holiness. We emphasize the security of His love at the expense of His transcendence.

God is not “the man upstairs.” He’s not a mild, old grandfatherly type with a white beard. God dwells in unapproachable light. The Bible teaches that no one can see God and live. He is high and lifted up. He is ineffable glory.

We need a realistic view of God. Isaiah 6 helps us get it. God gave Isaiah a glimpse, just a glimpse, of who He is, and the prophet fell flat on his face. That singular experience marked Isaiah’s whole life, and his vision is one we desperately need today.

God is infinite holiness — immeasurable, unalterable, unfathomable, ineffable holiness. Isaiah wrote, “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up” (Isaiah 6:1). He is seated. He is not pacing back and forth. He is not wringing His hands. He is not struggling or searching. He is seated, settled, secure, certain. Why? Because He is in absolute control.

And standing above are the seraphim who serve Him. They are calling back and forth in an unceasing, antiphonal chorus. They could call out, “Merciful, merciful, merciful God!” or “Loving, loving, loving God!” But the words God chose to be spoken about Him are of His holiness. “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

When the Hebrew people want to emphasize a word, they repeat it. Nowhere else in all of Scripture is an attribute repeated three times. Only this and only of God: He is “holy, holy, holy.”

The smoke rose quickly to veil Isaiah’s vision lest he be consumed in an instant by the moral perfection, the utter terror, the majestic power, and the unsearchable, unspeakable, infinite holiness of God.

When we grasp who God is, we also see our sinfulness. God’s infinite holiness casts our dirty sinfulness into stark relief. Isaiah was broken by this. “Woe is me!” he cried “for I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:5)! The phrase means, “I’m dead. Done for. Silenced. Bankrupt. Ruined.” Before the holiness of Almighty God, we realize how unclean we are.

How tragic if the story ended there. But once Isaiah saw God for who He really is, the poor prophet was primed for mercy. Then one of the seraphim flew to Isaiah, lifted a burning coal to his lips, and purged him of sin. We are only prepared to receive and comprehend the grace of God when we have understood His infinite holiness and our filthy sinfulness. Any presentation of the gospel that leaves that out is incomplete. It’s the holiness of God that casts us upon His mercy. Only when we have a right view of the holy God do we begin to see clearly.