

The Theology of the Feast of Christmas (Metropolitan of Gortyn and Megalopolis, Ieremias)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



The Feast of Christmas today, my Christian brothers and sisters. We celebrate the dogma of our faith, that God became human, a real human person, with flesh, bones, blood and a heart. A person like us in every way, except, of course, as regards sin. This is a very great feast, the mother of feasts, since all the other feasts follow it: the baptism, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. This is why it's been called the mother of feasts.

At this feast, we see the Son of God, Who formerly, in heaven, had only a divine nature, take on human nature at His incarnation. He is now God and human. Perfect God and perfect human. So, with Christmas, we have two natures united, the divine and human. This was precisely the purpose of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, my beloved friends: to unite our nature with that of God. We call this

'deification'. From the beginning this was the purpose for which God made us: to be deified.



But you may ask: 'Is it possible for our nature to be united with that of God?'. Of course, it is, because, at Christmas, we see the divine nature actually united with the human. To the question: 'Why was the Son of God made flesh?', we would answer: 'To show us the way to deification'. So even if Adam and Eve hadn't sinned, the Son of God would still have become incarnate, in order to declare to us our potential for deification and the way in which we can achieve it.

It's a great event we celebrate at Christmas, my fellow Christians. Great and terrible. To prevent us from being 'terrified' by the event of God becoming human, the Old Testament prepares us by presenting God as a person, a person with a body. Yes! Let me just mention one sentence in Job. Speaking somewhere of God, Job says: 'Who will give me his flesh to eat?'. What are you talking about, man? Does God have flesh? God is spirit. But Job was illumined by God. He saw God in the future, in the flesh, and heard him saying: 'Take, eat, this is my body'. So even in the Old Testament, Job desired 'communion' and says 'Who will give me his body to eat'. The actual text says: 'Who will give us of his flesh to fill us' (Job 31, 31). God is, indeed, presented in the Old Testament as having flesh. My Christian friends, we are made in the image of that God- in the image and likeness. Let me

ask a question: how are we made in the image of God, since we have a body and God doesn't? And don't say that the image of God is only in the soul and not in the body. No! the holy Fathers tell us that He's also in the body. Naturally, as we were in our prelapsarian state, before the Fall. The image of God is in the whole person, as we were made by the Creator. If we say that we're made in the image of God, we have to recognize God's body. And this God, in the image of Whom we're made, this God with a body, is Our Lord Jesus Christ. So when we say that we're made in the image of God, it would be better, as the holy Fathers tell us, to say that we're made in the image of Jesus Christ. This is why the Old Testament says: 'So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them'. Pay close attention to this. This passage refers to two persons of God. God made humankind in the image of God. We ask: 'In the image of which God did God make humanity?'. The answer is that God made humankind in the image of His Son, Who would become incarnate.

Let us honour, my beloved friends, the high station for which we've been created and let us glorify our blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, Who became incarnate for our own glory.