

The Holy One Made Sin for Us

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25 & Luke 1:30-38

In our last message we considered how Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh (without sin) and then was perfected through sufferings, so that He could be the captain of our salvation and a merciful, faithful high priest (Hebrews 2:6-18). This time we will consider Jesus, the Holy One ("*holy thing*" - KJV) who was made to be sin for us (II Corinthians 5:21).

He is Holy

- He is the spotless lamb (I Peter 1:18-19 cp. Exodus 12:1-13, especially vs. 5).
- He is the one "...who knew no sin..." (II Corinthians 5:21).
- He "...did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Peter 2:22).
- He always did those things that pleased His Father (John 8:29).
- He is "...holy, harmless (innocent), undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Hebrews 7:26).
- He is "... the Son, who is consecrated (perfected) for evermore" (Hebrews 7:28).
- He is "...Jesus Christ, the righteous" (I John 2:1).

In Philippians 2:6 we are told that Christ "...being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." That means that the essence of who Jesus is equaled the essence of who God is. Jesus did not have to try to attain the attributes of God. He already had them — always did and always will (John 1:1-3, 14; Hebrews 1:1-3, 8-9; I John 5:21)

He Was Made Sin for Us

The Father laid our sins upon His holy Son. It pleased Him to do this, because it was the only way to redeem us and bring us back to God (Isaiah 53 cp. Matthew 26:39, 51-54; Luke 24:44-47). Though the Father loved His Son and was pleased with Him, yet he "...spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for us all..." (Romans 8:32). The one who "knew no sin" was made "...to be sin for us..." so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21 cp. Philippians 3:8-9).

He who had all of the attributes of God and was His equal, made Himself of no reputation (emptied Himself) and took on all of the attributes of a servant. Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient even unto the death on the cross (Philippians 2:6-8). As God has honored and exalted Him, so should we honor and exalt Him, receiving His gift of grace (Philippians 2:9-11; John 5:22-24; I John 2:23). We should follow Christ's example of humility and serve Him with love and meekness (Philippians 2:1-5, 12-16).

A Special Note about Luke 1:35

Mary asked a sincere question – not doubting, only inquiring. How can she have a child when she is a virgin? Gabriel said that the Holy Spirit would "overshadow" her with His power. The Greek word used here means, "to throw a shadow upon something." It implies gentle, mysterious power. Note three times this word is used:

- 1) At Christ's transfiguration (Matthew 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:34);
- 2) The virgin Mary's conception (Luke 1:35);
- 3) Peter's shadow, healing the sick (Acts 5:15).

This corresponds with Exodus 40:34-35 – the dedication of the tabernacle. "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle...." Though a fearful sight, this cloud was a manifestation of the glorious, benevolent presence of God. It had been seen, at a distance, on Mt. Sinai. Now it was close and in the midst of the people – to show God is dwelling with them, to comfort, guide and protect them.

Think of that quiet, private, overshadowing moment with Mary. God was dwelling ("tabernacling") with man ("Emmanuel"- Matthew 1:23). The glorious, benevolent, presence of God would be with mankind (Isaiah 40:5; John 1:14; Matthew 17:1-8; Hebrews 1:1-3). Today, through the Gospel, individuals personally receive His presence and become a tabernacle in which God will dwell (John 14:23; I Corinthians 6:19-20; II Corinthians 4:6-11; Colossians 1:25-27; I Peter 4:14).