



The Association of Hebrew Catholics Lecture
Series 2021-2022

The Messiah of Israel

**Talk 13. Christ Is Perfect Man
and Perfect God: Leo the
Great and the **Council of
Chalcedon****

Eutyches and the Council of Chalcedon

- The **Nestorian heresy** separated Christ into two separate subjects or persons: the person of the Son of God and the person of the man, Jesus.
- The **Council of Ephesus** declared that **Jesus Christ was one Person, and that His two natures were united by the hypostatic union.**
- An opposite heresy broke out, promoted by an abbot in Constantinople named **Eutyches**. Eutyches stressed the hypostatic union to such an extent that **he denied the distinction of natures in Christ.**

Eutyches and the Council of Chalcedon

- **Eutyches** used the same false philosophical principle that nature and person always go together. He begins with the oneness of person in Christ, and infers that one person in Christ means only one nature. Hence the heresy is called **Monophysitism**, which means one-nature-ism. This controversy led to the **Council of Chalcedon**, held in 451.
- The controversy ended with a considerable portion of Christendom rejecting the Council and becoming lost to Catholic unity. Two centuries later, this loss of unity greatly aided the spread of Islam.

Apollinaris, St. Cyril, and Eutyches

- **Eutyches** claimed that his doctrine was that of St. Cyril and St. Athanasius. In reality, it stemmed from **Apollinaris of Laodicea**, who was condemned in Constantinople I (381).
- The followers of Apollinaris continued to spread his errors by forging documents attributed to orthodox theologians such as St. Athanasius, Pope Julius, etc.
- Even **St. Cyril of Alexandria** was later deceived in this way, who adopted a phrase of Apollinaris: “**one incarnate nature of the Word**,” thinking that it was written by St. Athanasius.

Apollinaris, St. Cyril, and Eutyches

- St. Cyril meant that Christ was one incarnate *person*, and that the person of the Logos was not changed by assuming flesh.
- Theological and philosophical terminology was not yet fixed. St. Cyril thought the phrase “one nature” meant one *person* in Christ. We see in numerous texts that Cyril excluded the position of Apollinaris and did not mean that the flesh and the divine Logos formed one new composite or mixed nature, or that Christ did not have a rational soul, or that the distinction between the divine and human natures was annulled in the Incarnation.

Apollinaris, St. Cyril, and Eutyches

Cyril writes in his **Letter to Succensus**:

“If we understand the manner of the incarnation we shall see that two natures come together with one another, **without confusion or change**, in an **indivisible union**. The flesh is flesh, and not Godhead, even though it became the flesh of God; and similarly the Word is God and not flesh even if he made the flesh his very own in the economy. Given that we understand this, we do no harm to that concurrence into union when we say that it took place out of two natures. After the union has occurred, however, we do **not divide** the natures from one another, **nor** do we **sever** the one and indivisible into two sons, but we say that there is **One Son**, and as the holy Fathers have stated: *One Incarnate Nature of the Word*. . . . We would admit that there are **two united natures but only One Christ** and Son and Lord.”

Apollinarius, St. Cyril, and Eutyches

- We see here that St. Cyril thought that the phrase, “one incarnate nature of the Word” came from orthodox sources.
- He interprets the phrase in a non-Apollinarian way to highlight the unity of subject in Christ while confessing that the two natures remain distinct without being divided from each other in the unity of the one Person of the Word.
- Cyril excludes two errors: 1) a “confusion or change” of the natures, and 2) a separation or division of the natures such that there would be a division of the subject “into two sons.”
- As will be seen below, the Christological definition of the Council of Chalcedon follows Cyril in this.

The Heresy of Eutyches

- After the death of Cyril some of his followers used the Apollinarian phrase, “one nature of the Logos incarnate,” as if it were orthodox.
- These followers included **Dioscorus**, patriarch of Alexandria; and **Eutyches**, the abbot. They rejected the Formula of Reunion which acknowledged two abiding natures in the one subject of the incarnate Word: “He is of the same being [*ὁμοούσιον, homooúsiον*] as the Father in respect to his divinity and of the same being [*homooúsiον*] as we in respect to his humanity.”

The Heresy of Eutyches

- After Cyril's death, **Eutyches** denounced numerous bishops whom he saw as Nestorian. One of these was **Eusebius of Dorylaeum**, who had opposed Nestorius. Eusebius denounced Eutyches to his bishop, **St. Flavian of Constantinople**.
- In a synod before his bishop, Eutyches maintained that there is only one nature in Christ. He said that Christ was *of* or *from* two natures, but not *in* two natures. He said that “before the Incarnation there were two natures, after their union one.”

The Heresy of Eutyches

- **Eutyches** held that Christ was consubstantial with the Father in divinity, but he *refused to say that Christ was consubstantial with us in humanity*. This contradicts the **Formula of Reunion** of 433, which refers to Christ as “one in substance with the Father as to the divinity and one in substance with us in His humanity.”
- **Thus Eutyches denied Christ’s full human nature.** He later conceded that Christ had a human nature, but continued to hold the oneness of nature in Christ.

The Heresy of Eutyches

- The doctrine of Eutyches was an excessive counter-reaction to Nestorianism, implicitly reviving the doctrine of Apollinaris. The local Council in Constantinople under St. Flavian condemned Eutyches and deposed and excommunicated him.
- Eutyches immediately got the support of the Imperial court, for his godson was the real power behind the throne and an enemy of the Flavians. Eutyches was also supported by the Patriarch of Alexandria, Dioscorus, and he appealed to the Pope, St. Leo the Great.

The Heresy of Eutyches

St. Leo confirmed the proceedings of the synod in Constantinople and communicated his decision to St. Flavian in a famous letter called the Tome of Leo. There he says that Eutyches, “who appeared to be honorable because of his priestly title, is revealed ... to be quite rash and ignorant.” Leo thought that Eutyches erred more out of ignorance than malice, and counseled Flavian to pardon Eutyches if he publicly recanted and recited a condemnation of his previous views.

The Heresy of Eutyches

- The emperor wanted to restore Eutyches and had the support of the patriarch of Alexandria. He thus called a general council to be held in Ephesus in 449.
- St. Leo wrote to the emperor saying that “the point of faith at issue is so obvious that it would have been more reasonable to have refrained from summoning a council.” Since it had already been called on the emperor’s initiative, however, he accepted it but excused himself from attending because of the distance.

The Heresy of Eutyches

- Leo thought that the defense of the true humanity of Christ did not require the extreme measure of an ecumenical council since so many Church Fathers had already abundantly defended it against the Gnostics, Docetists, and Manichees, and the Council of Constantinople had defended it against Apollinaris in 381. Great was his surprise and consternation when he heard that the council acquitted Eutyches as orthodox!

The Heresy of Eutyches

- This council has come to be known as the “Robber Council” (*Latrocinium*) and is not included among the ecumenical councils. Although it should have been led by the papal legates, Dioscorus was the presider. After the council opened, the legates attempted to read St. Leo’s Tome to Flavian, but Dioscorus forbade it. St. John Henry Newman describes the Council:

The Heresy of Eutyches, Description of St. John Henry Newman

“The proceedings which followed were of so violent a character, that the Council has gone down to posterity under the name of the Latrocinium or ‘Gang of Robbers.’ Eutyches was honorably acquitted, and his doctrine received; but the assembled Fathers showed some backwardness to depose St. Flavian. Dioscorus had been attended by a multitude of monks, furious zealots for the Monophysite doctrine from Syria and Egypt, and by an armed force. These broke into the Church at his call; Flavian was thrown down and trampled on, and received injuries of which he died the third day after. The Pope’s legates escaped as they could; and the Bishops were compelled to sign a blank paper, which was afterwards filled up with the condemnation of Flavian. These outrages however, were subsequent to the Synodical acceptance of the Creed of Eutyches.”

The Heresy of Eutyches

The Emperor issued an edict approving the council, and Dioscorus excommunicated the Pope, which was not canonically valid.

Newman describes the danger from this Robber Council:

“Such was the state of Eastern Christendom in the year 449; a heresy, appealing to the Fathers, to the Creed, and, above all, to Scripture, was by a general Council professing to be Ecumenical, received as true in the person of its promulgator. If the East could determine a matter of faith independently of the West, certainly the Monophysite heresy was established as Apostolic truth in all its provinces from Macedonia to Egypt.”

The Heresy of Eutyches, Description of St. John Henry Newman

“There has been a time in the history of Christianity, when it had been Athanasius against the world, and the world against Athanasius. The need and straitness of the Church had been great, and one man was raised up for her deliverance. In this second necessity, who was the destined champion of her who cannot fail? When did he come, and what was his name? He came with an augury of victory upon him, which even Athanasius could not show; it was Leo, Bishop of Rome.”

The Heresy of Eutyches

- **Leo** described the Latrocinium: “By the rejection of that faith which has crowned patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs, the birth according to the flesh of Jesus Christ our Lord, and the confession of His true death and resurrection (we shudder to say it) might be overthrown.”
- The situation was as grave as in the worst days of the Arian dominance a century earlier.
- A brief appeal to the Pope written by Flavian was given to the papal legate, who escaped and returned to Rome to deliver the message. Appeals from other deposed bishops gradually came to Rome.

The Heresy of Eutyches

- **Leo** asked **Theodosius** for a council to be held in Italy: “While private interests are being carried on under the cloak of religion, through the impiety of a few such an act has been committed as to wound the entire Church. . . The entire mystery of the Christian faith is, in fact, cut asunder . . . unless this most iniquitous action, which exceeds all sacrileges, is blotted out.”
- The emperor refused, but he died the next year after an accident. The new emperor had the body of Flavian buried in Constantinople and the exiled bishops were reinstated.

The Heresy of Eutyches

- A Council was called in 451 in Chalcedon, attended by 630 bishops, which included two Roman legates. The legates demanded the right to open the council as representing Rome, “which is the head of all the Churches.”
- Dioscorus was charged for having “presumed to hold a Council without the authority of the Apostolic See, which had never been done nor was lawful to do,” and for not having the Letter of the Pope read to the Council.

The Heresy of Eutyches

- After the Tome of Leo was read during the Council of Chalcedon, the assembled bishops cried out: “This is the faith of the Fathers; this is the faith of the Apostles. So we all believe, thus the orthodox believe. Anathema to him who does not thus believe. Peter has spoken thus through Leo. So taught the Apostles.”

The Heresy of Eutyches

Dioscorus was condemned:

“The most holy and blessed Leo, archbishop of the great and elder Rome, through us, and through this present most holy synod together with the thrice blessed and all-glorious Peter the Apostle, who is the rock and foundation of the Catholic Church, and the foundation of the orthodox faith, hath stripped him of the episcopate, and hath alienated from him all hieratic worthiness.”

Warren Carroll says: “Pope Leo had little to fear from Attila the Hun, but much to fear from Dioscorus. For it was with those who denied the fullness of Christ’s salvific human nature that the ultimate battle of this age was fought.”

Tome of Leo

• Leo's Tome maintains the unity of person in Christ in the duality of natures, each of which retain their own properties. He writes:

“The character of each nature, therefore, being preserved and united in one person, humility was assumed by majesty, weakness by strength, mortality by eternity, and, in order to pay the debt of our condition, the inviolable nature was united to a nature subject to suffering: so that, as was fitting for our healing, one and the same ‘mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus’ [1 Tim 2:5], **could die in one nature and not die in the other.** Therefore, the **true God** was born in the complete and perfect nature of **true man, complete in his nature and complete in ours.**”

Tome of Leo

Leo clarifies that Christ's human nature is not subject to original sin and thus to concupiscence:

“By ‘ours,’ however, we mean that which the Creator formed in us from the beginning and which he assumed in order to restore; as for those things that the deceiver introduced and that deceived man allowed, they had no trace in the Savior. . . . He assumed the form of a servant without the defilement of sin, **enriching the human without diminishing the divine.**”

Tome of Leo

“The Son of God, therefore, descending from his heavenly throne, enters into the infirmities of this world; and, not leaving the Father’s glory, he is generated in a new order and a new birth. In a new order, because **invisible in his own, he was made visible in ours**; being incomprehensible, he wished to be comprehended; while remaining prior to time, he began to exist in time; the Lord of the universe, concealing the immensity of his majesty, assumed the form of a slave; the impassible God did not disdain to be man subject to suffering, nor the Immortal One to be subject to the laws of death.”

Tome of Leo

“He is generated, however, by a new birth: because an inviolate virginity, not knowing concupiscence, has supplied the matter of the flesh. . . . Nor does the Lord Jesus Christ, born from the womb of a virgin, have a nature different from ours just because his birth was miraculous. For he who is **true God is likewise true man**, and there is no falsehood in this unity, in which the **lowliness of man and the height of divinity coincide**. God is not changed by his compassion, nor is man swallowed up by such dignity.”

Tome of Leo

Christ acts through both natures, which remain distinct principles of operation, although they are in intimate communion with each other. Leo explains:

“For **each nature does what is proper to each in communion with the other**: the Word does what pertains to the Word, and the flesh to what pertains to the flesh. One shines forth with miracles; the other succumbs to injuries. And just as the Word does not depart from equality with the Father’s glory, just so the flesh does not abandon the nature of our race.”

Chalcedon's Definition of Faith

“Following the holy Fathers, we unanimously teach and confess **one and the same Son**, our Lord Jesus Christ: the same **perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity**, the same **truly God and truly man**, composed of rational soul and body; **consubstantial with the Father as to his divinity and consubstantial with us as to his humanity**; “like us in all things but sin.” He was begotten from the Father before all ages as to his divinity and in these last days, for us and for our salvation, was born as to his humanity of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.

“We confess that one and the same Christ, Lord, and only-begotten Son, is to be acknowledged **in two natures without confusion, change, division or separation**. The distinction between the natures was never abolished by their union, but rather the **character proper to each of the two natures was preserved as they came together in one person** (*prosopon*) and one hypostasis.”

Chalcedon's Definition of Faith

- This definition condemned Nestorianism and Monophysitism by describing the union of the two natures of Christ as “**without confusion, change, division, or separation.**”
- This definition of Chalcedon was a restatement of the mature theology of St. Cyril.

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

- The Monophysites and the Nestorians both rejected the distinction between person and nature. They agreed that it was impossible for Christ to be one person in two natures.
- They both held that one nature belonged to one and only one person, and one person was the subject of one and only one nature. Either Christ had to be one person in one incarnate nature, which was the Monophysite heresy, or two persons each with its own distinct nature, which was the Nestorian heresy.

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

Leontius of Byzantium:

“Eutyches stands in the same relationship to Nestorius on the subject of the Incarnation, that Sabellius does to Arius on that of the Trinity. For they have also fallen in opposite ways into the same evil: the one confuses the hypostases [persons] into one because of the essence [Sabellius]; the other, because of the hypostases, divides the essence along with them [Arius]. And these, too, taken in the opposite order, do the same: ... **the one [Nestorius] makes the hypostasis [person] hypostases, the other [Eutyches] mixes up the natures into one nature.** The same arguments that one finds used by earlier writers to divide the Trinity are used later, we discover, to confuse the Incarnation.”

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

- The Monophysites did not accept Chalcedon because it defined that Christ is in two natures and they thought that this implied that Christ would be two persons.
- The Monophysites thought Nestorius was condemned because of his belief in “two natures” in Christ, while in reality he was condemned because he implied two separate persons in Christ.
- The Monophysites and the Nestorians erred in putting faith in a (false) philosophical principle—the identity of person and nature—rather than in an infallible decision of the Council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo.

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

- The two extremes end up touching one another. The Nestorians denied that the Word is united to Jesus' humanity in a personal union, and the Monophysites denied that a true and complete human nature is united to the Logos.
- Both positions make it impossible for Christ to be the perfect mediator between God and man, which requires Him to be in both natures while remaining one subject who brings together in His own Person what he sets out to reconcile: man and God. It is not enough to say that was "from two natures," as Eutyches said. He must be *in* both natures while remaining one Person.

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

St. Leo makes this point in a Letter to the Emperor :

“What reconciliation could there be in which God might again be made propitious to the human race if the Mediator between God and men did not take upon Himself the cause of all men? How, indeed, might anyone fulfill the reality of a mediator unless he shared in the nature of God, equal to the Father, and also in our servile nature, so that the bonds of death, brought about by the lie of one person, might be loosed by the death of One who alone was in no way subject to death?”

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

- This theological controversy shows **the danger of party spirit**. Too much allegiance to a particular school put the school above the infallible decisions of ecumenical councils and the bishop of Rome.
- **Some important maxims:** (a) Look not at who says something, but at what is said. (b) Strive in charity to give a benevolent and orthodox interpretation to theological colleagues. (c) Do not fight about terminology but about the substance of what is said.
- The Monophysites read St. Leo as if he were a Nestorian, and the supporters of Nestorius read St. Cyril as if he were a follower of Apollinaris.

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

- Another lesson is the importance of a **clear understanding of fundamental philosophical notions**. Nestorius and the Monophysites used faulty philosophical principles that are contrary to **common sense**, which should always be the basis of good philosophy.
- There should be a Catholic philosophy that is “the perennial philosophy of the human mind.” Thomas Aquinas supplied a clear philosophical synthesis—based on the common-sense principles of mankind—that can keep theology from falling into a war over philosophical terms.

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

Nestorius and the Monophysites put an erroneous philosophical idea over the faith transmitted in the Church's Tradition. This is contrary to proper theological method. Theology is faith seeking understanding. One must begin with the faith received through the Church, then penetrate that faith through rightly formed reason, making use of the best resources of the perennial philosophy in service of the faith.

Reflections on Monophysitism and Nestorianism

- **Leo and Cyril manifest correct theological method.** They start with the central truth that Christ, as the Word incarnate, is the perfect “Mediator between God and men” (1 Tim 2:5). He has three attributes: perfect God, perfect man, and one Person in whom the two natures are united. **Leo writes:** “He would not be the ‘Mediator between God and men’ unless the same God and the same man were one and real in both aspects.”
- Christ is one person in two natures, each of which retains its own properties, so that He is at once perfect man, consubstantial with us, and perfect God, consubstantial with the Father.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- Egypt rejected Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo due to injured regional pride, the continuing agitation of the followers of Dioscorus, and a concern that Chalcedon was too Nestorian in its clear distinction of the two natures of Christ.
- Dioscorus was deposed and exiled and a new bishop who was not Monophysite was put in his place. Because of the nationalist sentiments of the populace the new bishop was in constant danger and had to be protected by imperial troops. He was killed and a Monophysite bishop took his place.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- The Byzantine Emperors sought to restore ecclesial unity and bring the Monophysites back into communion. They tried compromise through ambiguity, but Rome refused to accept those formulations.
- In the seventh century the Monophysite controversy appeared as a question of whether Christ had two *wills* or one, which would be divine. It was feared that two wills and operations in Christ would entail conflict and disunity in Christ.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- The **Emperor**, as a compromise with the Monophysites, supported the idea that Christ had only one will and operation after the Incarnation, a view which is called **Monothelitism** (“oneness of will” in Greek). The Emperor thought that the Monophysites would come back, to the Church if they were permitted to hold that Christ had only one operation and will, which was the divine.
- This question had already been at least implicitly resolved by the **Tome of Leo**, which says that “both natures retain their own proper character without loss.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- If human nature retains its own proper character without loss, then Christ's human nature implies the existence of a free human will directing His human actions. This human will, which is limited and in time, is infinitely distinct in nature from the eternal and immutable divine will.
- To hold that Christ has only one will, the divine, is like the heresy of Apollinaris, which denied a rational soul to Christ, holding that the Logos took its place.
Monothelitism holds that the divine will of the Logos takes the place of the human will.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- **The Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople deceived Pope Honorius I** on this. Honorius wrote two private letters to Sergius in which he tolerated maintaining silence on whether Christ had one or two operations and wills.
- Honorius also thought that “one will” meant that Christ’s human will suffered no conflict with His divine will due to concupiscence, which is true.
- His letters do not make use of papal infallibility and offer no formulations of heresy, but they were used to support Monothelitism, and can be seen to demonstrate a grave lack of prudence because they fail to check the heresy at its start.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- **The doctrine of one will in Christ was condemned by Honorius's successors**, due in part to the influence and presence in Rome of **St. Maximus the Confessor** (ca. 580–662), who, like **Pope St. Martin I** (died 655), endured persecution and exile for the confession of Christ's true human will.
- In consequence of His two natures, Christ has two wills, human and divine, although His deliberated human will is always in harmony with the divine will. Denying Christ's human will implies a rejection of His true humanity and of the freedom and infinite merit of His sacrifice.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- **St. Maximus the Confessor:** “For if we melt down two essentially distinct faculties of will, and two natural ranges of activity, and pour them together, as a whole from parts, into one synthetic will and one activity, it will clearly be a *mythical* creation, wholly strange and foreign to any fellowship with the Father or ourselves.”
- Every rational nature has a rational appetite or will.
- In **Gethsemane** we see Christ’s human will in His natural and spontaneous human desire not to suffer and die and in His deliberated human will to suffer and die in fidelity to the divine will.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

St. Maximus: “The Logos himself showed with perfect clarity that he **had a human will by nature**, just as he also had by essence a divine one, in that very human prayer of his, uttered as part of his incarnate existence for us, to be spared from death. He cried out, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me,” to show that the onlookers had not perceived his flesh in some mirage that deceived the senses, but that he was, truly and properly, a human being. His **natural will, to which this prayer belonged** as part of his incarnate existence, bore witness to this.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

St. Maximus: “On the other hand, that his will was completely deified and agreed with the divine will, that it was always moved and formed by it and remained in accord with it, is clear from the fact that he **always carried out perfectly the decision of his Father’s will**, and that alone. So, as a human being, he said, “Not my will, but your will be done!” In this he offered himself to us as a model and norm for putting away our own wills to fulfill God’s will perfectly, even if we should see death threatening us as a result.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- Monothelitism was condemned in the **Lateran Council of 649** under **St. Martin I**, who was exiled and killed for this reason.
- **Canon 10** states: “If anyone does not, following the holy Fathers, confess properly and truly **two wills**, divine and human, intimately united in one and the same Christ, our God, since it is one and the same who, by each of his natures, naturally wills our salvation, let him be condemned.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

Lateran Synod, 649

• **Canon 11** states: “If anyone does not, following the holy Fathers, confess properly and truly **two operations**, the divine and the human, intimately united in one and the same Christ our God, since through each of his two natures he naturally is one and the same operator of our salvation, let him be condemned.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

Canon 4: “If anyone does not, following the holy Fathers, confess properly and truly **two births of our one Lord and God Jesus Christ**, one incorporeal and eternal from God the Father before all ages, the other corporeal and at the end of the ages from the holy, ever-virgin, Mother of God, Mary, in this latter age, and [who does not confess] one and the same Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, consubstantial with the Father as to his divinity and consubstantial with man and the Mother as to his humanity, subject to suffering in the flesh while he is impassible in his divinity, limited in his flesh, while he is unlimited in his divinity, at once uncreated and created, earthly and heavenly, visible and intellectually perceptible, comprehensible and incomprehensible, so that all mankind, which had fallen prey to sin, might be restored by one who is fully man and God at the same time, let him be condemned.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

- **Council of Constantinople III** condemned Monothelitism under **Pope St. Agatho** (678–681) and was confirmed by **Pope St. Leo II**. Pope Agatho condemned Monothelitism in a letter to the Emperor, in which he develops the **Christology of Leo and the Council of Chalcedon**.
- He says: “The holy and inseparable Trinity, that is, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, is of one deity, of one nature and substance or essence; and we also proclaim that [the Trinity] is of one natural will, one strength, operation, lordship, majesty, power, and glory.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

Agatho: “When we, however, confess two natures and two natural wills and two natural operations in our one Lord Jesus Christ, we affirm that they are not against or contrary to one another . . . , nor are they as if separated in two persons or subsistences [hypostases]. Rather we affirm that just as there are two natures in our Lord Jesus Christ, so does he have two natural wills and two operations, namely, divine and human; the divine will and operation he has in common from eternity with his co-essential Father; the human he has temporally from us with our assumed nature.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

Agatho: “Each one of these natures of Christ is perfect and whatever belongs to the properties of the natures is confessed to be twofold, because our Lord Jesus Christ himself is perfect God and perfect man from two and in two natures.”

- The Letter of Pope St. Agatho was read at the Council, and the Fathers said that Peter has spoken through Agatho, as they said of St. Leo I in the Council of Chalcedon.

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

Constantinople III issued a definition of faith, which reaffirmed the condemnation of Nestorianism and Monophysitism, repeating the exclusion of the same four properties included in Chalcedon's Definition:

- “...two natures that undergo no confusion, no change, no separation, no division; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together in a single person and hypostasis.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

Constantinople III: “We likewise proclaim in him, according to the teaching of the holy Fathers, two natural volitions or wills and two natural actions, without division, without change, without separation, without confusion. The two natural wills are not—by any means—opposed to each other as the impious heretics assert; but his human will is compliant; it does not resist or oppose but rather submits to his divine and almighty will. For, as the wise Athanasius says, it was necessary that the will of the flesh move itself, but also that it be submitted to the divine will; because, just as his flesh is said to be and is the flesh of God the Word, so too the natural will of his flesh is said to be and is God the Word’s very own. . . . For just as his most holy and immaculate flesh, animated by his soul, has not been destroyed by being divinized but remained in its own state and kind, so also his human will has not been destroyed by being divinized.”

Monothelitism: A Continuation of Monophysitism

Constantinople III: “His two natures shine forth in his one hypostasis. . . . The difference of natures in that same and unique hypostasis is recognized by the fact that each of the two natures wills and performs what is proper to it in communion with the other. Thus, we glory in proclaiming two natural wills and actions concurring together for the salvation of the human race.”

Implications of the “One-Will” Heresy

- 1) If Christ did not have a true human will and intellect, He would not have been truly man, sharing our nature in everything except the consequences of original sin.**
- 2) Redemption would be impossible, for Christ’s Passion is meritorious insofar as it proceeds from a free human will in obedience to the divine will. (Phil 2:8).**
- 3) If Christ did not assume a free human will, then our wills would not have been redeemed.**
- 4) Christ would not be the Perfect Model of every virtue for us.**