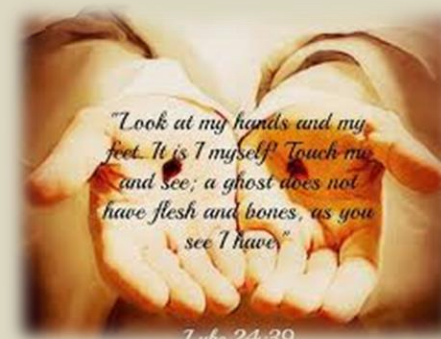


Evangelistic Newsletter Is everything in the Bible only for **“Spiritual interpretation?”** Edition 16/2017

Who was the first to say all things in Holy Scripture is spiritual?

I write this section to help us understand that since the early days of Christianity, has there been groups that denied that Jesus actually existed. We find today in some Christian traditions in the 1900s decided to follow this new way. It involved interpreting all of Holy Scripture as written for some unknown audience years in the future, which would use it to find meaning without needing to consider the context of when the books in the Bible were written and why they were written. **These spiritual, metaphorical, allegorical and symbolic interpretation appear only to be interested in the Divine Jesus, but some has gone as far as to write the historical Jesus out of their faith practices and traditions, seeing Jesus, His birth, His crucifixion and resurrection as mere spiritual reflections that people can share today.** The human Jesus is ignored as belief in Jesus being both human and Divine requires faith (Ephesians 2 and Hebrew 11). It is easier to believe he was just a spirit-like figure with good values and interesting stories to tell.



"Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

Luke 24:39

What does Apostle Paul say in 2Thess2?

The Man of Sin

1Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. **3Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.** 5Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and **shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:** 9Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. **11And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.**

Stand Firm

13But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, 17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

Right in the first century, we find Bishop Ignatius of Antioch one of the early Church Fathers in Christianity, who warns against this kind of thinking (Sparks, 1978). Ignatius was the second bishop in the first place where the followers of Jesus was identified by the name of "Christian" (Acts 11:26). It was from Antioch that Paul and Barnabas set out on their mission as recorded in Acts 13 and 14. Early church tradition holds that Ignatius was a disciple of the Apostle John. Ignatius's time as bishop started in 67AC, the commonly held belief of the time that Apostles Peter and Apostle Paul were martyred at this time, 3 years before the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 AC as foretold by Jesus Christ (Mark 1 3:1-2).

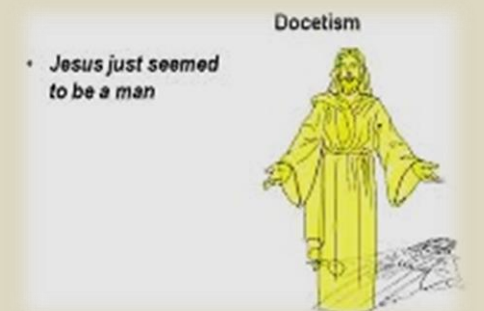
Ignatius wrote to **the Christians in Smyrna**, warning them against **Docetism**, a heretical sect dating back to Apostolic times, as early as the year 67AC (Sparks, 1978). They taught that Christ only "appeared" or "seemed to be a man, to have been born, to have lived and suffered." Some denied the reality of Christ's human nature altogether, some only the reality of His human body or of His birth or death (New Advent, 2015). **Docetism** argued that if Jesus were truly God, he would destroy his divinity if he became truly human and therefore could not be God. They believed that God pretended to be a human being for the benefit of people (NCRS, 2016).

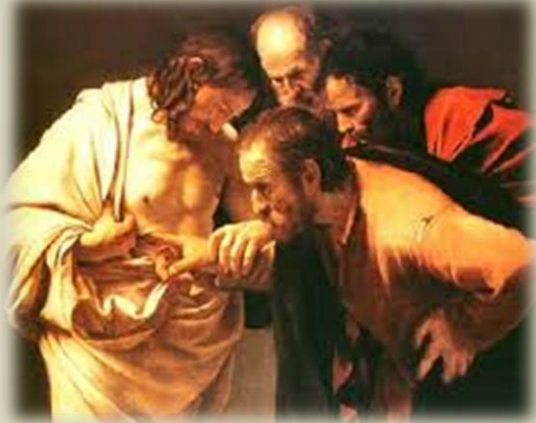
Followers of this early sect, Docetism, spiritualized every aspect of the faith and denied the **immaculate conception, virgin birth, life, crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the flesh** (Luke 24: 39 see also NCRS, 2016; Sparks, 1978). Bishop Ignatius tells them that true followers of Jesus Christ will know these false believers as they **have no love for the poor, the orphans, the distressed, the widows, the hungry, the old and the thirsty** (Spark, 1978). Ignatius also warns that these spiritual believers **do not maintain the sacrament of Holy Communion, as they do not believe it is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.**

I think these warnings are relevant and very much echoed in 2 Thessalonians 2 which warns against the coming of the **son of perdition** and the **great delusion** **God will give to those who wish to place themselves in the place of God.**

Luke, also the author of Acts of the Apostles, in Chapter 24, makes it clear that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was in flesh, in a glorified form.

Those who today persist with this spiritual and allegorical thinking therefore also dismiss the 2nd Advent, which is the return of Jesus Christ with all the angels to gather the elect, those who confess Jesus to be their Saviour (Matthew 24; Luke 24:39).





Kyk na my hande en my voete, want dit is Ek self. Voel aan My en kyk; want 'n gees het nie vlees en bene soos julle sien dat Ek het nie.

Tingnan ninyo ang aking mga kamay at ang aking mga paa, ako rin nga: hipuin ninyo ako, at tingnan; sapagka't ang isang espiritu'y walang laman at mga buto, na gaya ng inyong nakikita na nasa akin.

The First Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) presented the teaching of the Early Christian Church declaring the divinity of God the Son to be one substance and one nature with that of God the Father. From this Council we have the Nicene Creed. The 4th Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) affirmed the two natures in Christ, Him being both Human Divine at the same time.

To describe the nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, is it best to look at a class of oil and water, same glass but fluids are separated. One person but the humanity and divinity are separate. The Divine and Human nature of Jesus is taking a glass and mixing water and wine. The water and wine cannot be separated and become one in the glass.

Such was and is the nature of Jesus Christ, **Truly Human** and also **Truly Divine**.



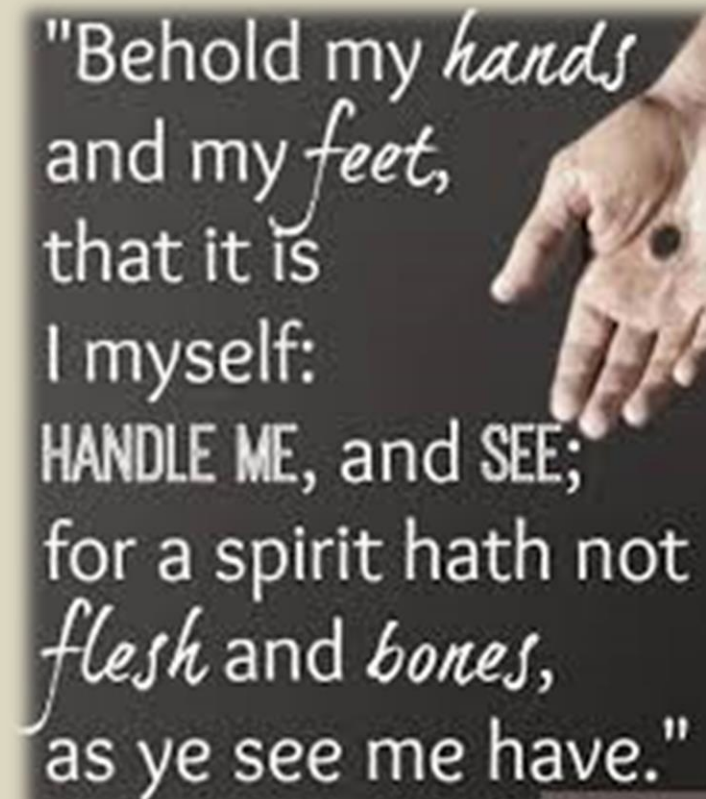
God bless, Nag Ou Grote, Fluit-Fluit, my storie is uit.

Br Theo PhD

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NCRS. (2016). *On The Threshold*. Wellington: Author.

Sparks, N. (1978). *The Apostolic Fathers*. Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing Company



"Behold my hands
and my feet,
that it is
I myself:
HANDLE ME, and SEE;
for a spirit hath not
flesh and bones,
as ye see me have."