

## *The Purple Pulpit*

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### **The Sufferings of the Monoprosoponic Christ**

“Monoprosoponic” is a word that speaks of the unipersonality of Christ. It comes from a combination of the Greek words for “one, single, only” and “person” plus the anglicizing “-ie” that makes a word an adjective, and means “consisting of one person.” Because every being but God is obviously consisting of only one person, the only Person that is ever spoken of as “monoprosoponic” is Christ Jesus, because He is the only One about Whom there has ever been a question of His consisting of more than one person. In this paper we will consider the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ in light of His monoprosoponic death as God in the flesh.

In previous writings in this series we have established the unipersonality and hypostatic union of our Lord Jesus Christ. As believers in both, we confess that the Son of God has come in flesh, assuming all that is essential to humanity. Many throughout church history, while confessing the same and recognizing the distinctions between His Deity and humanity, with the conditions of both, have argued that God is incapable of suffering, thereby determining that the humanity of Christ alone suffered on the cross. The monoprosoponic nature of His appearance, we affirm, argues otherwise. To be sure,

only the humanity of the Lord Jesus possessed physicality, thereby rendering physical sufferings of crucifixion relegated to His humanity, but His Deity is capable of suffering non-corporeal pain. Indeed this pain may be considered the more intense of the two: emotional, soulful, spiritual, and mental pain. Could Deity feel such pain? As an example of the pains of the emotion of compassion, we may cite Isa. 63:9, which reads thus: "In all their affliction He was afflicted," speaking of God Who had become their Saviour (v.8). This affliction was surely not physical. The following verse would speak of the Holy Spirit being "grieved" (v.10), as the New Testament testifies as well (Eph. 4:30). It is part of what it means for us to be made in the image and similitude of God: that we have this capacity for love, affection, grief, mourning, sorrow, pleasure, and the gamut of divine emotions that spring from rational thought. So the thoughts of Deity produced feelings in the monoprosoponic Jesus that flowed from His spiritually-able humanity. Examples of this emotional God being reflected in the Deity-mirroring humanity of Christ Jesus the Lord abound in the gospel narratives.

But consider also the monoprosoponic sufferings of Christ being necessary for our redemption. As a personal unit (not to objectify the Lord), the life that was infinite was offered in the place of trillions of everlasting souls. It was one Life that was more than sufficient to vicariously and effectively suffer a damnation-delivering death sentence for that gargantuan number of human beings. This one Man tasted death on behalf of all (Heb. 2:9). For that death to be truly efficacious, the spiritual essence of the Lord Jesus

Christ coupled with and in His humanity had to suffer monoprosopically. As one Being, God and Man, the Lord Jesus Christ suffered under sin, His humanity rendering the death forensically-applicable to men, and His Deity supplying the infinite value necessary to adequately pay for the everlastings of countless human souls. Thus, His death had to be a monoprosoponic one to work for our salvation.

Hailing back to Isa. 63:8, how it is that Yahweh (see v.7) has come to be our Saviour is by means of an incarnation that actualized our salvation through a monoprosoponic death and resurrection. As stated in Ps. 118:14, “Yah is my strength and my carol, and He has been to me for salvation.” Our salvation depends upon incarnation. Without a monoprosoponic inhumanation of God, we cannot be saved. Our Lord Jesus Christ has saved us, “to Whom is the glory into the ages of the ages. Amen.” (2 Tim. 4:18b).