

NO ONE IS GREATER THAN JESUS CHRIST

—The testimony of Ernest Renan—

Ernest Renan (1823-1892) was a French historian, philologist, and critic. Even though he was a complete unbeliever, compelled by the facts themselves, he unwillingly overlooks his personal prejudices and confesses in his work, *The Life of Jesus*, among other things, the following:

Jesus cannot belong solely to those who call themselves his disciples. He is the common honor of all who share a common humanity. His glory does not consist in being relegated out of history; we render him a truer worship in showing that all history is incomprehensible without him.

The great event of world history is the revolution by which the noblest portions of humanity have passed from the ancient religions, comprised under the vague name of Paganism, to a religion founded on the Divine Unity, the Trinity, and the Incarnation of the Son of God. It has taken nearly a thousand years to accomplish this conversion. The new religion had itself taken at least three hundred years in its formation. But the origin of the revolution in question is a fact which took place under the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. At that time there lived a superior personage, who, by his bold originality, and by the love which he was able to inspire, became the object and fixed the starting-point of the future faith of humanity.

This confused mixture of clear views and dreams, this alternation of deceptions and hopes, these ceaseless aspirations, driven back by an odious reality, at last found their interpretation in the incomparable man, to whom the conscience of all has decreed the title of Son of God, and that with justice, since he has advanced religion as no other has done, or probably ever will be able to do.

An excerpt from *Christology*
by Saint Nektarios of Pentapolis

Rest now in thy glory, noble Initiator. Thy work is completed; thy divinity is established. Fear no more to see the edifice of thy efforts crumble through a flaw. Henceforth, beyond the reach of frailty, thou shalt be present, from the height of the divine peace, in the infinite consequences of thine acts. At the price of a few hours of suffering, which have not even touched thy great soul, thou hast purchased the most complete immortality. For thousands of years the world will extol thee. Banner of our contradictions, thou wilt be the sign around which will be fought the fiercest battles. A thousand times more living, a thousand times more loved since thy death than during the days of thy pilgrimage here below, thou wilt become to such a degree the corner-stone of humanity that to tear thy name from this world would be to shake it to its foundations. Between thee and God men will no longer distinguish. Complete conqueror of death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither, by the royal road thou hast traced, ages of adorers will follow thee.

But whatever may be the unexpected phenomena of the future, Jesus will not be surpassed. His worship will constantly renew its youth, the tale of his life will cause ceaseless tears, his sufferings will soften the best hearts; all the ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there is none born who is greater than Jesus.

(*The Life of Jesus*, London: Watts & Co., Introduction, Chapters 1, 25, & 28)