

QUESTION 47

Of the Efficient Cause of Christ's Passion

(In Six Articles)

WE have now to consider the efficient cause of Christ's Passion, concerning which there are six points of inquiry: (1) Whether Christ was slain by others, or by Himself? (2) From what motive did He deliver Himself up to the Passion? (3) Whether the Father delivered Him up to suffer? (4) Whether it was fitting that He should suffer at the hands of the Gentiles, or rather of the Jews? (5) Whether His slayers knew who He was? (6) Of the sin of them who slew Christ.

FIRST ARTICLE

Whether Christ Was Slain by Another or by Himself?

We proceed thus to the First Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ was not slain by another, but by Himself. For He says Himself (Jo. x. 18): *No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.* But he is said to kill another who takes away his life. Consequently, Christ was not slain by others, but by Himself.

Obj. 2. Further, those slain by others sink gradually from exhausted nature, and this is strikingly apparent in the crucified: for, as Augustine says (*De Trin.* iv): *Those who were crucified were tormented with a lingering death.* But this did not happen in Christ's case, since *crying out, with a loud voice, He yielded up the ghost* (*Matth.* xxvii. 50). Therefore Christ was not slain by others, but by Himself.

Obj. 3. Further, those slain by others suffer a violent death, and hence die unwillingly, because violent is opposed to voluntary. But Augustine says (*De Trin.* iv): *Christ's spirit did not quit the flesh unwillingly, but because He willed it, when He willed it, and as He willed it.* Consequently Christ was not slain by others, but by Himself.

On the contrary, It is written (Luke xviii. 33): *After they have scourged Him, they will put Him to death.*

I answer that, A thing may be an effect in two ways: in the first instance by acting directly so as to produce the effect; and in this manner Christ's persecutors slew Him because they inflicted on Him what was a sufficient cause of death, and with the intention of slaying Him, and the effect followed, since death resulted from that cause. In another way someone causes an effect indirectly—that is, by not preventing it when he can do so; just

as one person is said to drench another by not closing the window through which the shower is entering: and in this way Christ was the cause of His own Passion and death. For He could have prevented His Passion and death. Firstly, by holding His enemies in check, so that they would not have been eager to slay Him, or would have been powerless to do so. Secondly, because His spirit had the power of preserving His fleshly nature from the infliction of any injury; and Christ's soul had this power, because it was united in unity of person with the Divine Word, as Augustine says (*De Trin.* iv). Therefore, since Christ's soul did not repel the injury inflicted on His body, but willed His corporeal nature to succumb to such injury, He is said to have laid down His life, or to have died voluntarily.

Reply Obj. 1. When we hear the words, *No man taketh away My life from Me, we must understand against My will:* for that is properly said to be *taken away* which one takes from someone who is unwilling and unable to resist.

Reply Obj. 2. In order for Christ to show that the Passion inflicted by violence did not take away His life, He preserved the strength of His bodily nature, so that at the last moment He was able to cry out with a loud voice: and hence His death should be computed among His other miracles. Accordingly it is written (Mark xv. 39): *And the centurion who stood over against Him, seeing that crying out in this manner, He had given up the ghost, said: Indeed, this man was the Son of God.* It was also a subject of wonder in Christ's death that He died sooner than the others who were tormented with the same suffering. Hence John says (xix. 32) that *they broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with Him,* that they might die more speedily; *but after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.* Mark also states (xv. 44) that *Pilate wondered that He should be already dead.* For as of His own will His bodily nature kept its vigor to the end, so likewise, when He willed, He suddenly succumbed to the injury inflicted.

Reply Obj. 3. Christ at the same time suffered violence in order to die, and died, nevertheless, voluntarily; because violence was inflicted on His body, which, however, prevailed over His body only so far as He willed it.

SECOND ARTICLE

Whether Christ Died Out of Obedience?

We proceed thus to the Second Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ did not die out of obedience. For obedience is referred to a command. But we do not read that Christ was commanded to suffer. Therefore He did not suffer out of obedience.

Obj. 2. Further, a man is said to do from obedience what he does from necessity of precept. But Christ did not suffer necessarily, but voluntarily. Therefore He did not suffer out of obedience.

Obj. 3. Further, charity is a more excellent virtue than obedience. But we read that Christ suffered out of charity, according to Eph. v. 2: *Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and delivered Himself up for us.* Therefore Christ's Passion ought to be ascribed rather to charity than to obedience.

On the contrary, It is written (Phil. ii. 8): *He became obedient to the Father unto death.*

I answer that, It was befitting that Christ should suffer out of obedience. First of all, because it was in keeping with human justification, that *as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just,* as is written Rom. v. 19. Secondly, it was suitable for reconciling man with God: hence it is written (Rom. v. 10): *We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son,* in so far as Christ's death was a most acceptable sacrifice to God, according to Eph. v. 2: *He delivered Himself for us an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness.* Now obedience is preferred to all sacrifices; according to 1 Kings xv. 22: *Obedience is better than sacrifices.* Therefore it was fitting that the sacrifice of Christ's Passion and death should proceed from obedience. Thirdly, it was in keeping with His victory whereby He triumphed over death and its author; because a soldier cannot conquer unless he obey his captain. And so the Man-Christ secured the victory through being obedient to God, according to Prov. xxi. 28: *An obedient man shall speak of victory.*

Reply Obj. 1. Christ received a command from the Father to suffer. For it is written (Jo. x. 18): *I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it up again: (and) this commandment have I received of My Father—namely, of laying down His life and of resuming it again.* From which, as Chrysostom says (*Hom. lix, in Joan.*), it is not to be understood that at first He awaited the command, and that He had need to be told, but He showed the proceeding to be a voluntary one, and destroyed suspicion of opposition to

the Father. Yet because the Old Law was ended by Christ's death, according to His dying words, *It is consummated* (Jo. xix. 30), it may be understood that by His suffering He fulfilled all the precepts of the Old Law. He fulfilled those of the moral order which are founded on the precepts of charity, inasmuch as He suffered both out of love of the Father, according to Jo. xiv. 31: *That the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so do I: arise, let us go hence—namely, to the place of His Passion:—and out of love of His neighbor,* according to Gal. ii. 20: *He loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.* Christ likewise by His Passion fulfilled the ceremonial precepts of the Law, which are chiefly ordained for sacrifices and oblations, in so far as all the ancient sacrifices were figures of that true sacrifice which the dying Christ offered for us. Hence it is written (Col. ii. 16, 17): *Let no man judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of a festival day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ's,* for the reason that Christ is compared to them as a body is to a shadow. Christ also by His Passion fulfilled the judicial precepts of the Law, which are chiefly ordained for making compensation to them who have suffered wrong, since, as is written Ps. lxxviii. 5: *He paid that which He took not away,* suffering Himself to be fastened to a tree on account of the apple which man had plucked from the tree against God's command.

Reply Obj. 2. Although obedience implies necessity with regard to the thing commanded, nevertheless it implies free-will with regard to the fulfilling of the precept. And, indeed, such was Christ's obedience, for, although His Passion and death, considered in themselves, were repugnant to the natural will, yet Christ resolved to fulfill God's will with respect to the same, according to Ps. xxxix. 9: *That I should do Thy will: O my God, I have desired it.* Hence He said (Matth. xxvi. 42): *If this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, Thy will be done.*

Reply Obj. 3. For the same reason Christ suffered out of charity and out of obedience; because He fulfilled even the precepts of charity out of obedience only; and was obedient, out of love, to the Father's command.

THIRD ARTICLE

Whether God the Father Delivered Up Christ to the Passion?

We proceed thus to the Third Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that God the Father did not deliver up Christ to the Pas-

sion. For it is a wicked and cruel act to hand over an innocent man to torment and death. But, as it is written (Deut. xxxii. 4): *God is faithful, and without any iniquity.* Therefore He did not hand over the innocent Christ to His Passion and death.

Obj. 2. Further, it is not likely that a man be given over to death by himself and by another also. But Christ gave Himself up for us, as it is written (Isa. liii. 12): *He hath delivered His soul unto death.* Consequently it does not appear that God the Father delivered Him up.

Obj. 3. Further, Judas is held to be guilty because he betrayed Christ to the Jews, according to Jo. vi. 71: *One of you is a devil,* alluding to Judas, who was to betray Him. The Jews are likewise reviled for delivering Him up to Pilate; as we read in Jo. xviii. 35: *Thy own nation, and the chief priests have delivered Thee up to me.* Moreover, as is related in Jo. xix. 16: *Pilate delivered Him to them to be crucified;* and according to 2 Cor. vi. 14: *there is no participation of justice with injustice.* It seems, therefore, that God the Father did not deliver up Christ to His Passion.

On the contrary, It is written (Rom. viii. 32): *God hath not spared His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.*

I answer that, As observed above (A. 2), Christ suffered voluntarily out of obedience to the Father. Hence in three respects God the Father did deliver up Christ to the Passion. In the first way, because by His eternal will He preordained Christ's Passion for the deliverance of the human race, according to the words of Isaias (liii. 6): *The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all;* and again (verse 10): *The Lord was pleased to bruise Him in infirmity.* Secondly, inasmuch as, by the infusion of charity, He inspired Him with the will to suffer for us; hence we read in the same passage: *He was offered because it was His own will* (verse 7). Thirdly, by not shielding Him from the Passion, but abandoning Him to His persecutors: thus we read (Matth. xxvii. 46) that Christ, while hanging upon the cross, cried out: *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?* because, to wit, He left Him to the power of His persecutors, as Augustine says (*Ep.* cxi).

Reply Obj. 1. It is indeed a wicked and cruel act to hand over an innocent man to torment and to death against his will. Yet God the Father did not so deliver up Christ, but inspired Him with the will to suffer for us. God's severity (*cf.* Rom. xi. 22) is thereby shown, for He would not remit sin without penalty: and the Apostle indicates this when (Rom. viii. 32) he says: *God spared not even*

His own Son. Likewise His *goodness* (Rom. xi. 22) shines forth, since by no penalty endured could man pay Him enough satisfaction: and the Apostle denotes this when he says: *He delivered Him up for us all:* and, again (Rom. iii. 25): *Whom—that is to say, Christ—God hath proposed to be a propitiation through faith in His blood.*

Reply Obj. 2. Christ as God delivered Himself up to death by the same will and action as that by which the Father delivered Him up; but as man He gave Himself up by a will inspired of the Father. Consequently there is no contrariety in the Father delivering Him up and in Christ delivering Himself up.

Reply Obj. 3. The same act, for good or evil, is judged differently, accordingly as it proceeds from a different source. The Father delivered up Christ, and Christ surrendered Himself, from charity, and consequently we give praise to both: but Judas betrayed Christ from greed, the Jews from envy, and Pilate from worldly fear, for he stood in fear of Cæsar; and these accordingly are held guilty.

FOURTH ARTICLE

Whether It Was Fitting for Christ to Suffer at the Hands of the Gentiles?

We proceed thus to the Fourth Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem unfitting that Christ should suffer at the hands of the Gentiles. For since men were to be freed from sin by Christ's death, it would seem fitting that very few should sin in His death. But the Jews sinned in His death, on whose behalf it is said (Matth. xxi. 38): *This is the heir; come, let us kill him.* It seems fitting, therefore, that the Gentiles should not be implicated in the sin of Christ's slaying.

Obj. 2. Further, the truth should respond to the figure. Now it was not the Gentiles but the Jews who offered the figurative sacrifices of the Old Law. Therefore neither ought Christ's Passion, which was a true sacrifice, to be fulfilled at the hands of the Gentiles.

Obj. 3. Further, as related Jo. v. 18, *the Jews sought to kill Christ because He did not only break the sabbath, but also said God was His Father, making Himself equal to God.* But these things seemed to be only against the Law of the Jews: hence they themselves said (Jo. xix. 7): *According to the Law He ought to die because He made Himself the Son of God.* It seems fitting, therefore, that Christ should suffer, at the hands not of the Gentiles, but of the Jews, and that what they said was untrue: *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,* since many sins are punishable with death according to the Law, as is evident from Lev. xx.

On the contrary, Our Lord Himself says (Matth. xx. 19): *They shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified.*

I answer that, The effect of Christ's Passion was foreshown by the very manner of His death. For Christ's Passion wrought its effect of salvation first of all among the Jews, very many of whom were baptized in His death, as is evident from Acts ii. 41 and iv. 4. Afterwards, by the preaching of Jews, Christ's Passion passed on to the Gentiles. Consequently it was fitting that Christ should begin His sufferings at the hands of the Jews, and, after they had delivered Him up, finish His Passion at the hands of the Gentiles.

Reply Obj. 1. In order to demonstrate the fulness of His love, on account of which He suffered, Christ upon the cross prayed for His persecutors. Therefore, that the fruits of His petition might accrue to Jews and Gentiles, Christ willed to suffer from both.

Reply Obj. 2. Christ's Passion was the offering of a sacrifice, inasmuch as He endured death of His own free-will out of charity: but in so far as He suffered from His persecutors it was not a sacrifice, but a most grievous sin.

Reply Obj. 3. As Augustine says (*Tract. cxiv, in Joan.*): *The Jews said that "it is not lawful for us to put any man to death," because they understood that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death* owing to the sacredness of the feast-day, which they had already begun to celebrate. Or, as Chrysostom observes (*Hom. lxxxiii, in Joan.*), because they wanted Him to be slain, not as a transgressor of the Law, but as a public enemy, since He had made Himself out to be a king, of which it was not their place to judge. Or, again, because it was not lawful for them to crucify Him (as they wanted to), but to stone Him, as they did to Stephen. Better still is it to say that the power of putting to death was taken from them by the Romans, whose subjects they were.

FIFTH ARTICLE

Whether Christ's Persecutors Knew Who He Was?

We proceed thus to the Fifth Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ's persecutors did know who He was. For it is written (Matth. xxi. 38) that the husbandmen seeing the son said within themselves: *This is the heir; come, let us kill him.* On this Jerome remarks: *Our Lord proves most manifestly by these words that the rulers of the Jews crucified the Son of God, not from ignorance, but out of envy: for they understood that it was He to whom the Father says by the Prophet: "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles*

for Thy inheritance." It seems, therefore, that they knew Him to be Christ or the Son of God.

Obj. 2. Further, our Lord says (Jo. xv. 24): *But now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father.* Now what is seen is known manifestly. Therefore the Jews, knowing Christ, inflicted the Passion on Him out of hatred.

Obj. 3. Further, it is said in a sermon delivered in the Council of Ephesus (P. iii, cap. x): *Just as he who tears up the imperial message is doomed to die, as despising the prince's word; so the Jew, who crucified Him whom he had seen, will pay the penalty for daring to lay his hands on God the Word Himself.* Now this would not be so had they not known Him to be the Son of God, because their ignorance would have excused them. Therefore it seems that the Jews in crucifying Christ knew Him to be the Son of God.

On the contrary, It is written (1 Cor. ii. 8): *If they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory.* And (Acts iii. 17), Peter, addressing the Jews, says: *I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers.* Likewise the Lord hanging upon the cross said: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* (Luke xxiii. 34).

I answer that, Among the Jews some were elders, and others of lesser degree. Now according to the author of *De Qq. Nov. et Vet. Test., qu. lxvi*, the elders, who were called rulers, knew, as did also the devils, that He was the Christ promised in the Law: for they saw all the signs in Him which the prophets said would come to pass: but they did not know the mystery of His Godhead. Consequently the Apostle says: *If they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory.* It must, however, be understood that their ignorance did not excuse them from crime, because it was, as it were, affected ignorance. For they saw manifest signs of His Godhead; yet they perverted them out of hatred and envy of Christ; neither would they believe His words, whereby He avowed that He was the Son of God. Hence He Himself says of them (Jo. xv. 22): *If I had not come, and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.* And afterwards He adds (24): *If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin.* And so the expression employed by Job (xxi. 14) can be accepted on their behalf: *(Who) said to God: depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways.*

But those of lesser degree—namely, the common folk—who had not grasped the mysteries of the Scriptures, did not fully compre-

hend that He was the Christ or the Son of God. For although some of them believed in Him, yet the multitude did not; and if they doubted sometimes whether He was the Christ, on account of the manifold signs and force of His teaching, as is stated Jo. vii. 31, 41, nevertheless they were deceived afterwards by their rulers, so that they did not believe Him to be the Son of God or the Christ. Hence Peter said to them: *I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers*—namely, because they were seduced by the rulers.

Reply Obj. 1. Those words are spoken by the husbandmen of the vineyard; and these signify the rulers of the people, who knew Him to be the heir, inasmuch as they knew Him to be the Christ promised in the Law, But the words of Ps. ii. 8 seem to militate against this answer: *Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance*; which are addressed to Him of whom it is said: *Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee*. If, then, they knew Him to be the one to whom the words were addressed: *Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance*, it follows that they knew Him to be the Son of God. Chrysostom, too, says upon the same passage that *they knew Him to be the Son of God*. Bede likewise, commenting on the words, *For they know not what they do* (Luke xxiii. 34), says: *It is to be observed that He does not pray for them who, understanding Him to be the Son of God, preferred to crucify Him rather than acknowledge Him*. But to this it may be replied that they knew Him to be the Son of God, not from His Nature, but from the excellence of His singular grace.

Yet we may hold that they are said to have known also that He was verily the Son of God, in that they had evident signs thereof: yet out of hatred and envy, they refused credence to these signs, by which they might have known that He was the Son of God.

Reply Obj. 2. The words quoted are preceded by the following: *If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin*; and then follow the words: *But now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father*. Now all this shows that while they beheld Christ's marvelous works, it was owing to their hatred that they did not know Him to be the Son of God.

Reply Obj. 3. Affected ignorance does not excuse from guilt, but seems, rather, to aggravate it: for it shows that a man is so strongly attached to sin that he wishes to incur ignorance lest he avoid sinning. The Jews therefore sinned, as crucifiers not only of the Man-Christ, but also as of God.

SIXTH ARTICLE

Whether the Sin of Those Who Crucified Christ Was Most Grievous?

We proceed thus to the Sixth Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that the sin of Christ's crucifiers was not the most grievous. Because the sin which has some excuse cannot be most grievous. But our Lord Himself excused the sin of His crucifiers when He said: *Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do* (Luke xxiii. 34). Therefore theirs was not the most grievous sin.

Obj. 2. Further, our Lord said to Pilate (Jo. xix. 11): *He that hath delivered Me to thee hath the greater sin*. But it was Pilate who caused Christ to be crucified by his minions. Therefore the sin of Judas the traitor seems to be greater than that of those who crucified Him.

Obj. 3. Further, according to the Philosopher (*Eth. v*): *No one suffers injustice willingly*; and in the same place he adds: *Where no one suffers injustice, nobody works injustice*. Consequently nobody wreaks injustice upon a willing subject. But Christ suffered willingly, as was shown above (AA. 1, 2). Therefore those who crucified Christ did Him no injustice; and hence their sin was not the most grievous.

On the contrary, Chrysostom, commenting on the words, *Fill ye up, then, the measure of your fathers* (Matth. xxiii. 32), says: *In very truth they exceeded the measure of their fathers; for these latter slew men, but they crucified God*.

I answer that, As stated above (A. 5), the rulers of the Jews knew that He was the Christ: and if there was any ignorance in them, it was affected ignorance, which could not excuse them. Therefore their sin was the most grievous, both on account of the kind of sin, as well as from the malice of their will. The Jews also of the common order sinned most grievously as to the kind of their sin; yet in one respect their crime was lessened by reason of their ignorance. Hence Bede, commenting on Luke xxiii. 34, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, says: *He prays for them who know not what they are doing, as having the zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*. But the sin of the Gentiles, by whose hands He was crucified, was much more excusable, since they had no knowledge of the Law.

Reply Obj. 1. As stated above, the excuse made by our Lord is not to be referred to the rulers among the Jews, but to the common people.

Reply Obj. 2. Judas did not deliver up Christ to Pilate, but to the chief priests who

gave Him up to Pilate, according to Jo. xviii. 35: *Thy own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee up to me.* But the sin of all these was greater than that of Pilate, who slew Christ from fear of Cæsar; and even greater than the sin of the soldiers who crucified Him at the governor's bidding, not out of cupidity like Judas, nor from envy and hate like the chief priests.

Reply Obj. 3. Christ, indeed, willed His Passion just as the Father willed it; yet He

did not will the unjust action of the Jews. Consequently Christ's slayers are not excused of their injustice. Nevertheless, whoever slays a man not only does a wrong to the one slain, but likewise to God and to the State; just as he who kills himself, as the Philosopher says (*Ethic. v*). Hence it was that David condemned to death the man who *did not fear to lay hands upon the Lord's anointed*, even though he (Saul) had requested it, as related 2 Kings i. 5-14.

QUESTION 48

Of the Efficiency of Christ's Passion

(In Six Articles)

We now have to consider Christ's Passion as to its effect; first of all, as to the manner in which it was brought about; and, secondly, as to the effect in itself. Under the first heading there are six points for inquiry: (1) Whether Christ's Passion brought about our salvation by way of merit? (2) Whether it was by way of atonement? (3) Whether it was by way of sacrifice? (4) Whether it was by way of redemption? (5) Whether it is proper to Christ to be the Redeemer? (6) Whether (the Passion) secured man's salvation efficiently?

FIRST ARTICLE

Whether Christ's Passion Brought About Our Salvation by Way of Merit?

We proceed thus to the First Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ's Passion did not bring about our salvation by way of merit. For the sources of our sufferings are not within us. But no one merits or is praised except for that whose principle lies within him. Therefore Christ's Passion wrought nothing by way of merit.

Obj. 2. Further, from the beginning of His conception Christ merited for Himself and for us, as stated above (Q. 9, A. 4; Q. 34, A. 3). But it is superfluous to merit over again what has been merited before. Therefore by His Passion Christ did not merit our salvation.

Obj. 3. Further, the source of merit is charity. But Christ's charity was not made greater by the Passion than it was before. Therefore He did not merit our salvation by suffering more than He had already.

On the contrary, On the words of Phil. ii. 9, *Therefore God exalted Him*, etc., Augustine says (*Tract. civ, in Joan.*): *The lowliness of the Passion merited glory; glory was the reward of lowliness.* But He was glorified, not merely in Himself, but likewise in His faithful ones, as He says Himself (Jo. xvii. 10). There-

fore it appears that He merited the salvation of the faithful.

I answer that, As stated above (Q. 7, AA. 1, 9; Q. 8, AA. 1, 5), grace was bestowed upon Christ, not only as an individual, but inasmuch as He is the Head of the Church, so that it might overflow into His members; and therefore Christ's works are referred to Himself and to His members in the same way as the works of any other man in a state of grace are referred to himself. But it is evident that whoever suffers for justice's sake, provided that he be in a state of grace, merits his salvation thereby, according to Matth. v. 10: *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake.* Consequently Christ by His Passion merited salvation, not only for Himself, but likewise for all His members.

Reply Obj. 1. Suffering, as such, is caused by an outward principle: but inasmuch as one bears it willingly, it has an inward principle.

Reply Obj. 2. From the beginning of His conception Christ merited our eternal salvation; but on our side there were some obstacles, whereby we were hindered from securing the effect of His preceding merits: consequently, in order to remove such hindrances, *it was necessary for Christ to suffer*, as stated above (Q. 46, A. 3).

Reply Obj. 3. Christ's Passion has a special effect, which His preceding merits did not possess, not on account of greater charity, but because of the nature of the work, which was suitable for such an effect, as is clear from the arguments brought forward above on the fittingness of Christ's Passion (Q. 46, AA. 3, 4).

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On the contrary, On the words of Phil. ii. 9, *Therefore God exalted Him*, etc., Augustine says (*Tract. civ, in Joan.*): *The lowliness of the Passion merited glory; glory was the reward of lowliness.* But He was glorified, not merely in Himself, but likewise in His faithful ones, as He says Himself (Jo. xvii. 10). There-

fore it appears that He merited the salvation of the faithful.

I answer that, As stated above (Q. 7, AA. 1, 9; Q. 8, AA. 1, 5), grace was bestowed upon Christ, not only as an individual, but inasmuch as He is the Head of the Church, so that it might overflow into His members; and therefore Christ's works are referred to Himself and to His members in the same way as the works of any other man in a state of grace are referred to himself. But it is evident that whoever suffers for justice's sake, provided that he be in a state of grace, merits his salvation thereby, according to Matth. v. 10: *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake.* Consequently Christ by His Passion merited salvation, not only for Himself, but likewise for all His members.

Reply Obj. 1. Suffering, as such, is caused by an outward principle: but inasmuch as one bears it willingly, it has an inward principle.

Reply Obj. 2. From the beginning of His conception Christ merited our eternal salvation; but on our side there were some obstacles, whereby we were hindered from securing the effect of His preceding merits: consequently, in order to remove such hindrances, *it was necessary for Christ to suffer*, as stated above (Q. 46, A. 3).

Reply Obj. 3. Christ's Passion has a special effect, which His preceding merits did not possess, not on account of greater charity, but because of the nature of the work, which was suitable for such an effect, as is clear from the arguments brought forward above on the fittingness of Christ's Passion (Q. 46, AA. 3, 4).

SECOND ARTICLE

Whether Christ's Passion Brought About Our Salvation by Way of Atonement?

We proceed thus to the Second Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ's Passion did not bring about our salvation by

way of atonement. For it seems that to make the atonement devolves on him who commits the sin; as is clear in the other parts of penance, because he who has done the wrong must grieve over it and confess it. But Christ never sinned, according to 1 Pet. ii. 22: *Who did no sin*. Therefore He made no atonement by His personal suffering.

Obj. 2. Further, no atonement is made to another by committing a graver offense. But in Christ's Passion the gravest of all offenses was perpetrated, because those who slew Him sinned most grievously, as stated above (Q. 47, A. 6). Consequently it seems that atonement could not be made to God by Christ's Passion.

Obj. 3. Further, atonement implies equality with the trespass, since it is an act of justice. But Christ's Passion does not appear equal to all the sins of the human race, because Christ did not suffer in His Godhead, but in His flesh, according to 1 Pet. iv. 1: *Christ therefore having suffered in the flesh*. Now the soul, which is the subject of sin, is of greater account than the flesh. Therefore Christ did not atone for our sins by His Passion.

On the contrary, It is written (Ps. lxxviii. 5) in Christ's person: *Then did I pay that which I took not away*. But he has not paid who has not fully atoned. Therefore it appears that Christ by His suffering has fully atoned for our sins.

I answer that, He properly atones for an offense who offers something which the offended one loves equally, or even more than he detested the offense. But by suffering out of love and obedience, Christ gave more to God than was required to compensate for the offense of the whole human race. First of all, because of the exceeding charity from which He suffered; secondly, on account of the dignity of His life which He laid down in atonement, for it was the life of One who was God and man; thirdly, on account of the extent of the Passion, and the greatness of the grief endured, as stated above (Q. 46, A. 6). And therefore Christ's Passion was not only a sufficient but a superabundant atonement for the sins of the human race; according to 1 Jo. ii. 2: *He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world*.

Reply Obj. 1. The head and members are as one mystic person; and therefore Christ's satisfaction belongs to all the faithful as being His members. Also, in so far as any two men are one in charity, the one can atone for the other as shall be shown later (Supplement, Q. 13, A. 2). But the same reason does not hold good of confession and contrition, be-

cause atonement consists in an outward action for which helps may be used, among which friends are to be computed.

Reply Obj. 2. Christ's love was greater than His slayers' malice: and therefore the value of His Passion in atoning surpassed the murderous guilt of those who crucified Him: so much so that Christ's suffering was sufficient and superabundant atonement for His murderer's crime.

Reply Obj. 3. The dignity of Christ's flesh is not to be estimated solely from the nature of flesh, but also from the Person assuming it—namely, inasmuch as it was God's flesh, the result of which was that it was of infinite worth.

THIRD ARTICLE

Whether Christ's Passion Operated by Way of Sacrifice?

We proceed thus to the Third Article:

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ's Passion did not operate by way of sacrifice. For the truth should correspond with the figure. But human flesh was never offered up in the sacrifices of the Old Law, which were figures of Christ: nay, such sacrifices were reputed as impious, according to Ps. cv. 38: *And they shed innocent blood: the blood of their sons and of their daughters, which they sacrificed to the idols of Chanaan*. It seems therefore that Christ's Passion cannot be called a sacrifice.

Obj. 2. Further, Augustine says (*De Civ. x*) that a visible sacrifice is a sacrament—that is, a sacred sign—of an invisible sacrifice. Now Christ's Passion is not a sign, but rather the thing signified by other signs. Therefore it seems that Christ's Passion is not a sacrifice.

Obj. 3. Further, whoever offers sacrifice performs some sacred rite, as the very word sacrifice shows. But those men who slew Christ did not perform any sacred act, but rather wrought a great wrong. Therefore Christ's Passion was rather a malefice than a sacrifice.

On the contrary, The Apostle says (Eph. v. 2): *He delivered Himself up for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness*.

I answer that, A sacrifice properly so called is something done for that honor which is properly due to God, in order to appease Him: and hence it is that Augustine says (*De Civ. Dei x*): *A true sacrifice is every good work done in order that we may cling to God in holy fellowship, yet referred to that consummation of happiness wherein we can be truly blessed*. But, as is added in the same place, *Christ offered Himself up for us in the Pas-*

sion: and this voluntary enduring of the Passion was most acceptable to God, as coming from charity. Therefore it is manifest that Christ's Passion was a true sacrifice. Moreover, as Augustine says farther on in the same book, *the primitive sacrifices of the holy Fathers were many and various signs of this true sacrifice, one being prefigured by many, in the same way as a single concept of thought is expressed in many words, in order to commend it without tediousness*: and, as Augustine observes (*De Trin.* iv), *since there are four things to be noted in every sacrifice—to wit, to whom it is offered, by whom it is offered, what is offered, and for whom it is offered—that the same one true Mediator reconciling us with God through the peace-sacrifice might continue to be one with Him to whom He offered it, might be one with them for whom He offered it, and might Himself be the offerer and what He offered.*

Reply Obj. 1. Although the truth answers to the figure in some respects, yet it does not in all, since the truth must go beyond the figure. Therefore the figure of this sacrifice, in which Christ's flesh is offered, was flesh right fittingly, not the flesh of men, but of animals, as denoting Christ's. And this is a most perfect sacrifice. First of all, since being flesh of human nature, it is fittingly offered for men, and is partaken of by them under the Sacrament. Secondly, because being passible and mortal, it was fit for immolation. Thirdly, because, being sinless, it had virtue to cleanse from sins. Fourthly, because, being the offerer's own flesh, it was acceptable to God on account of His charity in offering up His own flesh. Hence it is that Augustine says (*De Trin.* iv): *What else could be so fittingly partaken of by men, or offered up for men, as human flesh? What else could be so appropriate for this immolation as mortal flesh? What else is there so clean for cleansing mortals as the flesh born in the womb without fleshly concupiscence, and coming from a virginal womb? What could be so favorably offered and accepted as the flesh of our sacrifice, which was made the body of our Priest?*

Reply Obj. 2. Augustine is speaking there of visible figurative sacrifices: and even Christ's Passion, although denoted by other figurative sacrifices, is yet a sign of something to be observed by us, according to 1 Pet. iv. 1: *Christ therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sins: that now he may live the rest of his time in the flesh, not after the desires of men, but according to the will of God.*

Reply Obj. 3. Christ's Passion was indeed a malefice on His slayers' part; but on His

own it was the sacrifice of one suffering out of charity. Hence it is Christ who is said to have offered this sacrifice, and not the executioners.

FOURTH ARTICLE

Whether Christ's Passion Brought About Our Salvation by Way of Redemption?

We proceed thus to the Fourth Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ's Passion did not effect our salvation by way of redemption. For no one purchases or redeems what never ceased to belong to him. But men never ceased to belong to God according to Ps. xxiii. 1: *The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof: the world and all they that dwell therein.* Therefore it seems that Christ did not redeem us by His Passion.

Obj. 2. Further, as Augustine says (*De Trin.* xiii): *The devil had to be overthrown by Christ's justice.* But justice requires that the man who has treacherously seized another's property shall be deprived of it, because deceit and cunning should not benefit anyone, as even human laws declare. Consequently, since the devil by treachery deceived and subjugated to himself man, who is God's creature, it seems that man ought not to be rescued from his power by way of redemption.

Obj. 3. Further, whoever buys or redeems an object pays the price to the holder. But it was not to the devil, who held us in bondage, that Christ paid His blood as the price of our redemption. Therefore Christ did not redeem us by His Passion.

On the contrary, It is written (1 Pet. i. 18): *You were not redeemed with corruptible things as gold or silver from your vain conversation of the tradition of your fathers: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled.* And (Gal. iii. 13): *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.* Now He is said to be a curse for us inasmuch as He suffered upon the tree, as stated above (Q. 46, A. 4). Therefore He did redeem us by His Passion.

I answer that, Man was held captive on account of sin in two ways: first of all, by the bondage of sin, because (Jo. viii. 34): *Who-soever committeth sin is the servant of sin*; and (2 Pet. ii. 19): *By whom a man is overcome, of the same also he is the slave.* Since, then, the devil had overcome man by inducing him to sin, man was subject to the devil's bondage. Secondly, as to the debt of punishment, to the payment of which man was held fast by God's justice: and this, too, is a kind of bondage, since it savors of bondage for a

man to suffer what he does not wish, just as it is the free man's condition to apply himself to what he wills.

Since, then, Christ's Passion was a sufficient and a superabundant atonement for the sin and the debt of the human race, it was as a price at the cost of which we were freed from both obligations. For the atonement by which one satisfies for self or another is called the price, by which he ransoms himself or someone else from sin and its penalty, according to Dan. iv. 24: *Redeem thou thy sins with alms.* Now Christ made satisfaction, not by giving money or anything of the sort, but by bestowing what was of greatest price—Himself—for us. And therefore Christ's Passion is called our redemption.

Reply Obj. 1. Man is said to belong to God in two ways. First of all, in so far as he comes under God's power: in which way he never ceased to belong to God; according to Dan. iv. 22: *The Most High ruleth over the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.* Secondly, by being united to Him in charity, according to Rom. viii. 9: *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.* In the first way, then, man never ceased to belong to God, but in the second way he did cease because of sin. And therefore in so far as he was delivered from sin by the satisfaction of Christ's Passion, he is said to be redeemed by the Passion of Christ.

Reply Obj. 2. Man by sinning became the bondsman both of God and of the devil. Through guilt he had offended God, and put himself under the devil by consenting to him; consequently he did not become God's servant on account of his guilt, but rather, by withdrawing from God's service, he, by God's just permission, fell under the devil's servitude on account of the offense perpetrated. But as to the penalty, man was chiefly bound to God as his sovereign judge, and to the devil as his torturer, according to Matth. v. 25: *Lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer—that is, to the relentless avenging angel,* as Chrysostom says (*Hom. xi*). Consequently, although, after deceiving man, the devil, so far as in him lay, held him unjustly in bondage as to both sin and penalty, still it was just that man should suffer it. God so permitting it as to the sin and ordaining it as to the penalty. And therefore justice required man's redemption with regard to God, but not with regard to the devil.

Reply Obj. 3. Because, with regard to God, redemption was necessary for man's deliverance, but not with regard to the devil, the price had to be paid not to the devil, but to

God. And therefore Christ is said to have paid the price of our redemption—His own precious blood—not to the devil, but to God.

FIFTH ARTICLE

Whether It Is Proper to Christ to Be the Redeemer?

We proceed thus to the Fifth Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that it is not proper to Christ to be the Redeemer, because it is written (Ps. xxx. 6): *Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, the God of Truth.* But to be the Lord God of Truth belongs to the entire Trinity. Therefore it is not proper to Christ.

Obj. 2. Further, he is said to redeem who pays the price of redemption. But God the Father gave His Son in redemption for our sins, as is written (Ps. cx. 9): *The Lord hath sent redemption to His people,* upon which the gloss adds, *that is, Christ, who gives redemption to captives.* Therefore not only Christ, but the Father also, redeemed us.

Obj. 3. Further, not only Christ's Passion, but also that of other saints conduced to our salvation, according to Col. i. 24: *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh for His body, which is the Church.* Therefore the title of Redeemer belongs not only to Christ, but also to the other saints.

On the contrary, It is written (Gal. iii. 13): *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.* But only Christ was made a curse for us. Therefore only Christ ought to be called our Redeemer.

I answer that, For someone to redeem, two things are required—namely, the act of paying and the price paid. For if in redeeming something a man pays a price which is not his own, but another's, he is not said to be the chief redeemer, but rather the other is, whose price it is. Now Christ's blood or His bodily life, which is in the blood, is the price of our redemption (Lev. xvii. 11, 14), and that life He paid. Hence both of these belong immediately to Christ as man; but to the Trinity as to the first and remote cause, to whom Christ's life belonged as to its first author, and from whom Christ received the inspiration of suffering for us. Consequently it is proper to Christ as man to be the Redeemer immediately; although the redemption may be ascribed to the whole Trinity as its first cause.

Reply Obj. 1. A gloss explains the text thus: *Thou, O Lord God of Truth, hast redeemed me in Christ, crying out, "Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."* And so redemption belongs immediately to the Man-Christ, but principally to God.

Reply Obj. 2. The Man-Christ paid the price of our redemption immediately, but at the command of the Father as the original author.

Reply Obj. 3. The sufferings of the saints are beneficial to the Church, as by way, not of redemption, but of example and exhortation, according to 2 Cor. i. 6: *Whether we be in tribulation, it is for your exhortation and salvation.*

SIXTH ARTICLE

Whether Christ's Passion Brought About Our Salvation Efficiently?

We proceed thus to the Sixth Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ's Passion did not bring about our salvation efficiently. For the efficient cause of our salvation is the greatness of the Divine power, according to Isa. lix. 1: *Behold the hand of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save. But Christ was crucified through weakness, as it is written (2 Cor. xiii. 4). Therefore, Christ's Passion did not bring about our salvation efficiently.*

Obj. 2. Further, no corporeal agency acts efficiently except by contact: hence even Christ cleansed the leper by touching him in order to show that His flesh had saving power, as Chrysostom* says. But Christ's Passion could not touch all mankind. Therefore it could not efficiently bring about the salvation of all men.

Obj. 3. Further, it does not seem to be consistent for the same agent to operate by way of merit and by way of efficiency, since he who merits awaits the result from someone else. But it was by way of merit that Christ's Passion accomplished our salvation. Therefore it was not by way of efficiency.

On the contrary, It is written (1 Cor. i. 18) that *the word of the cross to them that are saved . . . is the power of God.* But God's

power brings about our salvation efficiently. Therefore Christ's Passion on the cross accomplished our salvation efficiently.

I answer that, There is a twofold efficient agency—namely, the principal and the instrumental. Now the principal efficient cause of man's salvation is God. But since Christ's humanity is the instrument of the Godhead, as stated above (Q. 43, A. 2), therefore all Christ's actions and sufferings operate instrumentally in virtue of His Godhead for the salvation of men. Consequently, then, Christ's Passion accomplishes man's salvation efficiently.

Reply Obj. 1. Christ's Passion in relation to His flesh is consistent with the infirmity which He took upon Himself, but in relation to the Godhead it draws infinite might from It, according to 1 Cor. i. 25: *The weakness of God is stronger than men;* because Christ's weakness, inasmuch as He is God, has a might exceeding all human power.

Reply Obj. 2. Christ's Passion, although corporeal, has yet a spiritual effect from the Godhead united: and therefore it secures its efficacy by spiritual contact—namely, by faith and the sacraments of faith, as the Apostle says (Rom. iii. 25): *Whom God hath proposed to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood.*

Reply Obj. 3. Christ's Passion, according as it is compared with His Godhead, operates in an efficient manner: but in so far as it is compared with the will of Christ's soul it acts in a meritorious manner: considered as being within Christ's very flesh, it acts by way of satisfaction, inasmuch as we are liberated by it from the debt of punishment; while inasmuch as we are freed from the servitude of guilt, it acts by way of redemption: but in so far as we are reconciled with God it acts by way of sacrifice as shall be shown farther on (Q. 49).

Q

A.

B

Satisfaction / liberation

debt of pna. poenae / Sentence of guilt etc

QUESTION 49

Of the Effects of Christ's Passion

(In Six Articles)

WE have now to consider what are the effects of Christ's Passion, concerning which there are six points of inquiry: (1) Whether we were freed from sin by Christ's Passion? (2) Whether we were thereby delivered from the power of the devil? (3) Whether we were freed thereby from our debt of punishment? (4) Whether we were thereby reconciled with God? (5) Whether heaven's gate was opened to us thereby? (6) Whether Christ derived exaltation from it?

* Theophylact, Enarr. in Luc.

FIRST ARTICLE

Whether We Were Delivered from Sin Through Christ's Passion?

We proceed thus to the First Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that we were not delivered from sin through Christ's Passion. For to deliver from sin belongs to God alone, according to Isa. xliii. 25: *I am He who blot out your iniquities for My own sake.* But Christ did not suffer as God, but as man.