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OO SHWE

**REDEMPTION IN ST. ANSELM AND ST. THOMAS
AQUINAS**

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INTRODUCTION

One of the subjects in theological discipline is a field called Soteriology, i.e., the study of the doctrine of redemption, salvation, liberation. The notion of salvation occupies a significant place in Christian religion. In fact, it is at the heart of every Christian theology. Throughout history, Christians at every age, “adapting to the actual needs and in line with the ruling cultural consciousness,”¹ have sought to explain in varying ways the saving work effected by Jesus Christ. These different soteriological models were “strongly dependent on the historical context, and furthermore on the contemporary language, mentality and social situation.”²

In this dissertation, the researcher shall focus on the soteriological model of two great theologians of the middle ages, St. Anselm of Canterbury and St. Thomas Aquinas. The first part discusses Anselm, which will deal with the question of “why God became man,” while the second part delves with Thomas Aquinas, which will point the necessity of Jesus.

St. Anselm of Canterbury

Anselm was born in the city of Aosta in the Italian Alps ca. 1033, and nominated archbishop of Canterbury by King William Rufus in 1093. In 1097, he disputed with King William, concerning Church’s independence. While he was in Rome, the King seized the properties of his see. After the death of the King, King Henry I recalled him to his office again. Anselm was generally considered the

¹ Herman-Emiel Mertens, *Not the Cross, But the Crucified: An Essay in Soteriology*, Louvain Theological and Pastoral Monographs, 11 (Louvain: Peeters Press, 1992), 81.

² Ibid.

outstanding theologian between St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Besides, he was considered as “the father of scholasticism,” and was the first person to successfully to incorporate dialectics into theology. He was canonized in 1163, and in 1720 Clement XI declared him a doctor of the Church.

One of the most important theories of salvation is to be found in Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo* (literally, “Why the God-Man” or “Why God Became Human”; henceforth *CDH*). Although the theory achieved widespread acceptance in the West, the Church has never defined it as a dogma.³ In this monumental work, Anselm sought to show that the Christian idea of the incarnation is compatible with God’s dignity.

There are two sections in this work with its specific objectives. The first section seeks to clarify the objection of the infidels on the act of salvation. In this section, Anselm points out that the person of Jesus was necessary for humankind’s salvation. Moreover, the incarnation of Jesus proves that “it is impossible to be saved without Christ.”⁴ In the second section, somewhat similar to the first part, is more focused on the incarnation of Christ, the fulfillment of God’s purpose, that is, to bring salvation to all in Christ. Although it has two sections, the content of *CDH* rests on three positions: firstly, the satisfaction is necessary on account of God’s honor and justice; secondly, this satisfaction can only be given by the God-man; finally, this satisfaction is really fulfilled by the voluntary death of Christ.⁵

³ Francis S. Fiorenza and John P. Galvin (eds.), *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, Second Edition (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1992), 278.

⁴ Paul Gilbert, “Anselm of Canterbury,” *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, ed., Rene Latourelle & Rino Fisichella (Metro Manila, Philippines: St. Pauls, 1994), 11-17, esp. 15.

⁵ Michael Walsh, *A New Dictionary of Saints: East and West* (London & NY: Burns & Oates, 2007), 49.

St. Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas was born at Rocca Secca, near Aquino, ca. 1225. He was educated first by the Benedictines of Monte Cassino and became a Dominican in 1244 and later studied at Cologne. Aquinas was the most important and influential scholastic theologian and philosopher the world had ever known. He became a master in theology in 1256 and spent the rest of his life in lecturing, studying, preaching, and above all, writing ceaselessly, in Paris and Italy. Among the most well-known of his works were *the Summa Contra Gentiles* and *the Summa Theologiae*. He started his *Summa Theologiae* in 1266 and left unfinished at the time of his death. *Summa Theologiae* (henceforth to be rendered as *ST*) is regarded as the greatest work of medieval theology, a great theological synthesis of Christian theology containing Aquinas' mature thought on all the Christian mysteries. Undoubtedly, Aquinas' *ST* is a remarkable masterpiece of all time, if not the greatest documents of the Christian Church, because of its manifold influences on many theologians of his time up to the present moment. In 1274, Thomas Aquinas died on his way to take part in the 14th Ecumenical Council, Lyons II (France). Pope John XXII canonized him in 1323, and in 1567, Pius V declared him a doctor of the Church. In 1880, Aquinas was acknowledged patron saint of universities and schools.

ST has three parts: The initial part treats of God and creation, the next section discusses the human person as a free moral agent, and the final unit discourses Christ as the way of humans to God. The notion of soteriology can be found in (*pars tertia*) the third part of Thomas Aquinas' *ST*, where he began with the notion of Incarnation. From the fact of the Incarnation, Aquinas taught that it is vital first to consider the Savior himself, who became flesh for the salvation of humankind; and secondly, the

death and resurrection of the Incarnate God. In God's plan, the Incarnation was a necessary element for humanity in order to be reconciled with him.

The love of God to human beings is unconditional. Being omnipotent, God could redeem humanity in many other ways, but the Incarnation is the most suitable for the salvation of humankind, claimed Aquinas. The angelic doctor considered humanity's sin as a violation of God's justice, therefore, punishment and chastisement must be done, as a repayment.

PART ONE

REDEMPTION IN ST. ANSELM

CHAPTER ONE

REDEMPTION THROUGH JESUS AND MARY

Jesus' perfect obedience to the Father's will even unto death, as an expression and condition for the salvation of humankind, is a theme so close to Saint Anselm. Related to this concern is the place of the Virgin Mary, mother of the God-man, in God's work of salvation. These are the concerns of this present chapter.

1. Incarnation of the Word

Anselm begins his *CDH* by asking the question, "for what cause or necessity, in sooth, God became man, and by his death, as we believe and affirm, restored life to the world; when he might done this, by means of some other being, angelic or human, or merely by his will" (Bk. 1, Ch. 1). Anselm is here refuting the objections against the Incarnation and argues that without Incarnation, Redemption is impossible for all of humanity. Why did God become a human being, and die on the cross? Anselm's answer is: To save us from sin and death. He concludes his Book I by saying:

Is it not sufficiently proved that man can be saved by Christ, when even infidels do not deny that man can be happy somehow, and it has been sufficiently shown that, leaving Christ out of view, no salvation can be found for man? For, either by Christ or by someone else can man be saved, or else not at all. If, then, it is false that man cannot be saved all, or that he can be saved in any other way, his salvation must necessarily be by Christ.¹

¹ Saint Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, trans. Sidney N. Deane (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1926; Electronic Version: Catholic Primer 2005), I, XXV, 51. Henceforth, the English translation texts of *CDH* are taken from this material, translated by Sidney N. Deane. The Latin text of *CDH* is taken from S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *Cur Deus Homo? Libri Duo. Editio Nova Correctior Ad Editionem Benedictinorum* (London: David Nutt, 1895), 76. The Latin text runs: "Nonne sufficienter probatur per Christum hominem posse salvari, cum etiam infidels non negent, hominem

Humanity owed God a debt because of their sinfulness. This debt had to be paid by humans, but they cannot. Thus, in Anselm's reasoning, God condescended to the level of humanity in the incarnation of the God-man. The second person of the Trinity became human to pay for the debt and offer God satisfaction for the sin of humanity. In short, the Incarnation of the Word of God is redemption's foundation and presumption. Conversely, for Anselm, Redemption is the inner motive (the *ratio*) of the Incarnation.² Thus, for Anselm, both Incarnation and Redemption are inseparable realities. Incarnation is a necessity for the salvation of the world. Sinful humanity cannot be redeemed without the Incarnation of the Word of God. In *CDH* Anselm by way of revelation and reason proves that it was right and necessary for God to become man and to die.

Anselm was a product of his time. In his defense of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation of the Word of God, Anselm framed his reasoning based on the social structure of his time. Thus, he gave his notion of salvation a "feudal structure."³ This will be further explained in the succeeding pages.

2. Mary, the *Theotokos*

Anselm of Canterbury, besides writing *CDH*, also wrote a treatise *De Virginali conceptu et de peccato originali* ("On the Virginal Conception and on

ullo modo posse fieri beatum, et satis ostensum sit, quia si ponimus Christum non esse, nullo modo potest inveniri salus hominus? Aut enim per Christum, aut alio aliquot, aut nullo modo poterit homo salvus esse; quapropter si falsum est quia nullo aut aliquot alio modo potest hoc esse, necesse est fieri per Christum." Henceforth, *Cur Deus Homo* shall be rendered as *CDH*.

² Mertens, Not the Cross, But the Crucified, 70-71.

³ See Cynthia S. W. Crysdale, *Embracing Travail: Retrieving the Cross Today* (New York: Continuum, 1999), 112.

Original Sin”), as well as fervent prayers addressed to the Virgin as Mediatrix. His views on Mary, though rich, largely mirror those of his contemporaries. He also presents Mary as the *theotokos*, which means not simply the “mother of God,” but more fully, as “the one who gave birth to the one who is God.”⁴

The Incarnation of the Word of God cannot be separated from the role played by the Blessed Virgin Mary. To Mary, God gave his only-begotten Son. This Son was by nature both Son of God and Son of Mary. The Messiah came into the world because of Mary’s *fiat* to God’s design. This messiah, both human and divine at the same time, was born of a Virgin.⁵ There are two points that Anselm mentioned regarding the Virgin Mary: first, the doctrine of Mary as Mediatrix, which he expressed in his orations to her; second, the development of the doctrine of Immaculate Conception, which he himself denied.⁶ Based on the foregoing, it is sufficient to conclude that the God-man, Jesus Christ, should be born of a Virgin.⁷

If God is the Father of the created world, then, Mary is the mother of the re-created world. God is the Father by whom all things were given life, and Mary the mother through whom all things were given new life. For God begot the Son, through whom all things were made, and Mary gave birth to him as the Savior of the world. Without God’s Son, nothing could exist; without Mary’s Son, nothing could be redeemed. Thus, for Anselm, the Virgin Mary is the Mother of the Re-created World.

⁴ Cf. The Council of Ephesus, 431 C.E.

⁵ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH? Libri Duo. Editio Nova Correctior Ad Editionem Benedictinorum* (London: David Nutt, 1895), 92: “Sed de picturis, quae possunt pingi super hoc, quia Deus homo de virgine muliere nasci debet.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, VIII, 61.

⁶ Atria A. Larson, “Passive Instrument and Active Intercessor: Anselm’s View of Mary’s Role in Redemption,” *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 41/1 (2006): 31-49, esp. 32.

⁷ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 91: “Sed sine omni dubitatione asserendum est quia de virgine Deum hominem nasci oportet.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, VIII, 60.

Anselm states that the cure of sin and the source of our salvation should also be found in a woman.⁸

Summing up, for Anselm, although Mary plays “a minor part of his larger concern for explaining and defending the incarnation,”⁹ she is nonetheless an instrument for God’s purpose of redemption.¹⁰

3. The Perfect Obedience of Jesus, the Redeemer

According to Anselm, Jesus kept his obedience perfect even unto death, and for this every rational being and every being owes the obedience to God.¹¹ Jesus Christ came to the world not to do his will, but to do the will of his Father (cf. Heb 10:7), and everything he did was for the sake of his Father who commanded him in such a way so that people may know that he was sent by the Father (cf. Jn 14:31). God did not compel Jesus to die, but Christ himself chose death of his own will as an account of his obedience in maintaining holiness.¹² Hence, Jesus learned obedience from the things which he suffers, which is a perfect obedience to the Father. Jesus “borne the most terrible pains and has voluntarily offered his life, in obedience to his

⁸ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 91: “Pinge igitur non super fictam vanitatem, sed super solidam veritatem, et dic quia valde convenit, ut quemadmodum hominis peccatum et causa nostrae damnationis initium sumpsit a femina, ita medicina peccati et causa nostrae salvationis nascatur de femina” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, VIII, 61.

⁹ Larson, “Passive Instrument and Active Intercessor: Anselm’s View of Mary’s Role in Redemption,” 41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 20: “Ut mihi videtur, non bene discernis inter hoc, quod fecit exigente obedientia, et quod, sibi factum, quia servavit obedientiam, sustinuit non exigente obedientia. Hoc puto, quia Deus ab omni rationali creatura exigit, et hoc illa per obedientiam Deo debet.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, IX, 19.

¹² S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 21: “Non ergo coegit Deus Christum mori in quo nullum fuit peccatum; sed ipse sponte sustinuit mortem, non per obedientiam deserendi vitam.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, IX, 20.

Father.”¹³ Quoting the Apostle Paul, Anselm declares “he humbled himself, being made obedient even unto death, and death of the cross, and therefore God has exalted him and gave him a name which is above every other name” (cf. Phil 2:7-10).¹⁴ Christ made atonement under the demand of the obedience.¹⁵ In like manner, every human being should obey God, as Jesus did.

Christ knew himself to be the Messiah, and the figure of the Messiah is inestimably important “not by the word that he speaks, not the work that he performs, not the instructions that he gives are decisive, but what he himself is.”¹⁶ The death of Jesus, therefore, is the cornerstone of the theology of Redemption of Saint Anselm. In fact, Anselm affirms, “if you do not kill him, all the sins of the world will be heaped upon you,” and we also see that “no enormity or multitude of sins, apart from the Divine person, can for a moment be compared with a bodily injury inflicted upon that man.”¹⁷ Hence, there is only one God, one mediator between God and human beings, Jesus Christ, who died for humanity as a ransom.¹⁸

¹³ Mertens, *Not the Cross, But the Crucified*, 73.

¹⁴ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, IX, 20. The Latin text runs: “Quod autem apostolus, cum dixisset: humiliavit semetipsum, factus obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis, subdidit Propter quod et Deus illum exaltavit, et donavit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 22).

¹⁵ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 20: “Ecce habes, quid fecit exigente obedientia.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, IX, 19.

¹⁶ Romano Guardini, *The Lord* (London: St. Paul Publications, 1954), 238.

¹⁷ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, XIV, 71. The Latin text runs: “Quid, si iterum tibi diceretur: aut eum occidas, aut omnia peccata mundi venient super te. Bene respondes; videmus ergo, quia violation vitae corporalis hujus hominis nulla immensitas vel multitudo peccatorum extra personam Dei comparari valet” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 118).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 220.

Christ redeemed our erring thoughts through the truths he brought to us.¹⁹ So, Jesus is an example of life giving, as the gift of his life surpasses all the sins of men, so will also his suffering of death. A question can further be raised: how does Jesus remove even the sins of his murderers?²⁰ According to St. Anselm, full awareness of the act is an important element in every sin committed:

for a sin knowingly committed and a sin done ignorantly are so different that an evil which they could never do, were its full extent known, may be pardonable when done in ignorance.²¹

When Saint Anselm talks about sins, he refers only to those sins committed with full knowledge.

Conclusion

The incarnation of the Word, Mary's *fiat* as the mother of the God-man (*Theotokos*), and the perfect obedience of Jesus to the Father are all necessary for the realization of redemption of humankind, since without these elements redemption of humanity would not be completed. The Word became flesh through a Virgin, and this incarnate Word faithfully obeyed the Father's design of giving up his life as a fitting ransom for humanity's inestimable debt to God, which is sin.

¹⁹ Adam Karl. *The Christ of Faith: The Christology of the Church* (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1957), 293.

²⁰ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 109: "Quomodo delect mors eadem etiam peccata eum perimentium." Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, XV, 73.

²¹ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, XV, 73. The Latin text goes: "Tantum namque different scienter factum peccatum, et quod per ignorantiam fit, ut malum, quod nunquam facere possent pro nimietate sua, si cognosceretur, veniale sit, quia ignoranter factum est" (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 110).

CHAPTER TWO

THE SATISFACTION THEORY OF ANSELM

Theologians have articulated the salvific meaning of Jesus' death (and resurrection) using different categories. They have tried to locate the *full* significance of salvation in one particular metaphor. Consequently, a variety of soteriological models have been proposed to explain the effect and significance of the Christ-event. One of the influential models that became a dominant view through the centuries was coming from the medieval theologian, Anselm of Canterbury. This Benedictine monk, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury, understood Christ's atoning work in terms of legal satisfaction. How does the death of Christ save us?

1. Theory of Satisfaction

Anselm was reacting to the "ransom theory" prevailing at that time. The first church father that spoke of a ransom paid to the devil was Irenaeus (died ca. 200 C.E.). According to Irenaeus in his magnum opus *Adversus Haereses* ("Against Heresies"), Christ had to become human because the devil had tempted humans into sin. Humanity had become captives of the devil. Thus, on the cross, Christ offered himself as the payment of the ransom to the devil. However, in the resurrection, God reclaimed his Son, so that the resurrected Son and the ransomed sinners became divine property (cf. *Adversus Haereses* V, 1, 1). Gregory of Nyssa (died 394), making a commentary on the ransom theory, explained that God played a trick on the devil by offering him his incarnate Son as a ransom. The devil is fooled, because he

does not recognize the divinity of the Son, veiled under his human nature. It was to this idea that Christ's death was a ransom paid to the devil that theologians like Anselm criticized. Anselm had denied that the devil had any rightful claim to have authority over humanity, "for both the devil and humanity are under God's power."¹ Instead, Anselm in the eleventh century proposed the "satisfaction theory" in his work *Cur Deus Homo* which won a wide following in the middle ages, the reformation period and later.

But to better understand Anselm's doctrine of satisfaction, it is necessary to take into account its *Sitz im Leben*. It must be made clear that this Benedictine monk lived in the context of medieval feudal system. In such a feudal society, there exists a relationship between the overlord or liege and the vassals based on mutual trust. The liege secured power and protection, while the vassals promised the liege their servitude and tribute. "The honor of the liege did not only bear upon his person, but had also a social dimension: where the lord was honored and served, order and peace ruled."² This medieval feudal system left its mark on the image of God, where God was presented as a feudal lord. Thus, Anselm's typical notion of *honor Dei* must be understood from the background of the feudal setting he was in.

Anselm's starting point is an assessment of sin and its effect. Anselm sees sin as an offense against God. For Anselm, the reality of sin "disrupts the order of the universe, the beautiful harmony of all things that constitutes the honor of God, their

¹ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, VII, 15. The Latin text runs: "Nam si diabolus aut homo suus esset aut alterius, quam Dei, aut in alia, quam in Dei potestate maneret, forsitan hoc recte diceretur; cum autem diabolus aut homo non sit nisi Dei" (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 14).

² Mertens, *Not the Cross, But the Crucified*, 73.

creator.”³ Sin as an offense against the infinite God has an infinite dimension to it. According to Anselm, humans as the originators of sin are by all means obligated to offer satisfaction to God for their sins (cf. Bk I, 11).⁴ Humankind ought to restore the order in the universe disrupted by their sins and make up to God for their offenses. The question, however, is: what else does any human being have to give to God that he or she does not already owe him? In Pannenberg’s words, Anselm wants to say:

The sinner is held fast in the condition of sin by the duty to bring satisfaction. It is not enough for man to stop sinning, but over and beyond this he must offer satisfaction to God for the sin he has already committed. Such satisfaction can consist only of something that man does not already owe God. It can consist only in a work that goes beyond his obligation, that is, in a merit.⁵

For Anselm, only something above and beyond what is already owed God can serve to make satisfaction for the offense of sin.

For Anselm the result or payment for sin is death. Now, since Jesus alone of all human beings is sinless he was not bound to die. Hence, what Jesus can offer to God that he does not already owe him is his death, and since Jesus is the God-man, his death has the infinite value required to match the infinite weight of sin. Ergo, in freely offering his life to God, Jesus makes satisfaction for sin. Through Jesus’ sinlessness, his humanity and divinity, Christ (and only Christ) could sufficiently satisfy on our behalf for the infinite dishonor to God which is sin.⁶ The human race, left of his own, is unable to pay the debt it has contracted. Moreover, any attempted

³ William P. Loewe, *An Introduction to Christology: Rethinking Jesus’ Religious Significance Today* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1997), 165.

⁴ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus: God and Man*, Study Edition (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1968), 42.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Gerald O’Collins & Edward Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology* (London: Harper Collins, 1991), 214.

satisfaction made by humans remain finite, and therefore insufficient to repay the infinite debt.

Anselm also emphasizes that only the divine-human person, Jesus Christ, is the true bearer of the fulfillment of satisfaction.⁷ Jesus Christ, being the sinless God-man, “restores and makes good what is corrupted through the fall.”⁸ Thus, the only one that “has made full satisfaction for sin by his death and resurrection,”⁹ is Jesus Christ. Anselm claims that “it is not fitting that God should take sinful man without an atonement, in substitution for lost angels; for truth will not suffer man thus to be raised to an equality with holy beings.”¹⁰

Consequently, Anselm has interpreted atonement in terms of a gift that Christ offers on behalf of sinful humankind.¹¹ Thus, the word “satisfaction” captures the activity by which God delivers us from the bondage of sin and evil.¹² Anselm states:

without satisfaction, that is, without voluntary payment of the debt, God can neither pass by the sin unpunished, nor can the sinner attain that happiness, or happiness like that, which he had before he sinned; for man cannot in this way be restored, or become such as he was before he sinned.¹³

⁷ See Pannenberg’s comment on Anselm in his *Jesus: God and Man*, 279.

⁸ Katherine Sonderegger, “Anselm: Defensor Fidei,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9/3 (2007): 342-359, esp. 348.

⁹ M. J. Peter Stravinskias, *Catholic Dictionary* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1993), 684.

¹⁰ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XIX, 40. The Latin text runs: “Non decet ergo Deum, hominem peccantem sine satisfactione ad restaurationem angelorum assumere perditorum; quoniam non patitur veritas, eum levari ad aequalitatem bonorum” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 58).

¹¹ Paul D. Jones, “Barth and Anselm: God, Christ and the Atonement,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 12/3 (2010): 257-282, esp. 257.

¹² O’Collins & Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, 221.

¹³ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XIX, 40. The Latin text goes: “Tene igitur certissime, quia sine satisfactione, id est, sine debiti solutione spontanea nec Deus potest peccatum impunitum dimittere, nec

Anselm demonstrates that “Christ’s death as a gift that the incarnate Son offers the Father on behalf of sinful humankind.”¹⁴ Hence, atonement is necessary for the reconstitution of a community of God’s beloved creatures in which all alienation and violence are overcome.¹⁵ “Satisfaction is not something God requires of man, or even of Jesus, as a condition for accomplishing his saving plan. Rather it is the means whereby God in very fact accomplishes his plan to bring all men and women into loving union with himself.”¹⁶ Therefore, Anselm asserts that only the God-man could solve this problem, and he understood the death of Jesus on the cross as “*satisfactio*.”¹⁷ Anselm states that “when you render anything to God which you owe him, irrespective of your past sin, you should not reckon this as the debt which you owe for sin. But you owe God every one of those things.”¹⁸

2. The Question of Sin

Sin is an insult to God and a violation of the legal order.¹⁹ As Larson comments, in Anselm’s understanding there are two points of indications of sin: firstly, original sin lies not within each human’s unique personality, but rather within

peccator ad beatitudinem vel talem qualem habebat antequam peccaret, pervenire; non enim hoc modo repararetur homo vel talis quails fuerat ante peccatum” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 60).

¹⁴ Paul D. Jones, “Barth and Anselm: God, Christ and the Atonement,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 12, no. 3 (2010): 257-282, esp. 257.

¹⁵ Cahill, “Quaestio Disputata,” 428.

¹⁶ Romanus Cessario, *The Godly Image: Christ and Salvation in Catholic Thought from Anselm to Aquinas*, Studies in Historical Theology (Petersham: St. Bede’s Publications, 1990), 18.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁸ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XX, 42. The Latin text shows: “Cum reddis aliquid, quod debes Deo, etiamsi non peccasti, non debes computare hoc pro debito, quod debes pro peccato. Omnia autem ista debes Deo, quae dicis” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 62).

¹⁹ Mertens, *Not the Cross, But the Crucified*, 71.

the human nature;²⁰ secondly, “all of human nature was contained in Adam and Eve, so when they sinned, they corrupted not just their own persons but human nature in its entirety.”²¹ Further, Anselm argues that “sin is the extreme love of self to the contempt of God, and man must realize this with sincerity and authenticity. Only then, can the grace of God work as he turns away from sin back to his creator.”²² In *CDH* Anselm asserts that

For the restoring of human nature by God is more wonderful than its creation; for either was equally easy for God; but before man was made he had not sinned so that he ought not to be denied existence but after man was made he deserved, by his sin, to lose his existence together with its design; though he never has wholly lost this, viz., that he should be one capable of being punished, or of receiving God's compassion.²³

It is not, therefore, God who suffers as the result of sin, it is the creature; when it does not will what it ought, it dishonors God.²⁴ Anselm views sin as an offense against God. He also maintained that the sin of mankind distressed the divine order in the Universe, and for this Jesus's death was satisfied divine honor and restored cosmic harmony.²⁵ In fact, as Anselm puts “you make no satisfaction unless you restore

²⁰ Larson, “Passive Instrument and Active Intercessor,” 34.

²¹ Ibid.

²² See Angeles, “St. Anselm on the Being of God,” 12.

²³ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, XVI, 74. “Quippe mirabilis Deus restauravit humanam naturam, quam instauravit; aequaliter enim utrumque Deo facile est; sed homo ante quam esset, non peccavit, ut fieri non deberet. Postquam vero factus est, peccando meruit, ut quod, et ad quod factus est, perderet; quamvis non perdiderit omnino quod factus erat, ut esset, qui puniretur, aut cui Deus miseretur.” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 113).

²⁴ Colin E. Gunton, *The Actuality of Atonement: A Study of Metaphor, Rationality, and the Christian Tradition* (London, T&T Clark, 2003), 94-95.

²⁵ Cahill, “Quaestio Disputata,” 421.

something greater than the amount of that obligation, which should restrain you from committing the sin.”²⁶

To sum up, sin is something against the soul and causing the shame of the sinful soul away from God.²⁷ In Anselm’s perspective, to sin is to dishonor God,²⁸ and that “original sin is simply the loss of the original justice.”²⁹

3. Man cannot be saved without Satisfaction

Anselm validates that human being had been completely ruined,³⁰ therefore “the ability to give recompense for sin and unload the burden of guilt is essential to the eventual happiness of the repentant sinner.”³¹ *CDH* proves that except the God-man, no other man can make the atonement by which man can be saved,³² and for this reason, no other being, even though how wise and talented he may be, could make satisfaction, only God can make this.³³ For this reason, Jesus is necessary for our

²⁶ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XXI, 45. The Latin text runs: “Sic graviter peccamus, quotiescunque scienter aliquid quamlibet parvum contra voluntatem Dei facimus; quoniam semper sumus in conspectus ejus, et semper ipse praecipit nobis, ne peccemus. Patet, quia secundum quantitatem exigit Deus satisfactionem. Non ergo satisfacis, si non reddis aliquid majus, quam sit id, pro quo peccatum facere non debueras” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 67).

²⁷ Heckman, *The Dream of the Road, Anselm, and Militant Christology*, 146.

²⁸ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 32: “Sic ergo debet omnis, qui peccat, honorem, quem rapuit Deo, solver; et haec est satisfaction, quam omnis peccator debet Deo facere.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XI, 25.

²⁹ Rogers, “Anselm on Grace and Free Will,” 69.

³⁰ Cahill, “Quaestio Disputata,” 422. Cfr. *CDH*, I, IV; II, IV.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 422-423. Cfr. *CDH*, I, XI, 25.

³² S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 85. The Latin text goes: “Quod satisfactionem, per quam salvatur homo, non possit facere nisi Deus homo.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, VI, 59.

³³ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, VI, 59. The Latin text puts: “Non ergo potest hanc satisfactionem facere nisi Deus. Sed nec facere illam debet nisi homo, alioquin non satisfacit homo” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 86).

salvation, for he is the only one that can make by laid down his life for humankind,³⁴

said Anselm. Here, *CDH* shows:

While God did not need to suffer to save mankind, sinners needed the suffering of the God-Man to redeem them, because they could not pay their own debt to God. Thus Christ gave God, of his own will, something that was not owed. To cure the “disorder of sin,” Christ took on human nature, paying the debt for sinners when he himself owed nothing.³⁵

Being as God, Jesus redeemed humanity without humbling the divine nature, and though God the Father did not force him to sacrifice himself, Jesus chose to offer himself in sacrifice to honor his Father.³⁶ Redemption of humanity, however, “cannot be effected, except the price paid to God for the sin of man is something greater than the entire universe besides God.”³⁷ Hence, “it is necessary that he who can give God anything of his own which is more valuable than all things in the possession of God, must be greater than all else but God himself.”³⁸

4. Humanity’s Debt to God

Since we are merely human beings, everyone owes God a debt, and which God requires from us. This debt creates essentially an imbalance in the moral universe; it could not be satisfied by God’s simply ignoring it. Therefore, the only

³⁴ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 100. The Latin text indicates: “Poterit igitur nunquam mori si volet, et poterit mori et resurgere. Sive autem animam suam ponat nullo alio faciente, sive alius hoc faciat ut team ponat ipso permittente: quantum ad potestatem nihil deffert.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, XI, 66.

³⁵ Heckman, *The Dream of the Road, Anselm, and Militant Christology*, 146.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 147.

³⁷ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, VI, 58. The Latin text points: “Hoc autem fieri nequit, nisi sit, qui solvat Deo pro peccato hominis aliquid majus, quam omne, quod praeter Deum est” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 85).

³⁸ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, II, VI, 58. The Latin text says: “Illum quoque, qui de suo poterit Deo dare aliquid, quod supersit omene quod sub Deo est, majorem esse necesse est, quam omne quod non est Deus” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 85).

possible way of repaying the debt was for a being of infinite greatness, acting as a man on behalf of men, to repay the debt of honor owed to God. Being sinner, they are saved only when paid.³⁹ Concerning this idea Anselm expresses:

Listen to the voice of strict justice; and judge according to that whether man makes to God a real satisfaction for his sin, unless, by overcoming the devil, man restore to God what he took from God in allowing himself to be conquered by the devil; so that, as by this conquest over man the devil took what belonged to God, so in man's victory the devil may be despoiled, and God recover his right.⁴⁰

Anselm states that it is not good for human beings to be with God without compensation or punishment, since “it is not fitting for God to pass over anything in his kingdom undischarged.”⁴¹ Therefore, the one who pays his/her debt by making supplication, praying, can reconcile with God, for “prayer is properly connected with the payment; for God owes no man anything, but every creature owes God.”⁴² Accordingly, “to sin is nothing else than not to render to God his due,”⁴³ and all the rational being is subject to the will of God.⁴⁴ This is the debt that man and even angel owe to God, and if anyone who does not pay his/her debt commits sin, this is justice

³⁹ J. Denny Weaver, *Keeping Salvation Ethical: Mennonite and Amish Atonement Theology in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Canada, Health Press, 1997), 47.

⁴⁰ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XXIII, 47. The Latin text indicates: “Intende in districtam justitiam; et judica secundum illam, utrum ad aequalitatem peccati homo satisfaciat Deo, nisi id ipsum, quod permittendo se vinci a diabolo, Deo abstulit, diabolum vincendo restituat; ut quemadmodum per hoc quod victus est, rapuit diabolus quod Dei erat, et Deus perdidit, ita per hoc, quod vincat, perdat diabolus, et Deus recuperet” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 69).

⁴¹ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XII, 26. The Latin text states: “Deum vero non decet aliquid in suo regno inordinatum dimittere” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 33).

⁴² Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XIX, 41. The Latin text points: “Quoniam hoc ipsum pertinent ad solutionem, ut supplicet; nam Deus nulli quidquam debet, sed omnis creatura illi debet” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 60).

⁴³ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XI, 25. The Latin text goes: “Non est itaque aliud peccare, quam Deon en reddere debitum” (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 31).

⁴⁴ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *Cur Deus Homo*, 31: “Omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subjecta debet esse voluntati Dei.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, I XI, 25.

that makes a person just or upright in heart.⁴⁵ Hence, when Jesus died, he did not pay a debt to Satan but the God, His Father.

As a result, the requirement of human being to God is to honor him, and the one who sins should pay back to God which he has robbed, and this is satisfaction that everybody owes to God.⁴⁶ In other word, human beings had violated God's honor and it is not enough to just give him his honor back, but according to the amount of the injury done we must make satisfaction to God whom we have dishonored. Therefore, everyone who sins needs to pay back God what the honor taken.⁴⁷

To sum up, Anselm concludes that "man's inability to restore what he owes to God, an inability brought upon himself for that very purpose, does not excuse man from paying; for the result of sin cannot excuse the sin itself."⁴⁸ Anselm, moreover, reveals that "if God gives up what he was about to take from unwilling man, because man is unable to restore what he ought to restore freely, He abates the punishment and makes man happy on account of his sin, because he has what he ought not to have."⁴⁹

⁴⁵ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 31: "Hoc est debitum, quod debet angelus et homo Deo, quod solvendo nullus peccat; et quod omnis, qui non solvit, peccat. Haec est justitia sive rectitude voluntatis, quae justos facit sive rectos corde, id est, voluntate." Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I XI, 25.

⁴⁶ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, I, XI, 32: "Sic ergo debet omnis, qui peccat, honorem, quem rapuit Deo, solver; et haec est satisfaction, quam omnis peccator debet Deo facere." Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XI, 25.

⁴⁷ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 32: "Hunc honorem debitum, qui Deo non reddit, aufert Deo, quod suum est, et Deum exhonorat; et hoc est peccare. Sicut enim, qui laedit salute alterius, non sufficit, si salute restituit, nisi pro illata doloris injuria recompenset aliquid; ita qui honorem alicujus violat, non sufficit honorem reddere, si non secundum exhonoratiōnis factam molestiam aliquid, quod placeat illi, quem exhonoravit, restituat" Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XI, 25.

⁴⁸ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XXIV, 48. The Latin text runs: "Quapropter impotentia reddendi Deo quod debet, quae facit ut non reddat, non excusat hominem, si non reddit; quoniam effectum peccati non excusat peccatum quod facit" (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 72).

⁴⁹ Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XXIV, 49. The Latin text shows: "At si dimittit, quod invite erat ablaturus, propter impotentiam reddendi quod sponte reddere debet, relaxat Deus poenam, et facit beatum hominem propter peccatum, quia habet, quod debet non habere" (S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 73).

As a matter of fact, a person ought not to have this inability, and therefore as long as he has it without atonement it is his sin.⁵⁰

Conclusion

God created human beings for the purpose of goodness, therefore they are required to live righteously. Because of the fall in Adam, humankind sinned against God, which is against his honor. Because of this wrong act, humankind owed a debt to the infinite God, and this debt can only be paid by satisfaction. Therefore, satisfaction is required as a ransom. The ransom is not paid to the devil, but to God. Human beings should make satisfaction for his sin, but they cannot, since they are finite human beings and God is infinite. Therefore, this satisfaction can only be done by the God-man.

The Satisfaction theory of Anselm is not without criticisms. For instance, “many modern theologians, especially liberal Protestants, have criticized Anselm sharply, both for his reliance on legal categories and for his concentration on the crucifixion.”⁵¹ Indeed, Anselm interprets the redemption by emphasizing on the crucifixion without taking into account the resurrection (cf. Rom 4:25: Jesus “was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification”). Moreover, Anselm tended to separate Christ’s death from his public life. Consequently, in the satisfaction model Jesus is seen primarily as an expiator. The satisfaction model seems to have highlighted not only the legalistic, but also the punitive elements. For instance, like sin, payment of the appropriate satisfaction is also measured

⁵⁰ S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *CDH*, 73: “Nam ipsam impotentiam debet non habere, et idcirco quamdiu illam habet sine satisfactione, peccatum est illi.” Cf. Saint Anselm, *CDH*, I, XXIV, 49.

⁵¹ Fiorenza and Galvin, *Systematic Theology*, 279.

qualitatively. Anyhow, over-all, the satisfaction model of Anselm was a product of his time and can only be properly appreciated within its particular historical setting.

PART TWO

SALVATION IN ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

CHAPTER THREE

SALVATION THROUGH JESUS AND VIRGIN MARY

Anselm's satisfaction model underwent various modifications. It is said that the most influential change is derived from Thomas Aquinas, the angelic doctor of the Church. While he basically supported Anselm, he developed further his theme of satisfaction. There were some points where Aquinas registered his opposition to Anselm. What were his thoughts? How did he differ from Anselm?

1. Incarnation of Christ

Reacting to Anselm, Thomas Aquinas is opposed to his idea that the incarnation was necessary for redemption. Galvin, explaining Aquinas' view, states:

In his judgment, the incarnation was very appropriate ("convenient"), a fitting and reasonable thing for God to do, but not strictly necessary. Thomas held that the incarnation was necessary only on the condition that God demands full satisfaction. Why God requires this and why satisfaction is accomplished precisely in Christ's death remain mysteries of divine freedom. Had God so willed, redemption could have been accomplished differently.¹

There are many other ways that God can liberate humankind, but none so appropriate for healing our wretchedness than the incarnation of Christ, and thus God needed to become flesh.² Aquinas argues that the death of Jesus satisfies the penalty

¹ Fiorenza & Galvin, *Systematic Theology*, 278.

² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: A Concise Translation*, Edited by Timothy Mc Dermott (Christian Classics/ Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, Inc., 1989), 475.

owed by sin. Hence, it was fitting that God should become incarnate for the restoration of human nature.³

According to Bauerschmidt, Aquinas is explaining the meaning of the incarnation in terms of God's desire to share himself with us, and since God is the highest goodness, it is only fitting that God would share himself in the highest way possible by actually becoming one of us. Aquinas does not think he is proving that God had to become incarnate, but rather showing that the incarnation fits with our understanding of God as the highest goodness.⁴

Scholastic theologians have long debated the motive for the incarnation. The question being asked is: Would the Word become flesh if Adam had not sinned? Aquinas on his part would argue that the Word would not have become flesh had Adam not sinned. He wrote in his *Summa*,

Everywhere in the Sacred Scripture, however, the sin of the first man is given as the reason for the Incarnation; thus it is preferable to hold that the work of the Incarnation is ordered by God as a remedy for sin, in such a way that if there had been no sin, there would have been no Incarnation. Divine power, of course, is not limited to this, for God could have become incarnate even if there had been no sin.⁵

The Thomists believe that the motive of the incarnation is the overcoming of sin; but without sin to overcome, the incarnation was not necessary. The biblical proof for this is Paul's insistence that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor 15:3). According

³ *ST*, III, q 1, a 2: "Primo modo Deum incarnari non fuit necessarium ad reparationem humanae naturae, Deus enim per suam omnipotentem virtutem poterat humanam naturam multis aliis modis reparare." (Cf. Bauerschmidt, *Introducing the Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 165).

⁴ Frederick C. Bauerschmidt, *The Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Grand Rapids, MN: Brazos Press, 2005), 165.

⁵ *ST*, III, q 1, a 3, 18: "Unde, cum in sacra Scriptura ubique incarnationis ratio ex peccato primi hominis assignetur, convenientius dicitur incarnationis opus ordinatum esse a Deo in remedium peccati, ita quod, peccato non existente, incarnation non fuisset. Quamvis potential Dei ad hoc non limitetur, potuisset enim, etiam peccato non existente, Deus incarnari."

to Galvin's commentary, "The Thomist position entails the consequence that both creation and the initial offer of grace are not intrinsically related to the incarnation. The incarnation is the divine response to a factor eternally foreseen but not willed by God."⁶ Summing up, the purpose of the Incarnation is principally for the restoration of human being. Therefore, it is not fitting for the Word of God to be incarnate in the beginning, before man sinned. For medicine is given only to the sick.

2. Mary, the *Theotokos*

Compare to Anselm, Aquinas is more pay attention to the Virgin Mary. The role of Mary in Anselm plays a minor part regarding to the Incarnation. Anselm, however, views Mary as an instrument of God's purpose of redemption. In Aquinas understanding, it is fitting that Christ should be born of a virgin, since Christ is the true and natural Son of God, it was not fitting that he should have another father than God.⁷ Alike Anselm, who pointed out two issues of Mary: Mary as the Mediatrix and Mary as the Immaculate Conception (which he himself denied), Aquinas likewise states that "it was nevertheless most becoming that he should take flesh from a woman: first, because in this way the entire human nature was ennobled; secondly, because thus the truth of the Incarnation is made evident."⁸

The pride of Eve brings sin into the world, whereas the Virgin Mary welcomes all Christians in order to unite with God through his Son. According to Anselm, Jesus

⁶ Fiorenza and Galvin, *Systematic Theology*, 280.

⁷ *ST*, III, q 31, a 4, 20: "Quod Christus sit conceptus ex virgine, conveniens est propter Cum enim Christus sit verus et naturalis Dei Filius."

⁸ *ST*, III, q 31, a 4, 20: "Convenientissimum tamen fuit ut de femina carnem acciperet. Primo quidem, quia per hoc tota humana natura novilitata est. secundo, quia per hoc veritas incarnationis adstruitur."

should be born of a virgin for three reasons: “first, for his own sake; second, for his Mother’s sake; third, for our sake.”⁹ Aquinas states:

The mother of Christ was a virgin even in his birth, for the prophet says not only behold a virgin shall conceive, but adds and shall bear a son, this indeed was befitting for three reasons. First, because this was in keeping with a property of him whose birth is in question, for he is the Word of God. For the word is not only conceived in the mind without corruption, but also proceeds from the mind without corruption. Secondly, this is fitting as regards the effect of Christ’s Incarnation, since he came for this purpose, that he might take away our corruption. Thirdly, it was fitting that he who commanded us to honor our father and mother should not in his birth lessen the honor due to his mother.¹⁰

For this reason, Aquinas clearly states, “we must therefore simply assert that the Mother of God, as she was a virgin in conceiving him and a virgin in giving him birth, so did she remain a virgin ever afterwards.”¹¹ It is important to realize that “in the fruit of the Blessed Virgin we find sweetness and salvation.”¹² Hence, “in whatever way the Blessed Virgin would have been sanctified before animation, she could never have incurred the stain of original sin: and thus she would not have needed redemption and salvation, which is through Christ.”¹³

⁹ *ST*, III, q 29, a 1, 58: “Dicendum quod conveniens fuit Christum de desponsata virgine nasci, tum propter ipsum, tum propter matrem, tum etiam propter nos.”

¹⁰ *ST*, III, q 28, a 2, 42: “Dicendum quod absque omni dubio asserendum est matrem Christi etiam in partu virginem fuisse: nam Propheta non solum dicit, Ecce virgo concipiet; sed addit, et pariet filium. Et hoc quidem conveniens fuit propter tria. Primo quidem, quia hoc competebat proprietati ejus qui nascebatur, quod est Verbum Dei. Nam verbum non solum in corde absque corruptione concipitur, sed etiam absque corruptione ex corde procedit. Secundo, hoc est conveniens quantum ad effectum incarnationis Christi. Nam ad hoc venit ut nostrum corruptionem tolleret. Tertio fuit conveniens, ne matris honorem nascendo diminueret qui parentes praeceperat honorandos.”

¹¹ *ST*, III, q 28, a 3, 4: “Et ideo simpliciter est asserendum quod mater Dei, sicut virgo concepit et virgo peperit, ita etiam virgo post partum in sempiternum permanserit.”

¹² *The Catechetical Instructions*, by St. Thomas Aquinas (Manila: Sinag-Tala Publishers, 1939), 210-11.

¹³ *ST*, III, q 27, a 2, 10: “Et sic, quocumque modo ante animationem beata Virgo sanctificata fuisset, nunquam incurrisset maculam originalis cuplae: et ita non indiguisset redemption et salute quae est per Christum.”

Aquinas concludes, “Before the infusion of the rational soul, the Blessed Virgin was not sanctified,”¹⁴ and thus, “Mary must have borne the mark of sin.”¹⁵

3. The Perfect Obedience of Jesus to the Father

Anselm views Jesus’ obedience as self-giving, obedience unto death. Jesus’ passion gives us an example of obedience, justice, perseverance, humility, and the further virtues demonstrated in it (Jesus’ passion), which are compulsory for the redemption of the humanity.¹⁶ According to Aquinas, it was befitting that Christ should suffer out of obedience for three reasons: firstly, by his obedience, in replacing of the disobedience of one man, many shall be made just (Rom 5:19); secondly, by his death human beings reconciled to God, since his death was a most acceptable sacrifice to God (Rom 5:10; Eph 5:2); thirdly, by his obedience Jesus conquered death (Prov 21:28).¹⁷ This concept is similar to Anselm, who claims that Christ himself chose death of his own will as an account of his obedience in maintaining holiness.

Aquinas uses Dionysius saying that Jesus Christ is subject to the decree of the Father, and this shows that he too is willing to obey God the Father. Every creature is supposed to serve God, even the Son of God is said to have taken the form of a servant, “the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a

¹⁴ *ST*, III, q 27, a 2, 10-12: “Et ideo ante infusionem animae rationalis beata virgo sanctificata non fuit, Unde relinquitur quod sanctificatio beatae Virginis fuerit post eius animationem.”

¹⁵ Bauerschmidt, *The Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 207, n. 7.

¹⁶ Jean-Pierre Torrel, *Christ and Spirituality in St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 90.

¹⁷ *ST*, III, q 47, a 2, 58: “Dicendum quod convenientissimum fuit quod Christus ex obedientia pateretur. Primo quidem quia hoc conveniebat justificationi humanae, ut *sicut per unius hominis inobedientiam peccatores constitute sunt multi, ita per unius hominis obedientiam iusti constituentur multi ut dicitur Rom.* Secundo, hoc conveniens fuit reconciliatione Dei ad homines Secundum illud *Rom., Reconciliati sumus Deo per mortem Filii ejus*, inquantum scilicet ipsa mors Christi fuit quoddam sacrificium acceptissimum Deo. Tertio, hoc conveniens fuit ejus victoria, qua de morte et auctore mortis triumphavit.

ransom for many” (Mt 20:28). Jesus states that what he is doing and has done always pleases the Father, and this shows that he obeys his Father even unto death (Phil 2:8).¹⁸ This, likewise, identical to Anselm’s way of understanding the obedience of Jesus, Jesus made atonement under the demand of obedience (*CDH*, I, IX).

By viewing Christ’s love of his people, “Jesus is the head, and by his passion, which he endured from love and obedience, he delivered us as his members from our sins.”¹⁹ Therefore, Christ ought to give something from himself or either himself for compensation, and being mortals every rational creature owes the obedience to God.²⁰

Aquinas quotes St. John Damascene as saying, *Christus non est obediens patri nisi secundum quod homo*, “Christ is not obedient to the Father except as man.”²¹ John Damascene once wrote “it is not as God, but as man that the Lord became obedient to the Father. On the other hand, Aquinas likewise quotes St. Augustine “in what Christ says, not what I will, but what you will, he shows that he willed something else than his Father.”²² Since Jesus is a man, he can and indeed must turn to the Father in submission, prayer, and sacrifice (*ST*, 3, 20, 1; 21, 1; 22, 1); he can

¹⁸ *ST*, III, q 20, a 1, 112: “Unde Dionysius dicit Cael. Hierar., quod Christus subjicitur Dei Patris ordinationibus. Et haec est subjection servitutis, secundum quod omnis creatura Deo servit, ejus ordinationi subjecta, secundum illud Sap., Creatura tibi factori deserviens. Et secundum hoc etiam Filius Dei, Philipp., dicitur formam servi accipiens. Tertiam etiam subjectionem attribuit sibi ipsi, Joan, dicens, Quae Placita sunt ei, facio semper. Et haec est subjection obedientiae. Unde dicitur Philipp. Quod factus est obediens Patri usque ad mortem.”

¹⁹ *ST*, III, q 49, a 1, 96: “Passio Christi causat remissionem peccatorum per modum redemptionis. Quia enim ipse est caput nostrum, per passionem suam, quam ex charitate et obedientia sustinuit, liberavit nos tanquam membra sua a peccatis, quasi per pretium suae passionis.”

²⁰ Brian Davies & G. R. Evans, *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 330.

²¹ See Michael Dauphinais & Matthew Levering, *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 95.

²² *Ibid.*, 95.

suffer and die to express his submission to the Father.”²³ Hence, the total submission of Christ to the Father is basic to the God-man’s effectiveness as the redeemer of all men.²⁴

As Dauphinais comments, St. Thomas Aquinas follows the theological tradition in seeing in the agony of Jesus and, in particular, in the contrast, “not my will, but your will,” the classical expression of Jesus’ human will submitting itself in obedience to the Father’s divine will. The divine will of the Father and the Son is one.²⁵ Jesus’s death was a perfect act of obedience, unlike the disobedience of the family of human beings,²⁶ and by his obedience he unfastens the disobedience of all humanity.²⁷ In addition, we can determine that “Jesus’ obedience to the Father is with an undivided heart, since, in his personality, his love to the Father is not deteriorated by any disorder.”²⁸

4. On Sin

Response to Anselm’s view of sin, who understood sin as an offense against God, Aquinas states that “sin is the first obstacle to be omitted so that man can benefit from the sources of life.”²⁹ It is a sin that lack the element of being ordered to a goal.³⁰

²³ William F. Hogan, *Christ’s Redemptive Sacrifice* (Darlington, N.J: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), 20.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁵ Dauphinais & Levering, *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas*, 95.

²⁶ Ian Petit, *Your Sin are Forgiven* (London, UK: Darton, Longman, Todd, 1993), 26.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁸ Roch A. Kereszty, *Jesus Christ: Fundamental of Christology* (Staten Island, NY: St. Paul, 2002), 408.

²⁹ See Lam Van Sy, Joseph, *Christ and the Deification of Man: In The Summa Theologiae of Saint Thomas*, *Dissertatio Ad Lauream In Facultate S. Theologiae Apud Pontificiam Universitatem St. Thomae In Urbe* (Romae: Pontificia Studiorum Universitas A. S. Thoma AQ. In Urbe, 2005), 140.

In Aquinas view, “the sin inherited [from Adam] was an infection passed first from Adam’s person to all human nature and then from that nature to every person inheriting it.”³¹ Man’s first sin consisted in his coveting some spiritual good above his measure: and this pertains to pride. Therefore, it is evident that man’s first sin was pride.³² This concept cannot be seen in Anselm, since he never mentioned sin as the pride of human beings, but rather against God’s honor. Therefore, “it is not that God has changed, it is we who have changed and it is we who are in need of healing.”³³ Because of this wrong act, punishment may equal the pleasure contained in a sin committed. For this reason, penance is required from wrongdoer. This, likewise, cannot be found in Anselm. Aquinas sees penance as having two functions: to pay a debt and to serve as a remedy for the avoidance of sin. Major different of Anselm and Aquinas is “honor” and “justice.” For Aquinas, sin is against the divine justice.

Thus, “sin is a disordered act, but not just sin. The claim is that the soul, too, falls into disorder because of sin, sin consists in the fact that the soul has lost her order.”³⁴ For that reason, “sin corrupted all mankind and no individual’s goodness could outweigh that; it was infinite in the sense that it offended God’s infinite majesty.”³⁵ On the part of human being’s pride, Aquinas explains that “man’s disobedience to the Divine command was not willed by man for his own sake, for this could not happen unless one presuppose inordinateness in his will, and his

³⁰ Josef Pieper, *The Concept of Sin* (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001), 35.

³¹ Timothy McDermott, *How to Read Aquinas* (Hanover Yard, London: Granta Books, 2007), 87. (Cf. *ST*, III, 69, 2-3).

³² *ST*, IIa-IIae, q 163, a 1, 150: “Unde relinquitur quod primum peccatum hominis fuit in hoc quod appetiit quoddam spirituale bonum supra suam mensuram; quod pertinet ad superbiam. Unde manifestum est quod primum peccatum primi hominis fuit superbia.”

³³ Petit, *Yours Sins are Forgiven*, 23.

³⁴ Pieper, *The Concept of Sin*, 34.

³⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: A Concise Translation*, 476.

disobedience was the result of his pride.”³⁶ As a result, “sin has necessary consequences, because it alienates us from our own nature, deprives us from the freedom to change the direction of our lives.”³⁷ Therefore, sin is, for Aquinas, fittingly divided into sin against oneself, sin against neighbor, and finally sin against God.³⁸

Conclusion

Human beings need to be redeemed because of human depravity, which is against God’s divine goodness. For this reason, Jesus took the form of a man born of a Virgin so that humankind could be reconciled to God, since only the God-man is truly able to redeem the loss of human dignity. Because of humankind’s pride, they need to be reconciled with God, and this act of reconciliation can be done by the God-man Jesus Christ.

³⁶ *ST*, IIa-IIae, q 163, a 1, 150: “Non autem inordinate appetivisset appetendo id secundum suam mensuram ex divina regula praestitutam. Unde relinquitur quod primum peccatum hominis fuit in hoc quod appetiit quoddam spirituale bonum supra suam mensuram; quod pertinet ad superbiam. Unde manifestum est quod primum peccatum primi hominis fuit superbia.”

³⁷ Kereszty, *Jesus Christ: Fundamental of Christology*, 211.

³⁸ See Francisco Benzoni, *Thomas Aquinas and Environmental Ethics: A Reconsideration of Providence and Salvation* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University, 2005): 446-476, esp. 456.

CHAPTER FOUR

ATONEMENT IN ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

The harmonious relationship between God and humankind had been disrupted by sin. Sin alienated the human race from his creator. Sin degrades human dignity. There is no way for the human race to right the destroyed relationship. God had to take the initiative. The term that describes how human beings can be reconciled to God is called atonement (“bringing together,” “at-one-ment”). Atonement refers to the forgiving of sins through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The end effect of atonement is the reconciliation between God and his creation. One can say that atonement is like an umbrella term for salvation, redemption, reconciliation, justification, etc. Historically, there are several theories for how the atoning work of Jesus might work. The ransom theory of the early church fathers is one of them. Anselm’s satisfaction model is another theory. In this chapter, we want to see how St. Thomas Aquinas view atonement.

Aquinas was influenced by Anselm. The term satisfaction was actually first employed by Ambrose of Milan. Anselm of Canterbury, however, was the first to work out in detail the theory in his *CDH*, in reference to the atoning work of Christ on the cross on behalf of human race.¹ Aquinas refined the Anselmian satisfaction model, while at the same time stressing the value of the example of the suffering Christ. In his *Summa Theologiae* (IIIa par. q. 48), Aquinas made use of four different models to explain the Christ-event: merit, satisfaction, sacrifice, and redemption. We shall now discuss these models.

¹ Bauerschmidt, *Summa Theologian of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 241, n. 1.

1. Merit

For Aquinas, the passion of Jesus paid the debt of humankind's sin. Jesus' death on the cross provided the merit needed to pay for sin. "Consequently, Christ by his passion merited salvation, not only for himself, but likewise for all his members."² According to Aquinas, one is saved by drawing on Christ's merit, which is provided by the sacraments of the Church. As Aquinas states "Christ's death cannot be the cause of our salvation by way of merit, but only by way of causality, that is to say, inasmuch as the Godhead was not separated from Christ's flesh by death; and therefore, whatever befell Christ's flesh, even when the soul was departed, was conducive to salvation in virtue of the Godhead united."³

God bestowed his Son with grace, and which was not given only to him "as an individual but in so far as he is head of the Church, so that grace might pour out from him upon his members."⁴ Since Jesus is the head of the Church, whatever he does affects too his members. There is thus the same relation between Christ's deeds for himself and his members. Aquinas says, "Christ by his passion merited salvation not only for himself, but for all who are his members, as well."⁵ What Jesus had achieved on the cross became also the merit of all believers by virtue of their incorporation into Christ. Aquinas insists that Jesus merited our eternal salvation from the beginning of his conception.⁶ It is clear that for

² *ST*, III, q 46, a1, 4: "Et sic manifestum est quod non fuit necessarium Christum oportuerit pati, fuit autem necessarium necessitate finis: qui quidem potest tripliciter intelligi."

³ *ST*, III, q 50, a 6, 134: "Hoc autem modo mors Christi non potest esse causa salutis nostrae per modum meriti, sed solum per modum efficientiae, inquantum scilicet nec per mortem divinitas separate fuit a Christi carne; et ideo quidquid contigit circa carnem Christi, etiam anima separate, fuit nobis salutiferum virtute divinitatis unitae. Consideratur autem proprie alicujus causae effectus secundem similitudinem causae."

⁴ *ST*, III, q 48, a 2, 76: "Christo data est gratia non solum sicut singulari personae, sed inquantum est caput Ecclesiae ut scilicet ab ipso redundaret ad membra."

⁵ *ST*, III, q 48, a 2, 76: "Unde Christus per suam passionem non solum sibi, sed etiam omnibus membris suis meruit salutem."

⁶ *ST*, III, q 48, a 1, Rep, Obj 2, 76: "Ad secundum dicendum quod Christus a principio suae conceptionis meruerit nobis salute aeternam."

Aquinas, God is the principal cause of human salvation, but Christ's human nature is its instrumental cause. He emphasizes Jesus as an instrument of God, and merit and efficiency are subordinate to instrumentality.⁷ Therefore, in order to remove our obstacles, the suffering of Christ was necessary.⁸

2. Satisfaction

Aquinas had refined Anselm's theory of satisfaction. The function of satisfaction for Aquinas is not to placate an angry, wrathful God or in some way to remove the constraints which compel God to damn sinners. In its place, for Aquinas, the function of satisfaction is to restore a sinner to a state of harmony with God by repairing or restoring in the sinner what sin has damaged. Instead of viewing the debt as one of honor (Anselm's view), Aquinas sees the debt as a moral injustice that needs to be corrected. This is how Aquinas is different with Anselm.

Aquinas in his *ST* was reacting to those who say that the passion of Christ did not effect salvation by way of satisfaction. Those who object seem to say that making or doing satisfaction is the responsibility of the one who sinned. Christ, however, did not sin. St. Peter himself says, "he committed no sin" (1 Pet 2:22). Because of the foregoing, the objectors conclude that Christ did not make satisfaction through his passion. Moreover, objectors also argue that satisfaction implies certain equality with the fault, since it is an act of justice. The passion of Christ, however, does not seem equal to all the sins of the human race, since Christ suffered according to the flesh, not according to his divinity. Consequently, objectors, conclude, Christ did not make satisfaction by his passion for humanity's sins.

⁷ Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, & Dermot A. Lane, *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1987), 842-843.

⁸ *ST*, III, q 48, a 1, Rep, Obj 2, 76: "Unde ad removendum illa impedimenta, oportuit Christum pati, ut supra dictum est."

To these objections, Aquinas makes his answer. The angelic doctor argues that true and proper satisfaction happens when someone offers to the offended party something which gives him a delight greater than his hatred of the offense. When Christ suffered, as a result of his love and obedience to God, he offered to God something greater than what might be paid as compensation for the whole offense of humankind. Christ suffered because of the greatness of his love for God and human race. And his love outweighed the sins and malice of those who crucified him to death. Hence, the satisfaction of Christ belongs to all the faithful. When Jesus suffered it was not merely the human flesh that endured the suffering, rather it was the flesh of God, from whom it gained an infinite worth.

As Schwartz comments, for Aquinas “satisfaction is properly and directly an act of justice that can also be directed towards the goal of charity: reconciliation.”⁹ As a matter of fact, satisfaction is “an interpretation of the incarnation and redemption in terms of Christ, by his freely accepted death, vicariously making amends for the offense to the divine honor caused by sin.”¹⁰ Jesus himself said, for I have come to call not the righteous but sinners (Mt 9:12-13). Kereszty aptly puts it, “the love of Christ is the direct principle of satisfaction in St. Thomas.”¹¹

On the other hand, there are two ways of repayment, according to Thomas Aquinas: firstly, the repayment cannot be done by a merely human person, since humanity was corrupted by sin, therefore a merely human being could not make up adequately for the whole of the nature;¹² secondly, “a sin committed against God has a kind of infinity, derived from the infinity of the divine majesty; for the greater the person (*condignam satisfactionem*) it was necessary that the act of the one repaying should have an infinite efficacy, namely, the act of

⁹ Daniel Schwartz, *Aquinas on Friendship* (Oxford, NY: Clarendon Press, 2007), 144.

¹⁰ O’Collins, & Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, 235.

¹¹ Kereszty, *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology*, 264.

¹² *Ibid*, 170.

one who is both God and a human being.”¹³ This notion is similar to Anselm, who claimed that only the God-man can do satisfaction.¹⁴ According to Aquinas:

the compensation may be termed sufficient even though it is imperfect, that is, the one accepting it may be content with it, even though it is not compensation equal to the fault committed. In this way the repayment of one who is purely human is sufficient. And because every imperfect thing presupposes something perfect by which it is sustained, the repayment of everyone who is merely human has its efficacy from the repayment of Christ.¹⁵

Justice, therefore, demands satisfaction.¹⁶ For Aquinas, satisfaction is both forward and backward looking; firstly, backward looking because satisfaction pursues to restore the situation that preceded the offence, and secondly, forward looking since the aim of satisfaction is to attain reconciliation between victim and offender and to reform their behavior.¹⁷

To conclude: Aquinas has refined and modified Anselm’s satisfaction theory. God as the highest being could forgive sins without satisfaction; but because his justice and mercy could be best revealed through satisfaction he chose this way. For Aquinas, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was “not only sufficient but a superabundant satisfaction for the sins of the human race.”¹⁸ Satisfaction for him happens when someone offers to the person offended

¹³ See Bauerschmidt, *Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 170.

¹⁴ Cessario, *The Godly Image: Christ and Salvation in Catholic Thought from Anselm to Aquinas*, 18. (Cf. Pannenberg’s comment on Anselm in his *Jesus: God and Man*, 279).

¹⁵ *ST*, III, q 1, a 2, Rep, Obj 2, 14: “Alio modo potest dici satisfactio sufficiens imperfecte, scilicet secundum acceptationem eius qui est ea contentus, quamvis non sit condigna. Et hoc modo satisfactio puri hominis est sufficiens. Et quia omne imperfectum praesupponit aliquid perfectum a quo sustentetur, inde est quod omnis puri hominis satisfactio efficaciam habet a satisfactione Christi.” Ibid, 170, n. 20. Here again Aquinas’s discussion of repayment connects to his discussion of merit. On the cross Christ makes an equivalent repayment for human fault and therefore receives merit in strict justice. This perfect repayment and reward forms the basis upon which human beings receive reward *de congruo* for the imperfect repayment they make through acts of love toward God and their neighbors.”

¹⁶ Daniel Schwartz, *Aquinas on Friendship* (Oxford, NY: Clarendon Press, 2007), 143.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Alister McGrath (ed.), *The Christian Theology Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1995), 185-186.

(and in this case, God) “that which the person loves equally or more than he hates the insult.”¹⁹ Through his suffering, Christ has given the Father something greater than any satisfaction. What Thomas contributes in his notion of redemption is Christ’s active personal love that embraced his whole life and was specially made manifest in his passion. Consequently, because of Christ’s superabundant love, he has merited redemption for all those who are united in him in love.²⁰

3. The Sacrifice of Christ

Compared to Aquinas, Anselm did not really use the term sacrifice. This is the third term that Aquinas used to expound on the meaning of atonement. For Aquinas, the passion of Jesus is the cause of salvation of mankind.²¹ It was the sacrifice of Christ that saves us, for this reason his sacrifice was the most efficacious one.²² There are five ways to consider the death of Jesus, according to Aquinas:

It was fitting for Christ to die. First of all to satisfy for the whole human race, which was sentenced to die on account of sin. How it is a fitting way of satisfying for another to submit oneself to the penalty deserved by that other. And so Christ resolved to die, that by dying he might stone for us. Secondly, in order to show the reality of the flesh assumed. Thirdly, that by dying he might deliver us from fearing death. Fourthly, that by dying in the body to the likeness of sin, that is, to its penalty he might set us the example of dying to sin spiritually. Fifthly, that by rising from the dead, and manifesting his power whereby he

¹⁹ Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, “Redemption,” in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, eds. Joseph A Komonchak, Mary Collins & Dermot A. Lane (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 843.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *ST*, III, q 48, a 6, 90: *Efficiens quidem principale humanae salutis est Deus. Quia vero humanitas Christi est divinitatis instrumentum, ut supra dictum est, ideo ex consequenti omnes actiones et passiones Christi instrumentaliter operantur in virtute divinitatis ad salutem humanam. Et secundum hoc passio Christi efficienter causat salutem humanam.*” (Cf. Mary T. Clark, *An Aquinas Reader: Edited with an Introduction and Five Sectional Essays, Revised Edition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 399).

²² *ST*, III, q 48, a 2, 78: “*Et ideo passio Christi non solums ufficiens, sed etiam superabundans satisfaction fuit pro peccatis humani generis.*”

overthrew death, he might instill into us the hope of rising from the dead.²³

According to Aquinas, “a sacrifice properly so called is something done for that honor which is properly due to God.”²⁴ Out of obedience, by his Passion Jesus gave more to God than what was required to compensate for the offense of the whole human race.²⁵ For this reason, Aquinas asserts that “Christ’s passion was known and willed in advance by God, it was not at the same time possible for Christ not to suffer, or for man to be delivered in any way other than by his passion.”²⁶ In fact, Jesus “was not obliged to suffer by a necessity of force originating either in God, who had decreed that he suffer, or in Christ himself, who suffered.”²⁷

“Christ’s death is said to have destroyed in us both the death of the soul which sin causes (he was delivered up, namely to death, for our sins), and the death of the body, which consists in the separation of the soul, for death is swallowed up in victory” (*ST*, III, q 50, a 6). The sacrifice of Jesus for humanity is the most efficacious one. As Aquinas states, all of Jesus’ acts and sufferings function instrumentally in virtue of his Godhead for the redemption

²³ *ST*, III, q 50, a 1, 118: “Dicendum quod conveniens fuit Christum mori. Primo quidem, ad satisfaciendum pro humano genere, quod erat morti adiudicatum propter peccatum. Est autem conveniens satisfaciendi pro alio modo cum aliquis se subiicit poenae quam alius meruit. Et ideo Christus mori voluit ut moriendo pro nobis satisfaceret. Secundo, ad ostendendum veritatem naturae assumptae. Tertio, ut moriendo nos a timore mortis liberaret. Quarto, ut corporaliter moriendo similitudini peccati, idest poenaltati, daret nobis exemplum moriendi spiritualiter peccato. Quinto ut a mortuis resurgendo et virtutem suam ostenderet, qua mortem superavit, et nobis spem resurgendi a mortuis daret.”

²⁴ *ST*, III, q 48, a 3, 80: “Dicendum quod sacrificium proprie dicitur aliquid factum in honorem proprie Deo debitum, ad eum placandum.”

²⁵ *ST*, III, q 48, a 2, 78: “Christus autem ex charitate et obedientia patiendo majus aliquid Deo exhibuit quam exigeret recompensatio totius offensae humani generis.”

²⁶ *ST*, III, q 46, a 2, 8: “Supposita praesentia et praeordinatione Dei de passionem Christi, non erat simul possibile Christum on pati vel hominem alio modo quam per ejus passionem liberari.”

²⁷ *ST*, III, q 46, a 1, 4: “Non ergo fuuit necessarium Christum pati necessitate coactionis neque ex parte Dei, qui Christum definivit pati, neque etiam ex parte ipsius Christi, qui voluntarie passus est.”

of humankind. His Passion accomplishes the salvation of the human race efficiently,²⁸ and his Passion causes forgiveness of sins by way of redemption.²⁹ Therefore, Christ's suffering results in humankind's redemption.

4. Redemption

Redemption primarily refers to healing or purification from sin.³⁰ The notion of redemption "does involve the lifting of the burden of sin, but it also involves the lifting up of human nature through participation in divine goodness."³¹ According to Aquinas, by sin human being contracts a twofold obligation: slavery to sin and the debt of punishment, divine justice.³² Anyone who sins is a slave of sins, and because of his sins he owes a debt to God. Thus, redemption is necessary from these obstacles, and this action can be provided adequately by Christ's Passion, since his Passion is more than adequate satisfaction for man's sins and debts. Christ's Passion was the price of punishment by which we are freed from both obligations.³³

It should be noticed that Aquinas' "doctrine of redemption is not limited to reflection on the death on the cross. His entire Christology is soteriologically tinted and all mysteries of

²⁸ *ST*, III, q 48, a 6, 90: "Quia vero humanitas Christi est divinitatis instrumentum, ut supra dictum est, ideo ex consequenti omnes actiones et passiones Christi instrumentaliter operantur in virtute divinitatis ad salutem humanam. Et secundum hoc passio Christi efficienter causat salute humanam."

²⁹ *ST*, III, q 49, a 1, 96: "Passio Christi causat remissionem peccatorum per modum redemptionis."

³⁰ Lam Van Sy, *Christ and the Deification of Man: In The Summa Theologiae of Saint Thomas*, 139.

³¹ Bauerschmidt, *Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 168.

³² *ST*, III, q 48, a 4, 84: "Dicendum quod per peccatum dupliciter homo obligatus erat. Primo quidem servitute peccati, quia qui facit peccatum, servus est peccati. Secundo, quantum ad reatum poenae, quo homo erat obligatus secundum Dei justitiam."

³³ *ST*, III, q 48, a 4, 84: "Quia igitur passio Christi fuit sufficiens et superabundans satisfactio pro peccato et reatu poenae generis humani, ejus passio fuit quasi quoddam pretium, per quod liberati sumus ab utraque obligatione."

Christ's earthly life are involved."³⁴ Among these, the notion of the resurrection has a soteriological meaning, since the resurrection is the efficient as well as exemplary cause of our resurrection.³⁵ Thus, for Aquinas, the main obstacle to human salvation lies in sinful human nature, which damns human beings unless it is repaired or restored by the atonement. Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners (Cf. 1 Tim 1:15).³⁶ The death of Jesus was the climax and summation of his meritorious activity, and it was liberated man from sin.³⁷ However, "if God had decided to restore man solely by an act of His will and power, the order of divine justice would not have been observed, since justice demands satisfaction for sin."³⁸ Therefore, the purpose of redemption is not only to undo the consequences of sin, but also to assume humankind into God's own Trinitarian life."³⁹

The death of Jesus was "the climax and summation of his meritorious activity."⁴⁰ In Aquinas understanding "it was not unworthy of our Redeemer to wish to be tempted, who came also to be slain; in order that by his temptations he might conquer our temptations, just as by his death he overcame our death."⁴¹ As a result, "if Christ is referred to as the Savior, the redemption from sin is certainly not the whole content of his saving work."⁴² However, it can also be said that "Christ is primarily predestinated to be the Redeemer of mankind

³⁴ Mertens, *Not the Cross, But the Crucified*, 77.

³⁵ Ibid. (Cf. *ST*, III, q 56, a 1, 68: "Primum autem in genere nostrae resurrectionis fuit resurrection Christi, sicut ex supra dictis patet.")

³⁶ Aquinas' *Shorter Summa*, 229-230.

³⁷ William F. Hogan, *Christ's Redemptive Sacrifice* (Darlington, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), 23.

³⁸ Aquinas' *Shorter Summa*, 229-230.

³⁹ Kereszty, *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology*, 198.

⁴⁰ Hogan, "Christ's Redemptive Sacrifice," 23.

⁴¹ *ST*, III, q 41, a 1, 70: "Unde Gregorius dicit, Non erat indignum Redemptori nostro quod tentari voluit, qui venerate occidi: justum quipped era tut sic tentationes nostras suis tentationibus vinceret, sicut mortem nostrum venerate sua morte superare."

⁴² Lam Van Sy, "Christ and the Deification of Man," 140.

because the Incarnation according to Scripture is ordained to be the remedy for sin.”⁴³ And thus, Aquinas concludes that the Holy Scripture indicated that in fact Jesus came to redeem the human race.⁴⁴

Conclusion

The death of Christ has satisfied the penalty owed by human sin. It was Christ’s passion alone that was needed to pay the debt of humanity’s sin. For Aquinas, the passion of Christ provided the merit needed to pay for sin. Because of the superabundance of Christ’s love best manifested in his passion, he merited salvation, not only for himself, but also for all those who one with him in love. Satisfaction, for Aquinas, consisted in the sinless Christ giving to his Father something greater than any satisfaction. If Christ’ atoning acts brought about our redemption, it was because his human nature was an instrument of salvation as exemplary cause affecting humans. After all, for Aquinas, God is the principal cause of human redemption; Christ’s human nature is its instrumental cause. Finally, more than Anselm, Aquinas has emphasized the mystery of the love of God for humans. All the activities and mysteries of Jesus’ whole life can be described as redemptive: his incarnation, life, ministry, passion, death, and resurrection.⁴⁵ In order to explain the efficacy of Christ’s atoning death, Aquinas has appropriated the categories, like satisfaction, merit, sacrifice, and redemption, but modifies them with the notion of liberating love. The death of Jesus on the cross is the sublime sign of his love for humankind that he allowed his humanity to be a free instrument of God.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 142.

⁴⁴ See W. P. Loewe & J. J. Walsh, “Jesus Christ (In Theology),” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Second Edition (Washington, DC: Thomson & Gale, 2003), 820.

⁴⁵ Fiorenza, “Redemption,” 843.

CONCLUSION

The course on “Sin and Redemption” given by Prof. Dr. João Eleutério was the inspiration that led me to write a practicum paper on Soteriology. With the many soteriological models presented in the class, I opted to do a paper on two medieval theologians whose ideas had definitely influenced the Christian thinking about atonement. Since both Anselm of Canterbury and Thomas Aquinas have something to teach us about redemption, my treatment of the two theologians have led me to the following conclusions:

Incarnation: Anselm claims that the incarnation is necessary to achieve the divine purpose.¹ He gave more attention on the role of sin and the fall of humanity as the central motivation for God’s needing to become flesh. For Anselm, incarnation and redemption are inseparable realities. On the other hand, although Aquinas used other models in his soteriology, in general he also supported Anselm by refining his theological arguments. For instance, Aquinas opposed Anselm’s idea of the necessity of the Incarnation for the redemption of humanity.² For Thomas Aquinas, “the Incarnation was very appropriate (convenient), a fitting and reasonable thing for God to do, but not strictly necessary.”³ And thus, Aquinas states that “the incarnation was necessary only on the condition that God demands full satisfaction.”⁴

Sin: Anselm’s major presupposition is the sins of humanity. For Anselm, “sin is in fact an offense against God himself, not in the sense of threatening or diminishing God’s divinity, dignity, or glory, but in the sense of affecting God himself, since God takes

¹ See Fiorenza & Galvin, *Systematic Theology*, 276.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 277. (Cf. *ST*, III, q 1, a 1).

⁴ Ibid.

seriously the human race whom he created in his own image and likeness.”⁵ Besides, he also states that “sin was an infinite offense as it was an offense against an infinite being when in a real sense broke the order of creation.”⁶ His major key point is that man owed something to God and he saw sin not as a mere rendering to God what is his due, but an act of dishonor against the infinite God. Therefore, finite human beings owed a debt to the infinite God. Both Anselm and Aquinas claimed that humans owe a debt of honor to God. The dissimilarity is that for Anselm, we could never pay the debt because what else do human beings have to give to God that they do not already owe him anyway, whereas for Aquinas we can pay the debt through acts of penance and through the Sacraments of the Church. Unlike Anselm, Aquinas asserts that we can make satisfaction for our own sin, and that our problem is not our personal sin, but original sin.

Anselm and Aquinas also differ in treating the case of Christ’s enemies who crucified him. For Anselm their sin could be atoned by Christ because they acted out of ignorance: they did not know that they crucified God himself. Aquinas, however, does not mention their ignorance. Instead, for him it is the love of Christ expressing itself in his suffering which satisfies for all sins. This superabundant love offsets the offence of his executioners (Cf. *CDH*, II: 15; *ST*, III, q 48, a 2).⁷

Satisfaction: Anselm understands satisfaction as “to understand salvation in terms of an exchange, a price paid to God for sin, which is God became man to make satisfaction for sins.”⁸ His Christology was not only different from Aquinas, but also dissimilar from that of the patristic church, for which the divinity of Jesus had direct saving significance.⁹ For

⁵ See Kereszty, *Jesus Christ: Fundamental of Christology*, 341.

⁶ Thomas P. Rausch, *Who is Jesus: An Introduction to Christology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 177.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 264, n. 126.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Pannenberg, *Jesus: God and Man*, 42.

Anselm, therefore, only the act of satisfaction can completely restore the order of God's creation which he has established.¹⁰ The common points of these great theologians are these: both Anselm and Aquinas believed that a mere man could not have made repayment for the whole human race, and God was not bound to repay. Therefore, it was proper for Jesus Christ to be both God and at the same time human being.¹¹

For Anselm, it is unjust that human beings do not pay what they owe to God.¹² Because of the dignity of his (Jesus) person as true God, his death is of infinite value and constitutes the necessary satisfaction for sin.¹³ Schwartz comments that:

Anselm's treatment of satisfaction makes no mention of friendship and gives only a marginal place to the theme of reconciliation with God. Anselm is almost exclusively concerned with corrective justice, that is, with the restoration to God, through satisfaction, of the honour of which we unjustly deprive him when we sin.¹⁴

On the other hand, Aquinas views satisfaction or reconciliation as "a horizon that allows us to discern those deviations from justice which should be satisfied for."¹⁵ Thus, for Aquinas, the love of Christ is the direct principle of satisfaction,¹⁶ since the act of salvation of humanity begins with the love of God (Jn 3:16). Satisfaction, for Aquinas, is a means of reconciliation.¹⁷ The prominence on relationship is Aquinas's original contribution to the

¹⁰ Rausch, *Who is Jesus: An Introduction to Christology*, 177.

¹¹ Bauerschmidt, *Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 169.

¹² S. Anselmi Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, *Cur Deus Homo*, 70: "Si homo dicitur injustus, qui homini non reddit, quod debet, multo magis injustus est qui Deo, quod debet, non reddit." (Cf. Saint Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, I, XXIV, 48).

¹³ Fiorenza & Galvin, *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, 276.

¹⁴ Schwartz, *Aquinas on Friendship*, 144.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 150.

¹⁶ Kereszty, *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology*, 264.

¹⁷ Daniel Schwartz, *Aquinas on Friendship*, 144.

understanding of satisfaction.”¹⁸ Unlike Anselm’s understanding, for Aquinas there are four ways to understand the concept of satisfaction:

(1) satisfaction is of no value if performed for only some of the previous offences, (2) satisfaction must come freely of the offender’s own accord, (3) satisfaction is especially interested in the restoration of honour to the victim, rather than of other unlawfully taken goods, (4) the offender’s satisfaction need not be quantitatively equivalent to the gravity of his fault.¹⁹

Therefore, for Aquinas, only those punishments that are voluntarily undertaken can be called satisfactory. He, however, seems to disagree with Anselm, who argues that God will exact satisfaction by force if the offender refuses to do so voluntarily.”²⁰ The dissimilarity of Aquinas from Anselm is that “the superabundant satisfaction caused by Christ’s suffering and death is no longer called “necessary” but “fit.” It has more to do with love than with justice.”²¹ Here again, Aquinas asserts that there are four points for satisfaction: human being need a savior because of sin, they need to proceed to the stage of perfection, of the dignity of the incarnate word, and of the fervor of the faith.²²

Aquinas wishes to stress *satisfactio* as an act undertaken to restore a relationship that has been broken.²³ His account of *satisfactio* draws deeply on Anselm, but at the same time he does not simply imitate Anselm. Hence, Aquinas’ understanding of Christ’s suffering as a repayment for sin is not the whole of his understanding of how Jesus saves humankind; merit, sacrifice, and redemption. Satisfaction, however, remains the key of his understanding of how

¹⁸ Ibid, 145.

¹⁹ See Schwartz, *Aquinas on Friendship*, 145.

²⁰ Ibid., 148.

²¹ Mertens, *Not the Cross, But the Crucified*, 77.

²² *ST*, III, q 1, a 5, 28: “Primo quidem, propter conditionem humani peccati, quod ex superbia provenerat; unde eo modo erat homo liberandus ut humilius recognosceret se liberatore indigere.”

“Secundo, propter ordinem promotionis in bonum, secundum quem ab imperfecto ad perfectum proceditur.” “Tertio, propter dignitatem ipsius Verbi incarnate.” “Quarto, ne fervor fidei temporis prolixitate tepesceret.”

²³ Bauerschmidt, *Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 240, n. 1.

Christ's suffering reconciles us with God.²⁴ His understanding of Christ's act of satisfaction is one of the ways in which he develops Anselm's account significantly.²⁵ The important thing to keep in mind is that Anselm never really addresses the affectiveness of God's love to redeem humanity. For Aquinas, since we are his members, being the head of the Church, the passionate love of Christ becomes our passion;²⁶ therefore, we are saved by his Passion.

Redemption: Aquinas insists that the redemption cannot be done by a merely human person (finite), since humanity was corrupted by sin; therefore a merely human being could not make up adequately for the whole of the nature.²⁷ On the part of Anselm, a critique can be pointed out, since he not only fails to consider even the possibility that Christ's act could redeem the fallen angels, but also explicitly rejects the idea that God could redeem the angels through becoming one of them because the angels do not stand in the same kind of network of relationality with one another (*CDH*, II, XXI).

The main problem for Aquinas, regarding redemption, is the sin of human being, since, by quoting Augustine, "sin is defined as a word, deed, or desire, contrary to the Law of God."²⁸ Hence, in his understanding, humankind lost twofold dignity through sin, one before God and the other before the Church. This expression cannot be seen in Anselm's theory. The first dignity can be recovered through repentance; however, the second dignity cannot be restored for the one who does not make repentance. Therefore, only the one who repents for his/her sin can be restored.²⁹ Though his understanding differs from Anselm, there is a notion that is comparable with Anselm's theory. For instance, "sin, both personal and original,

²⁴ Ibid., 241, n. 1.

²⁵ Ibid., 243, n. 8.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 170.

²⁸ Andrew Downing, "Sin and Its Relevance to Human Nature in the Summa Theologiae," *The Heythrop Journal* 50 (2009): 793-805, esp. 795.

²⁹ Reginald Masterson & T. C. O'Brien, *St. Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologiae, Penance*, Vol. 60 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 145.

is, inasmuch as it involves violation of God's commands, of infinite gravity."³⁰ Therefore, both of them have a common understanding that the human nature was damaged rather than corrupted, because of sin.³¹

In summing up, the core of Jesus' mission is to redeem human beings, and for this reason, the incarnation of Jesus is a singular event, once and for all (Rom 1:16). Therefore, the salvation of humanity is the desire of God (1 Tim 2:3-4).

³⁰ Schwartz, *Aquinas on Friendship*, 152.

³¹ Rausch, *Who is Jesus: An Introduction to Christology*, 177.

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