

**COMPLETE PHILOSOPHICAL AND
THEOLOGICAL TREATISES
of
ANSELM of CANTERBURY**

Translated
by
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and
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me or take into account the weakness of my knowledge when you impose upon me so difficult a task. Nevertheless, trusting in God rather than in myself, I shall make the attempt (since I have already commenced); and with God's help I shall do the best I can. But lest because of too lengthy a sustained-presentation weariness should arise in him who is willing to read these things: by making another beginning let us distinguish what is still to be presented from what has already been said.

BOOK II

CHAPTER ONE

Man was created *just* in order to be happy.

A. We ought not to doubt that God created rational nature *just* in order for it to be happy through enjoying Him. Indeed, the reason it is rational is in order to discriminate between what is just and what is unjust, between what is good and what is evil, between what is a greater good and what is a lesser good. Otherwise [i.e., could rational nature not make these discriminations], it would be the case that it was created rational in vain. But God did not create it rational in vain. Therefore, there is no doubt that it was created rational for the foregoing purpose. Similar reasoning proves that rational nature received the ability to make these discriminations in order that it would hate and shun evil, and love and choose good, and more greatly love and choose a greater good [than love and choose a lesser good]. For otherwise, it would be the case that God bestowed in vain upon rational nature this ability-to-discriminate, because rational nature would discriminate in vain if it did not love and shun in accordance with its discrimination. But for God to have bestowed in vain such a great capability would not be fitting. Thus, it is certain that rational nature was created for the purpose of loving and choosing the Supreme Good above all other things—loving and choosing it for its own sake and not for the sake of anything else. (For if [rational nature loves the Supreme Good] for the sake of something else, it really loves not the Supreme Good but this other thing.) But rational nature is able to do this only if it is just. Therefore, so that it would not be rational in vain, it was created both rational and just at

once. Now, if it was created *just* in order to love and choose the Supreme Good, then it was created just either for the further purpose of one day attaining what it loves, and has chosen, or else not for this purpose. But if it were not the case that rational nature was created *just* for the further purpose of attaining the thing it justly loves and chooses, then its having been created such as justly to love and choose this thing would have been in vain, and there would be no reason why rational nature ought ever to attain this thing. The consequence would be that as long as rational nature would do just works by loving and choosing the Supreme Good, for which it was created, it would be unhappy; for against its will it would be in a state of deprivation, since it would not possess what it desired. But this view is utterly absurd. Consequently, rational nature was created *just* in order to be happy through enjoying the Supreme Good, viz., God. Accordingly, man, who is rational in nature, was created *just* in order to be happy through enjoying God.

CHAPTER TWO

Man would not have died if he had not sinned.

A. The fact that man was created in such a state as not to have to die is easily proven from the following consideration: It is opposed to God's wisdom and justice (as I said earlier) that He compel to undergo death someone blameless, whom He created just, for the purpose of becoming eternally happy. Consequently, if man had never sinned, he would never have died.

CHAPTER THREE

Man will be resurrected with the body in which he lives during this present life.

A. From the above considerations the eventual future resurrection of the dead is clearly proven. Indeed, if man is to be perfectly restored, he ought to be restored to such a state as he would have been in had he not sinned.

B. It cannot be otherwise.

A. Therefore, just as had man not sinned he was to have been transformed into incorruptibility with the body he had, so it ought to be the case that when he will be restored he will be restored

with the body in which he lives during this present life.

B. What answer shall we give if someone claims that this ought to occur in the case of those in whom the human race will be restored but that it need not occur in the case of reprobate men?

A. Nothing is thought to be more just or fitting than the following: The whole man (i.e., consisting in a soul and a body) would have been eternally happy if man had persevered in justice; correspondingly, the whole man will be eternally unhappy if man continues in injustice.

B. On these matters you have satisfied me with terse answers.

CHAPTER FOUR

God will accomplish with human nature
that which He began.

A. From the foregoing considerations the following point is easy to recognize: Either God will accomplish with human nature that which He began, or else He has created in vain so sublime a nature for [receiving] so great a good. But if God is recognized to have created nothing more precious than rational nature, for the purpose of rejoicing in Him, then He is very far from allowing any rational nature to perish completely.

B. A rational mind cannot think otherwise.

A. Therefore, it is necessary that God will accomplish with human nature what He began. But this accomplishment can occur, as I said, only by means of complete satisfaction for sin. And no sinner can make complete satisfaction.

B. I now understand the necessity of God's accomplishing what He began—in order that He not seem, contrary to what is fitting, to fail in what He has undertaken.

CHAPTER FIVE

Although [what God began] must be accomplished,
nevertheless He will not accomplish it under
the constraint of necessity. There is a necessity
which diminishes or eliminates gratitude,
and there is a necessity which increases it.

B. But if [the previous statement] is true, then the necessity of avoiding unfitness seems to “constrain” God, so to speak, to

procure man's salvation. How, then, can we deny that He does this more for His own sake than for our sake? And if it is true [that He does this more for His own sake than for ours], what gratitude do we owe Him for that which He does for His own sake? And how will we [be able to] attribute our salvation to His grace if He saves us out of necessity?

A. There is a necessity which diminishes or eliminates gratitude to a benefactor; and there is a necessity in terms of which a greater gratitude is owed for a benefit. For example, when because of the necessity to which someone is subject he confers a benefit against his will, little or no gratitude is owed to him. But when he willingly submits himself to the necessity of doing a good work, and does not merely endure this necessity against his will, surely he deserves greater gratitude for his good work. For this "necessity" ought not really to be called a necessity but [ought to be called] a grace, since he voluntarily incurred it or holds to it, without anyone constraining him. For suppose you willingly promise today to bestow a gift tomorrow; and tomorrow you do bestow it with this same willingness. Although it is necessary that, if you can, you do tomorrow give what you have promised (or else be caught in a lie), nonetheless the one to whom you give this benefit is no less indebted to you for the bestowal of it than if you had not made a promise. The reason for his indebtedness is that you did not hesitate to make yourself indebted to him prior to the actual giving. The case is similar when someone freely vows to enter monastic life. For although, necessarily, he is obliged to keep his vow after having made it (on pain of incurring condemnation as an apostate), and although he can be compelled to keep it if he is unwilling to, nonetheless if he does willingly keep what he has vowed, he is more (rather than less) pleasing to God than if he had not made a vow. For it is for God's sake that he has renounced not only ordinary life but even ordinary life's being permitted to him. And he must not be said to live a monastic life out of necessity but [must be said to live it] by reason of the same freedom by which he vowed it. Therefore, it is much more the case that if God does for man the good work which He began, then even though it is not fitting for Him to leave unfinished the good work He has undertaken, we ought to attribute the entire good work to grace; for He began this work for our sake and not for His own, since He

Himself needs nothing. When He created man, He was not ignorant of what man was going to do. And, nevertheless, by creating man by His own goodness, He freely bound Himself, as it were, to accomplish the good which He had undertaken. In last analysis, God does nothing by necessity, because He is not in any way compelled to do anything or prevented from doing anything. And when we say that God does something as if under the necessity of avoiding dishonor (which, surely, He is in no danger of encountering) we must, rather, interpret this to mean that He does it under the necessity of maintaining His honor. Indeed, this necessity is nothing other than the immutability of His honor—an immutability which He has from Himself and not from another and which, therefore, is improperly called necessity. Nevertheless, let us say that it is necessary that God's goodness—on account of its immutability—accomplish with man what it began, even though the entire good which it does is by grace.

B. I grant it.

CHAPTER SIX

Only a God-man can make the satisfaction
by means of which man is saved.

A. But this work can only be accomplished if there is someone who pays to God, for man's sin, something greater than every existing thing besides God.

B. This has been proven.

A. Moreover, whoever can give to God something of his own which surpasses everything that is less than God must be greater than everything that is not God.

B. I cannot deny it.

A. Now, nothing except God surpasses everything that is not God.

B. This is true.

A. Therefore, only God can make this satisfaction.

B. This follows.

A. But only a man ought to make this satisfaction. For in any other case it would not be man who makes it.

B. Nothing seems more just.

A. . Therefore, if (as has been established) it is necessary that the Heavenly City be completed from among men, and if this com-

pletion can occur only if the aforementioned satisfaction is made, and if only God can make this satisfaction and only a man ought to make it: it is necessary that a God-man make it.

B. “Blessed be God.”¹ Now we have discovered a major point regarding the topic we are investigating. Therefore, proceed as you have begun. For I hope that God will continue to aid us.

CHAPTER SEVEN

It is necessary that one and the same [individual]
be fully divine and fully human.

A. We must now investigate the manner in which a God-man can exist. For it is not the case that the divine nature and the human nature can be changed into each other so that the divine nature becomes human or the human nature becomes divine; and it is not the case that they can be so mingled that from these two natures there is formed a third nature which is neither fully divine nor fully human. Indeed, if it were possible for the one nature to be changed into the other, then the result would be only someone who is divine and not someone who is human, or else only someone who is human and not someone who is divine. Or if they were so mingled that from the two corrupted natures a third nature were formed (as from two individual animals—one male and one female, but of different species—a third animal is born, which does not retain fully either the nature of the father or the nature of the mother but receives a third nature, which is a mixture of the two), then the result would be neither someone who is human nor someone who is divine. Therefore, the God-man about whom we are asking cannot be made from a divine nature and a human nature either by the transformation of the one into the other or by the corrupt mingling of both into a third. For these things cannot happen; or if they would happen, they would not apply to what we are investigating.

But if these two integral natures are said to be conjoined in some manner such that, nevertheless, the human nature is distinct from the divine nature and the one who is divine is not identical with the one who is human, then it is impossible for either one to do what must be done. For the one who is divine will not do

¹Psalms 65:20 (66:20).

it, because He will not be under obligation to do it; and the one who is human will not do it, because he will not be able to do it. Hence, in order that a God-man will do this, it is necessary that one and the same [individual] be fully divine and fully human, so as to make this satisfaction. For only one who is truly divine can make satisfaction, and only one who is truly human ought to make it. Therefore, since it is necessary to find a God-man who retains the integrity of both natures, it is no less necessary that these two integral natures conjoin in one person (just as a body and a rational soul conjoin in one man); for otherwise it is impossible that one and the same [individual] be fully divine and fully human.

B. All that you say pleases me.

CHAPTER EIGHT

God ought to assume a human nature from the race of Adam and from a virgin woman.

A. It now remains to ask from where and in what way God will assume a human nature. Either He will take it from Adam or He will create a new human being from no other human being—as He created Adam. But if God were to create a new human being, not of Adam's race, then this human being would not belong to the human race that is born from Adam. Therefore, it would not be the case that he ought to make satisfaction for Adam's race, because he would not descend from it. For just as it is right that human nature make satisfaction for human nature's guilt, so it is necessary that the one who makes satisfaction be either the sinner himself or someone of his race. Otherwise, neither Adam nor his race would make satisfaction for themselves. Therefore, just as from Adam and Eve sin was transmitted unto all men, so only they themselves or someone descended from them ought to make satisfaction for men's sin. Consequently, since they themselves are unable to [make satisfaction], it is necessary for the one who will do this to derive from them.

Moreover, just as, had Adam not sinned, he and his entire race would by themselves have remained standing, without the assistance of another creature, so if Adam's race rises after the fall, it should rise and be lifted up by its own efforts. For no matter through whom it is restored unto its own place, assuredly it will

stand because of him through whom it will recover its place. Moreover, when God first created human nature in Adam alone and willed to create a woman (in order for human beings to be reproduced from the two sexes) only from Adam, He showed clearly that He willed to create only from Adam that which He was going to create from human nature. Therefore, if the race of Adam were restored through a man who is not from the Adamic race, it would not be the case that [it is restored] unto the dignity that would have been its possession had Adam not sinned. And, thus, it would not be fully restored; and God's plan would seem to be a failure. But both of these consequences are unfitting. Therefore, the human nature [of the man] through whom Adam's race is to be restored must be assumed from Adam.

B. If we follow reason, as we proposed to, then this conclusion must, inescapably, be true.

A. Let us now look into whether God ought to assume a human nature (1) from a father and a mother (as do other human beings) or (2) from a man without a woman or (3) from a woman without a man. For no matter in which one of these three ways [the human nature is assumed], it will be from Adam and from Eve—from whom derives every human being of either sex. Moreover, it is not the case that one of the three ways is easier for God than are the other two so that a human nature ought more fittingly to be assumed in this one way.

B. You are proceeding commendably.

A. But not much effort is required to show that *that* man would be begotten more purely and more honorably from a man alone or from a woman alone than from a union of the two, as are all other offspring of human beings.

B. [This point] is clear enough.

A. Therefore, His human nature was taken either from a man alone or from a woman alone.

B. It cannot be taken from anywhere else.

A. God can create a human being in either of four ways: viz., (1) from a man and a woman (as constant experience shows); (2) neither from a man nor from a woman (as He created Adam); (3) from a man without a woman (as He created Eve); (4) from a woman without a man (something which He had not yet done). Therefore, in order for Him to prove that even this fourth way is

subject to His power and was reserved for this very purpose, nothing is more fitting than that He assume from a woman without a man that man about whom we are inquiring. Now, we need not discuss whether this would be done more worthily from a virgin or from a non-virgin; instead, we must affirm, without any doubt, the fittingness of the God-man's being born from a virgin.

B. You speak in accordance with my heart's sentiment.

A. Is what we have said something solid? Or is it, like a cloud, the empty kind of thing for which you said unbelievers reproach us?

B. Nothing is more solid.

A. Therefore, do not paint on an empty fiction but paint on the solid truth, and affirm that the following is especially fitting: As the sin of man and the cause of our condemnation took its beginning from a woman, so the remedy for sin and the cause of our salvation is born from a woman. And in order that women not despair of belonging to the company of the blessed (since it was from a woman that so great an evil proceeded), it is fitting that so great a good proceed from a woman, in order to re-establish women's hope. And paint the following: If a virgin was the cause of all the evil to the human race, then it is much more fitting that a virgin would be the cause of all the good for the human race. And paint this too: If the woman whom God created from a man without a woman was created from a virgin, then it is also especially fitting for the man who would be made from a woman without a man to be made from a virgin. But for now let these be enough examples of the pictures which can be painted on the truth that the God-man ought to be born from a virgin woman.

B. These pictures are very beautiful and reasonable.

CHAPTER NINE

It is necessary that the Word alone and
a human nature conjoin in one person.

A. We must now also ask in which one of His persons God, who is three persons, would assume a human nature. For a plurality of the persons cannot assume one and the same human nature into a oneness of person. Therefore, it is necessary that this assumption take place with respect to only one [of the three] per-

sons. Now, in the letter *On the Incarnation of the Word*, addressed to Lord Pope Urban, I have spoken—to an extent that I regard as sufficient for the present investigation—about this oneness of person of the divine nature and a human nature and have said for which person of God this most fittingly occurs.

B. Nevertheless, do mention briefly here why the person of the Son ought to become incarnate rather than the person of the Father or the person of the Holy Spirit.

A. If either of the other persons were to become incarnate, there would be two sons in the Trinity: viz., (1) the Son-of-God, who is the Son even before the incarnation, and (2) the one who by virtue of the incarnation would be the son of the virgin. And between these two persons who ought always to be equal there would be an inequality with respect to the dignity of their births. For the one who was begotten of God would have a more excellent birth than would the one who was begotten of the virgin. Likewise, if the Father were to become incarnate there would be two grandsons in the Trinity, because, by virtue of the human nature that He assumed, the Father would be the grandson of the parents of the virgin; and the Word, even though He would possess nothing from human nature, would nonetheless be the grandson of the virgin, since He would be the son of her son. Now, all these consequences are unfitting and do not occur in the case of the incarnation of the Word.

There is also another reason why it is more fitting for the Son to become incarnate than it is for either of the other two persons: viz., it sounds more fitting for the Son to supplicate the Father than for another of the persons to supplicate either of the other two.

Furthermore, man (for whom the Son was going to pray) and the Devil (whom the Son was going to defeat) had, by virtue of an autonomous willing, arrogated to themselves a false likeness to God. Therefore, they had sinned more specifically, so to speak, against the person of the Son, who is believed to be the true likeness of the Father.¹ Hence, the punishment or the remission of the guilt is more fittingly assigned to Him to whom the wrong is more specifically done. Consequently, since reason has led us inescapably to conclude (1) that the divine nature and a human na-

¹II Corinthians 4:4. Colossians 1:15.

ture must join together in one person, and (2) that this union cannot occur with regard to a plurality of divine persons, and (3) that, obviously, the union occurs more suitably in regard to the person of the Word than in regard to either of the other two persons, it is necessary that the Divine Word and a human nature conjoin in one person.

B. The route by which you lead me is so completely fortified by reason that I do not see how I can veer from it either to the right or to the left.

A. I am not leading you; instead, He of whom we are speaking and without whom we can do nothing leads us wherever we keep to the pathway of truth.

CHAPTER TEN

This man is not required to die. How He is able to sin and not able to sin. Why He and an angel ought to be praised for their justice even though they cannot sin.

A. However, we now ought to investigate whether this man would be required to die, just as all other men are required to die. Now, if Adam was not going to die had he not sinned, much more would not this man—in whom there could be no sin, because He would be God—be required to undergo death.

B. I want you to dwell awhile on this point. For whether He is said to be able to sin or not to be able to sin, in both cases a question of no small importance occurs to me. For if He is said not to be able to sin, then it seems that this view ought not to be readily believed. To speak for a moment not of one who has never existed (as we have been doing until now) but of one whom we know and whose deeds we know: would anyone deny that He was able to do many things which we call sins? Indeed—to mention only one—how would we say that He was unable to tell-a-lie, which is always a sin? For He says to the Jews regarding the Father: “If I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar like you.”¹ Now, in this sentence He says the words “I do not know Him.” Therefore, who would deny that He was able to utter these five words without the others, so as simply to say “I do not know Him”? But if He were to do this, then as He Himself says, He would be a liar;

¹John 8:55.

and to be a liar is to be a sinner. Therefore, since He was able to do this, He was able to sin.

A. He was both able to make this statement and not able to sin.

B. Demonstrate this point.

A. All ability depends upon willing. For when I say “I am able to speak or to walk,” the proviso “if I will to” is understood. For if willing is not included, then the ability is not really an ability but is a necessity. For when I say “I am able to be dragged off or to be overcome against my will,” this is not an instance of my ability but is an instance of constraint and of another's ability. Indeed, “I am able to be dragged off or to be overcome” means nothing other than “Someone else is able to drag me off or to overcome me.” Therefore, we can say of Christ, “He was able to tell a lie,” provided “if He willed to” is understood. And since He was not able to lie against His will and was not able to will to lie, He can equally well be said not to have been able to lie. So, then, He was able to lie and not able to lie.

B. Let us now return to making our investigation about Him as if He did not yet exist—just as we began to do. Accordingly, I say: if He were unable to sin because, as you say, He would be unable to will to sin, then He would keep justice of necessity. Therefore, He would not be *just* out of freedom of choice. Consequently, what esteem would be owed to Him for His justice? Indeed, we are accustomed to say that the reason God created angels and man to be such that they could sin was so that although they were able to forsake justice but kept it out of freedom of choice, they would merit esteem and praise, which would not be their due if they were *just* of necessity.

A. Are not the angels who now cannot sin worthy of praise?

B. Indeed they are. For by virtue of having been able [to sin] but having willed not [to sin] they merited their present state of being unable [to sin].

A. What do you say about God, who is not able to sin but who did not merit this state by virtue of [having] an ability-to-sin, by means of which He, nonetheless, did not sin? Is He not worthy of praise for His justice?

B. Here I want you to answer for me. If I say that He ought not to be praised, I know that I am not telling the truth. But if I say that He ought to be praised, I am afraid of undermining the rea-

son which I stated regarding the angels.

A. The reason that angels are to be praised for their justice is not that they were able to sin but is rather that thereby [i.e., because of having been able to sin] they, in a sense, have from themselves the fact that they are not able to sin. (In this respect they are somewhat similar to God, who has from Himself whatever He has.) For one who does not remove something when he can is said to bestow it; and one who does not cause [something not to be], although he is able to cause it not to be, is said to cause something to be. So, then, in the case where an angel was able to remove justice from himself but did not remove it, and was able to cause himself not to be just but did not do so, he is rightly said to have given himself justice and to have caused himself to be just. In this sense, then, he has justice from himself; for a creature is not able to have justice from himself in any other way. And, hence, an angel ought to be praised for his justice; and he is *just* not by necessity but in terms of freedom, since necessity is improperly called necessity in a case where there is neither compulsion nor prevention. Therefore, since whatever God has He has completely from Himself, He ought supremely to be praised for the goods which He possesses and keeps not because of any necessity but (as I said above) by His own eternal immutability. So, then, since that man who will be identical with God will have from Himself every good which He will have, and will have it not by necessity but in terms of freedom, He will be *just* of Himself and hence will be worthy of praise. For although what His human nature will have, it will have from His divine nature, nevertheless He will have it from Himself, since His two natures will be one person.

B. You have satisfied me on this point; and I see clearly that He will not be able to sin and that, nevertheless, He will be worthy of praise for His justice.

But since God is able to make such a man, I think that it must now be asked why He did not create angels and the first two human beings to be such that they also would be unable to sin and would be worthy of praise for their justice.

A. Do you understand what you are saying?

B. I seem to myself to understand it, and hence I ask why He did not create them in such a state.

A. The reason is that it should not and could not have hap-

pened that any one of them would be identical with God, as we speak of that man as being. And if you ask why He did not do this for as many of them as there are divine persons, or at least for one of them, I reply: reason did not at all require that this be done at that time but (since God does nothing without a reason) completely excluded the possibility.

B. I am ashamed of having asked this question. Continue with what you were going to say.

A. Let us say, then, that He would not be required to die, since He would not be a sinner.

B. I must admit this.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

He dies of his own power. Mortality
does not pertain to sinless human nature.

A. But it now remains to examine whether He would be able to die with respect to His human nature (for with respect to His divine nature it would always be the case that He is incorruptible).

B. Why should we be in doubt about this, since He would be a real man, and every man is naturally mortal?

A. I think that mortality pertains not to sinless human nature but to corrupt human nature. Indeed, if man had never sinned and if his immortality had been immutably confirmed, he would have been no less a real man; and when mortals will rise unto incorruptibility, they will be, no less, real men. For if mortality pertained to the essence [*veritas*] of human nature, there could not at all be a man who was immortal. Therefore, neither corruptibility nor incorruptibility pertains to the sinless state of human nature, since neither of these [by its presence] constitutes human being or [by its absence] destroys human being; rather, the one conduces to man's unhappiness, the other to his happiness. (But since there is no human being who does not die, the word "mortal" is included in the definition of "man" by [those] philosophers who have not believed that human nature as a whole ever could have been or ever can be immortal.) Therefore, the fact that that man would be a real man does not suffice to show that He ought to be mortal.

B. Then, look for another reason; for I do not know, if you do

not, the reason which proves that He can die.

A. There is no doubt that as He will be God, so He will be omnipotent.

B. This is true.

A. Therefore, if He wills to, He shall be able to lay down His life and take it up again.¹

B. If He cannot do this, it seems that He is not omnipotent.

A. Therefore, if He wills to, He shall be able never to die; and, [if He wills to], He shall be able to die and to arise. But as far as His power is concerned, it does not matter whether He lays down His life without anyone else serving as a cause thereof or whether, with His permission, someone else is a cause of the fact that He lays it down.

B. There is no doubt about this.

A. Therefore, if He is willing to permit it, He will be able to be killed; and if He is unwilling to permit it, He will not be able to be killed.

B. Reason leads us unswervingly to this conclusion.

A. Reason has also taught us that He ought to have something greater than whatever is inferior to God—something which He would give to God willingly and not out of debt.

B. This is true.

A. But this gift can be found neither beneath Him nor beyond Him.

B. This is true.

A. Therefore, it must be found in Him.

B. This follows.

A. Therefore, He will give either Himself or something belonging to Himself.

B. I cannot think otherwise.

A. It must now be asked what kind of giving this ought to be. For since every creature is God's, it is not the case that He will be able to give to God—as if it were to one who did not already have this as his own—either Himself or anything belonging to Himself.

B. True.

A. Therefore, this giving must be interpreted as follows: In

¹John 10:17-18.

some way in which He will not be required to, He will offer, for the honor of God, either Himself or something belonging to Himself.

B. This follows from the things already said.

A. If we say that He will give Himself in the sense of obeying God, so that by perseveringly keeping justice He will surrender Himself to God's will, this would not be a case of giving what God does not already exact from Him as a debt. For every rational creature owes this obedience to God.

B. This cannot be denied.

A. Therefore, He must in some other way give to God either Himself or something belonging to Himself.

B. Reason drives us to this conclusion.

A. Let us see whether perhaps this giving is the giving of His life, or the laying down of His life, or the handing Himself over to death, for the honor of God. For God does not exact this from Him as something owed [i.e., does not exact, as something owed, His laying down His life]. Indeed, since there will be no sin in Him, He will not be required to die, as I said.

B. I cannot think otherwise.

A. Let us consider, in addition, whether this view agrees with reason.

B. You continue to speak, and I shall continue to listen willingly.

A. If man sinned through pleasure, is it not fitting that he make satisfaction through distress? And if (with the result that he dishonored God by sinning) he was conquered by the Devil so easily that it could not have happened more easily, is it not *just* that in making satisfaction for sin man should (for the honor of God) conquer the Devil by such a difficult means that it could not be done by any means more difficult? And is it not fitting that man, who by sinning so stole himself from God that he could not have removed himself to any greater extent, should by making satisfaction so give himself to God that he cannot give himself to any greater extent?

B. There is not anything more reasonable.

A. Now, for the honor of God, a man can willingly and out of no obligation suffer nothing more harsh and difficult than death; and a man cannot at all give himself to God to any greater extent than when he hands himself over to death for the honor of God.

B. All of this is true.

A. Therefore, He who shall will to make satisfaction for man's sin ought to be such that He can die if He wills to.

B. I see clearly that that man about whom we are inquiring ought to be such that He will not die of necessity (because He will be omnipotent) and will not die out of obligation (because He will never be a sinner) and yet will be able to die of His own free will (because it will be necessary [that he be able to die freely]).

A. There are also many other reasons why it is especially fitting for that man to be like men and to dwell among them, yet without sin. These reasons stand out, of themselves, more readily and more clearly in His life and deeds than they can be demonstrated by reason alone, independently of experience. For who will explain how necessarily and how wisely it happened that He who was going to redeem men and to lead them back, by His teaching, from the way of death and perdition to the way of life and eternal happiness associated¹ with men and in this association (although He taught them by word how they ought to live) presented Himself as an example? But how could He give Himself as an example to weak and mortal men, so that they would not depart from justice on account of wrongs or insults or pain or death, if they did not know that He Himself experienced all these things?

CHAPTER TWELVE

Although He shares our misfortunes, He is not unhappy.

B. All of these considerations show plainly that He ought to be mortal and ought to share our misfortunes. Yet, all of these misfortunes contribute to our unhappiness. Will He, therefore, be unhappy?

A. By no means. For as something-beneficial which someone possesses against his will does not conduce to his happiness, so to experience something-detrimental wisely and willingly, without being compelled to, is not [a cause of] unhappiness.

B. This point must be granted.

¹Baruch 3:38.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

It is not the case that along with our other infirmities He has ignorance.

B. But in regard to this likeness which He ought to have to men, state whether He would have ignorance, even as He would have our other infirmities.

A. Why do you doubt whether God is all-knowing?

B. Well, because that man will be mortal with respect to His human nature, even though He will be immortal with respect to His divine nature. So why will He not likewise be able to be genuinely ignorant, even as He will be genuinely mortal?

A. The assumption of a human nature into the oneness-of-divine-person will be done only wisely by Supreme Wisdom. And so, Supreme Wisdom will not assume into His human nature that which is not at all useful (but is, in fact, very harmful) to the work which this man is going to do. Now, to be sure, ignorance would be of no use to Him; instead, it would be of much harm. For without great wisdom how would He do the very numerous and very great works which He was going to do? Or how would men believe Him if they knew that He was ignorant? Or even if they would not know [this about Him], of what use would His ignorance be? Furthermore, if only what is known is loved, then just as there would not be any good which He would not love, so there would not be any good which He would not know. But only one who knows how to discern good from evil has a complete knowledge of good. And no one who does not know evil knows how to make this distinction [between good and evil]. Therefore, just as the one of whom we are speaking will have complete knowledge of every good, so He will not be ignorant of any evil. Therefore, He will know everything, even though He will not publicly display all of His knowledge in His association with other men.

B. In the case of His adult life the fact of the matter seems to be as you say it is. But in the case of His infancy: just as infancy would not be a fitting time for wisdom to appear in Him, so it would not be necessary—as well as not fitting—for Him to have wisdom then.

A. Did I not say that the incarnation would be accomplished wisely? Indeed, God will assume mortality wisely; and He will use

mortality wisely because He will use it very usefully. But He would not be able to assume ignorance wisely, because ignorance is never useful but is always harmful (except perhaps in the case where an evil will—which would never be in Him—is kept from its evil effect because of ignorance). For even if ignorance would never be harmful in any other respect, it would be harmful merely in that it would prevent the benefit of knowledge. Moreover—to resolve your puzzle briefly—from the very moment that that man will exist He will always be fully divine, just as He is fully human. Hence, He will never exist without His power, might, and wisdom.

B. Although I did not doubt that this was always the case with Christ, nevertheless I asked to hear the reason for it. For often we are certain that something is the case but nevertheless do not know how to prove it rationally.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

How His death outweighs the number and the magnitude of all sins.

B. I ask you now to teach me how His death outweighs the number and the magnitude of *all* sins—seeing that you have shown *one* sin which we regard as trifling to be so infinite that if an infinite number of worlds were exhibited, each as full of creatures as is our world, and if these worlds could be kept from being reduced to nothing only on the condition that someone would take a single look contrary to the will of God, this look ought, nonetheless, not to be taken.

A. Suppose that that man were present, and you knew who He was, and someone said to you: “Unless you kill this man this whole world and whatever is not God will perish.” Would you do this for the sake of preserving every other creature?

B. I would not do it even if an infinite number of worlds were exhibited to me.

A. What if you were then told: “Either kill this man or all the sins of the world will come upon you”?

B. I would reply that I would prefer to bear all other sins—not only those which have been committed and will be committed in this world, but also whatever sins can be thought of, in addition

to these—than to commit this one sin. And I think that I ought to give the same answer not only for the case of slaying Him but also for the case of the slightest harm which would touch Him.

A. You think correctly. But tell me why your mind judges that one sin which harms this man is more dreadful than all other sins which can be conceived; for no matter what sins are committed, they are all sins against Him.

B. The reason is that a sin which is committed in regard to His person surpasses, incomparably, all conceivable sins which are not against His person.

A. What will you say about the fact that often someone voluntarily endures harm in regard to his person in order not to suffer greater harm in regard to his possessions?

B. [I will say] that God does not have need of this longsuffering; for all things are subject to His power, as you mentioned previously in reply to one of my questions.

A. You give a good answer. We see, then, that no magnitude or multitude of sins which are not against the person of God is comparable to [the sin of] harming the physical life of this man.

B. This is very clear.

A. In your opinion how great a good is [the life] of Him whose being-put-to-death is so evil?

B. If every good is as good as its destruction is evil, then [His life] is a good incomparably greater than the evil of those sins which His being-put-to-death immeasurably surpasses.

A. You speak the truth. Reflect also upon the fact that sins are as detestable as they are evil; and the life of this man is as lovable as it is good. Hence, it follows that His life is more lovable than sins are detestable.

B. I cannot fail to understand this.

A. Do you think that such a great and lovable good can suffice to pay what is owed for the sins of the entire world?

B. Indeed, it can [suffice to pay] infinitely more [than that].

A. Therefore, you see how His life would overcome all sins if it were given for them.

B. Clearly.

A. Therefore, if to give one's life is to accept death, then just as the giving of His life outweighs all men's sins, so too does His acceptance of death.

B. This is plainly the case regarding all sins which do not touch the person of God.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

How His death blots out even the sins
of those who put Him to death.

B. But now I see another point that must be questioned. If to put Him to death is as evil as His life is good, how can His death overcome and blot out the sins of those who have put Him to death? Or if it blots out the sin of one of them, how can it blot out any of the sins of other men as well? For we believe that many of the former have been saved and that countless other men are saved.

A. This question is answered by the apostle who said that “if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory.”¹ For a sin done knowingly and a sin done in ignorance are so different from each other that the evil which these men could never have done knowingly, because of its enormity, is venial because it was done in ignorance. For no man could ever will, at least knowingly, to kill God; and so those who killed Him in ignorance did not rush forth into that infinite sin with which no other sins are comparable. Indeed, in order to ascertain how good His life was, we considered the magnitude of this sin not with respect to the fact that it was committed in ignorance but as if it were done knowingly—something which no one ever did or ever could have done.

B. You have shown rationally that the slayers of Christ were able to obtain pardon for their sin.

A. For what more do you now ask? Assuredly, you see how rational necessity shows that the Heavenly City is to be completed from among men and that this completion can be effected only through the forgiveness of sins—a forgiveness which no man can have except through a man who is himself God and who by his death will reconcile sinful men to God. Plainly, then, we have found Christ, whom we confess to be divine and human, and to have died for us. But now that we know this fact without any doubt, we also must not doubt the truth of all the things He says

¹I Corinthians 2:8.

(since God cannot lie) and the wisdom of all the things He did (even though we may not understand the reason for them).

B. What you say is true. And I do not at all doubt that what He said is true or that what He did was done reasonably. But I have the following request: Disclose to me in what way there ought and can occur that thing whose occurrence unbelievers regard as unseemly or impossible in the Christian faith. Disclose this not in order to confirm me in faith but in order to make me, already so confirmed, joyful in the understanding of this truth.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

How God assumed from the sinful mass a sinless human nature. The salvation of Adam and of Eve.

B. Therefore, just as you have disclosed the rationale of the points which have been stated above, so I ask you to disclose the rationale of the points about which I am still going to ask. First of all, how did God assume from the sinful mass—i.e., from the human race, which was completely contaminated with sin—a sinless human nature (as something unleavened from something leavened)? For although the conception of this man was clean and was free from the sin of carnal delight, nevertheless the virgin from whom He was assumed was conceived in iniquities, and her mother conceived her in sins; and this virgin was born with original sin, since she sinned in Adam, in whom all have sinned.¹

A. Now that it has been established that that man is God and is the Reconciler of sinners, there is no doubt that He is completely sinless. However, this sinlessness is not possible unless He was assumed sinless from the sinful mass. But if we cannot comprehend in what way the wisdom of God accomplished this sinless assumption, we ought not to be astonished; rather, we ought reverently to tolerate the fact that within the mystery of so deep a matter there is something which we cannot know. Indeed, God has restored human nature in a more miraculous manner than He created it; for it is just as easy for Him to do the one as the other. Now, it is not the case that before human nature existed it sinned and, as a result, ought not to have been created. But after it was created, it did merit, through sinning, the loss of what it was cre-

¹Psalms 50:7 (51:5). Romans 5:12.

ated as being and of the end for which it was created. Nonetheless, in order that it would exist to be punished or to be the object of God's mercy (neither of which could occur if it were reduced to nothing), it did not completely lose what it was created as being. Therefore, God restored human nature so much more miraculously than He created it—inasmuch as He restored it from an undeserving sinner but created it neither from anyone sinful nor when undeserving. Moreover, how miraculous it is for the divine nature and a human nature so to conjoin in one [individual] that the integrity of each nature is preserved and the same [individual] who is divine is also human! Therefore, who would presume even to suppose that the human intellect would be able to discern how wisely and how miraculously so inscrutable a work was done?

B. I agree that in this life no man can completely disclose so deep a mystery. And I do not ask you to do what no man can do but to do only as much as you can. For you will be more persuasive that deeper reasons lie hidden in this matter if you show that you see some rationale in it than if, by saying nothing, you evidence that you discern none at all.

A. I see that I cannot be free of your urging. But if to some extent I can demonstrate what you are asking, let us give thanks to God. However, if I cannot, let those points which have already been proved suffice. For since it has been established that God ought to become a man, there is no doubt that He did not lack the wisdom and the power to do this without sin.

B. I gladly accept this point.

A. Surely, it was fitting that the redemption made by Christ was beneficial not only to those who then existed but also to others as well. For suppose that the following were true:

There is a king against whom all the inhabitants of one of his cities—except for one sole inhabitant, who is nevertheless of their race—so sinned that none of them is able to perform that [meritorious work] in virtue of which he would escape condemnation to death. But this inhabitant who alone is innocent has such great favor with the king that he is able—and has such great love for the guilty ones that he is willing—to bring about reconciliation for all who will trust in his plan. [He will reconcile them] by means of a service which will be especially pleasing to the king; and he will do this on the day determined in accordance with the king's will. Now, not all who are to be reconciled

are able to be present on that day. Therefore, because of the magnitude of this service, the king grants absolution from all past guilt to all those who either before or after that day acknowledge their desire both to obtain pardon on the basis of the work done on that day and to assent to the agreement then contracted. And [the king grants that] if they sin again after this pardon, they will be pardoned anew through the efficacy of this agreement, provided they are willing to make an acceptable satisfaction and thereafter to mend their ways. Nevertheless, [all of this occurs] in such way that no one may enter his palace until after the execution of the service on the basis of which his guilt is pardoned.

By comparison, since not all men who were to be saved were able to be present when Christ made that redemption, there was so much efficacy in His death that the effect of His death extends even to those who are absent in space and time. Moreover, from the following fact we easily recognize that His death ought not to be of benefit only to those then present: there could not have been present at His death as many [men] as are necessary for establishing the Heavenly City—even if all the men who existed everywhere at the time of His death were admitted to that redemption. For there are more evil angels than there were men (from whom the number of evil angels is to be restored) living on that day.

We must not believe that there was any time—from the point of man's creation—in which this present world with the creatures created for men's use was so empty that in it there was no member of the human race who shared in the end for which man was created. For it seems unfitting that God would even for a moment have permitted the human race (and those things which He created for the use of men, from among whom the Heavenly City is to be completed) to have existed in vain, so to speak. For to some extent these men would seem to exist in vain as long as they did not seem to exist for that end for which they were especially created.

B. By a fitting reason to which nothing seems opposed you show that there was never a time—from the point of man's creation—when no man at all shared in that reconciliation in whose absence every man would have been created in vain. We can conclude that this view is not only fitting but also necessary. For if this view is more fitting and more reasonable than the view that at some time there was no one concerning whom God's purpose in

creating man was being accomplished, and if nothing opposes this reasoning, then necessarily there was always someone who shared in the aforementioned reconciliation. Hence, we must not doubt that Adam and Eve shared in that redemption, even though Divine Authority does not openly state this.

A. Moreover, since God created them and immutably planned to create from them all other men, whom He was going to take into the Heavenly City, it also seems incredible that He would exclude these two from His plan.

B. Indeed, we ought to believe that He created them especially for the following purpose: viz., that they would be in the company of those for whose sake they were created.

A. You are thinking correctly. Nevertheless, no soul was able to enter the heavenly paradise before the death of Christ, just as I stated above about the palace of the king.

B. We hold this belief.

A. But the virgin from whom that man (of whom we are speaking) was taken belonged to the class of those who through Him were cleansed from their sins before His birth; and He was taken from her in her purity.

B. What you say would please me greatly except for the fact that, although He ought to have His purity from sin from Himself, He would seem to have it from His mother and to be pure through her rather than through Himself.

A. It is not so. Rather, since His mother's purity (by means of which He is pure) came only from Him, He was also pure through Himself and from Himself.

B. You are right, about this. But still another question must be raised, it seems to me. For earlier we said that He was not going to die by *necessity*. And now we see that His mother was pure through His future death; and unless she had been pure, He would not have been able to exist from her. Why, then, is it not the case that He died of necessity, since He was able to exist only because He was going to die? For if He had not been going to die, the virgin from whom He was taken would not have been pure, since her purity could not at all have occurred except by her faith in His actual death; and He could not have been taken from her unless she were pure. Therefore, if He did not have to die after having been taken from the virgin, then it could have happened that

He was not taken from the virgin after He had in fact been taken from her—something which is impossible.

A. If you had carefully considered what was said earlier, you would have recognized, I think, that the solution to this problem is already contained in those statements.

B. I do not see how.

A. When we asked whether He could have told a lie, did we not show that in the case of lying there are two abilities?: viz., an ability to will to lie and an ability to lie. And [did we not prove that] although He had the ability to lie, still since He had from Himself the fact that He could not will to lie, He must be praised for His justice, by which He kept the truth.

B. This is true.

A. Likewise in the case of preserving one's life: there is an ability to will to preserve it and an ability to preserve it. Therefore, when we are asked whether this God-man was able to preserve His life, so as never to die, we must not doubt that He always had the ability to preserve [His life], even though He was not able to will to preserve it so as never to die. And since He had from Himself the fact that He was not able to will [to preserve His life], He laid down His life not by necessity but by free ability.

B. The ability to tell a lie and the ability to preserve His life were not completely similar in Him. For in the case of the former it follows that if He were to will to, He would be able to tell a lie; but in the case of the latter it seems that even if He had willed not to die, He would no more have been able to avoid dying than He would have been able not to be what He was. For the reason He was a man was in order to die; and on account of the virgin's faith in His future death He was able to be taken from her—as you have just said.

A. Even as you suppose that He was not able not to die (or that He died of necessity) because He was not able not to be what He was, so you can assert that He was not able to will not to die (or that of necessity He willed to die) since He was not able not to be what He was. For it is no more true that He became a man for the purpose of dying than [it is true that He became a man] for the purpose of willing to die. Therefore, just as you ought not to say that He was not able to will not to die (or that of necessity He willed to die), so we must not say that He was not able not to

die (or that He died of necessity).

B. On the contrary. Since both of these—viz., to die and to will to die—are subject to the same rationale, they *both* seem to have been characteristic of Him by necessity.

A. Who [was it who] freely willed to become a man¹ in order (by this same immutable will) to die, and in order that the virgin from whom that man was taken would be purified by faith in the certainty of His death?

B. God—i.e., the Son of God.

A. Was it not shown earlier that when the will of God is said to do something of necessity, it is not really compelled by any necessity but instead maintains itself by its own free immutability?

B. Yes, this has been demonstrated. But we see, on the other hand, that what God immutably wills is not able not to occur but instead is necessary to occur. Therefore, if God willed for that man to die, He was not able not to die.

A. From the fact that with the intention of dying the Son of God assumed a human nature, you infer that that man was not able not to die.

B. This is the way I understand the matter.

A. Was it not also clear from what has already been said that the Son of God and the assumed man are one person, so that the same [individual] is divine and human, Son of God and Son of the Virgin?

B. This is true.

A. Therefore, of His own volition that man died and was not able not to die.

B. I cannot deny it.

A. Therefore, since the will of God does not do anything of necessity but does everything of its own power, and since that man's will was God's will, He did not die of necessity but died only of His own power.

B. I cannot refute your arguments. For I cannot at all fault either the statements you premise or the inferences you draw. Nevertheless, the point I have made keeps occurring to me: viz., that even if He had willed not to die, He would no more have been able to avoid dying than [He would have been able] not to be what He

¹“... to become a man”: i.e., to become a human being.

was. For, indeed, it was true that He was going to die, because if it had not been true that He was going to die, then the faith in His future death would not have been true faith—through which faith both the virgin from whom He was born and many others as well were cleansed from sin. Now, if this faith had not been true faith, then it could not have been of any benefit. Therefore, if He had been able not to die, He would have been able to cause not to be true what was true.

A. Before He died why was it true that He was going to die?

B. Because with an unchangeable will He freely willed to die.

A. Therefore, if, as you say, He was not able not to die because it was true that He was going to die, and if it was true that He was going to die because He freely and unalterably willed to die, then it follows that He was not able not to die only because He willed—with an unalterable will—to die.

B. This is correct. But whatever the cause was, it is nevertheless true that He was not able not to die (and that it was necessary that He die).

A. You are grasping at straws and, as the saying goes, are looking for a knot on a bulrush.

B. Have you forgotten what I said at the beginning of our discussion, in objection to your excuses?: viz., that what I was asking of you, you would do not for the learned but for me and for those making this request with me. Therefore, bear with the fact that I am raising questions commensurate with the slowness and dullness of our intellects, so that even in the case of our puerile questions you may continue to give satisfactory answers to myself and to these others—just as you did at the beginning.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

In God there is neither necessity nor impossibility.

There is a necessity which compels
and a necessity which does not compel.

A. As I have already pointed out, it is improper to say that God cannot do something or that He does something by necessity. Indeed, all necessity and impossibility are subject to His will; but His will is not subject to any necessity or to any impossibility. For a thing is necessary or impossible only because He wills it to be

so; but it is far from being true that He wills or does not will some thing because of a necessity or an impossibility. Therefore, since He does (*facit*) all the things He wills and only the things He wills: just as no necessity or impossibility precedes His willing or not willing, so [no necessity or impossibility precedes] His doing or not doing, although He immutably wills and does many things. Moreover, when God causes (*facit*) something, then once it has happened it is no longer able not to have happened; instead, it is henceforth always true that it has happened. Nevertheless, it is not right to say that it is impossible for God to cause what is past not to be past; for in this case what is operative is not the necessity of not doing something or the impossibility of doing something but only the will of God, who, since He is the Truth, wills that the truth always be immutable, just as it is [always immutable].

Similarly, if God unalterably plans to do something in the future, then even though, prior to its occurrence, what He plans to do is not able not to occur in the future, nevertheless in Him there is not any necessity to do it or any impossibility not to do it, since in Him only the will accomplishes this. For whenever we say "God is not able," we are not denying His ability but are signifying His insuperable ability and power. For nothing else is meant except that no thing can make Him do what He is said to be unable to do. (This kind of expression is often used; and so, frequently, the reason a thing is said to-be-able is not because there is any ability in it but because there is an ability in some other thing, and [the reason a thing is said] not-to-be-able is not because there is any inability in it but because there is an inability in some other thing. For, in fact, we say "This man is able to be overcome" in place of "Someone is able to overcome this man"; and [we say] "That man is not able to be overcome" in place of "No one is able to overcome that man." For to be able to be overcome does not constitute an ability but constitutes an inability; and not to be able to be overcome does not constitute an inability but constitutes an ability.) And our reason for saying that God does something by necessity is not that there is some necessity in Him but that there is some necessity in some other thing—just as I said about His "inability," in a case where He is said not-to-be-able. Indeed, all necessity is either a compulsion or a prevention. These two kinds of

necessity are mutually convertible contraries, just as are the necessary and the impossible. For whatever is compelled to be is prevented from not being; and what is compelled not to be is prevented from being—just as what is necessary to be is impossible not to be, and as what is necessary not to be is impossible to be (and conversely).

However, when in the case of God we say that something is necessary to be (or not to be) this statement does not mean that there is in Him a necessity which compels (or prevents); rather we mean that in all other things there is a necessity which prevents them from doing—and compels them not to do—anything contrary to that which is being [improperly] stated of God. For example, when we say “It is necessary that God always speak the truth” and “It is necessary that God never tell a lie,” nothing else is meant except that in God the steadfastness for maintaining the truth is so great that it is necessary that no thing can cause Him not to speak the truth or can cause Him to tell a lie.

Therefore, when we say that that man (who according to a oneness-of-person, as was said above, is identical with the Son of God and is Himself God) was not able not to die (or was not able to will not to die) after He was born from the virgin: we do not signify in Him any inability to keep (or any inability to will to keep) His immortal life. Rather, [we signify] the immutability of the will by which He freely became a man in order (while persevering in this will) to die; and [we signify] that no thing was able to change this will. For it would be an inability rather than an ability, if He were able to will to lie, or to will to deceive, or to will to change the decision which He previously willed to be immutable. Moreover, as I said earlier, if when someone freely plans to do a good deed and—subsequently and with this same willingness—does perform the deed he planned to, then (even though if he were unwilling to keep his promise he could be compelled to do so) he ought not to be said to do by necessity that which he does. Rather, [he ought to be said to do it] by the free will in terms of which he set out to do it. For a thing ought not to be said to be done or not done by necessity or by inability in a case where the will—and not the necessity or the inability—performs something. Now, if, I say, this point holds for men, then it is much more the case that necessity and inability must not at all be ascribed to God, who

does nothing except what He wills, and whose will is not able to be compelled or restrained by any force. In Christ the diversity of natures and the oneness-of-person served the following end: If the human nature was not able to do what was required to be done for restoring men, then the divine nature would do it; and if [what was required] did not at all befit the divine nature, then the human nature would do it. And not two different [individuals] but one and the same [individual], existing perfectly in two natures, would pay through His human nature what this nature ought to pay and would be able through His divine nature to do what was required.

Furthermore, the virgin who was purified by faith in order that He could be taken from her, believed that He would die only because He would will to—just as she had learned from the prophet who said of Him: “He was offered because He willed to be.”¹ Therefore, since her faith was true faith, it was necessary that the [object of her faith] would be as she believed [it would be]. But if you are once again disturbed by my saying “It was necessary ...,” then remember that the truth of the Virgin's faith was not the cause of His dying freely but that her faith was true faith because this was going to happen [viz., He was going to die freely]. Accordingly, if someone says “It was necessary that He die only of His own will because the faith (or because the prophecy) which preceded the event was true,” then this amounts to nothing other than if you were to say: “It was necessary for it to be going to happen in this manner because it was going to happen in this manner.” But this kind of necessity does not compel a state of affairs to occur; rather, the existence of the state of affairs causes the existence of the necessity.

For there is a necessity which precedes and is the cause of a thing's being the case; and there is a necessity which succeeds and is caused by the thing's being the case. When the heavens are said to revolve because it is necessary for them to revolve, then this is a necessity which precedes and efficiently causes. But when I say that because you are speaking, you are—necessarily—speaking, this is a necessity which is subsequent and does not efficiently cause anything but, instead, is caused. For when I make this statement,

¹Isaiah 53:7.

I signify that nothing can cause it to be the case that while you are speaking you are not speaking; I do not signify that anything is compelling you to speak. For although the force of their natural state compels the heavens to revolve, no necessity causes you to speak. Now, wherever there is antecedent necessity there is also subsequent necessity; but it is not the case that where there is subsequent necessity there must be antecedent necessity. For example, we can say “Because the heavens are revolving, they are—necessarily—revolving”; but it is not also true that you are speaking because it is necessary for you to speak.

Subsequent necessity applies to all tenses, in the following manner: Whatever has been, necessarily has been; whatever is, necessarily is and necessarily was going to be; whatever is going to be, necessarily is going to be. This is the necessity which (when Aristotle deals with singular and future propositions) seems to deny that there are real alternatives and to affirm that all things occur of necessity. Since the faith (or the prophecy) concerning Christ was true faith (or true prophecy) *because* He was going to die of His own will and not by necessity: it was necessary—in terms of the necessity which is subsequent and which does not efficiently cause anything—that it be so [i.e., that His death would occur voluntarily]. In terms of this necessity, He became a man;¹ in terms of this necessity He did and suffered whatever He did and suffered; in terms of this necessity He willed whatever He willed. For because these things were going to occur, necessarily they did occur; and because they occurred, necessarily they were going to occur; and because they occurred, necessarily they occurred. And if you wish to know the true necessity of all the things He did and suffered, know that they all occurred of necessity simply because He willed them. However, no necessity preceded His willing. Therefore, if they occurred only because He willed them, then if He had not willed them they would not have occurred. Accordingly, then, no one took His life from Him, but He Himself laid it down and took it up again because He had “the power to lay down His life and to take it up again,” as He says.²

B. You have satisfied me that He cannot be proved to have died because of any necessity; and I do not regret having urged you to

¹I.e., became a human being. ²John 10:18.

make this investigation.

A. I have presented, it seems to me, a reliable account of how it is that God assumed a sinless human nature from the sinful mass. Nevertheless—aside from the consideration that God can do what human reason cannot comprehend—I think we ought not at all to deny that there is still another account [*ratio*] in addition to the one I have given. But the present rationale [*ratio*] seems to me to be able to suffice. Moreover, if I now wanted to investigate the other rationale it would be necessary to examine what original sin is and how from our first parents it is imparted unto the whole human race (except for that man of whom we are now speaking). And it would be necessary to touch upon some other issues which require a treatise of their own. Therefore, being content with the argument we have articulated, let us pursue what remains of the task we have begun.

B. As you will—but with the proviso that at some future time you fulfill your “obligation” [to expound], with God's help, the other rationale which you shun examining now.¹

A. Since I know that I have this willingness, I do not deny your request. But because I am uncertain about future events, I dare not make you a promise. Instead, I entrust the matter to the disposition of God.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

How the life of Christ is paid to God
for the sins of men. The sense in which Christ
ought, and the sense in which He
ought not, to have suffered.

A. But tell me now what you think must still be resolved regarding the problem you set forth at the beginning—because of which problem many other topics intruded themselves.

B. The crux of the problem was why God became a man² in order to save mankind through His death, although He was apparently able to accomplish man's salvation in some other way. Responding to this problem, you showed by many compelling reasons that the restoration of human nature ought not to be left undone

¹See Anselm's *The Virgin Conception and Original Sin*. ²I.e., became a human being.

and, yet, could not be done unless man paid what he owed to God for his sin. This debt was so great that only God was able to pay it, although only a man ought to pay it; and, thus, the same [individual] who was divine was also human. Hence, it was necessary for God to assume a human nature into a oneness-of-person, so that the one who with respect to his nature ought to make payment, but was unable to, would be the one who with respect to his person was able to. Next, you showed that that man who was God had to be taken from a virgin by the person of the Son of God; and you showed how He could be taken sinless from the sinful mass. You proved very clearly that the life of this man was so sublime and so precious that it can suffice to make payment for what is owed for the sins of the whole world—and even for infinitely more [sins than these]. Therefore, it now remains to show how His life is paid to God for the sins of men.

A. If He allowed Himself to be killed for the sake of justice, did He not give His life for the honor of God?

B. Even though I do not see how He could reasonably have done this—since He was able to keep justice unwaveringly and His life eternally—nevertheless, if I can understand a thing which I do not doubt, I will admit that He freely gave to God, for God's honor, some such gift to which whatever is not God is not comparable in value, and which can make recompense for all the debts of all men.

A. Do you not realize that when He endured with patient kindness the injuries, the abuses, the crucifixion among thieves—which were all inflicted upon Him (as I said above) for the sake of the justice which He obediently kept—He gave men an example, in order that they would not, on account of any detriments they can experience, turn aside from the justice they owe to God? He would not at all have given this example if, as He was able to do, He had turned aside from the death that was inflicted upon Him for such a reason.

B. It seems that it was not necessary for Him to give this example, since we know that many people before His coming—and John the Baptist after His coming and before His death—sufficiently gave this example by bravely enduring death for the sake of the truth.

A. Except for Him, no human being through his death ever

gave to God what he was not necessarily going to lose at some time or other, or ever paid what he did not already owe. But that man freely offered to the Father what He was never going to lose as a result of any necessity; and He paid on behalf of sinners that which He did not already owe for Himself. Therefore, it is much more the case that He gave an example, in order that no single human being would hesitate (when reason demands it) to render to God on behalf of himself that which one day he will summarily lose. For although He did not at all need to do so for Himself, and although He was not at all compelled to do so for others to whom He owed only punishment, He gave with such great willingness so precious a life—indeed, His own self—i.e., so great a person.

B. You are coming very close to satisfying me. But bear with my asking a question which although you may think it foolish to ask, nevertheless I would not readily know what to answer if it were asked of me. You say that when He died, He gave what He was not obliged to. But no one will deny that when He gave this example in such a way, He did something better (and that His doing it was more pleasing to God) than if He had not done it. And no one will say that He was not obliged to do what He understood to be better and to be more pleasing to God. Therefore, how can we maintain that He did not owe to God the deed He performed—i.e., the deed He knew to be better and to be more pleasing to God—especially since a creature owes to God all that he is, all that he knows, and all that he can do?

A. Although a creature has nothing from himself, nevertheless when God grants him the right to do or not to do something, He gives him both prerogatives in such way that although the one alternative is the better, neither alternative is definitely required. Rather, whether he does what is the better or whether he does the alternative, we say that he ought to do what he does. And if he does what is the better, he should have a reward, because He voluntarily gives what belongs to him. For example, although the state of virginity is better than the marital state, neither of these is definitely required of a man. Instead, we say both of him who prefers to marry and of him who prefers to keep his virginity that he ought to do what he does. For no one claims that virginity ought not to be chosen or that marriage ought not to be chosen.

Rather, we say that before a man has decided upon either of these, he ought to do the one which he prefers; and if he keeps his virginity, he looks forward to a reward for the voluntary gift which he offers to God. Therefore, when you say that a creature owes to God what he knows to be the better and what he is able to do, then if you mean “[He owes it] as a debt” and do not add “provided God commands it,” [your claim] is not in every case true. For, indeed, as I said, a man does not owe virginity as a debt; but if he prefers, he ought to marry.

Now, perhaps the word “ought” troubles you, and perhaps you cannot understand it apart from [its signifying] a debt. If so, then be aware that just as *ability* and *inability* and *necessity* are sometimes ascribed not because they are in the things to which they are ascribed but because they are in something else, so it also happens in the case of *ought to*. Indeed, when we say that the poor *ought* to receive alms from the rich, this statement means nothing other than that the rich ought to give alms to the poor. For this obligation ought to be exacted not of the poor but of the rich. We also say that God *ought* to rule over all things—not because He at all owes anything but because all things ought to be subject to Him. And [we say that God] ought to do what He wills, since what He wills ought to occur. Likewise, when a creature wills to do what it is his prerogative to do or not to do, we say that he ought to do it, since what he wills ought to occur. Hence, when the Lord Jesus, as I said, willed to endure death: since it was His prerogative to undergo death or not to undergo death, He *ought* to have done what He did, because what He willed ought to have been done; and He *ought not* to have done it, because [He was] not [obliged to do it] out of debt.

Assuredly, the Lord Jesus was divine and human. Therefore, in accordance with His human nature (from the time that He was a man) He so received from His divine nature (which is different from His human nature) to have as His prerogative whatever-He-had that He was not obliged to give anything except what He willed to. And in accordance with His person He so possessed from Himself what He possessed, and was so completely sufficient unto Himself, that He was not obliged to make any recompense to anyone else and did not need to give anything in order to be recompensed.

B. I now see clearly (1) that it was not in any respect out of debt that He gave Himself over to death for the honor of God (as my argument seemed to show) and (2) that, nevertheless, He ought to have done what He did.

A. Surely, that honor belongs to the whole Trinity. Therefore, since He Himself is God—viz., the Son of God—He offered Himself to Himself (just as to the Father and the Holy Spirit) for His own honor. That is, [He offered] His humanity to His divinity, which is one and the same divinity common to the three persons. Nevertheless, in order to say more clearly what we mean, while still abiding within this truth, let us say (as is the custom) that the Son freely offered Himself to the Father. For in this way we speak most fittingly. For by reference to one person [viz., the Father] we understand it to be God as a whole to whom the Son offered Himself according to His humanity; and through the name “Father” and the name “Son,” an enormous devotion is felt in the hearts of those listening when the Son is said to entreat the Father for us in this way.

B. I accept this most gladly.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

How very reasonable it is that human salvation
results from his death.

A. Let us see now, as best we can, how very reasonable it is that human salvation results from His death.

B. My mind strives toward this end. Now, although I think that I understand this point, I want you to produce the structure of the argument.

A. It is not necessary to discuss how great is the gift which the Son freely gave.

B. This is [already] sufficiently clear.

A. But you will not suppose that he who freely gives to God so great a gift ought to go unrewarded.

B. On the contrary, I recognize that it is necessary for the Father to reward the Son. Otherwise, the Father would seem to be either unjust, if he were unwilling [to give a reward], or powerless, if He were unable [to give a reward]. And both of these features are foreign to God.

A. One who rewards another either gives what the other does not already have or else remits what can be exacted from the other. Now, even before the Son performed so great a deed, everything that was the Father's was also the Son's;¹ and the Son never owed anything that could be remitted. Therefore, what will be recompensed to one who needs nothing and to whom there is nothing that can be given or remitted?

B. On the one hand, I see the necessity for giving a reward—and, on the other, the impossibility thereof. For it is necessary that God pay what He owes; but there is not anything which He can pay.

A. If so great and so deserved a reward were not paid either to the Son or to someone else, then the Son would seem to have performed so great a deed in vain.

B. This is heinous to suppose.

A. Therefore, it is necessary that a reward be paid to someone else, since it cannot be paid to Him.

B. This follows inescapably.

A. If the Son wanted to give to someone else that which is owed to Himself, would the Father rightly be able either to prevent Him or to withhold the reward from the one to whom the Son would give it?

B. Indeed, I think it both just and necessary that the reward be paid by the Father to the one to whom the Son wanted to give it. For the Son is permitted to bestow what is His own; and only to someone other [than to the Son] can the Father pay what He owes.

A. To whom will the Son more fittingly give the fruit and the recompense of His death than to those for whose salvation He became a man (as sound reasoning has taught us) and to whom (as we said), by dying, He gave an example of dying-for-the-sake-of-justice? Surely, they would imitate Him in vain if they would not share in His merit. Or whom will He more justly make to be heirs of the reward He does not need, and heirs of His overflowing fullness, than His own kinsmen and brethren (whom—bound by such numerous and great debts—He sees languishing with need in the depth of miseries), so that what they owe for their sins may be

¹See John 16:15.

forgiven them and what they lack on account of their sins may be given to them?

B. The world can hear of nothing more reasonable, nothing more kind, nothing more desirable. Indeed, I receive so much confidence from this thought that right now I cannot say with how much joy my heart exults. For it seems to me that God rejects no human being who approaches Him under this name.

A. This is true—provided he approaches as he ought. Sacred Scripture everywhere teaches us how we are to approach the participation in such great grace and how we are to live under this grace. Sacred Scripture is founded upon the solid truth, as upon a firm foundation; and with God's help we have perceived this truth to some extent.

B. Truly, whatever is erected upon this foundation is established upon a solid rock.¹

A. I think that I have now to some extent satisfactorily answered your question—even though someone better than I can do this more fully, and even though the reasons for this matter are deeper and more numerous than my intelligence (or any mortal's intelligence) can comprehend. It is also clear that God had no need at all to do what we have been discussing; rather the immutable truth required it. For although on account of a oneness-of-person God is said to have done the thing which that man did, nevertheless God did not need to come down from Heaven in order to overcome the Devil. And [God did not need] to act against the Devil by means of justice in order to free man. Rather, God demanded of man that he overcome the Devil and that, having offended God by his sin, he make satisfaction by his justice. Indeed, God did not owe anything to the Devil except punishment; and man did not [owe the Devil anything] except to conquer him in return for having been conquered by him. But man owed to God, not to the Devil, whatever was required of him.

CHAPTER TWENTY

How great and how just the mercy of God is.

A. We have discovered that God's mercy—which, when we were

¹See Luke 6:47-48.

examining God's justice and man's sin, seemed to you to perish—is so great and so harmonious with His justice that it cannot be conceived to be either greater or more just. Indeed, what can be thought to be more merciful than for God the Father to say to a sinner, condemned to eternal torments and having no way to redeem himself: “Receive my only begotten son and render him in place of yourself,” and for the Son to say “Take me and redeem yourself”? For the Father and the Son do make these respective statements, as it were, when they call and draw us to the Christian faith. And what is more just than that He to whom is given a reward greater than every debt should forgive every debt if it is presented to Him with due affection?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

It is impossible for the Devil to be reconciled.

A. But if you will carefully consider human reconciliation, then you will understand that the reconciliation of the Devil (about which you asked) is impossible. For man was not able to be reconciled except through a God-man who could die and by whose justice there would be restored to God what He had lost by man's sin. Similarly, condemned angels cannot be saved except through a God-angel who could die and who by his justice would restore to God what the sins of the other angels took away from Him. Moreover, even as man ought not to have been lifted up through another man who would not be of the same race (even though he would be of the same nature), so no angel ought to be saved through another angel (even though all angels are of one nature), since angels are not—as men are—of the same race. For it is not the case that all angels are descended from one angel as all human beings are descended from one human being.

Furthermore, the restoration of angels is prevented by the fact that as they fell without anyone's abetting their fall, so they ought to rise without anyone's assistance. (But this is impossible for them.) For otherwise they cannot be restored to the dignity which they were going to have; for if they had not sinned they would without anyone else's assistance have remained standing in the truth by means of the ability they had received. Therefore, if anyone thinks that our Savior's redemption ought eventually to be ex-

tended even to fallen angels, reason proves that he is deceived by what is unreasonable. I say this not because the value of His death would not outweigh, by its magnitude, all the sins of men and angels but because an immutable reason opposes the elevation of lost angels.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

The truth of the Old and of the New Testament
has been proved within the statements that have been made.

B. All the statements you make seem to me to be reasonable and to be statements which cannot at all be contradicted. And I recognize that whatever is contained in the Old and in the New Testament has been proved by the solution of the single problem which we have set forth. For you prove the necessity of God's becoming a man, [and you do so] in such way that even if the few things you have introduced from our books are removed (e.g., what you mentioned about the three persons of God and about Adam), you would satisfy not only the Jews but also the pagans by reason alone. Moreover, this very God-man has established the New Testament and confirmed the Old. Therefore, just as it is necessary to affirm that He was truthful, so no one can deny the truth of anything contained in these testaments.

A. If we have said anything which ought to be corrected, I do not refuse correction if it is done in accordance with reason. But if that which we think we have rationally discovered is corroborated by truth's testimony, we ought to attribute this not to ourselves but to God, who is blessed forever. Amen.