

APPENDIX 1, QUESTION 2

Of the Quality of Souls Who Expiate Actual Sin or Its Punishment in Purgatory (In Six Articles)

We must next treat of the souls which after this life expiate the punishment of their actual sins in the fire of Purgatory.

Under this head there are six points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether the pain of Purgatory surpasses all the temporal pains of this life?
- (2) Whether that punishment is voluntary?
- (3) Whether the souls in Purgatory are punished by the demons?
- (4) Whether venial sin as regards its guilt is expiated by the pains of Purgatory?
- (5) Whether the fire of Purgatory frees from the debt of punishment?
- (6) Whether one is freed from that punishment sooner than another?

Whether the pains of Purgatory surpass all the temporal pains of this life?

App. 1 q. 2 a. 1

Objection 1. It would seem that the pains of Purgatory do not surpass all the temporal pains of this life. Because the more passive a thing is the more it suffers if it has the sense of being hurt. Now the body is more passive than the separate soul, both because it has contrariety to a fiery agent, and because it has matter which is susceptible of the agent's quality: and this cannot be said of the soul. Therefore the pain which the body suffers in this world is greater than the pain whereby the soul is cleansed after this life.

Objection 2. Further, the pains of Purgatory are directly ordained against venial sins. Now since venial sins are the least grievous, the lightest punishment is due to them, if the measure of the stripes is according to the measure of the fault. Therefore the pain of Purgatory is the lightest of all.

Objection 3. Further, since the debt of punishment is an effect of sin, it does not increase unless the sin increases. Now sin cannot increase in one whose sin is already remitted. Therefore if a mortal sin has been remitted in a man who has not fully paid the debt of punishment, this debt does not increase when he dies. But while he lived he was not in debt to the extent of the most grievous punishment. Therefore the pain that he will suffer after this life will not be more grievous to him than all other pains of this life.

On the contrary, Augustine says in a sermon (xli De Sanctis): "This fire of Purgatory will be more severe than any pain that can be felt, seen or conceived in this world."

Further, the more universal a pain is the greater it is. Now the whole separate soul is punished, since it is simple: which is not the case with the body. Therefore this, being the punishment of the separate soul, is greater than any pain suffered by the body.

I answer that, In Purgatory there will be a twofold pain; one will be the pain of loss, namely the delay of the divine vision, and the pain of sense, namely punishment by corporeal fire. With regard to both the least

pain of Purgatory surpasses the greatest pain of this life. For the more a thing is desired the more painful is its absence. And since after this life the holy souls desire the Sovereign Good with the most intense longing—both because their longing is not held back by the weight of the body, and because, had there been no obstacle, they would already have gained the goal of enjoying the Sovereign Good—it follows that they grieve exceedingly for their delay. Again, since pain is not hurt, but the sense of hurt, the more sensitive a thing is, the greater the pain caused by that which hurts it: wherefore hurts inflicted on the more sensible parts cause the greatest pain. And, because all bodily sensation is from the soul, it follows of necessity that the soul feels the greatest pain when a hurt is inflicted on the soul itself. That the soul suffers pain from the bodily fire is at present taken for granted, for we shall treat of this matter further on*. Therefore it follows that the pain of Purgatory, both of loss and of sense, surpasses all the pains of this life.

Some, however, prove this from the fact that the whole soul is punished, and not the body. But this is to no purpose, since in that case the punishment of the damned would be milder after the resurrection than before, which is false.

Reply to Objection 1. Although the soul is less passive than the body, it is more cognizant of actual suffering [passionis]: and where the sense of suffering is greater, there is the greater pain, though the suffering be less.

Reply to Objection 2. The severity of that punishment is not so much a consequence of the degree of sin, as of the disposition of the person punished, because the same sin is more severely punished then than now. Even so a person who has a better temperament is punished more severely by the same sentence than another; and yet the judge acts justly in condemning both for the same crimes to the same punishment.

This suffices for the Reply to the Third Objection.

* Cf. Suppl., q. 70, a. 3

Objection 1. It would seem that this punishment is voluntary. For those who are in Purgatory are upright in heart. Now uprightness in heart is to conform one's will to God's, as Augustine says (Serm. i in Ps. 32). Therefore, since it is God's will that they be punished, they will suffer that punishment voluntarily.

Objection 2. Further, every wise man wills that without which he cannot obtain the end he has in view. Now those who are in Purgatory know that they cannot obtain glory, unless they be punished first. Therefore they are punished willingly.

On the contrary, No one asks to be freed from a punishment that he suffers willingly. Now those who are in Purgatory ask to be set free, as appears from many incidents related in the Dialogue of Gregory (iv, 40,65). Therefore they will not undergo that punishment voluntarily.

I answer that, A thing is said to be voluntary in two ways. First, by an absolute act of the will; and thus no punishment is voluntary, because the very notion of punishment is that it be contrary to the will. Secondly, a thing is said to be voluntary by a conditional act of the

will: thus cautery is voluntary for the sake of regaining health. Hence a punishment may be voluntary in two ways. First, because by being punished we obtain some good, and thus the will itself undertakes a punishment, as instanced in satisfaction, or when a man accepts a punishment gladly, and would not have it not to be, as in the case of martyrdom. Secondly, when, although we gain no good by the punishment, we cannot obtain a good without being punished, as in the case of natural death: and then the will does not undertake the punishment, and would be delivered from it; but it submits to it, and in this respect the punishment is said to be voluntary. In this latter sense the punishment of Purgatory is said to be voluntary.

Some, however, say that it is not voluntary in any way, because the souls in Purgatory are so replete with suffering, that they know not that they are being cleansed by their pains, and deem themselves damned. But this is false, for did they not know that they will be set free, they would not ask for prayers, as they often do.

This suffices for the Replies to the Objections.

Objection 1. It would seem that the souls in Purgatory are punished by the demons; for, according to the Master, "they will have for torturers in their pains, those who were their tempters in sin." Now the demons tempt us to sin, not only mortal, but also venial when they fail in the former. Therefore in Purgatory also they will torture souls on account of venial sins.

Objection 2. Further, the just are competent to be cleansed from sin both in this life and afterwards. Now, in this life, they are cleansed by pains inflicted by the devil, as was the case with Job. Therefore after this life also, those who have to be cleansed will be punished by the demons.

On the contrary, It were unjust that he who has triumphed over someone, should be subjected to him after victory. Now those who are in Purgatory have triumphed over the demons, since they died without mortal sin. Therefore they will not be subjected to them through being punished by them.

I answer that, As after the Judgment day the Divine

justice will kindle the fire with which the damned will be punished for ever, even so now the elect are cleansed after this life by the Divine justice alone, and neither by the ministry of the demons whom they have vanquished, nor by the ministry of the angels who would not inflict such tortures on their fellow-citizens. It is, however, possible that they take them to the place of punishment: also that even the demons, who rejoice in the punishment of man, accompany them and stand by while they are being cleansed, both that they may be sated with their pains, and that when these leave their bodies, they may find something of their own in them. But in this life, while there is yet time for the combat, men are punished both by the wicked angels as foes, as instanced in Job, and by the good angels, as instanced in Jacob, the sinew of whose thigh shrank at the angel's touch*. Moreover, Dionysius says explicitly that the good angels sometimes inflict punishment.

This suffices for the Replies to the Objections.

Objection 1. It would seem that venial sin is not expiated by the pains of Purgatory as regards the guilt. For a gloss[†] on 1 Jn. 5:16, "There is a sin unto death," etc. says: "It is vain to ask pardon after death for what was not amended in this life." Therefore no sin is remitted

as to guilt after this life.

Objection 2. Further, the same subject is freed from sin as falls into sin. But after death the soul cannot sin venially. Therefore neither can it be loosed from venial sin.

* Gn. 32:25 † St. Gregory, Moral. xvi, 28 ‡ Dial. iv, 39

Objection 3. Further, Gregory says[‡] that every man will be at the judgment as he was when he left the body, because “the tree. . . wheresoever it shall fall, there shall it be”[§]. If, then, a man go forth from this life with venial sin, he will be with venial sin at the judgment: and consequently one does not atone for venial sin in Purgatory.

Objection 4. Further, it has been stated (Suppl., q. 2, a. 3) that actual sin is not blotted out save by contrition. But there will be no contrition after this life, because it is a meritorious act. For then there will be neither merit nor demerit since, according to the Damascene*, “death is to men what the fall was to the angels.” Therefore, after this life, venial sin is not remitted in Purgatory as to its guilt.

Objection 5. Further, venial sin is not in us except on account of the fomes. Wherefore in the original state Adam would not have sinned venially, as was stated (Sent. ii, D, xxi, 2). Now after this life there will be no sensuality; because the fomes will cease when the soul is separated, since it is called the “law of the flesh” (Rom. 7). Hence there will be no venial sin then, and consequently it cannot be expiated by the fire of Purgatory.

On the contrary, Gregory[†] and Augustine[‡] say that certain slight sins will be remitted in the life to come. Nor can this be understood of the punishment: because thus all sins, however grave they be, are expiated by the fire of Purgatory, as regards the debt of punishment. Therefore venial sins are cleansed by the fire of Purgatory as to their guilt.

Further, wood, hay, stubble (1 Cor. 3:12) denote venial sins, as we have said (Ia IIae, q. 89, a. 2). Now wood, hay, stubble are consumed in Purgatory. Therefore venial sins are remitted after this life.

I answer that, Some have asserted that no sin is remitted after this life, as regards the guilt: that if a man die with mortal sin, he is damned and incapable of being forgiven; and that it is not possible for a man to die with a venial sin and without mortal sin, since the final grace washes the venial sin away. They assign as reason for this that venial sin is excessive love of a temporal thing, in one who has his foundation in Christ, which excess results from the corruption of concupiscence. Wherefore if grace entirely overcome the corruption of concupiscence, as in the Blessed Virgin, there is no room for venial sin. Hence, since this concupiscence is altogether abated and removed, the powers of the soul are wholly subject to grace, and venial sin is cast out. But this opinion is nonsensical in itself and in its proof. In itself, because it is opposed to the statements of holy men and of the Gospel, which cannot be expounded as referring to the remission of venial sins as to their punishment, as the Master says in the text[§] because in this way both light and grave sins are remitted in the life to come: while Gregory[¶] declares that light sins alone are remitted after this life. Nor does it suffice for them

to say, that this is said expressly of light sins, lest we should think that we shall suffer nothing grievous on their account: because the remission of sin diminishes punishment rather than aggravates it. As to the proof, it is shown to be worthless, since bodily defect, such as obtains at the last moment of life, does not remove the corruption of concupiscence; nor does it diminish it in its root but in its act, as instanced in those who lie dangerously ill; nor again does it calm the powers of the soul, so as to subject them to grace, because tranquillity of the powers, and their subjection to grace, is effected when the lower powers obey the higher which delight together in God’s law. But this cannot happen in that state, since the acts of both kinds of powers are impeded; unless tranquillity denote the absence of combat, as occurs even in those who are asleep; and yet sleep is not said, for this reason, to diminish concupiscence, or to calm the powers of the soul, or to subject them to grace. Moreover, granted that the aforesaid defect diminish concupiscence radically, and that it subject the powers to grace, it would still be insufficient to wash away venial sin already committed, although it would suffice in order to avoid it in the future. Because actual sin, even if it be venial, is not remitted without an actual movement of contrition, as stated above (Suppl., q. 2, a. 3), however much the latter be in the habitual intention. Now it happens sometimes that a man dies in his sleep, being in a state of grace and yet having a venial sin when he went to sleep: and such a man cannot make an act of contrition for his venial sin before he dies. Nor may we say, as they do, that if he repented neither by act nor by intention, neither in general nor in particular, his venial sin becomes mortal, for that “venial becomes mortal when it is an object of complacency”; because not all complacency in venial sin makes it mortal (else all venial sin would be mortal, since every venial sin pleases for as much as it is voluntary), but only that complacency which amounts to enjoyment, wherein all human wickedness consists, in that “we enjoy what we should use,” as Augustine says^{||}. Hence the complacency which makes a sin mortal is actual complacency, for every mortal sin consists in an act. Now it may happen that a man, after committing a venial sin, has no actual thought of being forgiven or of remaining in that sin, but thinks perhaps about a triangle having its three angles equal to two right angles, and while engaged in this thought falls asleep, and dies.

It is therefore clear that this opinion is utterly unreasonable: and consequently we must say with others that venial sin in one who dies in a state of grace, is remitted after this life by the fire of Purgatory: because this punishment so far as it is voluntary, will have the power, by virtue of grace, to expiate all such guilt as is compatible

§ Eccles. 11:3 * De Fide Orth. ii, 4 † Dial. iv, 39 ‡ De vera et falsa poenit. iv, xviii, by some other author § Sentent. iv, D, xxi ¶ Dial. iv, 39 || De Trin. x, 10

with grace.**

Reply to Objection 1. The gloss refers to mortal sin. Or it may be replied that although, in this life, it is not amended in itself, it is amended in merits, because a man merited here that his punishment should be meritorious to him there.

Reply to Objection 2. Venial sin arises from the corruption of the fomes, which will no longer be in the separate soul that is in Purgatory, wherefore this soul cannot sin venially. On the other hand, the remission of venial sin proceeds from the will informed by grace, which will be in the separate soul in Purgatory. Hence the comparison fails.

Reply to Objection 3. Venial sins do not alter a man's state, for they neither destroy nor diminish char-

ity, according to which the amount of the soul's gratuitous goodness is measured. Hence the soul remains such as it was before, notwithstanding the remission or commission of venial sins.

Reply to Objection 4. After this life there can be no merit in respect of the essential reward, but there can be in respect of some accidental reward, so long as man remains in the state of the way, in a sense. Consequently in Purgatory there can be a meritorious act in respect of the remission of venial sin.

Reply to Objection 5. Although venial sin arises from the proneness of the fomes, sin results in the mind; wherefore even when the fomes is no more, sin can still remain.

Whether the fire of Purgatory delivers from the debt of punishment?

App. 1 q. 2 a. 5

Objection 1. It would seem that the fire of Purgatory does not deliver from the debt of punishment. For every cleansing is in respect of some uncleanness. But punishment does not imply uncleanness. Therefore the fire of Purgatory does not deliver from punishment.

Objection 2. Further, a contrary is not cleansed save by its contrary. But punishment is not contrary to punishment. Therefore one is not cleansed from the debt of punishment by the punishment of Purgatory.

Objection 3. Further, a gloss on 1 Cor. 3:15, "He shall be saved, yet so," etc. says: "This fire is the trial of tribulation of which it is written (Ecclus. 27:6): The furnace tries the potter's vessels," etc. Therefore man expiates every punishment by the pains of this world, at least by death, which is the greatest punishment of all, and not by the fire of Purgatory.

On the contrary, The pains of Purgatory are more grievous than all the pains of this world, as stated above (a. 3). Now the satisfactory punishment which one undergoes in this life atones for the debt of punishment. Much more therefore is this effected by the punishment of Purgatory.

I answer that, Whosoever is another's debtor, is freed from his indebtedness by paying the debt. And, since the obligation incurred by guilt is nothing else than the debt of punishment, a person is freed from that obligation by undergoing the punishment which he owed. Accordingly the punishment of Purgatory cleanses from the debt of punishment.

Reply to Objection 1. Although the debt of punishment does not in itself imply uncleanness, it bears a relation to uncleanness by reason of its cause.

Reply to Objection 2. Although punishment is not contrary to punishment, it is opposed to the debt of punishment, because the obligation to punishment remains from the fact that one has not undergone the punishment that was due.

Reply to Objection 3. Many meanings underlie the same words of Holy Writ. Hence this fire may denote both the present tribulation and the punishment to come, and venial sins can be cleansed from both of these. That natural death is not sufficient for this, has been stated above (Sent. iv, D, 20).

Whether one person is delivered from this punishment sooner than another?

App. 1 q. 2 a. 6

Objection 1. It would seem that one person is not delivered from this punishment sooner than another. For the more grievous the sin, and the greater the debt, the more severely is it punished in Purgatory. Now there is the same proportion between severer punishment and graver fault, as between lighter punishment and less grievous fault. Therefore one is delivered from this punishment as soon as another.

Objection 2. Further, in point of duration unequal merits receive equal retribution both in heaven and in hell. Therefore seemingly it is the same in Purgatory.

On the contrary, is the comparison of the Apostle, who denotes the differences of venial sins by wood, hay, and stubble. Now it is clear that wood remains longer in the fire than hay and stubble. Therefore one venial sin is punished longer in Purgatory than another.

I answer that, Some venial sins cling more persistently than others, according as the affections are more inclined to them, and more firmly fixed in them. And since that which clings more persistently is more slowly cleansed, it follows that some are tormented in Purgatory longer than others, for as much as their affections

** St. Thomas expresses himself differently, De Malo, q. 7, a. 2, ad 9,17: "Guilt is not remitted by punishment, but venial sin as to its guilt is remitted in Purgatory by virtue of grace, not only as existing in the habit, but also as proceeding to the act of charity in detestation of venial sin."

were steeped in venial sins.

Reply to Objection 1. Severity of punishment corresponds properly speaking to the amount of guilt: whereas the length corresponds to the firmness with which sin has taken root in its subject. Hence it may happen that one may be delayed longer who is tormented less, and “vice versa.”

Reply to Objection 2. Mortal sin which deserves the punishment of hell, and charity which deserves the reward of heaven, will, after this life, be immovably rooted in their subject. Hence as to all there is the same duration in either case. It is otherwise with venial sin which is punished in Purgatory, as stated above (a. 6).