

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THIRD PART, QUESTION 78

Of the Term “Wherefrom” of the Resurrection (In Three Articles)

We must now consider the term “wherefrom” of the resurrection; and under this head there are three points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether death is the term “wherefrom” of the resurrection in every case?
- (2) Whether ashes are, or dust?
- (3) Whether this dust has a natural inclination towards the soul?

Whether death will be the term “wherefrom” of the resurrection in all cases?

Suppl. q. 78 a. 1

Objection 1. It would seem that death will not be the term “wherefrom” of the resurrection in all cases. Because some shall not die but shall be clothed with immortality: for it is said in the creed that our Lord “will come to judge the living and the dead.” Now this cannot refer to the time of judgment, because then all will be alive; therefore this distinction must refer to the previous time, and consequently all will not die before the judgment.

Objection 2. Further, a natural and common desire cannot be empty and vain, but is fulfilled in some cases. Now according to the Apostle (2 Cor. 5:4) it is a common desire that “we would not be unclothed but clothed upon.” Therefore there will be some who will never be stripped of the body by death, but will be arrayed in the glory of the resurrection.

Objection 3. Further, Augustine says (Enchiridion cxv) that the four last petitions of the Lord’s prayer refer to the present life: and one of them is: “Forgive us our debts [Douay: ‘trespasses’].” Therefore the Church prays that all debts may be forgiven her in this life. Now the Church’s prayer cannot be void and not granted: “If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you” (Jn. 16:23). Therefore at some time of this life the Church will receive the remission of all debts: and one of the debts to which we are bound by the sin of our first parent is that we be born in original sin. Therefore at some time God will grant to the Church that men be born without original sin. But death is the punishment of original sin. Therefore at the end of the world there will be some men who will not die: and so the same conclusion follows.

Objection 4. Further, the wise man should always choose the shortest way. Now the shortest way is for the men who shall be found living to be transferred to the impassibility of the resurrection, than for them to die first, and afterwards rise again from death to immortality. Therefore God Who is supremely wise will choose this way for those who shall be found living.

On the contrary, It is written (1 Cor. 15:36): “That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die first,” and he is speaking of the resurrection of the body as compared to the seed.

Further, it is written (1 Cor. 15:22): “As in Adam all

die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.” Now all shall be made alive in Christ. Therefore all shall die in Adam: and so all shall rise again from death.

I answer that, The saints differ in speaking on this question, as may be seen in the text (Sent. iv, D, 43). However, the safer and more common opinion is that all shall die and rise again from death: and this for three reasons. First, because it is more in accord with Divine justice, which condemned human nature for the sin of its first parent, that all who by the act of nature derive their origin from him should contract the stain of original sin, and consequently be the debtors of death. Secondly, because it is more in agreement with Divine Scripture which foretells the resurrection of all; and resurrection is not predicted properly except of that “which has fallen and perished,” as the Damascene says (De Fide Orth. iv). Thirdly, because it is more in harmony with the order of nature where we find that what is corrupted and decayed is not renewed except by means of corruption: thus vinegar does not become wine unless the vinegar be corrupted and pass into the juice of the grape. Wherefore since human nature has incurred the defect of the necessity of death, it cannot return to immortality save by means of death. It is also in keeping with the order of nature for another reason, because, as it is stated in Phys. viii, 1, “the movement of heaven is as a kind of life to all existing in nature,” just as the movement of the heart is a kind of life of the whole body: wherefore even as all the members become dead on the heart ceasing to move, so when the heavenly movement ceases nothing can remain living with that life which was sustained by the influence of that movement. Now such is the life by which we live now: and therefore it follows that those who shall live after the movement of the heaven comes to a standstill must depart from this life.

Reply to Objection 1. This distinction of the dead and the living does not apply to the time itself of the judgment, nor to the whole preceding time, since all who are to be judged were living at some time, and dead at some time: but it applies to that particular time which shall precede the judgment immediately, when, to wit, the signs of the judgment shall begin to appear.

Reply to Objection 2. The perfect desire of the

saints cannot be void; but nothing prevents their conditional desire being void. Such is the desire whereby we would not be “unclothed,” but “clothed upon,” namely if that be possible: and this desire is called by some a “velleity.”

Reply to Objection 3. It is erroneous to say that any one except Christ is conceived without original sin, because those who would be conceived without original sin would not need the redemption which was wrought by Christ, and thus Christ would not be the Redeemer of all men*. Nor can it be said that they needed not this redemption, because it was granted to them that they should be conceived without sin. For, this grace was vouchsafed—either to their parents, that the sin of nature might be healed in them (because so long as that sin remained they were unable to beget without communicating original sin)—or to nature itself which was healed. Now we must allow that every one needs the redemption of Christ personally, and not only by reason of nature, and one cannot be delivered from an evil or absolved from a debt unless one incur the debt or

incur the evil: and consequently all could not reap in themselves the fruit of the Lord’s prayer, unless all were born debtors and subject to evil. Hence the forgiveness of debts or delivery from evil cannot be applied to one who is born without a debt or free from evil, but only to one who is born with a debt and is afterwards delivered by the grace of Christ. Nor does it follow, if it can be asserted without error that some die not, that they are born without original sin, although death is a punishment of original sin; because God can of His mercy remit the punishment which one has incurred by a past fault, as He forgave the adulterous woman without punishment (Jn. 8): and in like manner He can deliver from death those who have contracted the debt of death by being born in original sin. And thus it does not follow that if they die not, therefore they were born without original sin.

Reply to Objection 4. The shortest way is not always the one to be chosen, but only when it is more or equally adapted for attaining the end. It is not so here, as is clear from what we have said.

Whether all will rise again from ashes?

Suppl. q. 78 a. 2

Objection 1. It would seem that all will not rise again from ashes. For Christ’s resurrection is the exemplar of ours. Yet His resurrection was not from ashes, for His flesh saw not corruption according to Ps. 15:10; Acts 2:27,31. Therefore neither will all rise again from ashes.

Objection 2. Further, the human body is not always burned. Yet a thing cannot be reduced to ashes unless it be burned. Therefore not all will rise again from ashes.

Objection 3. Further, the body of a dead man is not reduced to ashes immediately after death. But some will rise again at once after death, according to the text (Sent. iv, D, 43), namely those who will be found living. Therefore all will not rise again from ashes.

Objection 4. Further, the term “wherefrom” corresponds to the term “whereto.” Now the term “whereto” of the resurrection is not the same in the good as in the wicked: “We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed” (1 Cor. 15:51). Therefore the term “wherefrom” is not the same. And thus, if the wicked rise again from ashes, the good will not rise again from ashes.

On the contrary, Haymo says (on Rom. 5:10, “For if when we were enemies”): “All who are born in original sin lie under the sentence: Earth thou art and into earth shalt thou go.” Now all who shall rise again at the general resurrection were born in original sin, either at their birth within the womb or at least at their birth from the womb. Therefore all will rise again from ashes.

Further, there are many things in the human body that do not truly belong to human nature. But all these will be removed. Therefore all bodies must needs be

reduced to ashes.

I answer that, The same reasons by which we have shown (a. 1) that all rise again from death prove also that at the general resurrection all will rise again from ashes, unless the contrary, such as the hastening of their resurrection, be vouchsafed to certain persons by a special privilege of grace. For just as holy writ foretells the resurrection, so does it foretell the reformation of bodies (Phil. 3:21). And thus it follows that even as all die that the bodies of all may be able truly to rise again, so will the bodies of all perish that they may be able to be reformed. For just as death was inflicted by Divine justice as a punishment on man, so was the decay of the body, as appears from Gn. 3:19, “Earth thou art and into earth shalt thou go[†].”

Moreover the order of nature requires the dissolution not only of the union of soul and body, but also of the mingling of the elements: even as vinegar cannot be brought back to the quality of wine unless it first be dissolved into the prejacant matter: for the mingling of the elements is both caused and preserved by the movement of the heaven, and when this ceases all mixed bodies will be dissolved into pure elements.

Reply to Objection 1. Christ’s resurrection is the exemplar of ours as to the term “whereto,” but not as to the term “wherefrom.”

Reply to Objection 2. By ashes we mean all the remains that are left after the dissolution of the body—for two reasons. First, because it was the common custom in olden times to burn the bodies of the dead, and to keep the ashes, whence it became customary to speak of the remains of a human body as ashes. Secondly, on

* See Editor’s note which follows IIIa, q. 26 † Vulg.: ‘Dust thou art and into dust thou shalt return’

account of the cause of dissolution, which is the flame of the fomes[‡] whereby the human body is radically infected. Hence, in order to be cleansed of this infection the human body must needs be dissolved into its primary components: and when a thing is destroyed by fire it is said to be reduced to ashes. wherefore the name of ashes is given to those things into which the human body is dissolved.

Reply to Objection 3. The fire that will cleanse the face of the earth will be able to reduce suddenly to ashes the bodies of those that will be found living, even as it will dissolve other mixed bodies into their preajacent

matter.

Reply to Objection 4. Movement does not take its species from its term “wherefrom” but from its term “whereto.” Hence the resurrection of the saints which will be glorious must needs differ from the resurrection of the wicked which will not be glorious, in respect of the term “whereto,” and not in respect of the term “wherefrom.” And it often happens that the term “whereto” is not the same, whereas the term “wherefrom” is the same—for instance, a thing may be moved from blackness to whiteness and to pallor.

Whether the ashes from which the human body will be restored have any natural inclination towards the soul which will be united to them?

Suppl. q. 78 a. 3

Objection 1. It would seem that the ashes from which the human body will be restored will have a natural inclination towards the soul which will be united to them. For if they had no inclination towards the soul, they would stand in the same relation to that soul as other ashes. Therefore it would make no difference whether the body that is to be united to that soul were restored from those ashes or from others: and this is false.

Objection 2. Further, the body is more dependent on the soul than the soul on the body. Now the soul separated from the body is still somewhat dependent on the body, wherefore its movement towards God is retarded on account of its desire for the body, as Augustine says (Gen. ad lit. xii). Much more, therefore, has the body when separated from the soul, a natural inclination towards that soul.

Objection 3. Further, it is written (Job 20:11): “His bones shall be filled with the vices of his youth, and they shall sleep with him in the dust.” But vices are only in the soul. Therefore there will still remain in those ashes a natural inclination towards the soul.

On the contrary, The human body can be dissolved into the very elements, or changed into the flesh of other animals. But the elements are homogeneous, and so is the flesh of a lion or other animal. Since then in the other parts of the elements or animals there is no natural inclination to that soul, neither will there be an inclination towards the soul in those parts into which the human body has been changed. The first proposition is made evident on the authority of Augustine (Enchiridion lxxxviii): “The human body, although changed into the substance of other bodies or even into the elements, although it has become the food and flesh of any animals whatsoever, even of man, will in an instant return to that soul which erstwhile animated it, making it a living and growing man.”

Further, to every natural inclination there corre-

sponds a natural agent: else nature would fail in necessities. Now the aforesaid ashes cannot be reunited to the same soul by any natural agent. Therefore there is not in them any natural inclination to the aforesaid reunion.

I answer that, Opinion is threefold on this point. For some say that the human body is never dissolved into its very elements; and so there always remains in the ashes a certain force besides the elements, which gives a natural inclination to the same soul. But this assertion is in contradiction with the authority of Augustine quoted above, as well as with the senses and reason: since whatever is composed of contraries can be dissolved into its component parts. Wherefore others say that these parts of the elements into which the human body is dissolved retain more light, through having been united to the soul, and for this reason have a

natural inclination to human souls. But this again is nonsensical, since the parts of the elements are of the same nature and have an equal share of light and darkness. Hence we must say differently that in those ashes there is no natural inclination to resurrection, but only by the ordering of Divine providence, which decreed that those ashes should be reunited to the soul: it is on this account that those parts of the elements shall be reunited and not others.

Hence the Reply to the First Objection is clear.

Reply to Objection 2. The soul separated from the body remains in the same nature that it has when united to the body. It is not so with the body, and consequently the comparison fails.

Reply to Objection 3. These words of Job do not mean that the vices actually remain in the ashes of the dead, but that they remain according to the ordering of Divine justice, whereby those ashes are destined to the restoration of the body which will suffer eternally for the sins committed.

[‡] Cf. Ia IIae, q. 82, a. 3