

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THIRD PART, QUESTION 82

Of the Impassibility of the Bodies of the Blessed After Their Resurrection (In Four Articles)

We must now consider the conditions under which the blessed rise again, and (1) the impassibility of their bodies; (2) their subtlety; (3) their agility; (4) their clarity. Under the first head there are four points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether the bodies of the saints will be impassible after the resurrection?
- (2) Whether all will be equally impassible?
- (3) Whether this impassibility renders the glorious bodies?
- (4) Whether in them all the senses are in act?

Whether the bodies of the saints will be impassible after the resurrection?

Suppl. q. 82 a. 1

Objection 1. It seems that the bodies of the saints will not be impassible after the resurrection. For everything mortal is passible. But man, after the resurrection, will be “a mortal rational animal,” for such is the definition of man, which will never be dissociated from him. Therefore the body will be passible.

Objection 2. Further, whatever is in potentiality to have the form of another thing is passible in relation to something else; for this is what is meant by being passive to another thing (De Gener. i). Now the bodies of the saints will be in potentiality to the form of another thing after the resurrection; since matter, according as it is under one form, does not lose its potentiality to another form. But the bodies of the saints after the resurrection will have matter in common with the elements, because they will be restored out of the same matter of which they are now composed. Therefore they will be in potentiality to another form, and thus will be passible.

Objection 3. Further, according to the Philosopher (De Gener. i), contraries have a natural inclination to be active and passive towards one another. Now the bodies of the saints will be composed of contraries after the resurrection, even as now. Therefore they will be passible.

Objection 4. Further, in the human body the blood and humors will rise again, as stated above (q. 80, Aa. 3,4). Now, sickness and such like passions arise in the body through the antipathy of the humors. Therefore the bodies of the saints will be passible after the resurrection.

Objection 5. Further, actual defect is more inconsistent with perfection than potential defect. But passibility denotes merely potential defect. Since then there will be certain actual defects in the bodies of the blessed, such as the scars of the wounds in the martyrs, even as they were in Christ, it would seem that their perfections will not suffer, if we grant their bodies to be passible.

On the contrary, Everything passible is corruptible, because “increase of passion results in loss of sub-

stance”*. Now the bodies of the saints will be incorruptible after the resurrection, according to 1 Cor. 15:42, “It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption.” Therefore they will be impassible.

Further, the stronger is not passive to the weaker. But no body will be stronger than the bodies of the saints, of which it is written (1 Cor. 15:43): “It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power.” Therefore they will be impassible.

I answer that, We speak of a thing being “passive” in two ways[†]. First in a broad sense, and thus every reception is called a passion, whether the thing received be fitting to the receiver and perfect it, or contrary to it and corrupt it. The glorious bodies are not said to be impassible by the removal of this kind of passion, since nothing pertaining to perfection is to be removed from them. In another way we use the word “passive” properly, and thus the Damascene defines passion (De Fide Orth. ii, 22) as being “a movement contrary to nature.” Hence an immoderate movement of the heart is called its passion, but a moderate movement is called its operation. The reason of this is that whatever is patient is drawn to the bounds of the agent, since the agent assimilates the patient to itself, so that, therefore, the patient as such is drawn beyond its own bounds within which it was confined. Accordingly taking passion in its proper sense there will be no potentiality to passion in the bodies of the saints after resurrection; wherefore they are said to be impassible.

The reason however of this impassibility is assigned differently by different persons. Some ascribe it to the condition of the elements, which will be different then from what it is now. For they say that the elements will remain, then, as to substance, yet that they will be deprived of their active and passive qualities. But this does not seem to be true: because the active and passive qualities belong to the perfection of the elements, so that if the elements were restored without them in the body of the man that rises again, they would be less perfect than now. Moreover since these qualities are the proper accidents of

* Aristotle, Topic. vi, 1 † Cf. Ia IIae, q. 22, a. 1

the elements, being caused by their form and matter, it would seem most absurd for the cause to remain and the effect to be removed. Wherefore others say that the qualities will remain, but deprived of their proper activities, the Divine power so doing for the preservation of the human body. This however would seem to be untenable, since the action and passion of the active and passive qualities is necessary for the mixture (of the elements), and according as one or the other preponderates the mixed (bodies) differ in their respective complexions, and this must apply to the bodies of those who rise again, for they will contain flesh and bones and like parts, all of which demand different complexions. Moreover, according to this, impassibility could not be one of their gifts, because it would not imply a disposition in the impassible substance, but merely an external preventive to passion, namely the power of God, which might produce the same effect in a human body even in this state of life. Consequently others say that in the body itself there will be something preventing the passion of a glorified body, namely the nature of a fifth[‡]: or heavenly body, which they maintain enters into the composition of a human body, to the effect of blending the elements together in harmony so as to be fitting matter for the rational soul; but that in this state of life, on account of the preponderance of the elemental nature, the human body is passible like other elements, whereas in the resurrection the nature of the fifth body will predominate, so that the human body will be made impassible in likeness to the heavenly body. But this cannot stand, because the fifth body does not enter materially into the composition of a human body, as was proved above (Sent. ii, D, 12, Q. 1, a. 1). Moreover it is absurd to say that a natural power, such as the power of a heavenly body, should endow the human body with a property of glory, such as the impassibility of a glorified body, since the Apostle ascribes to Christ's power the transformation of the human body, because "such as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly" (1 Cor. 15:48), and "He will reform the body of our lowliness, made like to the body of His glory, according to the operation whereby also He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:21). And again, a heavenly nature cannot exercise such power over the human body as to take from it its elemental nature which is passible by reason of its essential constituents. Consequently we must say otherwise that all passion results from the agent overcoming the patient, else it would not draw it to its own bounds. Now it is impossible for agent to overcome patient except through the weakening of the hold which the form of the patient has over its matter, if we speak of the passion which is against nature, for it is of passion in this sense that we are speaking now: for matter is not subject to one of two contraries, except through the cessation or at

[‡] The other four being the elements; this fifth element was known to the peripatetic philosophers as the quintessence, of which they held heavenly bodies to be formed

least the diminution of the hold which the other contrary has on it. Now the human body and all that it contains will be perfectly subject to the rational soul, even as the soul will be perfectly subject to God. Wherefore it will be impossible for the glorified body to be subject to any change contrary to the disposition whereby it is perfected by the soul; and consequently those bodies will be impassible.

Reply to Objection 1. According to Anselm (Cur Deus Homo ii, 11), "mortal is included in the philosophers' definition of man, because they did not believe that the whole man could be ever immortal, for they had no experience of man otherwise than in this state of mortality." Or we may say that since, according to the Philosopher (Metaph. vi, 12), essential differences are unknown to us, we sometimes employ accidental differences in order to signify essential differences from which the accidental differences result. Hence "mortal" is put in the definition of man, not as though mortality were essential to man, but because that which causes passibility and mortality in the present state of life, namely composition of contraries, is essential to man, but it will not cause it then, on account of the triumph of the soul over the body.

Reply to Objection 2. Potentiality is twofold, tied and free: and this is true not only of active but also of passive potentiality. For the form ties the potentiality of matter, by determining it to one thing, and it is thus that it overcomes it. And since in corruptible things form does not perfectly overcome matter, it cannot tie it completely so as to prevent it from sometimes receiving a disposition contrary to the form through some passion. But in the saints after the resurrection, the soul will have complete dominion over the body, and it will be altogether impossible for it to lose this dominion, because it will be immutably subject to God, which was not the case in the state of innocence. Consequently those bodies will retain substantially the same potentiality as they have now to another form; yet that potentiality will remain tied by the triumph of the soul over the body, so that it will never be realized by actual passion.

Reply to Objection 3. The elemental qualities are the instruments of the soul, as stated in De Anima ii, text. 38, seqq., for the heat of fire in an animal's body is directed in the act of nutrition by the soul's power. When, however, the principal agent is perfect, and there is no defect in the instrument, no action proceeds from the instrument, except in accordance with the disposition of the principal agent. Consequently in the bodies of the saints after the resurrection, no action or passion will result from the elemental qualities that is contrary to the disposition of the soul which has the preservation of the body in view.

Reply to Objection 4. According to Augustine (Ep. ad Consent. cxlvi) "the Divine power is able to remove"

whatever qualities He will “from this visible and tangible body, other qualities remaining.” Hence even as in a certain respect “He deprived the flames of the Chaldees’ furnace of the power to burn, since the bodies of the children were preserved without hurt, while in another respect that power remained, since those flames consumed the wood, so will He remove passibility from the humors while leaving their nature unchanged.” It has been explained in the Article how this is brought about.

Reply to Objection 5. The scars of wounds will not be in the saints, nor were they in Christ, in so far as they imply a defect, but as signs of the most steadfast virtue whereby the saints suffered for the sake of justice and

faith: so that this will increase their own and others’ joy (Cf. IIIa, q. 54, a. 4, ad 3). Hence Augustine says (De Civ. Dei xxii, 19): “We feel an undescrivable love for the blessed martyrs so as to desire to see in that kingdom the scars of the wounds in their bodies, which they bore for Christ’s name. Perchance indeed we shall see them for this will not make them less comely but more glorious. A certain beauty will shine in them, a beauty though in the body, yet not of the body but of virtue.” Nevertheless those martyrs who have been maimed and deprived of their limbs will not be without those limbs in the resurrection of the dead, for to them it is said (Lk. 21:18): “A hair of your head shall not perish.”

Whether all will be equally impassible?

Suppl. q. 82 a. 2

Objection 1. It would seem that all will be equally impassible. For a gloss on 1 Cor. 15:42, “It is sown in corruption,” says that “all have equal immunity from suffering.” Now the gift of impassibility consists in immunity from suffering. Therefore all will be equally impassible.

Objection 2. Further, negations are not subject to be more or less. Now impassibility is a negation or privation of passibility. Therefore it cannot be greater in one subject than in another.

Objection 3. Further, a thing is more white if it have less admixture of black. But there will be no admixture of passibility in any of the saints’ bodies. Therefore they will all be equally impassible.

On the contrary, Reward should be proportionate to merit. Now some of the saints were greater in merit than others. Therefore, since impassibility is a reward, it would seem to be greater in some than in others.

Further, impassibility is convided with the gift of clarity. Now the latter will not be equal in all, according to 1 Cor. 15:41. Therefore neither will impassibility be equal in all.

I answer that, Impassibility may be considered in two

ways, either in itself, or in respect of its cause. If it be considered in itself, since it denotes a mere negation or privation, it is not subject to be more or less, but will be equal in all the blessed. on the other hand, if we consider it in relation to its cause, thus it will be greater in one person than in another. Now its cause is the dominion of the soul over the body, and this dominion is caused by the soul’s unchangeable enjoyment of God. Consequently in one who enjoys God more perfectly, there is a greater cause of impassibility.

Reply to Objection 1. This gloss is speaking of impassibility in itself and not in relation to its cause.

Reply to Objection 2. Although negations and privations considered in themselves are not increased nor diminished, yet they are subject to increase and diminution in relation to their causes. Thus a place is said to be more darksome from having more and greater obstacles to light.

Reply to Objection 3. Some things increase not only by receding from their contrary, but also by approach to a term: thus light increases. Consequently impassibility also is greater in one subject than in another, although there is no passibility remaining in any one.

Whether impassibility excludes actual sensation from glorified bodies?

Suppl. q. 82 a. 3

Objection 1. It would seem that impassibility excludes actual sensation from glorified bodies. For according to the Philosopher (De Anima ii, 11), “sensation is a kind of passion.” But the glorified bodies will be impassible. Therefore they will not have actual sensation.

Objection 2. Further, natural alteration precedes spiritual* alteration, just as natural being precedes intentional being. Now glorified bodies, by reason of their impassibility, will not be subject to natural alteration. Therefore they will not be subject to spiritual alteration which is req-

uisite for sensation.

Objection 3. Further, whenever actual sensation is due to a new perception, there is a new judgment. But in that state there will be no new judgment, because “our thoughts will not then be unchangeable,” as Augustine says (De Trin. xv, 16). Therefore there will be no actual sensation.

Objection 4. Further, when the act of one of the soul’s powers is intense, the acts of the other powers are remiss. Now the soul will be supremely intent on the act of the

* “Animalem,” as though it were derived from “animus”—the mind. Cf. Ia Iae, q. 50, a. 1,3m; Ia Iae, q. 52, a. 1,3m.

contemplative power in contemplating God. Therefore the soul will have no actual sensation whatever.

On the contrary, It is written (Apoc. 1:7): “Every eye shall see Him.” Therefore there will be actual sensation.

Further, according to the Philosopher (De Anima i, 2) “the animate is distinct from the inanimate by sensation and movement.” Now there will be actual movement since they “shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds” (Wis. 3:7). Therefore there will also be actual sensation.

I answer that, All are agreed that there is some sensation in the bodies of the blessed: else the bodily life of the saints after the resurrection would be likened to sleep rather than to vigilance. Now this is not befitting that perfection, because in sleep a sensible body is not in the ultimate act of life, for which reason sleep is described as half-life.* But there is a difference of opinion as to the mode of sensation.

For some say that the glorified bodies will be impassible, and consequently “not susceptible to impressions from without”[†] and much less so than the heavenly bodies, because they will have actual sensations, not by receiving species from sensibles, but by emission of species. But this is impossible, since in the resurrection the specific nature will remain the same in man and in all his parts. Now the nature of sense is to be a passive power as the Philosopher proves (De Anima ii, text. 51,54). Wherefore if the saints, in the resurrection, were to have sensations by emitting and not by receiving species, sense in them would be not a passive but an active power, and thus it would not be the same specifically with sense as it is now, but would be some other power bestowed on them; for just as matter never becomes form, so a passive power never becomes active. Consequently others say that the senses will be actualized by receiving species, not indeed from external sensibles, but by an outflow from the higher powers, so that as now the higher powers receive from the lower, so on the contrary the lower powers will then receive from the higher. But this mode of reception does not result in real sensation, because every passive power, according to its specific nature, is determined to some special active principle, since a power as such bears relation to that with respect to which it is said to be the power. Wherefore since the proper active principle in external sensation is a thing existing outside the soul and not an intention thereof existing in the imagination or reason, if the organ of sense be not moved by external things, but by the imagination or other higher powers, there will be no true sensation. Hence we do not say that madmen or other witless persons (in whom there is this kind of outflow of species towards the organs of sense, on account of the powerful influence of the imagination) have real

sensations, but that it seems to them that they have sensations. Consequently we must say with others that sensation in glorified bodies will result from the reception of things outside the soul. It must, however, be observed that the organs of sense are transmuted by things outside the soul in two ways. First by a natural transmutation, when namely the organ is disposed by the same natural quality as the thing outside the soul which acts on that organ: for instance, when the hand is heated by touching a hot object, or becomes fragrant through contact with a fragrant object. Secondly, by a spiritual transmutation, as when a sensible quality is received in an instrument, according to a spiritual mode of being, when, namely, the species or the intention of a quality, and not the quality itself is received: thus the pupil receives the species of whiteness and yet does not itself become white. Accordingly the first reception does not cause sensation, properly speaking, because the senses are receptive of species in matter but without matter. that is to say without the material “being” which the species had outside the soul (De Anima ii, text. 121). This reception transmutes the nature of the recipient, because in this way the quality is received according to its material “being.” Consequently this kind of reception will not be in the glorified bodies, but the second, which of itself causes actual sensation, without changing the nature of the recipient.

Reply to Objection 1. As already explained, by this passion that takes place in actual sensation and is no other than the aforesaid reception of species, the body is not drawn away from natural quality, but is perfected by a spiritual change. Wherefore the impassibility of glorified bodies does not exclude this kind of passion.

Reply to Objection 2. Every subject of passion receives the action of the agent according to its mode. Accordingly if there be a thing that is naturally adapted to be altered by an active principle, with a natural and a spiritual alteration, the natural alteration precedes the spiritual alteration, just as natural precedes intentional being. If however a thing be naturally adapted to be altered only with a spiritual alteration it does not follow that it is altered naturally. For instance the air is not receptive of color, according to its natural being, but only according to its spiritual being, wherefore in this way alone is it altered: whereas, on the contrary, inanimate bodies are altered by sensible qualities only naturally and not spiritually. But in the glorified bodies there cannot be any natural alteration, and consequently there will be only spiritual alteration.

Reply to Objection 3. Just as there will be new reception of species in the organs of sensation, so there will be new judgment in the common sense: but there will be no new judgment on the point in the intellect; such is the

* This is what Aristotle says: “The good and the bad are in sleep least distinguishable: hence men say that for half their lives there is no difference between the happy and the unhappy” (Ethic. i, 13) [†] Cf. q. 74, a. 4, On the contrary

case with one who sees what he knew before. The saying of Augustine, that “there our thoughts will not be changeable,” refers to the thoughts of the intellectual part: therefore it is not to the point.

Reply to Objection 4. When one of two things is the type of the other, the attention of the soul to the one does not hinder or lessen its attention to the other: thus a physician while considering urine is not less but more able to bear in mind the rules of his art concerning the colors of urine. And since God is apprehended by the saints as the type of all things that will be done or known by them,

their attention to perceiving sensibles, or to contemplating or doing anything else will nowise hinder their contemplation of God, nor conversely. Or we may say that the reason why one power is hindered in its act when another power is intensely engaged is because one power does not alone suffice for such an intense operation, unless it be assisted by receiving from the principle of life the inflow that the other powers or members should receive. And since in the saints all the powers will be most perfect, one will be able to operate intensely without thereby hindering the operation of another power even as it was with Christ.

Whether in the blessed, after the resurrection, all the senses will be in act?

Suppl. q. 82 a. 4

Objection 1. It would seem that all the senses are not in act there. For touch is the first of all the senses (De Anima ii, 2). But the glorified body will lack the actual sense of touch, since the sense of touch becomes actual by the alteration of an animal body by some external body preponderating in some one of the active or passive qualities which touch is capable of discerning: and such an alteration will then be impossible. Therefore all the senses will not be in act there.

Objection 2. Further, the sense of taste assists the action of the nutritive power. Now after the resurrection there will be no such action, as stated above (q. 81, a. 4). Therefore taste would be useless there.

Objection 3. Further, nothing will be corrupted after the resurrection because the whole creature will be invested with a certain virtue of incorruption. Now the sense of smell cannot have its act without some corruption having taken place, because smell is not perceived without a volatile evaporation consisting in a certain dissolution. Therefore the sense of smell is not there in its act.

Objection 4. Further, “Hearing assists teaching” (De Sensu et Sensato i). But the blessed, after the resurrection, will require no teaching by means of sensible objects, since they will be filled with Divine wisdom by the very vision of God. Therefore hearing will not be there.

Objection 5. Further, seeing results from the pupil receiving the species of the thing seen. But after the resurrection this will be impossible in the blessed. Therefore there will be no actual seeing there, and yet this is the most noble of the senses. The minor is proved thus: That which is actually lightsome is not receptive of a visible species; and consequently a mirror placed under the sun’s rays does not reflect the image of a body opposite to it. Now the pupil like the whole body will be endowed with clarity. Therefore it will not receive the image of a colored body.

Objection 6. Further, according to the science of perspective, whatever is seen is seen at an angle. But this does not apply to the glorified bodies. Therefore they will

not have actual sense of sight. The minor is proved thus. Whenever a thing is seen at an angle, the angle must be proportionate to the distance of the object seen: because what is seen from a greater distance is less seen and at a lesser angle, so that the angle may be so small that nothing is seen of the object. Therefore if the glorified eye sees at an angle, it follows that it sees things within a certain distance, and that consequently it does not see a thing from a greater distance than we see now: and this would seem very absurd. And thus it would seem that the sense of sight will not be actual in glorified bodies.

On the contrary, A power conjoined to its act is more perfect than one not so conjoined. Now human nature in the blessed will be in its greatest perfection. Therefore all the senses will be actual there.

Further, the sensitive powers are nearer to the soul than the body is. But the body will be rewarded or punished on account of the merits or demerits of the soul. Therefore all the senses in the blessed will also be rewarded and in the wicked will be punished, with regard to pleasure and pain or sorrow which consist in the operation of the senses.

I answer that, There are two opinions on this question. For some say that in the glorified bodies there will be all the sensitive powers, but that only two senses will be in act, namely touch and sight; nor will this be owing to defective senses, but from lack of medium and object; and that the senses will not be useless, because they will conduce to the integrity of human nature and will show forth the wisdom of their Creator. But this is seemingly untrue, because the medium in these senses is the same as in the others. For in the sight the medium is the air, and this is also the medium in hearing and smelling (De Anima ii, 7). Again, the taste, like the touch, has the medium in contact, since taste is a kind of touch (De Anima ii, 9). Smell also which is the object of the sense of smell will be there, since the Church sings that the bodies of the saints will be a most sweet smell. There will also be vocal praise in heaven; hence a gloss says on Ps. 149:6, “The high praises of God shall be in their mouth” that “hearts

and tongues shall not cease to praise God.” The same is had on the authority of a gloss on 2 Esdra 12:27, “With singing and with cymbals.” Wherefore, according to others we may say that smelling and hearing will be in act there, but taste will not be in act, in the sense of being affected by the taking of food or drink, as appears from what we have said (q. 81, a. 4): unless perchance we say that there will be taste in act through the tongue being affected by some neighboring humor.

Reply to Objection 1. The qualities perceived by the touch are those which constitute the animal body. Wherefore the body of an animal has, through its tangible qualities according to the present state of life, a natural aptitude to be affected with a natural and spiritual alteration by the object of touch. For this reason the touch is said to be the most material of the senses, since it has a greater measure of material alteration connected with it. Yet material alteration is only accidentally related to the act of sensation which is effected by a spiritual alteration. Consequently the glorified bodies, which by reason of their impassibility are immune from natural alteration, will be subject only to spiritual alteration by tangible qualities. Thus it was with the body of Adam, which could neither be burned by fire, nor pierced by sword, although he had the sense of such things.

Reply to Objection 2. Taste, in so far as it is the perception of food, will not be in act; but perhaps it will be possible in so far as it is cognizant of flavors in the way mentioned above.

Reply to Objection 3. Some have considered smell to be merely a volatile evaporation. But this opinion cannot be true; which is evident from the fact that vultures hasten to a corpse on perceiving the odor from a very great distance, whereas it would be impossible for an evaporation to travel from the corpse to a place so remote, even though the whole corpse were to be dissolved into vapor. This is confirmed by the fact that sensible objects at an equal distance exercise their influence in all directions: so that smell affects the medium sometimes, and the instrument of sensation with a spiritual alteration, without any evaporation reaching the organ. That some evaporation should be necessary is due to the fact that smell in bodies is mixed with humidity; wherefore it is necessary for dissolution to take place in order for the smell to be perceived. But in the glorified bodies odor will be in its ultimate perfection,

being nowise hampered by humidity: wherefore it will affect the organ with a spiritual alteration, like the odor of a volatile evaporation. Such will be the sense of smell in the saints, because it will not be hindered by any humidity: and it will take cognizance not only of the excellences of odors, as happens with us now on account of the very great humidity of the brain, but also of the minutest differences of odors.

Reply to Objection 4. In heaven there will be vocal praise (though indeed some think otherwise), and in the blessed it will affect the organ of hearing by a merely spiritual alteration. Nor will it be for the sake of learning whereby they may acquire knowledge, but for the sake of the perfection of the sense and for the sake pleasure. How it is possible for the voice to give sound there, we have already stated (Sent. ii, D, 2; q. 2, a. 2, ad 5).

Reply to Objection 5. The intensity of light does not hinder the spiritual reception of the image of color, so long as the pupil retains its diaphanous nature; thus it is evident that however much the air be filled with light, it can be the medium of sight, and the more it is illumined, the more clearly are objects seen through it, unless there be a fault through defective sight. The fact that the image of an object placed in opposition to a mirror directly opposite the sun’s rays does not appear therein, is not due to the reception being hindered, but to the hindering of reflection: because for an image to appear in a mirror it must needs be thrown back by an opaque body, for which reason lead is affixed to the glass in a mirror. The sun’s ray dispels this opacity so that no image can appear in the mirror. But the clarity of a glorified body does not destroy the diaphanous nature of the pupil, since glory does not destroy nature; and consequently the greatness of clarity in the pupil renders the sight keen rather than defective.

Reply to Objection 6. The more perfect the sense the less does it require to be altered in order to perceive its object. Now the smaller the angle at which the sight is affected by the visible object, the less is the organ altered. Hence it is that a stronger sight can see from a distance more than a weaker sight; because the greater the distance the smaller the angle at which a thing is seen. And since the sight of a glorified body will be most perfect it will be able to see by the very least alteration (of the organ); and consequently at a very much smaller angle than now, and therefore from a much greater distance.