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(3a. 46-52)

Richard T. A. Murphy O.P.

Excerpt

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## SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 46, I

CONSEQUENTER CONSIDERANDUM est de his quæ pertinent ad exitum Christi de mundo:

- et primo de passione ejus;
- secundo, de morte;
- tertio, de sepultura;
- quarto, de descensu ad inferos.

Circa passionem occurrit triplex consideratio:

- prima de ipsa passione;
- secunda, de causa efficiente passionis;
- tertia, de fructu passionis.

## Quæstio 46. de passione Christi

Circa primum quærentur duodecim:

1. utrum necesse fuerit Christum pati pro liberatione hominum;
2. utrum fuerit alius modus possibilis liberationis humanæ;
3. utrum ille modus fuerit convenientior;
4. utrum fuerit conveniens quod in cruce pateretur;
5. de generalitate passionis ejus;
6. utrum dolor quem in passione sustinuit, fuerit maximus;
7. utrum tota anima ejus pateretur;
8. utrum passio ejus impediverit gaudium fruitionis;
9. de tempore passionis;
10. de loco;
11. utrum conveniens fuerit ipsum cum latronibus crucifigi;
12. utrum passio ipsius Christi sit divinitati attribuenda.

*articulus 1. utrum fuerit necessarium Christum pati pro liberatione humani generis*

AD PRIMUM sic proceditur:<sup>1</sup> 1. Videtur quod non fuerit necessarium Christum pati pro humani generis liberatione. Humanum enim genus liberari non poterat nisi a Deo, secundum illud, *Numquid non ego Dominus, et non est ultra Deus absque me? Deus justus et salvans non est præter me.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>cf III Sent. 16, 1, 2; 20, 1, iii. De Rationibus Fidei 7

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## CHRIST'S PASSION

NEXT WE HAVE TO CONSIDER the circumstances of Christ's departure from this world:

- first, his passion;
- second, his death;
- third, his burial;
- fourth, his descent into hell.

The passion occasions a threefold consideration:

- first, the passion itself (46);
- second, the causes at work in the passion (47-8);
- third, the results of Christ's passion (49).

### Question 46. Christ's passion

Under the first heading there are twelve points of inquiry:

1. whether Christ had to suffer in order to free man from sin;
2. whether man could have been freed in any other way;
3. whether the way chosen was the better way;
4. whether it was fitting that Christ be crucified;
5. the extent of Christ's suffering;
6. whether Christ's suffering in his passion surpassed all other pains;
7. whether Christ suffered in every part of his soul;
8. whether the passion prevented him from enjoying God;
9. the time of the passion;
10. the place;
11. whether he should have been crucified with thieves;
12. whether Christ's passion should be attributed to his divinity.

*article 1. did Christ have to suffer in order to free men from sin?*

THE FIRST POINT:<sup>1</sup> 1. It does not seem necessary that Christ should have had to suffer in order to free mankind. Man could be delivered only by God; *am not I the Lord, besides whom there is no other God? There is no just and saving God but me.*<sup>2</sup> Now to attribute any necessity to God would

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<sup>2</sup>Isaiah 45, 21

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SUMMA THEOLOGICÆ, 3a. 46, I

In Deo autem non cadit aliqua necessitas, quia hoc repugnaret omnipotentia ipsius. Ergo non fuit necessarium Christum pati.

2. Præterea, necessarium voluntario opponitur. Sed Christus propria voluntate est passus; dicitur enim, *Oblatus est, quia ipse voluit*.<sup>3</sup> Non ergo necessarium fuit eum pati.

3. Præterea, *Universæ viæ Domini misericordia et veritas*.<sup>4</sup> Sed non videtur necessarium quod pateretur ex parte misericordiae divinæ, quæ sicut gratis dona tribuit ita videtur quod gratis debita relaxet absque satisfactione: neque etiam ex parte divinæ justitiæ, secundum quam homo æternam damnationem meruerat. Ergo videtur non fuisse necessarium quod Christus pro liberatione hominum pateretur.

4. Præterea, angelica natura est excellentior quam humana, ut patet per Dionysium<sup>5</sup> Sed pro reparatione angelicæ naturæ quæ peccaverat Christus non est passus. Ergo videtur quod nec etiam fuerit necessarium eum pati pro salute humani generis.

SED CONTRA est quod dicitur, *Sicut Moyses exaltavit serpentem in deserto, sic oportet exaltari Filium hominis, ut omnis qui credit in eum, non pereat, sed habeat vitam æternam*,<sup>6</sup> quod quidem de exaltatione in cruce intelligitur. Ergo videtur quod Christum oportuerit pati.

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod, sicut Philosophus docet in v *Meta*.<sup>7</sup> necessarium multipliciter dicitur: uno quidem modo, quod secundum sui naturam impossibile est aliter se habere; et sic manifestum est quod non fuit necessarium Christum pati neque ex parte Dei, neque ex parte hominis.

Alio modo dicitur aliquid necessarium ex aliquo exteriori; quod quidem si sit causa efficiens, vel movens, facit necessitatem coactionis; ut puta cum aliquis non potest ire propter violentiam detinentis ipsum. Si vero illud exterius quod necessitatem inducit sit finis dicitur aliquid necessarium ex suppositione finis, quando scilicet finis aliquis aut nullo modo potest esse aut non potest esse convenienter nisi tali fine præsupposito.

Non ergo fuit necessarium Christum pati necessitate coactionis neque ex parte Dei, qui Christum definivit pati, neque etiam ex parte ipsius Christi, qui voluntarie passus est.

Fuit autem necessarium necessitate finis: qui quidem potest tripliciter intelligi. Primo quidem ex parte nostra, qui per ejus passionem liberati sumus, secundum illud, *Oportet exaltari filium hominis, ut omnis qui credit in eum, non pereat, sed habeat vitam æternam*.<sup>8</sup> Secundo, ex parte ipsius

<sup>3</sup>Isaiah 53, 7

<sup>4</sup>Psalms 24 (25), 10

<sup>5</sup>De Div. Nom. 2, I. PG 3, 696

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run counter to his omnipotence. So it was not necessary for Christ to suffer.

2. Moreover, the necessary is opposed to the voluntary. Christ however suffered voluntarily, *He was offered because it was his own will.*<sup>3</sup> His suffering, then, was not a necessity.

3. Again, *All the paths of the Lord are kindness and constancy.*<sup>4</sup> On the side of divine mercy Christ's suffering does not seem required, for that mercy bestows gifts freely and would, it seems, forgive debts freely without insisting on payment. Nor is it required on the side of divine justice, before which man had made himself liable to eternal damnation. Therefore it seems unnecessary that Christ suffer for man's deliverance.

4. Moreover, Dionysius shows that angelic nature is more excellent than human nature.<sup>5</sup> But as Christ did not suffer to restore sinful angelic nature, it does not seem that he had to suffer for the salvation of the human race.

ON THE OTHER HAND *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*<sup>6</sup> But this refers to Christ's being lifted up on the Cross. It therefore seems that Christ had to suffer.

REPLY: Aristotle observes<sup>7</sup> that the word 'necessary' is used in many ways. It may signify something which by its very nature cannot be otherwise. In this sense, it was not necessary either on the part of God or of man for Christ to suffer.

In another way, however, a thing is said to be necessary in view of some extrinsic consideration. Necessity of compulsion arises from an efficient or moving cause; a man, for example, cannot move if someone forcibly holds him still. But if the extrinsic cause inducing necessity is a desired end, then a necessity arises in view of that end; without it, in other words, the objective either cannot be attained at all or cannot otherwise be so well attained.

Christ was not obliged to suffer by a necessity of force originating either in God, who had decreed that he suffer, or in Christ himself, who suffered willingly.

He was however under that necessity which arises from the end, and this can be understood in three ways. Christ had to suffer, first, for our sakes, who have been delivered by his passion; it is written, *the Son of Man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.*<sup>8</sup> Secondly for his own sake, who by his lowly passion merited a

<sup>6</sup>John 3, 14

<sup>8</sup>John 3, 14

<sup>7</sup>Metaphysics v, 5. 1015a20

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## SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 46, 2

Christi, qui per humilitatem passionis meruit gloriam exaltationis: et ad hoc pertinet quod dicitur, *Nonne oportuit Christum pati, et sic intrare in gloriam suam?*<sup>9</sup> Tertio, ex parte Dei, cujus definitionem circa passionem Christi prænuntiata in Scripturis et præfigurata in observantia veteris Testamenti oportebat impleri:\* et hoc est quod dicitur, *Filius hominis, secundum quod definitum est, vadit;*<sup>10</sup> et, *Hæc sunt verba quæ locutus sum ad vos, cum adhuc essem vobiscum, quoniam necesse est impleri omnia quæ scripta sunt in lege Moysi et Prophetis, et Psalmis de me*<sup>11</sup> . . . *quoniam sic scriptum est, et sic oportebat Christum pati, et resurgere a mortuis.*<sup>12</sup>

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod ratio illa procedit de necessitate coactionis ex parte Dei.

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod ratio illa procedit de necessitate coactionis ex parte hominis Christi.

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod hominem liberari per passionem Christi conveniens fuit et misericordiæ et justitiæ eius. Justitiæ quidem, quia per passionem suam Christus satisfecit pro peccato humani generis; et ita homo per justitiam Christi liberatus est. Misericordiæ vero, quia cum homo per se satisfacere non posset pro peccato totius humanæ naturæ, ut supra dictum est,<sup>13</sup> Deus ei satisfactorem dedit Filium suum, secundum illud, *Justificati gratis per gratiam ipsius, per redemptionem quæ est in Christo Jesu, quem proposuit Deus propitiatorem per fidem in sanguine ipsius:*<sup>14</sup>† et hoc fuit abundantioris misericordiæ quam si peccata absque satisfactione dimisisset. Unde dicitur, *Deus, qui dives est in misericordia, propter nimiam charitatem, qua dilexit nos, cum essemus mortui peccatis, convivificavit nos in Christo.*<sup>15</sup>

4. Ad quartum dicendum quod peccatum angeli non fuit remediabile, sicut peccatum hominis, ut ex supradictis in *Prima Parte* patet.<sup>16</sup>

*articulus 2. utrum fuerit possibilis alius modus liberationis humanæ quam per passionem Christi*

AD SECUNDUM sic proceditur:<sup>1</sup> 1. Videtur quod non fuerit possibilis alius modus liberationis humanæ quam per passionem Christi. Dicit enim Dominus, *Nisi granum frumenti cadens in terram mortuum fuerit, ipsum solum manet; si autem mortuum fuerit, multum fructum affert.*<sup>2</sup> Ubi dicit Augustinus quod *seipsum granum dicebat.*<sup>3</sup> Nisi ergo mortem passus esset, aliter fructum nostræ liberationis non fecisset.

\*Leonine: *Cuius definitio est . . . whose decree is about the passion . . . omits oportebat impleri*, had to be fulfilled

†Leonine omits: *in sanguine ipsius*, in his blood

<sup>9</sup>Luke 24, 26

<sup>10</sup>Luke 22, 22

<sup>11</sup>Luke 24, 44

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glorious exaltation. *Was it not necessary that Christ should suffer . . . and enter into his glory?*<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, for God's sake, for his decree concerning Christ's passion as announced in the Scriptures and prefigured in the observances of the Old Testament had to be fulfilled, *The Son of Man goes his way as it has been determined.*<sup>10</sup> Again, *These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all the things that are written about me in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms, must be fulfilled.*<sup>11</sup> Again, *Thus it is written, that Christ should suffer and on the third day arise from the dead.*<sup>12</sup>

Hence: 1. The first objection assumes that there was, on God's part, necessity of compulsion.

2. The second argument supposes that there was, on the part of the man Christ, necessity of compulsion.

3. The liberation of man through the passion of Christ was consonant with both his mercy and his justice. With justice, because by his passion Christ made satisfaction for the sin of the human race, and man was freed through the justice of Christ. With mercy, because since man was by himself unable to satisfy for the sin of all human nature, as was said above,<sup>13</sup> God gave him his Son to do so, according to Paul, *They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth as a propitiation by his blood, through faith.*<sup>14</sup> In so acting God manifested greater mercy than if he had forgiven sins without requiring satisfaction. Paul therefore writes, *God, who is rich in mercy, by reason of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead by reason of our sins, brought us to life together with Christ.*<sup>15</sup>

4. Unlike man's sin, the sin of the angels was, as has been pointed out, irreparable.<sup>16</sup>

*article 2. could man have been freed in any other way than by Christ's passion?*

THE SECOND POINT:<sup>1</sup> 1. It seems there was no other way possible for man to be freed than by Christ's passion. *Unless the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, Christ said, it remains alone. But if it die, it brings forth much fruit.*<sup>2</sup> Augustine here observes that *Christ calls himself grain.*<sup>3</sup> Unless therefore he suffered death, he would not otherwise have brought forth our liberation as fruit.

<sup>9</sup>Luke 24, 46<sup>10</sup>cf 3a. 1, 2 ad 2<sup>11</sup>Romans 3, 24<sup>12</sup>Ephesians 2, 4<sup>13</sup>1a. 64, 2<sup>14</sup>cf III Sent. 3, 20, 4, i. Opusc. 1, 17<sup>15</sup>John 12, 24 f.<sup>16</sup>cf In Joann., 51. PL 35, 1766

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## SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 46, 2

2. Præterea, Dominus dicit ad Patrem, *Pater mi, si non potest hic calix transire, nisi bibam illum, fiat voluntas tua.*<sup>4</sup> Loquitur autem ibi de calice passionis. Ergo passio Christi præteriri non poterat; unde et Hilarius dicit, *Ideo calix transire non potest, nisi illum bibat, quia reparari nisi ex ejus passione non possumus.*<sup>5</sup>

3. Præterea, justitia Dei exigebat ut homo a peccato liberaretur, Christo per passionem satisfaciente. Sed Christus suam justitiam non potest præterire: dicitur enim, *Si non credimus, ille fidelis permanet, negare seipsum non potest.*<sup>6</sup> Seipsum autem negaret, si justitiam suam negaret, cum ipse sit justitia. Ergo videtur quod non fuerit possibile alio modo hominem liberari quam per passionem Christi.

4. Præterea, fidei non potest subesse falsum. Sed antiqui Patres crediderunt Christum passurum. Ergo videtur quod non potuerit esse quin Christus pateretur.

SED CONTRA est quod Augustinus dicit, *Istum modum quo nos per mediatorem Dei et hominum hominem Christum Jesum Deus liberare dignatur, asserimus bonum, et divinæ congruum dignitati; verum etiam ostendamus non alium modum possibilem Deo defuisse, cujus potestati cuncta æqualiter subjacent.*<sup>7</sup>

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod aliquid potest dici possibile vel impossibile dupliciter, uno modo simpliciter et absolute, alio modo ex suppositione. Simpliciter igitur et absolute loquendo possibile fuit Deo alio modo hominem liberare quam per passionem Christi, quia *non est impossibile apud Deum omne verbum.*<sup>8</sup> Sed ex aliqua suppositione facta, fuit impossibile. Quia enim impossibile est Dei præscientiam falli et ejus voluntatem seu dispositionem cassari, supposita præscientia et præordinatione Dei de passione Christi, non erat simul possibile Christum non pati vel hominem alio modo quam per ejus passionem liberari. Et est eadem ratio de omnibus his quæ sunt præscita et præordinata a Deo, ut in *Prima Parte* habitum est.<sup>9</sup>

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod Dominus ibi loquitur, supposita præscientia et præordinatione Dei, secundum quam erat ordinatum ut fructus humanæ salutis non sequeretur nisi Christo patiente.

2. Et similiter intelligendum est quod secundo objicitur, *Si non potest hic*

<sup>4</sup>Matthew 26, 42

<sup>5</sup>cf *In Matt.* 31. PL 9, 1069

<sup>6</sup>II *Timothy* 2, 13

<sup>7</sup>*De Trinitate* XIII, 10. PL 42, 1024

<sup>8</sup>Luke 1, 37

<sup>9</sup>cf Ia. 14, 13

\*Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the great patriarchs. The term may also refer, in a wider sense, to those prophets who foretold the sufferings of Christ. In Deutero-

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2. Moreover, when Jesus said to his Father, *My Father, if this cup cannot pass away unless I drink it, thy will be done*,<sup>4</sup> he was referring to the cup of his passion. Thus Christ's passion could not have been omitted. Hilary therefore remarks that *the cup cannot pass away unless he drinks it, for we cannot be restored except by his passion*.<sup>5</sup>

3. God's justice required that man be freed from sin by Christ's atoning passion. But Christ cannot transgress his own justice, *If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself*.<sup>6</sup> But if he were to disown his justice, he would disown himself, for he is himself justice. It seems then impossible that man should be delivered in any other way than through the passion of Christ.

4. Again, faith cannot cling to what is false. But the patriarchs of old believed that Christ was to suffer.<sup>a</sup> It therefore seems that Christ had to suffer.

ON THE OTHER HAND as Augustine says, *the way God deigns to free us through the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, we find both good and in keeping with divine dignity. Still, we ought to show that to God, to whose power all things are equally subject, there were other possible ways open*.<sup>7</sup>

REPLY: A thing can be possible or impossible in two ways, first, simply and absolutely, second, hypothetically. Simply and absolutely speaking, God could have freed man otherwise than by Christ's passion, for *nothing is impossible with God*.<sup>8</sup> Once however a certain hypothesis is granted, there was no other way. It is impossible that God's foreknowledge should be erroneous and that his will or plan be frustrated. On the hypothesis, then, that Christ's passion was known and willed in advance by God, it was not at the same time possible for Christ not to suffer, or for man to be delivered in any way other than by his passion. This reasoning holds for everything that is foreknown and determined in advance by God, as we have already shown in the *Prima Pars*.<sup>9b</sup>

Hence: 1. In the passage quoted, Jesus takes for granted God's foreknowledge and plan, according to which the fruit of man's salvation was to result only from Christ's suffering.

2. The second objection, *If this cup cannot pass away unless I drink it*,

Isaiah especially, there emerges the mysterious figure of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh (42, 1-9; 49, 1-6; 50, 4-11; 52, 13-53, 12). The idea of a suffering Messiah, however, was never taken seriously by the ordinary Jew, who looked forward to the coming of a nationalist leader who would free the nation from foreign domination. <sup>b</sup>God's power enables him to move necessary things necessarily, and free or contingent beings freely. In other words, the divine motion of a creature endowed with free-will does not impose a way of acting yet is infallibly efficacious. cf 1a. 22, 4 and ad 1.



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## SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 46, 3

*calix transire, nisi bibam illum, scilicet propter hoc quod tu ita disposuisti; unde subdit, fiat voluntas tua.*

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod hæc etiam justitia dependet ex voluntate divina, ab humano genere satisfactionem exigente pro peccato. Nam si voluisset absque omni satisfactione hominem a peccato liberare, contra justitiam non fecisset. Ille enim iudex non potest salva justitia culpam sine pœna\* dimittere, qui habet punire culpam in alium commissam, puta vel in alium hominem vel in totam rempublican sive in superiorem principem. Sed Deus non habet aliquem superiorem, sed ipse est supremum et commune bonum totius universi. Et ideo si dimittat peccatum, quod habet rationem culpæ, ex eo quod contra ipsum committitur, nulli facit injuriam: sicut quicumque homo remittit offensam in se commissam absque satisfactione, misericorditer et non injuste agit. Et ideo David misericordiam petens dicebat, *Tibi soli peccavi*,<sup>10</sup> quasi dicat, 'Potes sine injustitia mihi dimittere.'

4. Ad quartum dicendum quod fides humana, et etiam Scripturæ divinæ, quibus fides instruitur, innituntur præscientiæ et præordinationi† divinæ. Et ideo eadem ratio est de necessitate quæ provenit ex suppositione eorum, et de necessitate quæ provenit ex præscientia et voluntate divina.

*articulus 3. utrum fuerit aliquis modus convenientior ad liberationem humani generis quam per passionem Christi*

AD TERTIUM sic proceditur.<sup>1</sup> Videtur quod alius modus convenientior fuisset liberationis humanæ quam per passionem Christi. Natura enim in sua operatione imitatur opus divinum, upote a Deo mota et regulata. Sed natura non facit per duo quod per unum potest facere. Cum ergo Deus potuerit hominem liberare sola propria voluntate, non videtur conveniens fuisse quod ad liberationem humani generis Christi passio adderetur.

2. Præterea, ea quæ fiunt per naturam convenientius fiunt quam ea quæ fiunt per violentiam: quia violentia est *quædam excisio, seu casus ab eo quod est secundum naturam*, ut dicitur in libro *de Cælo*.<sup>2</sup> Sed passio Christi mortem violentam induxit. Ergo convenientius fuisset ut Christus naturali morte moriendo hominem liberaret, quam quod pateretur.

3. Præterea, convenientissimum videtur quod ille qui violenter et injuste detinet aliquid per superioris potentiam spoliatur, unde et dicitur, *Gratis venundati estis, et sine argento redimemini*.<sup>3</sup> Sed diabolus nullum jus in homine habebat, quem per fraudem deceperat, et per quamdam violentiam servituti subjectum detinebat. Ergo videtur convenientissimum fuisse quod Christus diabolum per solam potentiam spoliaret absque sua passione.

\*Leonine: *culpam sive pœnam*, crime or punishment †Leonine: *ordinationi*, plan

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must be understood in the same way, namely, because you have so ordained it. That is why he went on to say *your will be done*.

3. Even this justice depends upon the divine will which requires satisfaction for sin from the human race. For if God had wanted to free man from sin without any satisfaction at all, he would not have been acting against justice. Justice cannot be safeguarded by the judge whose duty it is to punish crimes committed against others, e.g. against a fellow man, or the government, or the head of the government, should he dismiss a crime without punishment. But God has no one above him, for he is himself the supreme and common good of the entire universe. If then he forgives sin, which is a crime in that it is committed against him, he violates no one's rights. The man who waives satisfaction and forgives an offence done to himself acts mercifully, not unjustly. David therefore cried out for mercy, saying, *I have sinned against you*,<sup>10</sup> as if he were saying, 'you can forgive me without being unjust.'

4. Human faith and even the Sacred Scriptures which instruct it rest upon the divine foreknowledge and plan. Hence the necessity which derives from the assertions of the faith and of Scripture is of the same nature as the necessity arising from divine foreknowledge and will.

*article 3. was there a better way to free man than the passion of Christ?*

THE THIRD POINT:<sup>1</sup> I. It seems that some way other than Christ's passion would have been more suitable to deliver man. Nature, which is moved and regulated by God, operates in imitation of the divine work. But nature does not do by twos what can be done by one. Since therefore God could have freed man by merely willing that freedom, it does not seem right that for man's liberation there should have been added also the passion of Christ.

2. Moreover, the course of nature is preferable to the introduction of violence. Violence is *a kind of destruction or ruin of what is natural*.<sup>2</sup> But Christ's passion led to his violent death. It would therefore have been preferable if Christ had freed man by dying a natural death, rather than by suffering.

3. Again, it seems eminently right that one who holds something by violence and injustice, should be stripped of it by a greater power. *You were sold for nothing*, Isaiah says, *and you shall be redeemed without money*.<sup>3</sup> However, the devil had no claim upon man, whom he had deceived by guile and held in slavery by a certain violence. It would then have been most right for Christ to have dispossessed the devil by sheer power, without suffering.

<sup>10</sup>*Psalms* 50 (51), 6   <sup>1</sup>cf III *Sent.* 20, 4, ii. *In Symbolum Apostolorum Expositio* 4  
<sup>2</sup>*De Caelo* II, 18. 286a19; 300a23   <sup>3</sup>*Isaiah* 52, 3