

SESSION THREE

Western Innovations in Models of Salvation/Sacrifice

- With Anselm and subsequently in the West, there is a “God-ward” emphasis on Christ’s work/sacrifice that is novel—that the “problem” that Christ addresses on the Cross is substantially on God’s side of the equation.
 - Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo* (“Why God became Man”)—ca. mid 11th century-early 12th century
 - Christ’s sacrifice as a “satisfaction” of God’s offended honor
 - “Penal Substitution” in the Reformers (esp. Calvin)
 - God is enabled to forgive by virtue of having poured out all his wrath against human sin on Christ. This substitutionary punitive death and condemnation is a payment to God for sin, such that Christ has formed a “treasury of merit” that can be applied to those who believe in him. They can be “reckoned righteous” by virtue of Christ’s punitive substitutionary death, with His “merit” applied to their “account,” while not actually being righteous themselves.
 - “Penal substitution” as necessary for forensic imputation of an alien righteousness
 - This punitive model, then, is a relative late-comer to the theological scene, and is part and parcel of a whole system of soteriological innovation.
 - Note however that the Reformers did not reject the *premises of the Latin penitential system, they simply collapsed it into the one “event” of Christ’s sacrifice.*
- Problems:
 - Anselm
 - Anselm’s model implies something like the “God of infinite self-regard”—is this really the God revealed to us in Christ, Whom we are to imitate and Whose “mind” we are supposed to have (e.g., Phil 2.5ff)?
 - The notion of “satisfaction”—that sins need to be not just forgiven, but compensated for with meritorious works. This leads to the Latin teaching on Purgatory, that the East rejects.

“This is how Ludwig Ott has defined the concept of satisfaction, to which the Latins referred in the aforementioned passage: ‘By sacramental satisfaction is understood works of penance which are imposed on the penitent in atonement for the temporal punishment for sins which remain *after the guilt of sin and its eternal punishment have been forgiven.*’ Or, as Martiniano Roncaglia has put it in commenting on the Latin view on purgatory, ‘albeit forgiven, sin leaves, in fact, behind it punishments to be undergone in compensation, which can be compared to a debt. Acquittal is achieved down here through voluntary penances. But when one does not finish one’s penances, it is believed that this may be done in the afterlife through the mere fact of non-meritorious suffering. This is what is **called . . . *satispassio.***” (Bathrellos, “LOVE, PURIFICATION, AND FORGIVENESS VERSUS JUSTICE, PUNISHMENT, AND SATISFACTION: THE DEBATES ON PURGATORY AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AT THE COUNCIL OF FERRARA-FLORENCE,” *JTS* NS 65.1 [2014] pp. 84-5) (Council spanned ca. AD 1431-1449)

- The penal-substitutionary model
 - Inevitably leads to Christological problems inasmuch as Christ’s deity is rendered unnecessary (God’s relationship with humanity is mediated not through Christ, but

through “justice”; see below), or approaches the Nestorian heresy of “two Sons” that parts Christ into two separate parts/persons

- Which leads to soteriological problems, in that it subsumes Christ’s Person and Work to some abstract principle or mechanism of retribution/justice. Which means that in some substantial and real way salvation can be contemplated apart from our *participation in Christ, and thus our imitation of Christ*
- Lurking behind both of these models is the Western philosophical commitment to *absolute divine simplicity*—that posits that God is constrained by his nature. That is, God is not first and foremost Personal (Three Persons of the Godhead), but is first and foremost an impersonal “essence,” such that God as Person is constrained by what God *is*. The East takes a radically different approach in that for us *the Person of God the Father* is the “starting point” of the Eternal life of the Trinity (i.e., the Monarchy of the Father), not the divine essence as such.

The Pattern and Continuity of Scriptural and Patristic Thought

- Back to First Things
 - Is Scripture a crime-and-punishment “courtroom drama”? (If so, what kind of court, what kind of judge, what kind of law, what kind of justice? Etc.)
 - Is Scripture a comedic “love story” with a tragic subplot? (I.e., the Incarnation is *not* God’s “Plan B.”)
- Any idea of sacrifice that starts with “necessity” for God is off on the wrong foot to begin with. Because this implies that there is something more universal than God, to which God is beholden.
 - God is not beholden to an “impersonal standard” of justice—rather, Christ is *God’s Righteousness* (1 Cor 1.24, 30).
- Any idea of sacrifice that inserts some sort of distance or difference between Christ and God, as relates to Christ’s Sacrifice (or anything else), is off on the wrong foot.
 - Christ’s sacrifice is not “for God;” Christ *is* God (the eternal Person of the Son).
 - God is *never the object of the verb “to propitiate” in Scripture in a sacrificial context.*
 - Christ certainly and truly does offer all of humanity *to God the Father*, but this is by way of the Son’s assumption and recapitulation of human nature—Christ takes human nature up into His Person and “re-does/makes” and “re-heads” it.
 - This is a far cry from the idea that the Son becomes incarnate just to provide God with a substitute death in place of humanity, such that God is *enabled to forgive, etc.*
 - There is **no mediator between God and Man other than the eternal divine Person of the incarnate Christ, including abstract notions of “justice.”**
 - **God’s relationship with humanity is Person-to-Person in Christ:**
 - **Not:** God → “Justice” → Christ (suffering) → God (forgiveness) → Humanity (relationship/acceptance).
 - **Rather: Person of the Father → Person of the Son → Persons of Humanity via the universal (impersonal) human nature assumed by the Son**

- Forgiveness (Jubilee remission of debts, Isa 61/Lk 4) is found in Christ, because in Christ, humanity is brought back “from exile,” brought out from under “the curse of the Law.”
- Said another way, Forgiveness is found in Christ because in Christ all things are restored—God “lets go of” or “puts away” (remits) the past, because those in Christ have died and been raised and so have become “new creation” in Christ.
 - The logic of this is not *punitive*—it’s not the “fact” or even extent of Christ’s suffering as such that is in focus in an abstract “legal” calculus (suffering must be proportionate to “crime”)—it is the concrete reality that is effected through Christ’s self-offering, with the extreme suffering of Christ revealing *the depth of the Holy Trinity’s love for mankind* in this work.
- Within this overall theological vision, the Scriptures and the Fathers do at times indeed use *penal language* to understand the reality of Christ’s work on the Cross:
 - 2 Cor 5.19-21; Rom 8.3-4; 1 Pet 2.4
 - The question is not *that this language exists*, the question is,
 - What does the text actually say? (vs. what we might be used to assuming it says)
 - *What does it mean given our whole confession about Christ, the Holy Trinity, the Church, etc.?*
- We must continually return to our Christology to understand how Christ fulfills sacrifice.
 - The one Person of Christ is eternally God, begotten timelessly of the Father, and begotten in time, according to His humanity, by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary *for our salvation*.
 - Christ *assumes human nature into His eternal divine Person*. And this is the very purpose for which God created humanity—to be united to Him in eternal communion.
 - The Incarnation is not God’s “Plan B.” God’s free self-offering in the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is the *fulfillment of God’s self-offering in creating the world to begin with*.
 - This is why Christ is the New Adam, the True Human, the True King-Priest, the Unique Mediator between God and Man.
 - This is why we are called to become Christians, “little Christs,” as we are restored into the Image of Him who created us, and we are granted by grace to participate in the Son’s relationship, by nature, eternally with the Father.
 - In and through Christ’s eternal self-offering (of deified humanity) to the Father, we are enabled to offer ourselves *in and with Christ the True Human* to the Father—thus fulfilling the purpose for which we were created.
 - There is no “distance” between the Father and the Son at any point, in any way.
 - All that Christ does, He does *for our sake*. God stands in need of nothing.
 - God does not *need* a sacrifice to forgive sin. (As Paul directly states several times! 2 Cor 5.19; Rom 3.25; 5.14) (God also does not *need* to “punish” sin—not least because the effects of sin are *their own punishment* [cf. Rom 1].)
 - In this way, while the Fathers do talk about God’s eschatological judgment as “retributive,” even this is not reflective of a *necessity* on God’s part, but

rather an *ultimate* giving over of humans that choose to reject God to the consequences of that rejection—“**you are treasuring up for yourself** wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God” (Rom 2.5 NKJ)

- The issue is that *forgiveness* does not address the root problem that we have as humans. As St. Athanasius observes, God could forgive us, and yet we would still die in our corrupt state, in our separation from life and descent into non-being.
- Sin is a *symptom of death/corruption*. Rom 5.12
- Christ “pays the wage of sin” in His death—He who has assumed HUMAN NATURE ITSELF *dies*, thus putting the “old Adam”—i.e., all humanity—to death in and with Him, and raising it to new life in His Resurrection.
- In one sense this can be understood as bearing our “condemnation”—as a kind of divine sentence—but it also can be understood, more faithfully, in terms of death as the natural consequence of human separation from God. Christ enters into “our region,” into our exile, to bear and to *reveal* the fallen human condition, so as to destroy it and redeem us out of it.

Romans 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, **condemned sin in the flesh**, ⁴ so that the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Rom 8:1-4)

NB: Two points to note about the passage as it stands:

1) The reticence of Paul’s expressions: Paul does not say the Father condemned the Son; indeed, Paul does not even bring himself to say “in the flesh of Christ”—his focus is on the *effects for all, because Christ’s flesh is ours*. (I.e., *Christ’s sinless flesh was not “of another nature” than ours, because sin and corruption are **not constituent parts of human nature!** Cf. Chrysostom below.*)

2) The participatory logic and Personification of sin in the preceding chapters, Romans 5-7: Inasmuch as the “condemnation of sin in the flesh” is effected in and through Christ’s death, it is something that becomes efficacious *for us by participation in Christ’s death*. That is, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death”—our death and resurrection in and with Christ is *the way that sin is condemned in **our flesh** such that we are no longer under its power*. Likewise, Paul personifies “Sin” and portrays it as a cosmic force tyrannizing humanity—thus “sin” for Paul is not the sum-total of all sinful acts viewed as an “*account that needs to be paid by a corresponding punitive death of equal magnitude, but rather a cosmic quasi-personal force (“virus”) that needs to be defeated/destroyed, of which Pharaoh is an Old Testament type.*

St. John Chrysostom, Hom. 13 on Rom. (NPNF1 11.432)

For to teach is easy, but to show besides a way in which these things were easily done, this is the marvel. Now it was for this that the Only-Begotten came, and did not depart before He had set us free from this difficulty. But what is greater, is the method of the victory; for He took none other flesh, but this very one which was beset with troubles. **So it is as if any one were to see in the street a vile woman of the baser sort being beaten, and were to say he was her son, when he was the king's, and so to get her free from those who ill treated her. And this He really did, in that He confessed that He was the Son of Man, and stood by it (i.e. the flesh), and condemned the sin.** However, He did not endure to smite it besides; **or rather, He smote it with the blow of His death, but in this very act it was not the smitten flesh which was condemned and perished, but the sin which had been smiting.** And this is the greatest possible marvel. For if it were not in the flesh that the victory took place, it would not be so astonishing, since this the Law also wrought. But the wonder is, that it was with the flesh (μετὰ σαρκός) that His trophy was raised, and that what had been overthrown numberless times by sin, did itself get a glorious victory over it. For behold what strange things there were that took place! One was, that sin did not conquer the flesh; another, that sin was conquered, and conquered by it too. For it is not the same thing not to get conquered, and to conquer that which was continually overthrowing us. A third is, that it not only conquered it, but even chastised it. For by not sinning it kept from being conquered, but by dying also, **He overcame and condemned it, having made the flesh, that before was so readily made a mock of by it, a plain object of fear to it.** In this way then, He at once unnerved its power, and abolished the death by it introduced. For so long as it took hold of sinners, it with justice kept pressing to its end. But after finding a sinless body, when it had given it up to death, it was condemned as having acted unjustly. Do you observe, how many proofs of victory there are? The flesh not being conquered by sin, Its even conquering and condemning it, Its not condemning it barely, but condemning it as having sinned. For after having convicted it of injustice, he proceeds to condemn it, and that not by power and might barely, but even by the rules of justice. For this is what he means by saying, “for sin condemned sin in the flesh.” As if he had said that he had convicted it of great sin, and then condemned it. So you see it is sin that getteth condemned everywhere, and not the flesh, for this is even crowned with honor, and has to give sentence against the other.

NB: 1) Christ is viewed as the active Divine subject here, not a passive (human) victim—Christ smites His own flesh (cf. Jn 10.18). 2) Chrysostom brings out the ambiguity in the preposition “in the flesh,” which can refer both to location and instrumentality, i.e., “by the flesh.”

1 Peter 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. (1Pe 2:24 NAU)

- Because Christ *is God*, this in itself is the revelation of God's intentions, God's “disposition” toward us.
- “Paying the wage of sin” is not in any way the same thing as saying that God needs payment for sin, or that Christ “pays God off” by his death. It is simply that, *if you sin, you will most certainly die*.
- The New Testament *never discusses or portrays the death of Christ in terms of hypothetical, abstract, or psychological problems (like “guilt,” or even “punishment”)*.
 - It is simply the fact of the matter that New Testament never—EVER—says that God the Father *pours His wrath out on—or, Lord, have mercy!, damns—the Son*.

- The Death of Christ is not addressing an internal conflict in God, or a subjective state in humanity—e.g., how we feel about ourselves—or how we measure up to an abstract standard of “justice.”
- The story of God and humanity is not primarily one of “crime and punishment.”
 - The fundamental reality of the Fall is not “breaking a law, and needing to be punished,” it is breaking communion with God through false love and worship, and thus descending toward non-being/perdition.
 - The “problem” of human sin is not that it “offends God”—and the Life of God Incarnate is the proof of this!—as if God were so “fragile” and “sensitive” as to not be able to “cope” with human evil. This is not a small issue—Do we want to portray God as *petty*?
 - The problem of human sin is that it destroys the humanity that God created in His Image, and prevents the communion that God desires.
 - The problem of human sin is also in the fact that God has given us free will—in His own self-emptying and providential way, God pursues and saves humanity in such a way that preserves this freedom, in a way that *educates us about the true nature of our problem such that we are enabled and desire to choose God freely.*
 - God, then, is not to be understood in some ultimate way as an impartial “Judge” or a self-concerned “Despot” who cannot brook any challenge to his honor, or leave any sin/infraction unpunished—lest He be “untrue to Himself.”
 - God is primarily a *Person (the Tri-Hypostatic Divinity)*—He is not primarily an impersonal essence, such that what God does as person would be somehow “constrained” by what God is.
 - If that were the case, God, by nature divine, could not have become Incarnate.
 - This is why it is deeply perilous to proceed with “theories” of the atonement that presume *necessity on the divine side of the equation.*

A Brief Return to Penal Substitution:

The logic of penal substitution short-circuits when it comes to the issue of *participation in and imitation of Christ* which is front-and-center on virtually every page of the NT.

If I am a mystical participant in Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, would not the necessary corollary be that I am punished in and with Him?

And if the martyrs’ deaths are the fulfillment of Christ’s death in their own person (the “baptism of blood”), would not the martyr dying for Christ also be God punishing the martyr for sin?

Or perhaps, Christ and the Martyr are rather the “Substitute” for God (the Father), so to speak:

³ *For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "THE REPROACHES OF THOSE WHO REPROACHED YOU FELL ON ME."* ⁴ *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Rom 15:3-4 NAU)*

The martyr bears on himself the hatred toward God, to reveal it for what it is, and to “deflect it” from God.¹

And more generally, we must all take up our crosses and follow Christ—not because God is punishing us through suffering, but because suffering is the way we come to truly know Christ, God. This is the theme that unifies Paul’s presentation of Christ and the Church across Hebrews 2, 5, and 12.

“Propitiation” by Conversion—Or, What does it look like to offer our bodies as living sacrifices?

Eph 5.1-2

Rom 12

Sweet-Smelling Fragrance & the Prophetic Critique of Sacrifice

Inner Disposition must coincide with External Ritual

Horizontal relationships must be “at peace” for the Holy Oblation of our lives—culminating in the Eucharist—to be acceptable to God

“I desire mercy, and not sacrifice”—Hosea 6.6 / Matthew 9.13; 12.7

“By almsgiving and by faithful dealings sins are purged away [MT – iniquity is atoned for]; and by the fear of the Lord every one departs from evil.” (Prov 15:27 LXX; 16.6 MT)

“God is far from the ungodly; but he hearkens to the prayers of the righteous.” (Prov 15.29)

“The beginning of a good way is to do justly; and it is more acceptable with God than to offer sacrifices.” (Prov 16.7 LXX)

To do justly and to speak truth, are more pleasing to God than the blood of sacrifices. (Prov 21:3 LXX)

The Most High is not pleased with the offerings of the wicked; neither is he propitiated for sin by the multitude of sacrifices. (Sir 34:19 LXX)

“Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because *love covers a multitude of sins.*” (1 Pet 4.8)

“Hatred stirs up strife, *But love covers all transgressions.*” (Prov 10.12 MT)

Procopius of Gaza, *Comm. Prov.* 10.12:

12. “*Hate stirs up strife.*” And hostility of soul against the flesh, as a conspirator, incites the law of the flesh, according to pleasure and pain, to fight against the law of the mind.

“*But (friendship) will cover all those who do not love strife.*” But, in accordance with those who live the life that is hidden in Christ (cf. Col 3.3), divine love will hide all those who subject the flesh to the soul in accordance with reason, and who procure a truce for these things, when the

¹ Cf, Bates, *Birth of the Trinity*, 122-25.

soul of each person is synergistically assisted by the flesh toward better things, and the flesh is deemed worthy by the soul of the appropriate care.

Martyrdom as the Ultimate Expression

- Corporate solidarity of Church & Christ—“Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”
- Martyrdom as expiatory

CHALCEDONIAN DEFINITION ON CHRISTOLOGY (AD 451)

In agreement, therefore, with the holy fathers, we all unanimously teach that we should confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the same perfect in Godhead, the same perfect in manhood; *truly God and truly Man*, the same of a rational soul and body, consubstantial with the Father in Godhead, and the same consubstantial with us in manhood, that is like us in all things but sin; begotten from the Father before the ages as regards his Godhead, and in these last days, the same one begotten of the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, as regards his manhood, for our sake and for the sake of our salvation; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, who is made known in Two Natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the difference of natures being by no means removed because of the union, but the property of each nature being preserved **and concurring into One Person (*Prosopon*) and One Hypostasis**, not parted or divided into two persons (*prosopa*), but one and the same Son, Only-begotten, Divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets of old and Jesus Christ himself have taught us about him, and the creed of our fathers has handed down. (cf. McGuckin, *Saint Cyril of Alexandria*, 237).

PAUL'S PARTICIPATORY CHRISTOLOGY

- Chosen in Christ from foundation of the cosmos, Eph 1.4
- Co-Crucifixion -- Συσταυρόω
- Romans 6.6: “knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him [συνεσταυρώθη], in order that the body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer serve sin”
- Gal 2.19: “I have been crucified with [συνεσταύρωμαι] Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And what I am living now in the flesh, I live in faith to/by the Son of God who loves me and handed himself over for my sake.”
- Circumcised in Him -- Ἐν ᾧ καὶ περιετμήθητε περιτομῇ ἀχειροποιήτῳ (Col 2.11)
- Co-died with -- συναποθνήσκω; ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ (2 Tim 2.11; Rom 6.8; Col 2.20)
 - No condemnation “in Christ” (Rom 8.1)
- Co-buried -- συνθάπτω (Rom 6.4; Col 2.12)
- Co-raised -- συνεγείρω (Col 2.12; 3.1; Eph 2.6)
- Co-made-alive -- συζωοποιέω (Col 2.13; Eph 2.5)
- Co-live – συζάω (Rom 6.8; 2 Tim 2.11; 1 Thess 5.10)
- Co-seated -- συγκαθίζω (Eph 2.6)
- Hidden with & Revealed with -- κέκρυπται σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ & ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε (Col 3.3-4)
- Co-workers -- συνεργοί (1 Cor 3.9; 2 Cor 6.1; 1 Thess 3.2)
- Co-heirs, Co-sufferers, Co-glorified -- συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ, εἴπερ συμπάσχομεν ἵνα καὶ συνδοξασθῶμεν (Rom 8.17; cf. Eph 3.6)

St. Augustine, *City of God* 10.5-6:

"All the divine ordinances, therefore, which we read concerning the sacrifices in the service of the tabernacle or the temple, we are to refer to the love of God and our neighbor. For 'on these two commandments,' as it is written, 'hang all the law and the prophets.' Thus a true

sacrifice is every work which is done that we may be united to God in holy fellowship, and which has a reference to that supreme good and end in which alone we can be truly blessed. For, though made or offered by man, sacrifice is a divine thing, as those who called it a sacrifice meant to indicate. Thus man himself, consecrated in the name of God, and vowed to God, is a sacrifice in so far as he dies to the world that he may live to God."

Eusebius of Caesarea, *Commentary on Psalm 87/88*

§ 5

"They placed me in the lowest pit, in [places of] darkness and in the shadow of death." (v. 7)

Instead of "they placed me," Aquila rendered, "You placed me," and Symmachus, "You assigned me." Through these things he presents that, by the approval and will of the Father, he had come down not simply unto death, nor to hades and the "pit" so-called, but even to the deepest and "lowest" and ultimate, as one might say, of the regions there. He himself presents this in the Gospels when he says, "It is necessary that the son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (~Matt 12.40).

Instead of "in darkness and in the shadow of death," Aquila says, "in darkness and in the deeps," while Symmachus, "having been covered by darkness," and the Fifth Edition, "in darkness in submerged places." We have closely observed this out of necessity, so that one might not suppose that he had not in fact been in death because it is said by the Septuagint, "in [places of] darkness and in the shadow of death." For it has been demonstrated that he was "in places darkened and deep" and "submerged" in his death. Wherefore neither the Hebrew nor the rest of the translators translated "shadow of death." For the logos is accustomed to frequently calling the present life and the present life (τὸν γὰρ παρόντα βίον καὶ τὴν ἐνεστώσαν ζωὴν) "shadow of death." But here the Savior, having been in death itself, describes his whole economy.

§ 6

"Your anger was made to lean upon me, and you caused all your billows to pass over me.

Pause. You drove my acquaintances far from me, they have set me [as] an abomination to themselves. I was betrayed, and I was not going forth." (vv. 8-9)

Since "Christ died for our sake," according to the Apostle (Rom 5.8), "becoming a curse for our sake, about which it has been written, 'Everyone who is hung on a tree is accursed'" (Gal 3.13; Deut 21.23), and since "God made him who knew no sin for our sake" (2 Cor 5.21), according to the same [Apostle], drawing upon himself the impending wrath of God for us who were formerly impious and sinners, and his anger which was against us, taking upon himself the retribution and punishment for our sake on account of his exceeding love for mankind, he fittingly puts forth the present expressions, seeing as indeed he is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Wherefore the prophet says concerning him, "He bears our sins and is afflicted for us; by his wound we are healed, and the Lord handed him over for our sins" (Isa 53.4, 5, 6). He himself presents this through the psalm, saying,

"Your anger was made to lean upon me, and you caused all your billows to pass over me,"

instead of which Symmachus says, "*Your anger fell heavily on me, and you afflicted me with your tempests.*"

For as a certain tender-hearted father defending [his] genuine sons in the hour of a storm or of war, he covered them, hiding and protecting [them] by his own arms, and he offers himself instead of all to the tempests and arrows, exchanging his death for the salvation of the children and turning away the anger

against them to himself. Because of this he who was himself the blessing of God became a curse, and he became sin while being righteousness, and after drawing on to himself the anger of God falling heavily against men, he dispersed it from himself, so that nothing injured him or the others, but he rendered the Father as it were propitious to the race of men. Seeing as all the disciples abandoned him at the time of the passion, and they also denied, there is no need to discuss the four evangelists who teach these things in agreement. So then he says these very things in advance, prophesying the future through the present expressions, which Symmachus translated in this manner,

“You made my acquaintances far from me, you assigned me an abomination to them, being kept under watch and not coming forth.”

The disciples denied him at that time, then, when he was kept under watch in the house of Caiaphas the high priest.

§ 7

“My eyes became feeble from poverty; I have cried out to you, O Lord, the whole day, I have spread out my hands to you.” (v. 10)

Symmachus rendered this more clearly when he said, *“My eye poured forth from the affliction; I called to you each day, I spread out my hands to you.”*

For he was continually mourning from the miseries of men and he exhausted his own “eyes” with tears, lamenting the destruction of those who would not accept him. And as he mourned over Jerusalem, so also it was reasonable that he would mourn over the fall of the apostle who betrayed him and the rejection of the whole nation of the Jews, and the destruction of the rest of those perishing, inasmuch as he is [called] the philanthropic son of the all-good Father; through whom² he was unfolding “the hands” and sent up cries, crying out to the Father in prayers, interceding with the Father with unutterable groanings (Rom 8.26).

Alternatively, you would not err if you were to say that his “eye” or “eyes that have become feeble” are the apostles, if in fact his people as a whole are his body, as he taught when he said, “We are all the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Cor 12.27). His “hands,” which are the works³ which he effected for the glory of the Father, “he spread out,” unfolding them to Him who is alone able to behold them. But also “he stretched out [his] hands” during the passion in the successive prayers on behalf of the world, whose sin he took away, propitiating the Father.

§ 11

And according to Symmachus: *“Through me your wraths passed by,”* Or according to Aquila, *“On me your wraths came by.”* Or according to the Septuagint, **“On me your wraths passed through,”** it clearly presents that they did not cover over him, but they “came by” through him, and that they did not stay, but “passed through.” This “they troubled me” according to the Septuagint is similar to what is said by the Evangelists, “Now my soul is troubled” (Jn 12.27), and “my soul is deeply grieved until death” (Matt 26.38). And the rest of things were fulfilled according to the history, when the apostles forsook him and left, and Peter denied him thrice.

Alternatively he said all the present passages, as he is making the evils of other people his own, I mean the destruction of the betrayer, Judas, and the fall of the whole nation of the Jews; over whom, as though over wicked sons who are perishing on account of their vices, he bitterly lamented, as he assumed these [evils] onto his own person on account of the abundance of [his] lovingkindness and love for man.

² I am not sure of the force and antecedent reference of this phrase. It could have a temporal or instrumental sense.

³ Perhaps the reference to the apostles continues here, if indirectly, as of course this is the word used in title, “Acts of the Apostles.”

But you will understand this matter when you attend to the prophet who says, “He bears our sins, and” “he is in pain for us” (Isa 53.4) Wherefore being pained on our behalf, he cried out saying,

“On me your wraths passed through, your terrors troubled me.”

For he saw the wrath that would come upon them not far off, which demolished all their sacred things collectively, as the holy of holies and the altar were destroyed from [their] foundations, and their kings who endured unto that time from a succession of heirs were deposed, the self-governance, according to which they were being governed from time immemorial, and the worship according to the law by the priesthood itself and the rest of their leaders and rulers have been extinguished, so that no track of theirs would be left behind. They had experienced all these things by the wrath of God, which overtook their whole nation not long after his passion on account of the daring things done by them against him. Which things he indicated, saying,

“On me your wraths passed through,” as it were he said, “on account of me,” according to Symmachus, “through me.” Since they had experienced all these things on account of him, according to the true word. But also looking ahead to their destruction he said, **“your terrors troubled me.”**

For even if the “terrors” of God which threatened against them through the prophets did not “trouble” them, because of insensibility, yet “your terrors troubled” me, he says, as I see the eventual ends of your fearful words. In this way, therefore, on account of their impieties, advocating the Father on their behalf and grieving exceedingly in soul, and “being troubled” on account of them, he was “deeply grieved” to the point of death, since the matters of God’s wrath were impending against them exceedingly, since the prayers which he sent up for their sake would not attain [their goal]. When he advocated and supplicated through these [prayers] in the Gospels he fell face downward, lying face down, he cried out, “Father,” saying, “if it is possible, let this cup pass from me” (Matt 26.39). Then, seeing the will of the Father confirmed, he continued, “Nevertheless not as I will, but as you” (Matt 26.39). And coming a second time, he falls to his face and prays, saying, “Father, if it is not possible for this to pass, unless I drink it, let your will come to pass” (Matt 26.42). And coming a third time he offers up “the same word” (Matt 26.44). Wherefore signifying these things also through the passages at hand, he said,

“For what reason, O Lord, will you reject my soul, will you turn away your face from me?” (v. 15) and **“On me your wraths passed through, your terrors troubled me.”**

Seeing from afar those who fall away from the salvation of God, on behalf of whom he offers the prayers, who are most cherished and beloved on account of the fathers (cf. Rom 11.28) he said,

“You have made friend and neighbor far from me, and my acquaintances from misery.”

He indicates all the “acquaintances” in the nation were formerly his friends, since they were his portion and inheritance (cf. Deut 32.8-9). But “they were made far” truly from him because of their disbelief, and though being “friends” of old, they made themselves enemies. And while being his “acquaintances,” they did not recognize nor accept him. For all these reasons “they were made far” from God, because of their own “misery.” So, then, they fell away from God according to the oracle which says, “For they who make themselves far from you will perish” (Ps 72.27). And with this the psalms entitled “of the sons of Korah” cease.