

# THE CONCEPT OF SATISFACTION IN MEDIEVAL REDEMPTION THEORY

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**T**HIS STUDY investigates the theme of satisfaction in the explanation of the redemptive work of Christ by ten theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It does not attempt to deal with all the elements which are constitutive of the various medieval theories, but with those alone which are involved in this central notion of satisfaction. Its intent is not limited to that historical exposition which DeClerck achieves in his studies of the explanations of the rights of the devil and the necessity of the actual method of redemption in the same period.<sup>1</sup> Rather, this historical investigation seeks to uncover the significance of the concept of satisfaction for Christian soteriology by exposing the assumptions, achievements, and limitations of the theologies built upon it.

The medieval period presents an unusual opportunity to map the logic of this concept of redemptive satisfaction. At the end of the eleventh century Anselm of Canterbury set forth a brilliant schema for understanding the salvific death of Christ. However, the twelfth-century process of gathering and elaborating the patristic suggestions on the way in which Christ fulfilled the divine justice and won the forgiveness of sins advanced almost without regard for his proposal. Not until the middle of the thirteenth century did Alexander of Hales and his Franciscan disciples undertake to structure the authorities of the Fathers and the explanations of the twelfth-century theologians according to the schema of Anselm. Successive commentaries on Lombard's *Sentences* carried forth this project of a theory based on the notion of satisfaction which would systematically relate the various aspects of the redemptive death of Christ. Scotus' critique of Anselm's complex reasoning finally terminated this effort, and the notion of merit which he proposed was the new foundation for subsequent builders. Thus in the period which stretches from Anselm to Bonaventure and Aquinas one finds compressed the development of a theology of redemptive satisfaction which aspires to comprehend all the aspects of Christ's suffering and death. In tracing this development, the logic of the concept of satisfaction can be explored and mapped.

Before charting this development, it might be helpful to sketch the

<sup>1</sup>D. E. DeClerck, "Questions de sotériologie médiévale," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 13 (1946) 150-84; "Droit du démon et nécessité de la rédemption: Les écoles d'Abélard et de Pierre Lombard," *ibid.* 14 (1947) 32-64.

terrain itself, to outline the various concepts related to the central notion of satisfaction. Satisfaction involves three aspects of the sin of Adam: the insult shown to God, the injury done to man, and the punishment imposed for sin. The insult is the contempt for the divine will and reflects the pride of man. The injury done to man may be considered as God's loss of the elect who were to fill the heavenly city, or as man's own loss of his eternal goal, or as the disorder introduced into the universe by the corruption of human nature. The punishment imposed for sin may be temporal or eternal, and can be considered either as the suffering of some evil or as the deprivation of some good. Satisfaction for insult, injury, and punishment may be made either by restoring the particular good which was damaged, lost, or exacted and suffering the evil imposed, or by substituting an equivalent good or evil for the one required. At the heart of each theory is the calculation of the magnitude of the goods offered and evils suffered by the Redeemer, and the demonstration of their adequacy or equivalence to the insult, the injury, and the punishment.

Three aspects of the work of Christ will be examined in the theology of each author: the satisfaction made to God for the contempt of sin, the substitution for the temporal and eternal punishment of the sin, and the restoration of mankind by the communication of forgiveness and eternal life from Christ to other men.

#### ANSELM OF CANTERBURY

Anselm's theory of satisfaction is contained in *Cur Deus homo*<sup>2</sup> and is repeated in an abbreviated form in the *Meditatio redemptionis humanae*.<sup>3</sup> In the first book of the *Cur Deus homo* Anselm analyzes the notion of satisfaction and defines the context of the work of Christ. In the second book the work of Christ itself is considered. Since this theory is the foundation of many subsequent discussions, it merits detailed exposition.

Anselm bases his theory of redemption through satisfaction on a definition of sin as a failure to submit one's will to the will of God.<sup>4</sup> The failure to render the submission owed by angels and men constitutes an injustice and a disorder in the universe and a dishonoring of God.<sup>5</sup> God cannot simply forgive sin without a restoration of justice and order<sup>6</sup> and a vindication of His honor, which involves the order of the universe.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In *Opera* 2 (ed. F. S. Schmitt; Edinburgh, 1945) 37-133. References are made to page and line of this edition.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 3, 84-91.

<sup>4</sup> *Cur Deus homo*, L. 1, c. 11 (68.10-14).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 11, 12 (68.14-21, 69.8-30).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 12, 13, 19 (69.8-30, 71.7-26, 84.9-85.32).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 15 (72.29-73.9).

The divine honor can be vindicated, justice fulfilled, and the order of the universe restored by either punishment or satisfaction. When God deprives a sinner of his goods, He exercises a dominion over him which the sinner has refused to acknowledge. The creature's relationship to God is thereby asserted and enforced, and justice is satisfied in man's losing something as a consequence of his attempt to deprive God of His honor.<sup>8</sup> Punishment, however, includes neither voluntary submission to God nor the restoration of goods which were lost to God as a consequence of the sin. Nor does the bearing of a punishment win the forgiveness of sin.

The punishment for sin is the deprivation of eternal beatitude and the consequent incurring of corporeal death. Although beatitude was not actually in man's possession at the time of his sin, it is a good for which his nature had been created and to which his rationality has some claim.<sup>9</sup> But as a sinner, man could not have entered into the divine presence to possess this beatitude.<sup>10</sup> Mankind's original immunity from temporal death was a function of this vocation to eternal possession of infinite good. Hence, when he was deprived of his claim to beatitude and incurred an impediment to it, he lost his immunity to death.<sup>11</sup>

Satisfaction includes submission to God, repayment for the dishonor and injustice, and restoration of the goods lost to God as a consequence of the sin. To make reparation for the dishonor, one must not simply render the submission which is always due. By failing to discharge his original responsibility, the sinner incurs a new obligation to make up for the dishonor of his refusal, and consequently must give something additional which would not have been due had the failure not occurred. The good which will satisfy for the offense must be proportionate to the dishonor of insubordination.<sup>12</sup> The other goods lost as a consequence of sin, a victory by man over the devil and the number of the elect necessary to fill the heavenly city, must also be restored to God.<sup>13</sup>

The race of Adam cannot of itself give this satisfaction. To satisfy for sin, some good must be given to God which is not otherwise due and which is proportionate to the dishonoring of disobedience. But man already owes God all the activities, attitudes, and aspirations which are necessary or fitting to his attaining the heavenly goal assigned him. Hence he has no good not already due which he might offer in satisfaction.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the good adequate to satisfy for the divine

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 14 (72.8-22).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 2, c. 1 (97.4-98.5).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 1, cc. 19, 24 (85.17-32, 93.7-94.17).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 2, c. 2 (98.8-11).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 1, c. 11 (68.22-29).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 22, 23 (90.9-24, 91.18-24).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 20 (87.3-24).

dishonor must be greater than any nondivine good. Anselm judges the evil of sin according to its insubordination to the divine command rather than according to the significance of the forbidden activity. He observes that the intention of preventing the destruction of the whole creation would not justify a violation of the divine will. Since no created good is adequate to justify a failure to submit to God, no good outside the divine sphere will be sufficient to satisfy for the evil of insubordination.<sup>15</sup>

Anselm shows in the second book of *Cur Deus homo* that the life and death of Jesus Christ satisfied for the sins of men and merited their forgiveness. Christ submits to the will of God in his life; he renders the greatest good to the Father in his death; and he defeats the devil and opens the way for the completion of the heavenly city.

The discussion of the obedience or submission of Christ is complicated by Anselm's refusal to affirm either that God commanded the death of an innocent man or that the death of Christ was something owed to God as a greater good.<sup>16</sup> Christ showed obedience in his life; and his death was the inevitable consequence of this commitment to justice in a sinful world.<sup>17</sup> Christ also submitted to the Father by accepting the divine decree which required satisfaction for sin and in freely choosing to save men in the permitted manner.<sup>18</sup>

The death of Jesus Christ was adequate to satisfy for the evil of sin because it was a good not otherwise owed to God and was proportionate to the divine honor. Because death is a punishment for sin, the innocent Christ was not obliged to give his life in this way.<sup>19</sup> Nor was he under any obligation arising from the good which would be accomplished by his voluntary death. In the absence of a divine command of some particular good, Christ himself was required to determine which of the acceptable courses of action he would take. He freely chose to give his life for men, although he could have withheld the offering freely and justly.<sup>20</sup> The adequacy of the life of Christ to satisfy for sins is established through a calculation of the evil involved in killing him. Because one would prefer to permit the destruction of the whole creation rather than knowingly kill the God-man, the life of Christ has greater value than the entire created order. Hence, in offering his life to God, Christ presents a good which is equivalent in magnitude or degree to the evil of sin's refusal to submit to God, which Anselm measured by the same standard. The life of Christ is intensively adequate to satisfy for the evil of sin: it is also

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 21 (88.13-89.32).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 8 (60.5-14).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 9 (61.8-24, 62.5-8).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 1, c. 9; cf. L. 2, c. 11 (63.29-64.11, 111.6-112.4).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 2, c. 10 (106.14-16).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 18 (128.4-129.13).

extensively adequate to satisfy for all the sins of mankind. Although every sin is against God, no other sin affects the divine person as the killing of Christ does. One would prefer to accept responsibility for all other sins rather than injure Christ. Therefore the evil of taking this life exceeds the evil of all other sins; and the good of Christ's offering of his life is adequate to satisfy for all the sins of mankind. Since ignorance mitigated the sin of the actual killing of Christ, his sacrifice outweighs this sin as well.<sup>21</sup>

Christ also restored what was lost through the Fall. The good which Christ presented to God makes a reward due to Him in justice. But since Christ already has all goods, the reward is given to mankind, for whose salvation he performed his meritorious acts.<sup>22</sup> Christ's satisfaction fulfilled the conditions of justice and order which are prerequisite to the forgiveness of men's sins; and his merited reward was given to gain them eternal life. Thus he restored the number of the elect. Although God need not have been incarnate to overcome the devil, the human Christ did vanquish him as Adam should have and gave God the victory due Him.<sup>23</sup>

Anselm's theory is the theme on which most later explanations of the redemption are variations. Mankind is liberated by the presentation as satisfaction of a good intensively and extensively exceeding the evil of men's sins. The value of this satisfactory good is estimated according to the divine person offended and the divine person satisfying. The satisfaction of Christ fulfills the prior condition of justice, thereby bringing the divine forgiveness of sins. The graces attained by him are communicated to mankind through a merit-reward transaction. Once satisfaction is given, sin forgiven, and man restored to submission, the purpose of punishment is achieved and it is no longer appropriate. Neither the good of which man is deprived in punishment nor that which was lost through the Fall is significant in the calculation of the good which is necessary to satisfy the divine honor.

#### PETER ABELARD

Abelard treats the redemption in his *Commentary on Romans*.<sup>24</sup> His work lacks the speculative rigor of Anselm's investigation, but he clearly indicates an understanding of the redemption as Christ's bearing of the punishment due men's sin.

Sin has a plurality of meanings, two of which are relevant in the pres-

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 2, c. 14 (113.21-115.4).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 19 (130.5-131.2).

<sup>23</sup> *Loc. cit.* (131.13-24).

<sup>24</sup> *Commentaria in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. E. M. Buytaert, *Corpus christianorum*, Continuatio mediaevalis 11 (Turnhout, 1969). References are made to chapter and verse of the epistle, page and line of this edition.

ent exposition. In one sense, sin indicates the voluntary act of contempt for God. This active willing cannot be found in infants, nor does it occur in the unconscious states of evil men. Sin also designates the punishment which God imposes for such contempt, to which one can be subject even in the absence of active contempt.<sup>25</sup> This condemnation to punishment is the sin which infants inherit from Adam.<sup>26</sup> The punishment for Adam's sin is corporeal death and the eternal punishment of deprivation of the beatific vision and of all hope of attaining it.<sup>27</sup> By personal sin one can incur eternal torments in addition to the penalty of darkness.

A sinner can free himself from ill will, but not from its penalty. Freedom from the fault of contempt toward God is achieved by reversing one's own willing, by beginning to love God. God provokes this conversion by the manifestation of His love for man, particularly in the sacrifice of Christ.<sup>28</sup> Freedom from the fault of contempt does not, however, liberate the sinner from the punishment he has incurred. Divine forgiveness is for sin in the second sense, a liberation from the condemnation to punishment.<sup>29</sup> Infants who die without baptism are eternally condemned.<sup>30</sup> A man cannot be saved in the Christian order if he has converted to the love of God but has not received forgiveness of the penalty of his sins in baptism. This man will not die in such a state: at the approach of death he will despair of his salvation and fall from charity.<sup>31</sup>

Christ has the dual role of exciting to charity and freeing from punishment. The divine love which is exhibited in the death of Christ provokes a response of love in the sinner which overcomes his contempt of God.<sup>32</sup> Christ bears the punishment of death which was imposed for sin. In liberating men from this condemnation, he gains for them access to salvation.<sup>33</sup> The relation between the temporal and eternal punishment, however, goes unexplored. Abelard does not explain how the corporeal death of Christ is adequate to the eternal punishments due for Adam's sin and the sins of his descendants. Nor does he establish the efficacy of the satisfaction of Christ and of the penitential works of men to remit the temporal punishment due in this world and the next.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* 5:19 (162.288-90, 164.354-62).

<sup>26</sup> *Loc. cit.* (164.368-78).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* 5:13,16,19 (158.157-62, 159.207-9, 161.267-69, 169.545-170.547).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* 4:25 (153.991-1000).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* 3:27; 4:7; 5:16,19 (121.347, 124.67-71, 159.210-13, 164.357-62).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* 5:19 (163-70).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* 3:27 (120.334-121.344).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* 4:25; 5:8,9 (153.991-1000, 156.81-92).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* 4:25; 6:9 (153.991-1000, 178.86-179.116).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 4:7,8 (124.67-83; 125.103-23).

In Abelard's exposition, the redemption is necessary to lift the condemnation to death and eternal darkness which was imposed because of the contempt of God in man's heart. Christ suffers the temporal punishment, thereby making possible the remission of the sentence against men. Most of the issues which Anselm raises and which are significant for the subsequent discussion do not appear in Abelard's commentary.

#### HUGH OF ST. VICTOR

Hugh's understanding of the redemption is succinctly presented in his *De sacramentis*.<sup>35</sup> Three punishments are visited on mankind for the sin of Adam: ignorance, concupiscence, and temporal death. If divine grace does not liberate man from sin, these temporal punishments result in an eternal one. But the eternal punishment itself was not imposed for the sin of the first man.<sup>36</sup>

To return to the favor of God and gain his protection against the devil, man must both repay God for the loss He suffered in man's fall and satisfy for the contempt of sin. God lost an innocent man in the Fall; but since all the descendants of Adam were sinful, none could be offered to God. God then mercifully became man in order that mankind might fulfil justice by offering the innocent Christ, who was even greater than the original man. Secondly, a sinner would not make satisfaction by suffering the penalty justly visited upon him. The proper means of satisfying for the contempt of sin was that an innocent man freely and obediently take upon himself the corporeal death imposed upon sinners. In accepting the penalty of death, Christ satisfied for the contempt of man's disobedience and gained access to the divine mercy for mankind.<sup>37</sup>

Unlike Abelard, Hugh carefully specifies that man was actually sentenced to temporal penalties alone, although he may incur an eternal punishment by failing to pay these. Since no eternal punishment is required, Hugh can affirm without inconsistency that satisfaction is offered for the dishonor done to God by a gratuitous suffering of the punishment which was imposed for it. The presentation of a single innocent man restores what God actually lost in the Fall. In this suffering and restoring, Christ fulfilled the conditions prerequisite to the exercise of divine mercy in man's regard. Hugh is concerned with the sin of Adam alone: he neither determines the proper penalty nor establishes the adequacy of Christ's satisfaction for subsequent personal sin.

<sup>35</sup> In J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 176, 183-618.

<sup>36</sup> L. 1, p. 7, c. 19; p. 8, c. 1 (195D, 305C).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8, c. 4 (308B-309C).

## PETER LOMBARD

Ignoring Anselm and taking only an analogy from Hugh, Lombard's exposition of the redemption reaches back to Ambrose and Augustine. His discussion of the destruction of the rights and powers of the devil is from Augustine.<sup>38</sup> But it is Ambrose's comparison of the pride of Adam and the humility of Christ which dominates Lombard's explanation of redemption from sin and punishment. According to this tradition, God decreed that no man would enter heaven unless the humility of some one man were as profitable to his fellow man as the pride of Adam had been harmful to his descendants. Only the humility of Christ was adequate to this. Christ was more humiliated in the bitterness of his death than Adam had been exalted by the pleasures of his sinful act. Christ's humility and patience opened the kingdom to those who believe in him.<sup>39</sup>

Lombard then makes assertions regarding the restoration of man which are not systematically related to the humility of the Passion or the divine mercy which it gains. Christ releases men from both sin and punishment. He frees from sin by exciting men to love and strengthening them against temptation.<sup>40</sup> He removes the condemnation to eternal punishment, but will deliver men from temporal punishment only in the future life.<sup>41</sup> Unlike Abelard, Lombard does not affirm that Christ bore either the eternal or the temporal punishment due to sin. One can say that Christ bore men's punishment on the Cross in the sense that by the Passion their temporal punishment is removed in baptism and mitigated by penance.<sup>42</sup> But the relation of the Passion and its salvific humility to the remission of temporal punishment and of the condemnation to eternal punishment remains unclarified.

Lombard's understanding seems to involve the twin elements of satisfaction for contempt and restoration of mankind. The efficacy of the Passion to satisfy for the dishonor arises from the interior dispositions of Christ, which offset the pride of Adam. Unlike Hugh, Lombard assumes that both temporal and eternal punishments were imposed for sin, but he explains neither their appropriateness nor their relation to one another. Finally, he asserts without explanation the efficacy of the humility of Christ for the restoration of mankind.

<sup>38</sup> *Libri quatuor Sententiarum* (2 vols.; Quaracchi, 1916) L. 3, d. 19, c. 1; d. 20, cc. 1,2 (2, 635-36, 640-41).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 18, c. 5 (2, 633).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, c. 1 (2, 634-35).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 3 (2, 637).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 4 (2, 637).



## WILLIAM OF AUXERRE

William insists that the work of Jesus Christ is not simply a meriting of eternal life for mankind through the great charity operative in all that he did, but also a satisfying for sin by his passion.<sup>43</sup> God decreed that no man should enter paradise unless satisfaction were made for the sin of Adam. The offense to the divine majesty must be balanced by a humility even more pleasing than the pride of Adam was odious. Moreover, mankind must satisfy by giving God something equivalent to the value of the human race which was damned as a punishment for sin.<sup>44</sup>

William asserts that the satisfaction of the death of Christ was adequate to both of these requirements. The equivalence of pride and humility is easily understood through the tradition present in Lombard, but the exacting of some good equivalent to the damned human race is not so easily understood. This might be a restoration of the loss which God suffered in the form of a comparable good. But it seems more likely that William intends to measure the necessary satisfaction by the magnitude of the good which was exacted as punishment for the sin. The presentation of an equivalent good might then be necessary to avert the punishment itself. William's brief discussion does not answer the question.

## ALEXANDER OF HALES

Alexander entered the Franciscan order in 1231, the year William of Auxerre died. The *Glossa* of the *Sentences* of Lombard which he composed before this time presents no real advance on prior thought.<sup>45</sup> But the *Summa fratris Alexandri*, which was composed in his name and of his teaching by his Franciscan successor in Paris, John of la Rochelle, is clearly the product of a different era and a different type of theological reflection.<sup>46</sup> Authorities are marshaled on each side of a question, and the reflection on them is explicitly speculative. Anselm comes into his own as the master of teaching on the redemption.

In the *Summa fratris Alexandri* the Anselmian theory of satisfaction has been assimilated, its complexities reduced, and many of its exaggerations eliminated. The alternatives are punishment or satisfaction; and the work of Christ is satisfaction. The sin of Adam was of infinite

<sup>43</sup> *Summa aurea* (Frankfurt, 1964). L. 3, t. 1, q. 7 (CXIX<sup>r</sup>A).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, qq. 8, 7 (CXX<sup>r</sup>B-C, CXIX<sup>r</sup>A).

<sup>45</sup> *Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum* (Quaracchi, 1954).

<sup>46</sup> *Summa theologiae, seu Summa fratris Alexandri* (Quaracchi, 1924-48). References are made to the work according to the volume and section numbers of this edition, and to its pages.

magnitude according to two criteria: the person sinned against and the disorder introduced by the sin. Adam sinned against an infinite good. A certain infinity is also evident in the disordering of the entire human race, which Adam's sin turned aside from its fulfilment in infinite goodness and subjected to condemnation. The injury of Adam's sin was not simply to God but to human nature in its orientation to God. The fitting punishment for such a sin is itself infinite.<sup>47</sup>

The satisfaction to be exacted in order that God might remit the punishment for Adam's sin likewise meets two criteria. The satisfaction must be given by a person in whom infinite good is found and who reorders all of human nature.<sup>48</sup> Anselm's cumbersome estimating and equating of goods through the corresponding evils are eliminated by the juxtaposition of an infinite good in the one offended and in the one satisfying for the offense. Further, this person must be capable of acting in the name of human nature itself to discharge the obligation which it contracted in the sin of Adam. His own value as an individual must be equivalent to that of the entire nature.<sup>49</sup> The requirement of restoring to God the created good of which he was deprived, His elect, is abandoned. Instead of this, the satisfier must re-establish human nature's relationship to God as its goal, which was disrupted by Adam's sin.

The author undertakes to establish that the satisfaction which Christ actually offered in giving his life was adequate to the punishment of temporal and eternal death imposed for the sin of Adam. Christ satisfied for the eternal punishment by presenting to God a good equivalent to that which is taken away by man's spiritual death. Because the life which Christ lived in the flesh takes its value from the union of his soul to the Deity, it was a greater good than the spiritual life which the souls of other men live for God. This bodily life belonging to God is an adequate satisfaction for the deprivation of spiritual life in other men.<sup>50</sup>

Christ must also satisfy for the temporal punishment imposed on mankind. Men can themselves satisfy for the temporal punishment due their personal sin once the eternal punishment is remitted. But since original sin was contracted from another, the satisfaction of its temporal punishment must also come from another.<sup>51</sup> The way in which Christ satisfies for temporal punishment is not by presenting an equivalent good but by suffering an evil which is greater than the penalty exacted from other men. The dissonance between the sufferer's nature and his natural will or sensibility and the punishment he suffered makes the bodily death

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 4<sup>2</sup>, # 8, ad 1m, ad 2m (22-23).

<sup>48</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, # 6, ad 3m, ad 4m (20b).

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, # 139, ad obj. (192b).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, # 6, resp. (20a).

of Jesus an extreme temporal penalty, greater than any other temporal punishment imposed on men. By its great evil the passion of Christ gained the remission of the temporal punishment of others.<sup>52</sup> In each of these cases, only the intensive equivalence of the values involved is considered. The problem of extensive adequacy, of the relation of the individual to the entire species, does not arise.

The satisfactory work of Christ affects only the obligation to these punishments. However, his passion merits the forgiveness of guilt and of the deformity of sin, which is given by divine grace.<sup>53</sup> Anselm's argument that the giving of Christ's life was a greater good than the evil of all sins and that the sin of his executioners was mitigated by ignorance is used to prove that his merit was sufficient to win the forgiveness of all sins.<sup>54</sup>

The third part of the work of the Redeemer, the restoration of the human race to its relationship to God, seems to be accomplished through the graces which Christ merits for men. Christ does not simply remove the obstacle to the divine forgiveness of sins: he merits the forgiveness of sins.<sup>55</sup>

The understanding of satisfaction made to God for the dishonor of man's insubordination is derived from Anselm. But the concern over the punishments which were imposed for sin is of a later origin. The author and his editor advance a theory of satisfaction for punishment by the substitution of an equivalent good or evil for that exacted. Eternal punishment is defined as the deprivation of a good, one whose value the presented life of Christ exceeds. Temporal punishment seems to be understood as the suffering of an evil; and again the pain of Christ goes beyond what is exacted in other cases. This theory is tailored to fit the recognition of an eternal punishment imposed for sin, which Christ could not have suffered. The restoration of mankind is through a merited grace rather than simply by the paying of a debt which fulfils the conditions for the giving of forgiveness; and the adequacy of the merit is calculated. The *Summa fratris Alexandri* presents the first detailed discussion of the reflections of the prior century and systematizes them as a series of variations on Anselm's theme.

#### ALBERT THE GREAT

Albert repeats much of the material contained in the text of Lombard on which he comments, but he also develops some of Lombard's suggestions in original and influential ways. A divine decree bars man from paradise until the price of satisfaction, a humility equal in intensity

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, # 140 I, resp. (193).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, # 156 I (216-17).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, # 138 (191-92).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, # 156 I (216-17).

and efficacy to Adam's pride, is paid. The contempt which the creature showed to the eternal and uncreated good demands an infinite satisfaction of humility.<sup>56</sup> The damage is only potentially infinite, increasing with the steady growth of the human race.<sup>57</sup>

Christ pays the price with a humility which is adequate for all men.<sup>58</sup> He frees from the penalty of eternal death by removing man's condemnation to separation from the eternal life, which is the vision of God.<sup>59</sup> Albert does not, however, explain how or why Christ lifts this condemnation. Christ frees men from death in paying the price necessary for them to come to a resurrection of glory rather than being raised to a fuller punishment.<sup>60</sup> Again, the price in question is not specified, though it seems to be the humility demanded by the divine decree. Finally, by satisfying for us, Christ takes away the major part of the temporal punishment which remains once the eternal penalty has been remitted.<sup>61</sup>

Albert's contribution to the understanding of the redemption is in his exposition of the restoration of the loss consequent upon the Fall. Original sin affects men through the one man who is their principle of corporeal generation. The one who restores the race must also be its principle, but he cannot have the role of father which Adam already exercises. Christ is a principle of the human race both as God and as man. As God, he is the efficient principle of both being and grace in men. As man, he is the principle of grace, because he possesses grace without measure and merits it for others. Only the God-man can be head of the Mystical Body and the source of spiritual life to all his members.<sup>62</sup>

Christ has both a meritorious and a satisfactory role. As satisfier, he frees men from the condemnation to eternal punishment and consequently from guilt and the deformity of the divine image which is inseparable from it. As meriting grace, the power of his Passion removes the guilt of sin and consequently erases the deformity and condemnation.<sup>63</sup> The satisfaction of the Passion bears directly on the condemnation imposed for contempt. The merit of Christ wins the grace which restores man to life and forgives his guilt.

Albert's discussion of the satisfaction of Christ is as indeterminate as that of Lombard's text on which he comments. Humility satisfies for pride; but the way in which it affects punishment goes unspecified. The

<sup>56</sup> *Commentarium in 3 et 4 Sententiarum*, in *Opera*, ed. A. Borgnet (Paris: Vives, 1894), vols. 28, 29. In 3 Sent., d. 18, a. 14; In 4 Sent., d. 15, a. 5 (28, 331bB; 29, 478aA).

<sup>57</sup> In 3 Sent., d. 19, a. 5, ad 4m (28, 342bC).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 20, a. 3 (28, 342bD).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, a. 6 (28, 343bD).

<sup>60</sup> *Loc. cit.* (28, 344aA).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 7 (28, 345bB).

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 20, a. 7, ad 1m, ad 2m (28, 366).

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, a. 2 (28, 339aC).

notions of the new Adam and of the Mystical Body define the communication of merited grace more sharply than in the *Summa fratris Alexandri*. The divinity of the Redeemer is required for the communication of grace.

#### BONAVENTURE

Bonaventure defines the problematic according to Lombard's lead. A divine decree requires that satisfaction be given for the sin of Adam before any man can be admitted to heaven.<sup>64</sup> Satisfaction involves reparation for the offense or injury and a restoration of what was lost as a consequence of the Fall. The magnitude of the offense is measured by the divinity of the person against whom it was committed: as such, the satisfaction for it exceeds the capacity of any creature.<sup>65</sup> Satisfaction for an injury is a penal work: it requires not only charity but the suffering of the bitterness of the Passion.<sup>66</sup> But Christ does not bear the punishment itself. In his discussion, Bonaventure does not establish the adequacy of the Passion to satisfy for the injury done to God or the punishment imposed on man.

The restoration of the human race which was damaged in the Fall is more fully explored. The redeemer must be capable of transmitting justice to men, as Adam brought all into sin.<sup>67</sup> Thus he must be divine, and must have a grace which is common rather than simply individual, a grace whose fulness is intended to be shared with others.<sup>68</sup> The redeemer must have Christ's grace of headship.

The penal nature of the Passion directs it to the winning of the remission of the punishment due to sin.<sup>69</sup> The Passion also merits the eradication of guilt and iniquity.<sup>70</sup> Bonaventure indicates that in the individual the grace which forgives sins releases from the obligation of the penalty as a consequence.<sup>71</sup> Christ frees from eternal punishment immediately, but from temporal punishment only in the future life.<sup>72</sup>

The work of restoring humanity is prominent in Bonaventure's discussion, as it was in Albert's. The exposition of reparation for the injury done to God becomes less detailed. The general assertion of the penal character of the Passion replaces the fuller explanation of the adequacy of Christ's offering for the injury to God and the punishment of

<sup>64</sup> *Commentarium in 3 et 4 libros Sententiarum*, in *Opera* (Quaracchi, 1882) vols. 3, 4. *In 3 Sent.*, d. 18, a. 2, q. 3, c (3, 392b).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 20, a. 1, q. 3, c (3, 423a).

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 18, a. 2, q. 3, ad 3m; d. 20, a. 1, q. 5, ad 5m (3, 393a, 429a).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 20, a. 1, q. 3, ratio 4, c, ad 1m (3, 422-23).

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 4, c (3, 425b-426a).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, a. 1, q. 4, ratio 4; d. 18, a. 2, q. 3, ad 3m (3, 407a, 393a).

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, a. 1, q. 1, c, ad 2m (3, 401).

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 4; *In 4 Sent.*, d. 15, I, a. 1, q. 2, c (3, 407b; 4, 352a).

<sup>72</sup> *In 3 Sent.*, d. 19, a. 1, q. 4, c, ad 4m (3, 407b, 408b).

man. Satisfaction fulfils the condition under which the merited grace of forgiveness might be applied to man, thereby freeing from punishment. The divinity of the redeemer is required for the communication of his grace.

#### THOMAS AQUINAS

Two works of Aquinas will be studied. In his commentary on the *Sentences* of Lombard, he submits to some of the limitations of the common text and treats questions which are suggested by the text and the tradition of commentary. But in the *Tertia pars* of the *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas is freer to organize the corresponding material according to his own interpretation. These two works belong to the chronological extremes of Aquinas' own career.

In the commentary on Lombard's text, Aquinas notes that the satisfaction for the sin of mankind must have a certain infinity to be proportionate to the magnitude of the sin itself. The sin can be considered infinite because it showed the contempt of disobedience to infinite good, turned from infinite to created good, and lost the infinite good which was man's end. The corruption of human nature which was consequent upon the sin has a certain infinity because of its unlimited generative power. The satisfaction adequate to this sin exceeds the capacity of any creature.<sup>73</sup>

The task of the redeemer has three elements. First, satisfaction must be made for the offense to God.<sup>74</sup> Second, some human action must be offered to God which is at least equivalent in value to the good lost in the corruption of the whole human nature.<sup>75</sup> Finally, the savior must be capable of affecting other men, and thereby of restoring humanity to its pristine state.<sup>76</sup>

Satisfaction for the injury to the divine majesty must be a penal work, since sin is cleansed and reordered by punishment.<sup>77</sup> In a different context, Aquinas explains that in his sinning man takes something to which he has no right, and that to restore the order of justice, something must be taken from the sinner. Thus satisfaction must be penal: it must take something away from the sinner and restore the order between God and man.<sup>78</sup> Of course, that which is taken away in satisfaction is not something which man would have to give to God for another reason.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>73</sup> *Scriptum super sententiis*, libri 3, 4 (pars 1) ed. F. Moos (Paris, 1933, 1947). In *3 Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 2, ad 5m; d. 20, a. 2; In *4 Sent.*, d. 15, q. 1, a. 2, ad 1m.

<sup>74</sup> In *3 Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 2, ad 5m.

<sup>75</sup> *Loc. cit.*, d. 18, a. 6, q. 1, sol.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, a. 1, q. 1, sol.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 20, a. 1, q. 2, sol.

<sup>78</sup> In *4 Sent.*, d. 15, q. 1, a. 4, q. 1, sol.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 2, ad 3m.

Because of the divine nature united to the human reality of Christ, the good he gives as penal satisfaction is adequate. Aquinas takes the measure of the satisfaction to be given from the eternal and temporal punishment imposed by divine justice.<sup>80</sup> Christ satisfied for the eternal punishment by giving a good equivalent to that which is taken as punishment. The corporeal life of Christ which was offered in the Passion is a greater good than the eternal life of other men because of the union of his soul to the divinity.<sup>81</sup> Christ satisfied for the temporal punishment by his death, which is the equivalent of all the temporal punishments required for original and actual sin. Hence the temporal punishment which Christ suffered had to contain in some way all the punishments which are imposed for sin. Since the ultimate penalty to which all others tend and which encompasses them all is that of a violent death,<sup>82</sup> Christ bore the worst form of criminal death.<sup>83</sup> By the good he offered and by the evil he endured, Christ paid the penalty and satisfied for the sins of men.

The good which Christ offered in giving his life was also adequate to satisfy for the corruption of human nature. Because it can be multiplied without limit, the value of a created nature exceeds that of any of its individuals. Its quasi-infinity even makes a nature greater than a single individual of a higher nature. Hence, to satisfy for the corruption of human nature, some action of infinite value was required.<sup>84</sup> Such an action was performed by the God-man in virtue of the divine power operative in his human activity.<sup>85</sup>

Finally, Christ alone was capable of affecting human nature itself by meriting the lifting of its condemnation and communicating his merit to other men. Other individuals are of lesser stature than human nature, and are therefore incapable of acting for or upon the nature as it exists in all of mankind. Because the power of the divinity works in the human nature of Christ as through a conjoined instrument, Christ's human activity merits a reward which is adequate to all of humanity rather than being limited to an individual. Christ's meriting is adequate to win the forgiveness of the sin of the nature and of all its individuals.<sup>86</sup> In a similar way, the divinity of Christ gave him power over the entire human nature and the capacity to communicate his merit to other men.<sup>87</sup> Thus he is capable of affecting all of those who share the nature, of communicating to them the grace which finds its fulness in him, of giving them a share in

<sup>80</sup> *In 3 Sent.*, d. 19, a. 3, q. 1, sol.; q. 2, sol.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 20, a. 3, ad 2m. Cf. d. 19, a. 1, q. 2, sol.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 20, a. 3, sol., ad 6m.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 4, q. 2, ad 1m.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 2, ad 6m, 9m; d. 18, a. 6, q. 1, sol.; d. 20, a. 2, ad 4m.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 18, a. 6, q. 1, sol.; q. 2, sol.; d. 19, a. 1, q. 1, ad 1m; q. 2, sol.; a. 5, q. 2, ad 3m.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 18, a. 6, q. 1, sol.; d. 19, a. 1, q. 1, sol.; q. 2, sol.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 18, a. 6, q. 1, ad 2m; q. 2, sol.

his merit, and of reducing their temporal punishment through his own suffering.<sup>88</sup> In order actually to share in this, men must be joined to him by faith and charity.<sup>89</sup>

In the *Tertia pars* of the *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas simplifies his discussion of satisfaction by dealing with the contempt of God alone. To satisfy is to present to the offended party something which he loves as much or more than he hates the offense. The magnitude of Christ's charity, the value of the life of the God-man, and the fact that he bore the greatest of sufferings make the work of Christ outweigh the sins of mankind in God's sight.<sup>90</sup> Christ suffered the most painful death, one proportionate to his desire to satisfy for men's sins.<sup>91</sup> Aquinas specifies, however, that the suffering of Christ does not compare to that of damnation.<sup>92</sup> The penal quality of satisfaction is not as fully explained as earlier.

The merit of Christ is communicated to men through the Mystical Body. The union of charity enables Christ to extend his satisfaction to others.<sup>93</sup> Further, the divinity bestows upon its assumed humanity an instrumental spiritual power for causing the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of men.<sup>94</sup>

In summary, Aquinas asserts that satisfaction for sin requires a penal work which is the equivalent of the punishment imposed upon man by the divine justice to reorder the evil of sin and integrate it into the universe. His use of the concept of commutative justice in dealing with personal satisfaction may provide a bridge between Anselm's explanation of satisfaction and punishment as the giving and taking of goods and the later substitution theory which requires the fulfilment of the penalty imposed. In each case, some good or evil is offered to restore justice and order.

In dealing with the penalties which Christ paid, Aquinas is concerned to show that the passion of Christ is equivalent to all the temporal punishment which is imposed for sin. A good greater than that which is exacted satisfies for the eternal punishment.

The operation of the divine nature in Christ's human activity is central to Aquinas' explanation of Christ's power to satisfy, to merit, and to communicate supernatural life to other men.

In the commentary on the *Sentences*, Aquinas requires a good which is

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 1, ad 2m; d. 19, a. 3, q. 2, sol.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, a. 1, q. 1, ad 4m; q. 2, sol.

<sup>90</sup> *Summa theologiae*, in *Opera* (Rome, 1887-) vols. 4-12. 3, q. 48, a. 2, c.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 46, a. 6, c, ad 6m.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, ad 3m.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 19, a. 4, c, ad 1m; q. 48, a. 2, ad 3m.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 48, a. 6; q. 49, a. 1.



equivalent to the damage done to human nature as a satisfaction in addition to the bearing of the punishment; but this is omitted in the *Summa theologiae*. Restored human nature does not retain its central role as a medium of the communication of satisfaction and forgiveness to other men. The bond of charity is considered necessary in both works and sufficient in the latter.

#### JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

Given the uncertainties of composition and the present state of the work of editing the various *reportationes* of Scotus' commentary on the third book of Lombard's *Sentences*, the theory presented in the version printed in the Vives edition need not be considered an adequate account of Scotus' teaching.<sup>96</sup> It does, however, give a post-Thomistic doctrine from a significantly different viewpoint.

The central concept of Scotus' theory is not satisfaction but merit. He attacks the Anselmian satisfaction doctrine by attempting to undercut the various infinities and equivalences employed in it. The sin of Adam cannot be considered an infinite evil. Its formal reality was that of the created activity of loving a creature. In itself, it simply could not have been an infinite evil—something like the Manichean principle of evil. As a turning from infinite good, however, the act had a certain extrinsic infinity. But the good necessary to satisfy for such an evil need be nothing more than another such activity of equal or greater intrinsic and extrinsic value. An act of love of God placed with a greater concentration of will by Adam or any of the saints would have greater formal value, and it would have an equivalent extrinsic infinity because of its object.<sup>96</sup> Sin might be considered an infinite evil extensively, in that a man remains forever in an evil state. But only the damned are in such a situation, and in Scotus' theory the redemption affects only the elect.<sup>97</sup>

The key to Scotus' understanding of the work of Christ is his notion of merit. Merit is something which is or ought to be accepted by another, for which the one accepting ought to give something in return. Merit implies a sort of debt owed to the one meriting, or to another for whom he merits.<sup>98</sup> When merit is before God, the merit is always accepted

<sup>96</sup> For a list of Scotus' various commentaries on the third book of the *Sentences*, see Carolo Balic's introduction to the Roman edition of the *Opera* (Rome, 1950—) vol. 1, pp. 147\*–148\*. Allan Wolter explains the limitations of the current editions in his *Duns Scotus, Philosophical Writings* (Edinburgh, 1962) pp. xvii–xix. The only presently edited commentary on the section of the *Sentences* dealing with the redemption is the *Ordinatio*. References are made to the Vives edition (Paris, 1894) vol. 14.

<sup>96</sup> *In 3 Sent.*, d. 19, q. 1; d. 20, q. 1 (14, 726, 736b).

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, q. 1 (14, 726bB).

<sup>98</sup> "Et dico quod meritum est aliquid acceptatum vel acceptandum in alio, pro quo ab acceptante est aliquid retribuendum illi, in quo est quasi debitum illi pro illo merito vel alteri pro quo meruit" (*ibid.*, d. 18, q. 1 [14, 663bD–664aA]).

according to its full goodness.<sup>99</sup> But God cannot love and accept some created reality in a way and to a degree which exceeds the goodness of the created reality itself.

Christ's merit, the reality to be accepted by God, is the act of willing in which he offers his life to the Father in accepting the Passion. This willing is an act of the created nature, and as such it is formally finite. Since it is not infinitely lovable, God cannot accept it as infinite and cannot grant an infinite reward for it. To accept this act as infinitely good would be to equate it to the uncreated willing of the same divine person.<sup>100</sup> Scotus insists that the formal or intrinsic goodness of an act comes from the nature through which it is elicited. Even a divine person cannot produce an infinite act through or in a created nature. The merit of Christ is intrinsically finite, because the human action which he presented for divine acceptance was formally finite.

By reason of the divine person whose act this was, it might have been acceptable for an unlimited number of finite goods. But the merit of Christ was neither offered nor accepted for such an extensively infinite reward. In the order of divine knowledge and willing, the election of certain men preceded the knowledge of the Fall. The redemption was then willed in order that the prior divine election might be fulfilled.<sup>101</sup> Hence God and His Christ intended the merit only for the finite number of the elect, and it was accepted as such. The merit and reward of Christ, accepted according to its formal goodness and its circumstances, are both intensively and extensively finite.<sup>102</sup>

What Christ actually merits is the giving of the first grace, which joins men to himself without a prior disposition on their part. The fullest grace he merits is that given to infants, which does not require their co-operating assent. Adults, however, must accept this first grace. Christ also merits the grace of reunion for those who have fallen from him by mortal sin. This grace requires prior dispositions of sorrow. Finally, he merits the further co-operation of those united to him and their glorification.<sup>103</sup>

Scotus rejects the satisfaction and substitution theories and attacks the arguments upon which they are based. His own understanding of the redemption is based on the merit of Christ. Although this is finite, it is adequate to gain the initial grace of union with Christ and the forgiveness of sins for the limited number of the elect. This critique shifts attention to the notion of merit in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century thought. The

<sup>99</sup> *Loc. cit.* (14, 664aB).

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, d. 19, q. 1 (14, 710bC-711aB, 726bD).

<sup>101</sup> *Loc. cit.* (14, 714a).

<sup>102</sup> *Loc. cit.* (14, 718bC-719aA).

<sup>103</sup> *Loc. cit.* (14, 711bD, 719aBC).

Reformers, however, could not base their soteriology on this foundation. Calvin returned to a theory of substitution and Luther developed the theory of the exchange between Christ and the believer.

#### SUMMARY

A summary of the various theories of satisfaction and the restoration of humanity will help to indicate the development of the Scholastic doctrine of the redemption on the foundation which Anselm laid. The two opposing theories of satisfaction are synthesized in a third, common doctrine. No such consensus is reached in the discussion of the way in which Christ communicates with other men. Scotus then attacks the common doctrine of satisfaction and proposes yet another variation on the sharing of merited grace.

Anselm's theory of satisfaction requires that the evil of divine dishonor be balanced by a reassertion of God's sovereignty and the submission of the creature. Punishment accomplishes this by forcing the submission of the creature through a deprivation of his goods. By taking away what belongs to man, God forces him to realize that he cannot escape divine control. The evil of corporeal death appears to be a consequence of the deprivation of beatitude rather than a separate punishment in which man is forced to suffer an evil. Satisfaction begins with a submission to God, and reverses the prior insubordination by an even fuller submission in the giving of goods which were not otherwise due. In each case, the giving and taking of goods seem to be forms of submission of the creature to God. Lombard's recognition of the satisfactory efficacy of the humility of Christ, which is repeated in thirteenth-century theories, is in fundamental accord with Anselm's principles.

Abelard and Hugh of St. Victor work in a system governed by vindictive justice, which demands that the evildoer suffer evil. Satisfaction is made when an innocent man suffers the penalty in place of the sinner. Each asserts that Christ frees mankind by actually suffering the death to which men were condemned for the sin of Adam. Only Hugh, however, argues that Christ need not have paid an eternal penalty for mankind.

The satisfaction theory which was presented in the *Summa fratris Alexandri* and developed by Aquinas also reckons punishment as an integral part of the restoration of a just order. To satisfy for the sins of Adam and his descendants, Christ must fulfil the penalty by which divine justice integrates the sin of man into the order of the universe. Lombard's assumption that both temporal and eternal punishments were imposed for sin prevailed over Hugh's argument that only the temporal suffering was actually required. But since Christ could not have borne the penalty of eternal darkness, this theory returned to Anselm's observation that eternal punishment is a deprivation of a good and

asserted that Christ paid it by presenting a greater good. The temporal punishment was satisfied by suffering an evil greater than that imposed. To be satisfactory, this penalty must have been paid by one from whom it was not due.

This theory is compatible with a recognition of the role of the humility of Christ and the requiring of a good equivalent to that of human nature which was corrupted. Moreover, it has the great advantage of integrating the long tradition of freely assumed penitential works by recognizing the satisfactory character of these penances and grounding their efficacy in the union of the penitent with Christ in his penal suffering. The inability to deal with the devotion to the suffering Christ and the tradition of penitential works as part of the forgiveness of sins may have been the fatal weakness of Anselm's doctrine of the redemption.

An integral part of this substitution theory is the relation between the divine and human in Christ. The peculiar value which the divine person bestows upon his human life is central to Anselm's doctrine. The same relationship is the key to the value of Christ's substitution for the eternal punishment and the adequacy of his death to satisfy for all temporal punishment. The union with the divinity is no less significant in establishing the infinity of Christ's merit and his power to communicate it.

Anselm also required that the redeemer restore the number of the elect. He explained that Christ merited as a reward the gifts of grace which are given to bring the full number of men to salvation. The satisfactory work of Christ is generally recognized as fulfilling the conditions of justice which are prerequisite to the exercise of divine mercy. But in the thirteenth century a meritorious role becomes increasingly significant. Christ is said to merit the grace of divine forgiveness rather than simply gaining access to it. Albert and Aquinas go beyond the meritorious work to assert that in virtue of his divinity Christ communicates supernatural life to men. The notions of the new Adam and the Mystical Body become integral to the redemptive work of Christ. However, when Scotus reduces the work of Christ to his meriting, he rejects both the satisfactory and sacramental functions of Christ's human action. The merit of Christ affects the elect by the reward which it wins through divine acceptance.

The key elements of Scholastic redemption theory are satisfaction for the dishonor of sin, substitution for the punishment imposed, and the restoration of mankind. The first is a contribution of Anselm; the second derives from Abelard; the third becomes central only in the thirteenth century.