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1. The subject of the second part: The origins and ends of the two cities

The City of God of which we are treating is vouched for by those Scriptures whose supremacy over every product of human genius does not depend on the chance impulses of the minds of men, but is manifestly due to the guiding power of God's supreme providence, and exercises sovereign authority over the literature of all mankind. Now in this Scripture we find these words, 'Glorious things have been said of you, City of God', and in another psalm, 'The Lord is great, and to be highly praised in the City of our God, in his holy mountain, spreading joy over the whole earth.' And soon afterwards in the same psalm, 'As we have heard, so have we seen, in the City of the Lord of Powers, in the City of our God: God has founded that City for eternity.' Again, in yet another psalm, 'The swift stream of the river brings gladness to the City of God: the Most High has sanctified his tabernacle; God in her midst will not be shaken.'

From such testimonies as these -- and it would take too long to quote them all -- we have learnt that there is a City of God: and we have longed to become citizens of that City, with a love inspired by its founder. But the citizens of the earthly city prefer their own gods to the founder of this Holy City, not knowing that he is the God of gods; not, that is, the God of the false gods, the impious and arrogant gods who are deprived of his changeless light which is shed upon all alike, and are therefore reduced to a poverty-stricken kind of power, and engage in a kind of scramble for their lost dominions and claim divine honours from their deluded subjects. He is the God of the good and holy gods, who would rather have themselves in subjection to the one God than have many subjects for themselves. Their delight is to worship God rather than to be worshipped instead of God.

But we have already replied to the enemies of this Holy City, in the first ten books, to the best of our ability, with the assistance of our Lord and King. And now, knowing what is expected of me, and not forgetting my obligation, I will approach my task, relying always on

1. Ps. 87, 31; 48, 1, 2, 8; 46, 4f.  2. sc. angels; cf. Bk IX, 25; X, 1.
the help of the same Lord and King. My task is to discuss, to the best of my power, the rise, the development and the destined ends of the two cities, the earthly and the heavenly, the cities which we find, as I have said, interwoven, as it were, in this present transitory world, and mingled with one another. And first I shall explain how the beginnings of those two cities arose from the difference between two classes of angels.

2. Of the knowledge of God, attainable only through the one Mediator

It is a great achievement, and no everyday matter, that man in his speculation should go beyond the created universe, having examined it, both in its material and immaterial aspects, and found it mutable, and arrive at the immutable being of God; and then should learn from him that everything which exists, apart from God himself, is the creation of God, and of him alone. For when God speaks to man in this way, he does not need the medium of any material created thing. He does not make sounds audible to bodily ears; nor does he use the kind of 'spiritual' intermediary which takes on a bodily shape, as happens in dreams or similar phenomena — for in such cases he speaks as it were to bodily ears, because he speaks, we may say, through the medium of a body, and, in a way, over a distance of physical space; indeed such visions have much in common with physical bodies. But when God speaks in the way we are talking of, he speaks by the direct impact of the truth, to anyone who is capable of hearing with the mind instead of with the ears of the body. He speaks to the highest of man's constituent elements, the element to which only God himself is superior. For man is rightly understood — or, if this passes understanding, is believed — to be made 'in the image of God'. And his nearness to God who is above him is certainly found in that part of man in which he rises superior to the lower parts of his nature, which he shares with the brute creation. And yet the mind of man, the natural seat of his reason and understanding, is itself weakened by long-standing faults which darken it. It is too weak to cleave to that changeless light and to enjoy it; it is too weak even to endure that light. It must first be renewed and healed day after day so as to become capable of such felicity. And so the mind had to be trained and purified by faith; and in order to give man's mind greater confidence in its journey towards the truth along the way of faith, God the Son of God, who is himself the Truth, took manhood without abandoning his

godhead, and thus established and founded this faith, so that man might have a path to man's God through the man who was God. For this is the mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. As man he is our Mediator; as man he is our way. For there is hope to attain a journey's end when there is a path which stretches between the traveller and his goal. But if there is no path, or if a man does not know which way to go, there is little use in knowing the destination. As it is, there is one road, and one only, well secured against all possibility of going astray; and this road is provided by one who is himself both God and man. As God, he is the goal; as man, he is the way.

3. The authority of the canonical Scriptures

This Mediator spoke in former times through the prophets and later through his own mouth, and after that through the apostles, telling man all that he decided was enough for man. He also instituted the Scriptures, those which we call canonical. These are the writings of outstanding authority in which we put our trust concerning those things which we need to know for our good, and yet are incapable of discovering by ourselves. Now we ourselves are our own witnesses for the knowledge of things which are within reach of our senses, whether interior or exterior — hence they are said to be 'present', because, as we say, they are 'before our senses' (praec sensibus), as things accessible to sight are 'before our eyes'. And so we clearly need other witnesses for things which are out of reach of our senses, since we cannot base our knowledge on our own evidence; and we trust the witnesses of those who, we believe, have, or have had, those things within reach of their senses. Thus, in the case of visible things which we ourselves have not seen, we believe those who have seen them, and similarly with respect to things related to the various senses. There are other matters which are perceived by the mind and the reason; and such perception is rightly described as a kind of sense; and that is why the term sententia denotes a mental process. Hence, in respect of invisible things which are out of reach of our own interior perception, we ought likewise to put our trust in witnesses who have learnt of those things, when they have been once presented to them in that immaterial light, or who behold them continually so displayed.

3. 1 Tim. 2, 5.
4. The creation of the world: not outside of time, yet not the result of any change in God's design

Of all visible things the greatest is the world; of all invisible things the greatest is God. But the existence of the world is a matter of observation: the existence of God is a matter of belief. For the belief that God made the world we can have no more trustworthy witness than God himself. Where do we hear this witness? Nowhere, up to the present time, more clearly than in the holy Scriptures, where his prophet said: 'In the beginning God made heaven and earth.' Are we to suppose that the prophet was there, when God made them? No: but the Wisdom of God was there, and it was through that Wisdom that all things were made; and that Wisdom 'passes also into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets', and tells them, in wardly and soundlessly, the story of God's works. The angels of God also speak to them, the angels who 'always see the face of the Father', and announce his will to those who are fit to know it. One such was the prophet who said and wrote, 'In the beginning God made heaven and earth.' He was so suitable a witness to produce belief in God that by inspiration of the same Spirit of God, through whom he learnt these truths revealed to him, he foretold even our faith, which was then so far off in the future.

But why did the eternal God decide to make heaven and earth at that particular time, and not before? If the motive for this question is to make it appear that the world is eternal without beginning, and therefore not the creation of God, then the questioners are far away from the truth, and affected by the deadly madness of impiety. For, leaving aside the utterances of the prophets, we have the evidence of the world itself in all its ordered change and movement and in all the beauty it presents to our sight, a world which bears a kind of silent testimony to the fact of its creation, and proclaims that its maker could have been none other than God, the ineffably and invisibly great, the ineffably and invisibly beautiful.

There are some who admit that the world is created by God, but refuse to allow it a beginning in time, only allowing it a beginning in the sense of its being created, so that creation becomes an eternal process. There is force in this contention, in that such people conceive themselves to be defending God against the notion of a kind of random, fortuitous act; to prevent the supposition that the idea of creating the world suddenly came into his mind, as an idea which had never before occurred to him, that he happened to take a new decision, whereas in fact he is utterly insusceptible of change. But I cannot see how their reasoning will stand up in application to other things, and especially if applied to the soul. If they maintain that the soul is co-eternal with God, how can it experience a change to unhappiness, to a condition from which it has been exempt for all eternity? This is something they will never be able to explain. For if they say there has been a perpetual alternation of the soul between misery and felicity, they are forced to say that this alternation will continue for ever. And this leads them to this absurdity, that the soul is said to be happy, which is obviously impossible if it foresees its coming misery and degradation, while if it does not foresee this, but thinks that it will always enjoy happiness, its felicity is based on a mistake; and you could not have a more nonsensical proposition than that. If, on the other hand, they suppose that the soul has always alternated between felicity and misery throughout the infinity of past ages, but from now onwards, after its liberation, it will not return to a state of misery, they still lose the argument. They are saying that the soul was never truly happy in the past, but then begins to enjoy a kind of novel and genuine felicity, which is to admit that the soul has a new experience, something which had never before happened to it in all its eternity; and this new experience is something of remarkable importance! If they are going to deny that the production of this novelty has no part in God's eternal plan, they will be saying at the same time that God is not the author of felicity, which is intolerable blasphemy. While if they say that even God himself decided on an alteration in his design, to give the soul felicity for all future eternity, how are they to show him to be exempt from the mutability which they also refuse to ascribe to God?

If then they admit that the soul is created in time, and yet will never perish in the time to come (just as number has beginning but no end) and that therefore when it has been freed from the miseries which it has once experienced, it will never thereafter be unhappy, they will agree without demur that this happens without altering the immutability of the God's design. In the same way let them believe that the world could have been created in time, and yet that would not

mean that in the act of creation God made any change in his eternal purpose and design.

5. We are not to think about infinite time before the world, any more than about infinite space outside it. As there was no time before it, so there is no space outside it.

These philosophers agree that the world was created by God, but they go on to ask us how we reply to questions about the date of creation. So let us now find out what they themselves would reply to questions about the position of the creation. For the question, "Why at this time and not previously?" is on the same footing as, "Why in this place rather than that?" For if they imagine that there were infinite stretches of time before the world existed, an infinity in which they cannot conceive of God's being inactive, they will, on the same showing, imagine infinite stretches of space; and if anyone says that the Omnipotent could have been ineptive anywhere in that infinity, it will follow that they are compelled to share the Epicurean fantasy of innumerable worlds. The only difference would be that while Epicurus asserts that these worlds come into being and then disintegrate through the fortuitous movements of atoms, the Platonists will say that they are created by the action of God. This infinite number of worlds must follow, if they refuse to allow God to be inactive throughout the boundless immensity of space which stretches everywhere around the world, and if they hold that nothing can cause the destruction of those worlds, which is what they believe about this world of ours.

For we are now disputing with those who agree with us in believing that God is an immaterial being, the creator of all things other than himself. It would not be worth while to admit other pagans to this discussion on matters of religion, for this reason in particular; that among those who consider that the honours of worship should be paid to many gods, those Platonist philosophers excel all others in reputation and authority, just because they are nearer to the truth than the rest, even though they are a long way from it.

Now those thinkers have a right conception of God in that they do not confine his being to any place, nor set bounds to it, nor extend it spatially: they acknowledge that God's being is everywhere entire, in his immaterial presence. Are they going to say that his being is absent from those immense tracts of space outside the world? That he is enclosed in this one space in which the world is situated, so tiny a space, compared with that infinity? I do not suppose that they will go in for such nonsense as this.

They say that this one world, for all its material vastness, is finite and bounded by its own space, and that it was created by the action of God. If they have an answer about the infinite spaces outside this world, if they can answer the question why God 'ceases from his work' in that infinity, then they can answer their own question about the infinity of time before the world, and why God was inactive then. It does not follow that it was by mere chance rather than by divine reason that God has established this world where it is and not elsewhere, since this space could be chosen among the infinite spaces available everywhere, with no differences of eligibility, even though the divine reason which determined the choice is beyond human comprehension. In the same way it does not follow that we conceive of anything fortuitous in God's action in creating the world at that particular time rather than earlier, since the previous ages had passed without any difference which might make one time preferable to another.

Now if they assert that it is idle for men's imagination to conceive of infinite tracts of space, since there is no space beyond this world, then the reply is: it is idle for men to imagine previous ages of God's inactivity, since there is no time before the world began.

6. The beginning of the world and the beginning of time are the same

If we are right in finding the distinction between eternity and time in the fact that without motion and change there is no time, while in eternity there is no change, who can fail to see that there would have been no time, if there had been no creation to bring in movement and change, and that time depends on this motion and change, and is measured by the longer or shorter intervals by which things that cannot happen simultaneously succeed one another? Since God, in whose eternity there is no change at all, is the creator and director of time, I cannot see how it can be said that he created the world after a lapse of ages, unless it is asserted that there was some creation before this world existed, whose movements would make possible the course of time.

The Bible says (and the Bible never lies): 'In the beginning God made heaven and earth.' It must be inferred that God had created nothing
before that; 'in the beginning' must refer to whatever he made before all his other works. Thus there can be no doubt that the world was not created in time but with time. An event in time happens after one time and before another, after the past and before the future. But at the time of creation there could have been no past, because there was nothing created to provide the change and movement which is the condition of time.

The world was in fact made with time, if at the time of its creation change and motion came into existence. This is clearly the situation in the order of the first six or seven days, in which morning and evening are named, until God's creation was finished on the sixth day, and on the seventh day God's rest is emphasized as something conveying a mystic meaning. What kind of days these are is difficult or even impossible for us to imagine, to say nothing of describing them.

7. Of the nature of the days when there was 'morning and evening' before the creation of the sun

In our experience, of course, the days with which we are familiar only have an evening because the sun sets, and a morning because the sun rises; whereas those first three days passed without the sun, which was made, we are told, on the fourth day. The narrative does indeed tell us that light was created by God, and that God separated that light from the darkness, and gave to the light the name of 'day', and to the darkness the name of 'night'. But what kind of light that was, and with what alternating movement the distinction was made, and what was the nature of this evening and this morning: these are questions beyond the scope of our sensible experience. We cannot understand what happened as it is presented to us; and yet we must believe it without hesitation.

For either there was some material light, whether in the upper regions of the universe, far removed from our sight, or in the regions from which the sun later derived its light; or else the word 'light' here means the Holy City which consists of the holy angels and the blessed spirits, the City of which the Apostle speaks, 'Jerusalem which is above, our mother, eternal in the heavens'. He certainly says in another place, 'You are all the sons of light, sons of day: you do not belong to night and darkness.' But this latter interpretation depends on our being able to discover some appropriate meaning for 'the evening and the morning' of this day.

10. Gal. 4. 16. 11. 1 Thess. 5. 5.

8. How God's rest on the seventh day is to be understood

When 'God rested on the seventh day from all his works, and sanctified that day', this is not to be understood in any childish way, as if God had tired at his work, seeing that 'he spoke and they were made' by a word which was intelligible and eternal, not vocal and temporal. No, the 'rest of God' means the rest of those who find their rest in him, just as 'the joy of a house' means the joy of those who rejoice in that house — even if it is not the house itself but something else which is responsible for the joy. How much more appropriate it would be if in fact the house itself were to make the inhabitants glad by reason of its beauty. In that case the house would be called joyful not by the figure of speech in which the container stands for the contents (as in 'the theatre applauds', when it is the audience that applauds, or 'the pastures are lowing', when it is the cattle that are
calling) but by the figure in which the efficient cause stands for the effect—as in 'a glad letter', meaning a letter which makes the readers glad.

And so it is most appropriate that when God is said, on the authority of the prophetic narrative, to have 'rested', what is meant is the rest of those who find their rest in him, and to whom he gives rest. The prophecy promises this to men also, for it speaks to men, and was in fact written for men's benefit. It promises them that they also, after the good works which God performs in them and through them, will have eternal rest in him, if they have already in some measure drawn near to him already in this life, through faith. For this promise is prefigured also by the Sabbath cessation from work in God's ancient people, in obedience to the instructions of the Law. But I think that I must discuss this more fully in its own place.13

9. The scriptural evidence about angels
I have undertaken to treat of the origin of the Holy City, and I have decided that I must first deal with the subject of the holy angels. They form the greater part of that City, and the more blessed part, in that they have never been on pilgrimage in a strange land; and I shall be at pains to explain, with God's aid, the information given on this subject in the inspired testimonies of Scripture, as far as shall seem sufficient. When the sacred writings tell of the making of the world, there is no explicit statement about whether the angels were created, or in what order they were created. But if they were not passed over in the narrative, they were referred to either under the name of 'heaven', when it is said that 'in the beginning God created heaven and earth', or, more probably, under the name of the 'light', about which I have been speaking.

I do not think that the angels were passed over, for this reason: that the Scripture says that God rested on the seventh day from all the works that he had done, while the whole book starts with the statement, 'In the beginning God made heaven and earth.' He began with heaven and earth, and the earth itself, which he made first, was, according to the next statement in Scripture, 'invisible and disorderly' and, because light had not yet been created, 'darkness was over the abyss', that is, over a kind of confused and indistinct mass of land and water—since there must needs be darkness where light does not exist; then all things were set in order by God's creative act, all the things

which, in the narrative, were completed in the course of the six days. How, then, could the angels have been passed over, as though they were not among those works, from which God rested on the seventh day?

Now although the fact that angels are a work of God is not passed over in this narrative, it is not explicitly stated; but in other places the holy Scripture testifies to the fact with the utmost clarity. For the hymn of the three men in the furnace starts with the words, 'Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord'14 and in the enumeration of his works the angels are included. And in one of the psalms there are these verses:

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights. Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his powers. Praise him, sun and moon: praise him, all stars and light. Praise him heaven of heavens; and the waters which are above the heavens, let them praise the Lord. For he spoke, and things were made: he gave the command, and they were created.15

Will anyone now venture to suppose that the angels were created after all those things which were enumerated in the six days? However, if anyone is silly enough for this, he is refuted by another passage in Scripture, of equal authority, where God says, 'When the stars were made, all my angels praised me with a loud voice.'16 That shows that angels already existed when the stars were made. Now the stars were created on the fourth day. Are we then to say that the angels were made on the third day? Most certainly not. For it is quite plain what was made on that day; the land was separated from the waters, and each of the two elements took on its characteristic and distinct appearance; and the dry land produced all that has its roots in it. On the second day, then? No, indeed. For then the firmament was made between the upper and lower waters, and was called 'heaven'; this is the firmament in which the stars were made on the fourth day. The obvious conclusion is that if the angels are among the works of God of those days, they are that light which received the name of 'day'. And the unity of that day is underlined by its not being called 'the first day', but 'one day'. Thus the second day, and the third, and the rest are not different days; the same 'one day' was repeated to complete the number of six or seven, to represent the seven stages of knowledge, the six stages comprehending the created works, and the seventh stage embracing God's rest.

For when God said, 'Let there be light', and light was created, then,

15. Ps. 148, 1ff.