

## QUESTION 100

### The Condition of the Generated Offspring with respect to Justice

The next thing to consider is the condition of the offspring with respect to justice or moral rectitude (*quantum ad justitiam*). On this topic there are two questions: (1) Would men have been born with justice? (2) Would they have been born confirmed in justice?

#### Article 1

##### Would men have been born with justice?

It seems that men would not have been born with justice or moral rectitude (*cum iustitia nati*):

**Objection 1:** Hugo of St. Victor says, “Before the sin the first man generated children who were without sin but who did not inherit their father’s justice.”

**Objection 2:** As the Apostle says in Romans 5:16 and 21, justice or justification comes through grace (*iustitia est per gratiam*). But grace is not bequeathed [by the parents to the children] (*non transfunditur*), since in that case it would be natural; instead, it is infused by God alone. Therefore, the children would not have been born with justice.

**Objection 3:** Justice exists in the soul. But the soul is not passed on [from the parents to the children] (*anima non est ex traduce*). Therefore, neither was justice passed on from the parents to the children.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Conceptu Virginali* Anselm says, “Along with having a rational soul, those whom the man would generate would be just if they did not sin.”

**I respond:** Man naturally generates what is similar to himself in species. Hence, any accidents that follow upon the nature of the species are such that the children must be similar in those accidents to the parents, unless there is some error in the operation of nature—which there would not have been in the state of innocence. But in individual accidents the children did not have to be similar to the parents.

Now original justice (*iustitia originalis*), in the rectitude of which the first man was made, was an accident belonging to the nature of the species—not in the sense that it was caused by the principles of the species, but in the sense that it was a special gift given by God to the nature as a whole. This is clear from the fact that opposites belong to a single genus, and original sin (*peccatum originale*), which is opposed to original justice, is called a sin of the nature. That is why it is passed down from the parents to their posterity. Because of this, the children would have been like the parents with respect to original justice as well.

**Reply to objection 1:** The passage from Hugo should be taken not to be about the habit of justice, but rather about the execution of the act of justice.

**Reply to objection 2:** Some claim that the children would have been born not with the justice of grace (*cum iustitia gratuita*), which is a principle of meriting, but rather with original justice.

However, the root of original justice, in the rectitude of which man was made, consists in the supernatural submission of reason to God (*in subiectione supernaturali rationis ad Deum*)—a submission which, as was explained above (q. 95, a. 1), is effected by habitual grace (*per gratiam gratum facientem*). Hence, one must claim that if the children had been born with original justice, then they would likewise have been born with grace—just as we explained above (q. 95, a. 1) that the first man was made with grace. Still, the grace would not for this reason have been natural, since it would not have been bequeathed by the power of the semen, but would instead have been conferred on man as soon as he had a rational soul—just as it is also the case that even though the rational soul is not passed on [from the parents to the children], it is nonetheless infused by God as soon as the body is disposed for it.

**Reply to objection 3:** The solution to the third objection is clear from what was just said.

## Article 2

### In the state of innocence, would the children have been born confirmed in justice?

It seems that in the state of innocence the children would have been born confirmed in justice (*in iustitia confirmati*):

**Objection 1:** In *Moralia* 4, commenting on Job 3:13 (“For now I should have been asleep, etc.”), Gregory says, “If none of the rottenness of sin (*putredo peccati*) had corrupted the first parent, then he would in no way have generated of himself the children of Gehenna; but those who now have to be saved by the Redeemer would have been born of him only as the elect.” Therefore, all of them would have been born confirmed in justice.

**Objection 2:** In *Cur Deus Homo* Anselm says, “If the first parents had lived in such a way that, though tempted, they did not sin, then they, along with all their progeny, would have been confirmed in the sense that they would no longer have been able to sin.” Therefore, the children would have been born confirmed in justice.

**Objection 3:** Good is more powerful than evil. But from the sin of the first man there followed a necessity of sinning on the part of those who were born of him. Therefore, if the first man had persisted in justice, the necessity of preserving justice would have redounded to his posterity.

**Objection 4:** An angel who adheres to God while others are sinning is immediately confirmed in justice, so that he is no longer able to sin. Therefore, if man had resisted the temptation, he too would have been confirmed. But he would have generated others who were such as he was. Therefore, his children would likewise have been born confirmed in justice.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Civitate Dei* 14 Augustine says, “Human society would have been happy as a whole if they”—viz., the first parents—“had not committed the evil that they passed on to their descendants, and if none of their posterity had perpetrated the iniquity that merited condemnation.” From this one is given to understand that even if the first parents had not sinned, some of their posterity would have been able to perpetrate iniquity. Therefore, they would not have been born confirmed in justice.

**I respond:** It does not seem possible that in the state of innocence children should have been born confirmed in justice. For it is clear that at their birth the children would not have had more perfection than their parents had in the state of generating them. But for as long as the parents were generating, they would not have been confirmed in justice. For a rational creature is confirmed in justice by the fact that he is beatified (*efficitur beata*) through the clear vision of God, who is such that one is unable not to inhere in Him when He is seen; for He is the very essence of goodness, from which no one can turn away, since nothing is desired and loved except under the notion of the good. (I say this as a general rule, since it can happen otherwise by a special privilege, as we believe happened in the case of the virgin mother of God (*sicut creditur de virgine matre Dei*.) But as soon as Adam had arrived at that beatitude by which he saw God through His essence, he would have been made spiritual in both mind and body, and his animal life, in which alone he would have made use of generation, would have ceased. Hence, it is clear that the children would not have been born confirmed in justice.

**Reply to objection 1:** If Adam had not sinned, he would not have generated from himself children of Gehenna, i.e., children who would have contracted from him the sin that is the cause of Gehenna. Yet they would have been able to become children of Gehenna by sinning through their own free choice. Or,

if they did not become children of Gehenna through sin, this would not have been because they were confirmed in justice. Instead, it would have been because of divine providence, through which they would have been preserved immune from sin.

**Reply to objection 2:** Anselm said this not by way of assertion (*asserendo*), but by way of conjecture (*opinando*). This is clear from his very mode of speaking when he says, “It *seems that* if they had lived, etc.”

**Reply to objection 3:** This argument is not efficacious even though, as is apparent from his words, Anselm seems to have been moved by it. For through their sin the first parents did not impose on their descendants a *necessity of sinning* in the sense that they would have been unable to return to justice; for this holds only in the case of the damned. Hence, neither would they have transmitted to their descendants a *necessity of not sinning* in the sense that they would have been altogether unable to sin; for this holds only in the case of the blessed in heaven.

**Reply to objection 4:** There is no similarity here between men and angels. For men have a power of free choice that can turn either way (*vertibile*) both before an act of choice and after an act of choice; by contrast, as was explained above when we were discussing the angels (q. 64, a. 2), this is not the case with angels.