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THOMAS AQUINAS

The Literal Exposition on Job

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION
CLASSICS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Carl A. Raschke, Editor

Classics in Religious Studies, No. 7

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Anthony Damico, Translator

Martin D. Yaffe, Interpretive Essay and Notes

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A Scriptural Commentary

Concerning Providence

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Scholars Press

Atlanta, Georgia

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The Literal Exposition on Job

(c) 1989

The American Academy of Religion

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Thomas, Aquinas, Saint, 1225?-1274.

The literal exposition on Job.

(Classics in religious studies; 7)

Translation of: *Expositio super Job ad litteram*.

Bibliography: p.

Includes index. 1. Bible. O.T. Job—Criticism, interpretation, etc. —Early works to 1800. I. Yaffe, Martin D. II. Damico, Anthony. III. Title. IV. Title: Thomas Aquinas, the literal exposition on Job. V. Series:

Classics in religious studies; no. 7.

BS1415.T4713 1989 223'.106 88-31855

ISBN 1-55540-291-7

ISBN 1-55540-292-5 (pbk.)

Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper

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THOMAS AQUINAS

Literal Exposition on Job:
A Scriptural Commentary Concerning Providence

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PREFACE

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This work is a translation of the text of Thomas Aquinas's *Expositio super Job ad litteram* in Vol. XXVI of *Sancti Thomae de Aquino, Opera Omnia, Iussu Leonis XIII P.M. edita*. In view of the relative currency of this edition and the reputation of the editors of the Leonine Commission, we have with utmost confidence accepted this text as definitive for our purpose.

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Our purpose in making this translation was twofold: to pursue interests of our own in Thomas's thought and to make available in English to other scholars a work which promised to be influential if it should reach a wider readership. This second consideration has influenced the way in which we have approached the translation. We have inclined more toward the literal than toward a freer, more literary style. This inclination will be especially noticeable in our attempt to translate a given Latin word with the same English word on every possible occasion. A notable exception is the word *virtus*, which Thomas uses sometimes in the restricted Christian sense of moral excellence (virtue) and sometimes in the more common classical sense of a) the perfection of some attribute of an individual, or b) the efficacy or power of some person or thing which is the result of that perfection. Very often *potentia*, another word for power, seems to denote the capacity to effect or undergo some change; yet another related word for power, *potestas*, implies the capacity to impose one's will.

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In many cases we have preferred to translate Latin words by their obvious English derivatives, for example, premise from *praemittere*, to send ahead, as both verb and noun, and posit from *ponere*, to place or put, as some question. The result is a somewhat less familiar English diction which both reflects the seriousness of the work as Thomas conceived it and helps the reader bridge the gap between Thomas and himself by means of a language which at the scholarly level to a remarkable degree still unites the Western world as it did in Thomas's own day.

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We have followed current academic convention in placing our interpretive essay before the translated text. Even so, we consider the former a guide, not a substitute, for reading the text with care. Readers are invited to proceed to Thomas directly, if they will, and to judge the merits of our work in the light of his. Our manner of citing references in and to the *Exposition*, in terms of Thomas's comments on the Vulgate verses rather than by arbitrary page numbers, aims at facilitating comparison with the Latin original. We are particularly indebted to the Leonine edition for its generous apparatus of cross-references and sources, on which we have relied extensively.

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Early and ongoing encouragement has come from scholarly friends, whose compelling insights may have found their way into our work unacknowledged inasmuch as we have grown unable to distinguish them from our own. We acknowledge, with deep thanks, Rabbi Jack Bemporad and Professors Ernest Fortin, Harry Jaffa, Walter Principe, Ellis Rivkin, Fred Sontag, and Brian Stock. The late Professor James Weisheipl gave most freely of his time and counsel at a critical juncture of our work. We have also benefited from alert readings of drafts of the Interpretive Essay by our colleagues Derek Baker, Michael Platt, and Robert Stevens, and of the translation as well by Dorothy Damico. Though our list of debts to others knows no strict limits, we alone bear responsibility for our errors.

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Librarians at institutions besides our own have graciously opened their resources to us. We are especially grateful to the staff of Bridwell Library at Southern Methodist University, to the Reverend Donald Finley of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies and to Miss Evelyn Collins of St. Michael's College Library at the University of Toronto, to the Reverend Vincent MacKenzie of Regis College Library in Toronto, and to Miss Johnnye Cope of Willis Library at the University of North Texas. Necessary typing assistance sprang from the capable hands of Susie Bretz, Kathy Copeland, Joan Damico, Teresa Damico, Treva Sandefur, and Betty Ann Wilkie. And we thank Vice President Robert Toulouse (now Emeritus) of the University of North Texas for prompt material assistance early on.

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Time for uninterrupted study and needed travel was made possible by a Translation Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, by a Grant-in-Aid from the American Council of Learned Societies, and by matching grants from the University of North Texas Organized Research Fund. Publication subvention has come from the American Academy of Religion, under the able guidance of our series editor Professor Carl Raschke and with kind support from Dennis J. DuBois and family of Dallas and from the Reverend Donald F. Zimmerman of St. Monica Catholic Church, Dallas.

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Finally, our long hours of study and preoccupation with our work have been sustained with the patient and undimmed love of our wives and families—to whom we dedicate this volume.

A.D.

M.D.Y.

University of North Texas
Denton, 1988

INTERPRETIVE ESSAY

p 1

*Sicut etiam apud nos,
doctores, quod in summa capiunt,
multipliciter distinguunt,
providentes capacitati aliorum.*

—*Summa Theologiae* I.106.1

To the modern reader, Thomas Aquinas's *Literal Exposition on Job* appears curious. One wonders what intellectual substance lies behind its literary format. Thomas's exposition takes the form of a line-by-line explanation of the intended meaning of the scriptural Book of Job. The original story, which Thomas read in the Latin Vulgate, is about a perfectly religious man whom God allows to suffer in order to test his faith. Why, one may ask, should the thoughtful Christian reader prefer extensive commentary on the details of the scriptural story to, say, paraphrase or interpretive summary? Thomas himself understands the details of the story as conveying Christianity's authoritative teaching about divine providence, namely, that God, despite appearances, orders and governs for the best the particular accidents befalling human life. Yet Thomas's detailed interpretation admittedly relies not on the scriptural text alone, nor simply on other Christian authorities, but somewhat anachronistically on the writings of the pagan philosopher Aristotle. Is Thomas's overt Aristotelianism here reconcilable with his claim to speak for Christianity? Such questions deserve consideration, or the credibility and integrity of Thomas's work would seem doubtful.

p 1

Now although Thomas's teaching has long been identified with the authority of the Catholic Church, his work remains of more than sectarian or antiquarian interest. Thomas poses the broader problem of the relationship between divine revelation and human reason. His analysis of Job's pious suffering, and of Job's subsequent debate with his unbelieving friends and with God, aims to show that Christianity's belief in divine providence is plausible in the light of rational or philosophical understanding. His point of departure is the potential conflict between revelation, as transmitted to Christians through the Old and New Testaments and the Church Fathers, and reason, as exemplified above all in the writings of Aristotle. +1

Testaments and the Church Fathers, and reason, as exemplified above all in the writings of Aristotle. ¶1 Thomas would have his Christian reader compare what he would accept by faith with what he might discover by his own disciplined understanding. If nothing else, Thomas's balanced approach still merits attention. In our own time, the uneasy coexistence of revelation and reason all too often comes to sight in radically one-sided formulas. On the one hand, we find religious belief openly repudiated by way of nihilistically-inspired slogans like "God is dead!" On the other hand, we see scientific theories like evolution attacked in the name of intellectually naive renderings of the scriptural account. Thomas's exposition, in contrast, is guided by the implicit maxim that what may be gathered by faith does not destroy what can be known by reason, but the two are somehow complementary. ¶2

p 2

Perhaps, however, the chief obstacle to appreciating Thomas's exposition is not his attempt to moderate between revelation and reason but his tendency to identify reason with the arguments of Aristotle. Thomas regularly defers to Aristotle, whom he often calls simply "the Philosopher." ¶3 His exposition is filled with distinctions drawn from Aristotle's antique scientific-philosophic vocabulary. Terms like "potentiality"/"act," ¶4 "imperfect"/"perfect," ¶5 "corruptible"/"incorruptible," ¶6 etc., appear strange and outdated to modern readers. Literary differences aside, Thomas seems hardly to deviate at all from Aristotle, except where the philosopher's conclusions prove contrary to certain basic tenets of Christianity. Moreover, even where Aristotle suggests, contrary to Christian belief, that the world has no temporal beginning but is eternal, ¶7 that God does not care for any particular individual as such but only for the species, ¶8 and that the immortality of the soul means at best the impersonal survival after death of the intelligence of the philosopher, ¶9 Thomas generally uses Aristotelian premises in defending Christianity's commitment to divine creation, ¶10 particular providence, ¶11 and bodily resurrection. ¶12 Now it is tempting to explain Thomas's Christian-inspired reliance on Aristotle primarily as an intended philosophical correction of Aristotle. Thomas's synthesis of Christian and Aristotelian elements would thereby suggest a philosophical or quasi- philosophical "system," rivalling the original "system" found in Aristotle's treatises. Nevertheless, to look for such a "system" would not take the prospective reader very far. ¶13 "System" scarcely describes the Aristotelianism which first attracted Thomas's attention and which is reflected in his exposition. Nor does it explain why a reader of Thomas's caliber would give first-hand attention to the scriptural story at all, as opposed merely to finding in it proof-texts for conclusions established elsewhere. These last two points, pertinent but controversial, deserve further elaboration.

p 3

As for the *Exposition's* inherent Aristotelianism, to speak of it as a "system" obscures what is properly philosophical about it. Aristotle's own treatises, we would argue, do not present themselves as a finished "system," but rather as protreptic introductions or exhortations to philosophy. ¶14 What we mean may be seen by recalling the truism that Aristotle, like other premodern philosophers, tends to identify philosophy with "science." "Science" here is not, or not yet, understood as the results of the experimental work of Galileo, Newton, Einstein, and their followers. Premodern "science" is a much more speculative enterprise, which is closely connected with the original, unsophisticated meaning of the term. Originally, "science" means knowledge in the strict sense, or knowledge of causes, as Aristotle says. In Aristotle's Greek, *episteme* ("science") is equivalent to *techne* ("art") or knowledge of the causes of artifacts as understood by artisans. These causes Aristotle reduces to four: (1) the material of the artifact (e.g., the wood of a table); (2) the "beginning of the change," later called the efficient cause, whereby that material begins to be shaped into the proper form (e.g., of a table); (3) the form itself, or more literally the "look" of the artifact (called in Greek *eidos* or *idea*, translated into Latin as *species*); and finally (4) the purpose or good of the artifact, namely, its work or function (e.g., to hold a vase, to write on, etc.). ¶15 To know these four causes of an artifact is then to be "scientific" about that artifact. But such knowledge is not yet "science" in the full meaning of the term. "Science" for Aristotle is the attempt to become as knowledgeable about the causes of *non-man-made* things as artisans are about their own products. All of Aristotle's "technical" terminology, we would argue, appears to be consciously animated by this task.

p 4

The modern reader may note one obvious difficulty with Aristotle's "scientific" project—recognized, however, by both Aristotle and his medieval interpreters, including Thomas. Namely, there is no human guarantee that the philosopher can be as successful in understanding the causes of non-man-made things as artisans are about artifacts. Artisans have a much closer access to the artifacts which they make. The philosopher, on the other hand, does not make the things he would know, which he calls "natural" as opposed to artificial. †16 He becomes acquainted with them only through his continuing observation and inference (called in Greek *theoria*, †17 and in Latin *speculatio*). For this reason, Aristotelian philosophy or "science" remains an inherently speculative (i.e., tentative, provisional, unfinished) project. The very term "philosophy" suggests to Aristotle and to Thomas the ongoing "love" or pursuit of "wisdom," rather than any putatively settled results. †18 Accordingly, it is misleading to speak of an Aristotelian "system." Aristotle and his philosophical followers seem quite aware that they may not have achieved complete certainty, free from all doubt, about what they would understand. On the contrary, their writings, as protreptic vehicles of philosophy, would introduce the reader also to their doubts.

p 4

Why then should a reader of Thomas's caliber pay particular attention to the scriptural story of Job? Perhaps this question can be answered by comparing Thomas's Christian-Aristotelian approach with that of the Jewish-Aristotelian Moses Maimonides, with whose *Guide of the Perplexed* Thomas is also familiar. †19 Thomas follows Maimonides in interpreting the story of Job's suffering as the authoritative account of divine providence. Their interpretations nevertheless differ. Maimonides understands the story to be a parable about an imaginary figure who is perfectly blameless, if somewhat unwise. †20 Thomas, on the other hand, understands it to be the description of a historical person who is perfectly wise, if somewhat sinful. †21 These symmetrical differences between Maimonides and Thomas can scarcely be accounted for in terms of competing philosophical "systems." Such an account would suggest, contrary to *prima facie* evidence, that neither Maimonides nor Thomas is primarily concerned with actually reading the scriptural text, but only with gaining apologetical support for a preconceived philosophical position. This suggestion would have the further disadvantage of contradicting the currently accepted scholarly assessment of medieval Aristotelian scriptural exegesis as marking a return to a more literal understanding of the text itself. †22 The differences between Maimonides and Thomas therefore seem better accounted for protreptically, in terms of their respective addressees whom they would introduce (or reintroduce) to Aristotelian philosophy. As Maimonides addresses his Jewish reader, so Thomas addresses his Christian reader. In either case, the reader is typically affected by a prior religious commitment which acts as a barrier to his full acceptance or appreciation of philosophy. It is this barrier which Maimonides' and Thomas's protreptic writings seek to overcome.

p 5

Maimonides' Jewish reader, for example, officially identifies perfect justice with talmudic law. Such a reader therefore disdains purely philosophical speculation about justice as potentially disruptive of his practice of the law. To overcome this disdain, Maimonides interprets his Job as an authoritative but unphilosophical paradigm of a just man, with whom the Jewish reader can easily identify. By showing Job to be the perfect practitioner, as it were, of talmudic law, who nevertheless stands in need of further philosophical wisdom in order to explain his undeserved suffering, Maimonides' interpretation allows the scriptural story to alert his Jewish reader to the otherwise dormant question of whether Judaism may need to be supplemented by Aristotelian philosophy after all. †23 Similarly, Thomas's Christian reader readily identifies perfect wisdom with scholastic theology. Unlike Maimonides' reader, however, Thomas's reader already recognizes philosophical authorities as proper in academic debates in order to defend approved doctrines against rival claimants. Hence Thomas interprets his Job as an historical individual who appropriates Aristotelian philosophy in order to maintain theological doctrines of which the Christian reader can approve. By showing Job in this way to be a perfectly competent professor of theology *avant la*

lettre, who, however, succumbs to the sin of pride in wishing to convert his friends to a true understanding of his suffering by merely arguing with them, Thomas's interpretation allows the scriptural story to remind his reader that there may be limits to what a strictly philosophical intelligence can accomplish within a Christian setting. ¶24

p 6

Such a protreptic reading of Thomas's work might encourage renewed scholarly appreciation for Thomas's intellectual sophistication and sensitivity as a religious teacher. In interpreting the Book of Job to his fellow Christians, Thomas succeeds in taking a moderate course between two dangerous extremes. One extreme is described as a kind of theological materialism, according to which God displays divine providence by rewarding good men and punishing evil men through particular bodily pleasures and pains. ¶25 This extreme is refuted by Thomas's appeal to the doctrine of bodily resurrection, according to which full and final reward and punishment come only in a future life apart from the particular pleasures and pains of this world. ¶26 The other extreme which Thomas refutes is the pure Aristotelianism of the so-called "Averroists," who seek to reinterpret Christianity in a manner consistent with Aristotle's implicit denial of divine creation, particular providence, and bodily resurrection. ¶27 (In 1270 and 1277, Christian Averroism is officially condemned by the Bishop of Paris.) ¶28 Thomas himself comes close to Averroism, as we may see, when his *Exposition* shows how God eventually compares providence to the "scientific" (but impersonal) care an architect exercises over a building he has made. ¶29 Nevertheless, Thomas shuns mere Averroism by supplementing his otherwise Aristotelian view with the plausible "hope" that Job's individual soul may somehow be rewarded personally in a future life. ¶30 Set within the context of this proto-Christian interpretation of Job's drama, Thomas's refutations of Averroism and materialism become not only theologically astute but rhetorically persuasive. Thomas is able to ascribe the competing theological positions to the book's various speakers, with whom his Christian reader is presumably familiar. Thus, the three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, with whom Job debates directly about the cause of his suffering, represent the position of theological materialism, while Job himself assumes a quasi-Averroistic position. In the course of their debate, the materialism of the three friends is refuted not only by Job, but also by God himself, who rebukes Job's near Averroism as "levity" or superficiality. ¶31 Thomas is thereby able to analyze the entire argument of the book according to the model of an academic debate. ¶32 Thomas's own reader, as a student of scholastic theology, finds this manner of arguing familiar. Indeed, he is accustomed to accepting its victorious conclusions as religiously authoritative for himself.

p 7

Read protreptically, then, Thomas's *Literal Exposition on Job* may also pose an interesting challenge to twentieth-century philological scholarship. At present there seems no scholarly consensus on the meaning of God's climactic speech in the Book of Job, even though that speech is evidently intended to resolve Job's entire drama. ¶33 Perhaps differences of opinion here stem in part from an inherent inability to establish with certainty the important philological details of the book, including its various layers and dates of composition. ¶34 However that may be, so long as modern philologists remain predominantly occupied with the minutiae of the book, they would seem unable to grasp the whole. Thomas, on the other hand, following Maimonides, achieves a unifying perspective on the details of the story by interpreting the entire book in the light of the addressee for whom it might be intended. Might not modern philology, then, profit here too, if not from the peculiar anachronism of Thomas's interpretation (which links the Book of Job rather to a thirteenth-century Christian addressee), perhaps from fitting Thomas's Aristotelian method *mutatis mutandis* to a more chronologically calibrated search for a typical Sadducean or, at any rate, Jewish addressee?

THE TITLE: LITERAL EXPOSITION ON JOB

p 8

The exact title of Thomas's book is *Literal Exposition on Job*. An exposition, in scholastic terminology, is a line-by-line commentary on an authoritative text. [‡35](#) According to the autographic evidence, Thomas wrote expositions on the Vulgate texts of Job, John, I Corinthians, and Hebrews. Of these, however, only the expositions on Job and Romans are complete, and even so, the latter was to be part of a larger exposition on all of Paul's letters. Other scriptural commentaries ascribed to Thomas—on the remainders of John, I Corinthians, and Hebrews, as well as on Matthew (incomplete) and the rest of Paul's letters—survive only in the form of student or secretarial lecture notes, and each is considered a *reportatio*, or unofficial report, rather than a finished exposition. Expositions are moreover distinguished from postillas and glosses, which simply paraphrase the Vulgate text, generally with collated scriptural cross-references in the case of a postilla, and with various competing patristic interpretations in the case of a gloss. Thomas wrote postillas on the texts of Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah (incomplete), and Lamentations, and a continuous gloss on the four Gospels. In addition, he undertook thirteen philosophical expositions of Aristotelian treatises, [‡36](#) including the pseudo-Aristotelian *Liber de Causis*, and theological expositions on Boethius's *De Trinitate* and *De Hebdomadibus* and on Dionysius's *De Divinis Nominibus*. Except for perhaps these last three, Thomas's non-scriptural expositions may be described as extracurricular, since they do not stem directly from his official classroom lectures on Scripture or on the Church Fathers. Indeed, of all Thomas's finished expositions, none is more closely connected with his practical pedagogical activity as professor of theology than his *Literal Exposition on Job*. [‡37](#)

p 9

Thomas calls his exposition of Job "literal." This term may mislead the modern reader, accustomed to associating it either with religious fundamentalism or with modern philology. Though Thomas believes that the ultimate author of Scripture is God, [‡38](#) his belief by no means makes him a fundamentalist. Nor is he a philologist in the strictly modern sense, even though his exposition is often necessarily concerned with linguistic details. Elsewhere, in his *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas explains what he understands by the "literal" sense of Scripture. [‡39](#) He distinguishes between the "literal" and the "spiritual" senses. The "literal" sense is also called the historical sense. It is the meaning of the words of the text as intended by the human author. The "spiritual" sense, on the other hand, is a consequence of the literal. It occurs when the thing signified by the literal sense signifies something else apart from the particular text under consideration. Thomas outlines three different spiritual senses. First, the "allegorical" sense occurs whenever things described in the Old Testament anticipate, independently of their original context, things in the New Testament. Second, the "moral" sense occurs whenever things in the New Testament explicitly ascribed or referred to Christ are further signs of what we ourselves ought to do. Finally, the "anagogical" sense occurs whenever things described in either Testament are in themselves also implicit signs of God's eternal glory. Because these three spiritual senses depend on and presuppose the literal sense, however, the literal sense remains for Thomas the starting-point of any proper understanding or use of Scripture.

p 9

Yet, unlike religious fundamentalists, Thomas does not start from the premise that Scripture reveals its literal sense adequately to readers who are simply inspired. Intellectual effort is also needed. Old Testament books, for example, are originally written in Hebrew, and some Hebrew words are ambiguous, figurative, or otherwise untranslatable without further explanation. Thus, in the Book of Job, "Leviathan" is understood to mean both a large fish and an ancient reptile. Thomas adds that the latter meaning also refers figuratively to the devil. [‡40](#) Sometimes, as with that same word, the intended meaning or meanings may be established textually by comparing other instances of the same term in Scripture. Often, however, simple cross-reference is not enough. Rhetorical features must be clarified too. The Book of Job, for instance, speaks of angels appearing before God on a certain "day," and so may suggest misleadingly that both God and angels possess bodies necessarily subject to temporal accidents. Thomas, on the other hand, understands both God and angels to be spiritual beings, free of corporeal or temporal accidents.

Accordingly, he advises his reader of Scripture's custom of speaking about spiritual things in corporeal

Accordingly, he advises his reader of Scripture's custom of speaking about spiritual things in corporeal terms and about eternal things in temporal terms. †41 In his *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas links this custom to the condition of Scripture's original addressees, the ancient Hebrews, whom he describes as lacking in intellectual refinement. Thus, the account of creation in Genesis is said to speak of the creation of earth, water, etc., rather than of matter in general, since sensible things were more familiar and apparent to Moses' immediate addressees. †42 Likewise, in his *Literal Exposition on Job*, Thomas explains Satan's having "moved" God to allow Job's suffering, as a figurative expression signifying God's eternal intention to show Job's perfect virtue, and adds simply that Scripture speaks "in a human manner." †43 Thomas's reader is left to infer that the "human manner" of Scripture includes not merely what is said but also how what is said is to be interpreted by Scripture's intended human addressees.

p 10

Nevertheless, unlike modern philologists, who may also identify the literal meaning of the scriptural text with the understanding of its intended addressee, Thomas does not view the Book of Job as a literary composite. Modern philologists generally assume the text to be a compilation of sources, written or redacted at various times by diverse hands for various successive addressees. †44 They therefore aim at showing the evident growth or metamorphosis of the text as we have it through a series of earlier forms. †45 Thomas, by contrast, stays close to the surface of the text. He views the book throughout as a completed whole. †46 Accordingly, he analyzes it only in its received form, as intended for its final addressee. His exposition does indeed divide the book into its obvious parts:

1. an introductory "history," †47 describing Job as both a virtuous and a prosperous man, and showing how God permits Satan to inflict suffering on him (chapters 1 and 2);
2. a lament by Job "cursing" the day of his birth (chapter 3);
3. three sessions of accusatory speeches by each of Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, alternating with Job's replies to each of them, stemming from the friends' belief that Job's present suffering is caused by his past sinfulness—except that Zophar refrains from making his third speech (chapters 4 to 28);
4. another lament by Job, comparing his past innocence with his present suffering (chapters 29 to 31);
5. a speech by Job's fourth friend Elihu, who also believes that Job's present suffering is caused by his past sinfulness (chapters 32 to 36);
6. a speech by God, which rebukes both Job and his friends for their inadequate beliefs, and which is accompanied by two penitent replies by Job (chapters 37 to 42:1-6);
7. a concluding narrative, describing God's restoration and doubling of Job's former prosperity (chapter 42:7-17).

What unifies the parts of the book for Thomas, however, is not their putative accretion over a period of time, but the notion that, taken as a whole, they convey a more or less coherent message to their intended addressee. In this respect, Thomas follows the procedures of Aristotelian "science" rather than those of modern philology. Viewing the completed text much as an artisan views an artifact, Thomas would understand the materials, format, and genesis of the book in accordance with its intended purpose or function. According to Thomas, that function is ultimately theological, namely, "to show how human affairs are ruled by divine providence." †48 Thomas's otherwise anachronistic recourse to the notions of later Christian theology, as well as to pagan Greek philosophy, may be explained accordingly. In comparing the figure of Job with that of Christ, †49 for example, and in comparing Old Testament citations with those of the New Testament and with the doctrines of Church Fathers and of philosophers, Thomas's own intention is not to blur the differences among his sources, but to articulate the theological meaning of

own intention is not to blur the differences among his sources, but to articulate the theological meaning of the received text with the help of authorities which may be more familiar and approachable to his Christian reader. Of course, as we have said, Thomas's recourse to strictly philosophical authorities would scarcely be justified without his implicit premise that theology and philosophy are mutually complementary and not contradictory. Nor, as we may soon see, would his adaptation of the literal meaning of an originally Jewish source to a Christian setting be justified either, except on the analogous premise that Christianity's new dispensation does not run altogether counter to the old, but may deepen and enhance it.

p 12

Thomas's "literal" approach to the Book of Job may therefore be described as follows. He expounds the subject-matter of each verse in the order in which it occurs in the Vulgate text. In the course of his exposition, he divides the subject-matter of the text as he reads it into its smallest details. That is, the broadest and most obvious divisions of the story, as we have already outlined them, are further subdivided according to the different speeches of each speaker, and these in turn according to the general subject-matter of each speech and the subdivisions of each subject-matter, and so on, down to the smallest unit of subject-matter. Ultimately, each significant clause, phrase, or word becomes a simple component of the whole. Thomas's exposition therefore proceeds by connecting each successive unit of subject-matter with what has preceded until the entire text has been reconstructed. Only where the connections may not appear evident on the basis of the units themselves does Thomas appeal in addition to other authorities—scriptural, patristic, or philosophical. Yet the authorities are kept strictly subservient to the task of reconstructing the text as a whole.

p 12

Seen in this way, Thomas's "literal" approach resembles that of an architect or builder. His finished exposition may be compared to a Gothic cathedral, whose massive earthbound structure points heavenward. †50 What is most awesome here is not its massiveness, however, but its artfulness. The whole sublime facade may be seen to consist of units carefully fitted and bonded together in accordance with the artisan's design. In the case of Thomas's exposition the design is no ordinary product of art, but is dictated by that of the Book of Job itself, as Thomas reads it. The comparison between Thomas's procedure and an architect's, though faulty in some respects, as we shall show, is apt in others. For one thing, it emphasizes Thomas's "scientific" exegesis, whereby every detail of the text is noted and accounted for in the Aristotelian manner of an artisan explaining his product. Furthermore, the comparison indicates how the scriptural text itself functions as a blueprint for explaining divine providence "scientifically," following insights available through Aristotelian philosophy. Finally, insofar as an art like architecture is indeed Thomas's implicit model for understanding the scriptural text, Thomas would seem to have provided his reader with an independent "scientific" means for evaluating the success of his work, of which more may be learned as he progresses through the *Exposition*.

THE PROLOGUE TO THOMAS'S EXPOSITION

p 13

Thomas's Prologue to the *Exposition* introduces his Christian reader to the theological intention of the Book of Job. The reader is to learn how, despite opinions to the contrary, divine providence rules human affairs. "Providence," however, is not a term which occurs explicitly in the scriptural text. Thomas therefore turns elsewhere to explain it, namely, to the philosophical writings of Aristotle. His opening discussion relies tacitly on the first book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, which may be said to treat the issue of providence in the context of Aristotle's philosophical predecessors. †51 The informed reader may doubt, however, whether Aristotelian philosophy is more instructive here than the received Scripture. Aristotle's text scarcely recommends itself as a discussion of providence in the Christian sense. Nor is "providence"

an Aristotelian term any more than it is a scriptural term. [†52](#) Such doubts about Thomas's use of Aristotle nevertheless serve to alert the reader to Thomas's comprehensive theological purpose. Thomas's *Exposition* wishes to indicate in passing the drawbacks as well as the appropriateness of philosophical speculation about providence. Hence his Prologue, like his *Exposition* as a whole, deliberately limits its use of Aristotle to a clarification of the corresponding position of Christian theology, to which Thomas's reader is expected to subscribe beforehand.

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Thomas begins his Prologue by drawing the following Aristotelian comparison. Arriving at knowledge of truth is like the slow growth of naturally generated things. Both processes are said to occur "step by step as it were" [†53](#) from a small beginning. The resulting incompleteness of knowledge about nature explains how many have erred about divine providence. Various competing speculations have emerged accordingly. On the one hand, some would deny providence altogether and instead attribute everything to fortune and chance. This position is partly confirmed by the earliest natural philosophers and their followers, including Democritus and Empedocles, who attribute most things to fortune and chance, since they would account for only the material cause of natural things. On the other hand, later philosophers went further in discovering the sure courses of the heavens and the stars and other "effects of nature." [†54](#) Thomas traces their superiority in observation and reasoning to their premise that natural things are in turn "governed by some supereminent ordered intelligence." [†55](#)

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Yet Thomas does not leave the impression that the issue of providence is purely theoretical. Further reflection discloses its practical ramifications. Once most men have come to believe that not chance but providence is active in the manifest order of nature, new doubt emerges over whether providence is similarly active in human affairs. Patterns here are less easily discernible. That is, good things do not always happen to good men or evil things to evil men, nor again do evil things always happen to good men or good things to evil men, but both good things and evil things appear to happen to good men and evil men indifferently. Such apparent indifference moves men's hearts to the opinion that human affairs are not ruled by providence but proceed by chance, except insofar as providence here means "human providence and planning." [†56](#) Alternatively, men may be moved to attribute the outcome of human affairs to a heavenly fate indifferent to human wishes. In either case, the denial of divine providence in human affairs is extremely harmful to humanity. It leaves no true basis for revering or fearing God, and so deprives human beings of their greatest curb from evildoing and their greatest inducement to good. The obvious practical result, discernible to anyone, is considerable sloth concerning the virtues and considerable inclination towards the vices. [†57](#)

p 14

This practical-philosophical predicament, according to Thomas, occasions the theological message of the Book of Job. Its human author cannot be named or dated with certainty. Thomas places him among a group of anonymous men "who pursued wisdom in a divine spirit for the instruction of others." [†58](#) Their first and chief concern was the "pursuit of wisdom"—not for its own sake, however, but for removing the aforementioned pernicious opinion about providence from the human heart. Evidently those men were dedicated to appealing to the heart even more than to the mind, although an appeal to the mind was by no means excluded. To this end, a number of scriptural books were composed, after the giving of the Law and the Prophets, called Hagiographa, or "books written wisely through the Spirit of God as befits the instruction of men." [†59](#) Of these the first is said to be the Book of Job, "the whole intention of which turns on showing, through plausible arguments, that human affairs are ruled by divine providence." [†60](#) Thomas does not say whether a more philosophical approach to demonstrating providence would look for necessary arguments, instead of resting content with merely "plausible" ones as does the Book of Job. Nevertheless, he implies that it is philosophy's failure to supply such arguments which has led to the need for writings like the Book of Job in the first place.

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Thomas's reader would therefore not go far wrong in thinking of the Book of Job as a scriptural corrective to philosophy. Its author begins by taking from philosophy the supposition that natural things are governed by divine providence. On this basis he confronts what seems to be the chief philosophical argument against extending providence into human affairs, namely, the suffering of the just. To be sure, from a strictly philosophical viewpoint, the suffering of the just is not the only theme that could have been considered. There is also the fact that good things appear to happen undeservedly to evil people. Yet, as Thomas explains, this latter fact seems unreasonable and contrary to providence only at first sight. It can be explained on grounds of divine compassion. On the other hand, the fact that evil things appear to happen to good people without cause lacks comparable justification. It "seems to undermine totally the foundation of providence." †61 Perhaps, then, it was to avoid perplexing his reader hopelessly that the scriptural author thought it unwise to launch directly into Job's debate concerning providence, but prefaced the entire debate with a personal "history" describing how Job's suffering originated. At any rate, the Book of Job is thus the story of "the many grave afflictions of a certain man, perfect in every virtue, named Job." †62

p 15

Thomas, however, warns against considering the story of Job only a parable. His Christian reader may be familiar with parables designed to raise questions for academic debate. These are said to be a customary method of teaching theology in the medieval university. †63 Whether the Book of Job is only a parable or not would make no difference to its intention if it were designed to be read and discussed like any other book. But the Book of Job must be read in the light of the authority of sacred Scripture, and not merely treated academically. Due consideration must accordingly be given to passages like Ezekiel 14:14, which speaks in God's name of the exemplary justice of Noah, Daniel, and Job, and also James 5:11, which speaks of Job's patience as a blessing from God. Neither passage suggests that Job was anything but a "man in the nature of things." †64 To think otherwise would seem to obviate the aforementioned authority of Scripture. Needless to say, without faith in scriptural authority, Thomas's reader would find little plausibility in the theological message which the Book of Job claims to provide in the first place.

p 16

Having shown the theological need for the book and the historicity of its namesake, Thomas concludes his Prologue with a summary statement of the intention of his exposition. He does not intend to discuss such details as when Job lived or who his parents were or who the human author of the book was, whether Job himself or someone else. Nor does Thomas intend to add to the mysteries of the book, already broached subtly and articulately by Pope Gregory. †65 Rather, he intends "as far as we are able, having trust in divine help, to expound according to the literal sense that book which is entitled *Blessed Job*." †66 To this exposition we may now turn.

THE "HISTORY" OF JOB'S SUFFERING (JOB 1-2)

p 16

The "history" of Job's suffering is recounted in chapters one and two of the scriptural text. Thomas begins his exposition by remarking that this history "is premised as a foundation of the whole debate" †67 about providence which follows. Thomas's use of the term "foundation" here tends to confirm our earlier comparison between his exposition and a work of architecture. His complete account of these chapters recognizes the following structure:

1. an introductory description of the man Job (1:1-5);

2. the cause of Job's suffering (1:6-12a);
3. the arrival of Job's suffering (1:12b-19);
4. Job's patience (1:20-21);
5. Job's innocence (1:22);
6. Job's perseverance (2:1-13).

Thomas's reader, however, is not made aware of this structure in advance. He learns of it only in the due course of Thomas's exposition of each part. To that extent, therefore, our earlier comparison between Thomas's procedure and an architect's is misleading, since the full structure of Thomas's exposition is not made available from the beginning but is revealed only at the end. To his intended reader, Thomas would instead resemble a builder, since the reader is allowed to view that structure only in step-by-step stages. Our own analysis must accordingly aim at showing not only the completed structure of Thomas's exposition, but also how that structure is conveyed to the reader at each stage.

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The structure begins to emerge with Thomas's account of the introductory description of Job (1:1-5). Thomas isolates the opening words of the scriptural text, "There was a man of the Land of Uz by the name of Job. . . ." (1:1a) He notes three significant details. First, the person described is male. Thomas adds that this detail is mentioned because the male sex is found to be more robust for enduring troubles. Second, the person's country, Uz, is in a part of the Orient. Third, the person is named Job. These last two details serve to imply that the story is to be read not as a parable but as a real occurrence. The reader cannot fail to note here that Thomas discusses each of these details from two points of view: first, its meaning as an individual unit, and second, its function within the larger context. Evidently, then, the reader is able to infer that both the individual meaning and the functional meaning are required in order for him to follow the "literal" meaning of the text as a whole.

p 17

This inference also applies where Thomas establishes the "literal" meaning by referring outside the text itself. For example, the remainder of the first verse, ". . . and that man was simple and straightforward, fearing God and withdrawing from evil" (1:1b), occasions Thomas's first digression from the text. He observes that the text here functions to show Job's immunity from sins. As Thomas subsequently explains, Job did not sin either against his neighbor (being "simple and straightforward") or against God ("fearing God") or against himself ("withdrawing from evil"). In order to support his threefold analysis, Thomas must first digress to establish that there are three and only three ways in which men sin. He introduces this digression with the expression "one should know," an expression used in his exposition generally to introduce philosophical or theological doctrines elaborated more fully elsewhere. †68 (In contrast, Thomas uses the expression "one should notice" generally to emphasize particular points of the text, †69 and the expression "one should consider" generally to offer independent observations.) †70 Thomas's digression here goes so far as to cite examples for each of the three different ways of sinning. Examples of sins against one's neighbor include homicide, adultery, and theft. Examples of sins against God include perjury, sacrilege, and blasphemy. Finally, the sole example of a sin against oneself is given by quoting I Corinthians 6:18: "One who fornicates sins against his own body." Nor is this all his digression. In order to show further why Job's immunity from sins against his neighbor is signified by the double expression, "simple and straightforward," Thomas adds that someone can sin against his neighbor in two ways, namely, secretly through guile and openly through violence. Only then does Thomas return to the text in order to identify Job's simplicity with his lack of guile and his straightforwardness with his lack of violence. In addition, this last identification requires Thomas to establish the equivalence of

straightforwardness with justice, which he does by quoting Isaiah 26:7: "The path of the just man is straight; straight is the trail of the just man to tread." We note that in this entire discussion of the second part of the first verse, Thomas gives no indication that the digressions and outside citations needed to buttress the connections among significant details of the text contribute any less to the "literal" meaning than do the details themselves.

p 18

Before going any further, therefore, we are once again beset by the difficulty that Thomas's "literal" exposition of the text relies on further scriptural and extra-scriptural materials. Do these disqualify its being "literal"? Perhaps we can resolve this difficulty in the light of what has already been said. We have suggested that, in showing step by step how Job's history is "premised as the foundation" [¶71](#) for the argument which follows, Thomas proceeds like a builder. Differently stated, Job's history according to Thomas is constructed as an underlying premise, or set of premises, to support the rest of the book. Indeed, not merely Job's history in general, but the entire book in detail, would seem to be constructed step by step in this way. By analogy, it follows that each detail of the text becomes a premise for some succeeding detail. This circumstance would indicate how each detail of Thomas's "literal" exposition is to be read. No single detail of the text or simple connection among details, whether derived from within or from outside the text, alone supplies the "literal" meaning of the text any more than a single building-block or pillar or buttress alone supports the facade of a cathedral. Like the facade of the cathedral, the surface of the text for Thomas has a variegated structure. Hence Thomas does not wish his reader to proceed simply line by line over it. The reader must also progress in his ability to understand and weigh what is set forth as each line unfolds. His progress is measured not merely by the number of details he accumulates, but by his degree of sophistication about them. Hence he must not simply accumulate but must integrate detail with detail, premise with premise. We may therefore conclude that Thomas's other scriptural and extra-scriptural materials contribute to the "literal" understanding of the text, not in themselves or as substitutes for the text, but precisely insofar as they supply the sophisticated premises needed for the reader to integrate each new detail of the text as he proceeds.

p 19

Let us return to Thomas's exposition of the man Job (1:1-5) to see how the foregoing procedure works. The reader who completes this part of Thomas's exposition will have been informed, *in abstracto*, of the following details:

1. Job's identity (1:1a)
2. Job's virtue (1:1b)
3. Job's prosperity (1:2-5)
 - a. his offspring (1:2)
 - b. his wealth (1:3)
 - c. the discipline of his household (1:4-5)
 - {a}. its concord, etc. (1:4)
 - {b}. its purity (1:5a)
 - {g}. its devotion (1:5b)

Yet, *in concreto*, the reader is not made aware of these details all at once. To be sure, Thomas's exposition

of, say, verse 1a, which identifies Job personally, alerts the reader to its being the basis for the "history" of Job's suffering which follows. Nevertheless, so far as the reader himself is concerned, he might well be justified in presuming that Job's identity is the only premise needed to understand the further details of Job's history. To counter that assumption, Thomas expounds verse 1b, the description of Job's immunity from sins, as a further premise "lest anyone believe that the adversities which are introduced later happened to this man because of his sins." †72 The reader gains not only a new detail about the "history" of Job's suffering, but also a new appreciation for the cohesiveness and profundity of that suffering. Similarly, Thomas next indicates how the details of verses 2 through 5, which describe Job's prosperity, support the subsequent "history" in two general ways. First, the suffering which follows is thereby shown to be weightier. Second, as Thomas comments, "according to God's first intention, not only spiritual but also temporal goods are always bestowed on just men." †73 Anticipating what will be indicated in the next section of the text, Thomas adds: "Sometimes, however, it happens that just men are pressed by adversities for some special reason. Hence, even in the beginning man was instituted in such a way that he would not have been subject to any disturbances if he had persisted in his innocence." †74 However this may be, verses 2 through 5 are thereby shown to supply further premises for understanding the subsequent details of Job's suffering, just as verse 1a and 1b supply comparatively simpler and more basic premises. It is not necessary to go further here in showing how Thomas expounds the separate details of verses 2 through 5 in a similar way.

p 20

Likewise Thomas continues to introduce new premises throughout his lengthy exposition of the cause of Job's suffering (1:6-12a), although, or because, he makes numerous explicit digressions from the scriptural text. The text itself describes angels appearing before God, and Satan's receiving permission to deprive Job of his worldly prosperity. Thomas's digressions here prepare for his concluding caveat that Job's suffering is not the product of a mere sequence of temporal events, but part of God's eternal plan. In Thomas's words, †75

. . . one should be careful not to believe that the Lord was induced by Satan's words to permit Job to be afflicted. On the contrary, He ordained it in His eternal disposition to manifest Job's virtue against all the calumnies of impious men.

Thomas begins by recalling indirectly the words of the Prologue, namely, that someone might think that the sufferings of the just go on without divine providence, and hence that human affairs are not subject to divine providence. In this section of the scriptural text, accordingly, "it is premised how God has a care for human affairs and dispenses them." †76 Such is the function of the description of angels appearing before God. This description, Thomas explains, is not to be understood temporally. It is set forth "symbolically and enigmatically," †77 according to Scripture's custom of describing spiritual things under figures of corporeal things. He elaborates this point by quoting, as a further example, Isaiah's vision of the Lord in Isaiah 6:1ff. and by mentioning the beginning of the Book of Ezekiel and "many other places" in Scripture. Thomas also indicates here that the "literal" or primarily intended sense of Scripture may include words used figuratively as well as in their strict sense. On this basis, he digresses first to explain how angels fit in the eternal scheme of divine providence. "One should know," he admonishes, that divine providence orders lower things through higher ones. Tacitly relying on Aristotle, †78 he explains that bodies which are generated and corrupted are in turn subject to the eternal motion of celestial bodies, and similarly, embodied spirits or souls are influenced by higher incorporeal spirits. Ecclesiastical tradition calls these higher spirits "angels," or messengers of God, and divides them into good and evil according as they move human souls to good things or to evil things. †79 The scriptural text describes figuratively how these spirits appear before God, in order to show above all that they are eternally subject to divine view and examination. †80 Nor is God's subsequently "speaking" to Satan to be understood temporally either, but as indicating the

"concept" in Satan's mind whereby he is made to know that whatever he does is eternally viewed and examined by God. ¶81 Thus, Satan is described as having gone about the earth, by way of showing how he approaches human beings circuitously, as opposed to straightforwardly, in order to deceive them. ¶82 God therefore sees through Satan's question about whether Job's virtue is caused only by his worldly prosperity, a circuitous question designed to slander Job. ¶83 Assuming that God not only orders the life of the just but also renders it eternally conspicuous to others for their salvation, God's permitting Satan to deprive Job of his earthly prosperity is therefore intended to show that ¶84

the good things which we do are not referred to earthly prosperity as to a reward; otherwise it would not be a perverse intention if someone were to serve God because of temporal prosperity. And similarly, on the contrary, temporal adversity is not the proper punishment for sins, and the discussion in the whole book will generally concern this point.

p 21

The remainder of Job's "history" describes the arrival of Job's suffering (1:12b-19), and Job's patience (1:20-21), innocence (1:22), and perseverance (2:1-13) under duress. ¶85 Thomas's exposition of these verses continues to introduce new premises to his reader in the manner we have described, though for our present purposes we need not dwell on them in detail. Rather, if our comparison of Thomas's step-by-step method with a builder's is correct, then it will always be possible for the reader to excavate and recover earlier premises as needed to support points made later on. Indeed, Thomas's habit of summarizing major premises at the beginning of each chapter and subsection of each chapter aids the reader in that possibility. We therefore turn to the subsequent speeches of Job, his friends, and God, inasmuch as they are based on Job's "history."

JOB'S "CURSING" HIS DAY (JOB 3)

p 22

Chapter three of the scriptural text contains a single speech by Job, which begins by "cursing" the day he was born. Thomas's exposition uncovers the following structure:

1. Job "curses" his own life (3:1b-19)
 - a. its inception (3:1b-10)
 - {a}. the day he was born (3:1-5)
 - {b}. the night he was conceived (3:6-10)
 - b. its preservation (3:11-19)
 - {a}. in the womb (3:11-15)
 - {b}. after emerging from the womb (3:16-19)
2. Job "curses" human life generally (3:20-26)
 - a. its burdensomeness (3:20-23)
 - {a}. its misery: adversity is painful (3:20-22)

{b}. its bitterness: prosperity is useless (30:23)

b. the magnitude of its misery, etc., as applied to Job himself (3:24-25)

3. Job's own innocence (3:26)

The reader as yet unprepared by Thomas's exposition may wonder little at Job's "cursing" here. After all, has not Job already been deprived of his household (1:12b-19) and his bodily health (2:1-8)? Has he not subsequently been told by his wife that he has nothing left to live for (2:9)? And has he not been visited in consolation by three distant friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, who have been sitting with him silently for seven days and seven nights, scarcely recognizing him in his severe pain and disfigurement (2:11-13)? Nevertheless, Thomas reminds his reader that Job's "cursing" seems contrary to the Apostle's admonition in Romans 12:14, "Bless, and curse not." †86 Thomas does not wish Job's "cursing" to be understood naively as a sin. In a digression, he proceeds to interpret it in a manner consistent with Job's acknowledged patience (1:20-21), innocence (1:22), and perseverance (2:1ff., 10). †87 "Cursing" or malediction, his reader should know, has three distinct meanings, each signified by the term's Latin roots, "to say [*dicere*]" "evil [*malum*]." First, saying evil may mean causing evil, as uttering a divination causes the thing uttered to happen, or as a judge's sentencing a condemned person causes his punishment. Second, it may mean inviting or wishing evil on someone. Finally, it may mean simply asserting the occurrence of an evil either past or present or future, whether truly or falsely. The Apostle prohibits only inviting or wishing evil, or else falsely defaming, neither of which Job does here. Rather, Job's "cursing" the day he was born simply asserts the true evils which happened at that time, though these are recalled in figures of speech, "according to that custom of Scripture by which a time is said to be good or evil on the strength of the things which are done at the time." †88

p 23

Thomas's exposition therefore requires the reader to make intellectual adjustments in order to follow the details of Job's "cursing." He must distinguish between his hasty impression of the text and its true meaning. At first glance, for example, Job's saying, "Let that day be turned into darkness" (3:4a), seems frivolous and vain, for how could a day be changed which has already passed? Yet the reader should also know that the optative mood is used for expressing judgment, so that Job is now judging that the day of his birth ought to have been dark, as befits the misery he suffers. †89 In addition, the reader should consider, as Jerome has indicated, that all speeches included in the text from this chapter up to chapter 42:6 are originally written in meter and use poetic figures and coloration to move the reader. †90 Thus, as "darkness" here is a metaphor for sadness, so Job's further remark, ". . . let the darkness obscure it, and the shadow of death; let the mist seize it and let it be wrapped in bitterness" (3:5), asserts movingly that the day of his birth ought not to be judged a day of joy but a day of mourning, since through his birth he came into a life subject to so much adversity. †91 Surely the reader's need to keep revising his preconceptions in this way would strain his capacity, were he not from the outset assured of Job's wisdom and integrity. Such is the function of Thomas's apparently abrupt remarks which open his exposition of chapter three. Recalling an earlier digression, Thomas distinguishes two ancient opinions about the wisdom of the emotions accompanying human suffering. †92 According to the Stoics, a wise man would not feel sadness at the loss of external goods, since these do not pertain to what is good for human beings, namely, the goods of the mind. According to the Peripatetics, however, external goods are useful in acquiring the goods of the mind, and so a wise man like Job might reasonably be saddened, moderately, at their loss. Thomas supports the truth of the Peripatetics' opinion, first, by the observation that it is natural to delight and rejoice in external conveniences and to be pained and saddened at external harm, and second, by the authority of Scripture in placing sadness in Christ, "in Whom is every fullness of virtue and wisdom." †93 Thomas henceforth interprets Job's "cursing" as the moderate speech of a wise man whose intellect remains undisturbed by the personal sadness which is his subject-matter.

p 24

Thomas's reader must wonder how Job can continue to express his misery without becoming overwhelmed by it. Evidently Job's emotional stability is based on his ability to make intellectual distinctions, of the sort manifest throughout Thomas's exposition. These distinctions, as Thomas suggests, are singularly indebted to Peripatetic, i.e. Aristotelian, philosophy or "science." Thomas's Job thus speaks in the manner of a "scientifically" informed person who is able to distinguish the causes of his misery. Here, for example, Job is found to distinguish between his misery as apprehended by his senses alone and that same misery as apprehended by his reason. Job's composure is thus "scientific." To explain this point, Thomas introduces an analogy from the art of medicine. †94 Supposing someone were to express how the bitterness of a certain medicine affected his senses, he might denounce the medicine as evil tasting, even though his reason also judged it good for the purpose of restoring health. Similarly, Thomas's Job denounces the misery which affects his bodily senses as making life itself hateful, even though he also judges that suffering good in the light of some further purpose. What this purpose is, is not fully revealed till later. Meanwhile, Job is thereby said to limit his "cursing" to speaking, in poetic terms, "in the character of his sensual side." †95

p 24

No matter what else is said during Job's speech and afterwards, however, Thomas's reader is not allowed to forget the initial impression which the exposition has set out to rebut, namely, that Job's "cursing" appears sinful. Indeed, as the reader will soon discover, all of the subsequent speeches of Job's friends are based on that impression too. Thomas thereby indicates that, between the practical impression made by Job's speech and its "scientifically" true meaning, some conflict remains. Presumably, this conflict would be resolved if only Job's audience were able to understand Job as Job understands himself. In this way, the reader, sympathizing with Job, is encouraged to acquire the "scientific" wisdom and virtuous integrity attributed to Job. Yet as Thomas's subsequent exposition shows, none of Job's friends ever succeeds in doing the same. Thomas's reader cannot fail to ponder why that is so. Perhaps he will then be induced to recall further how Job's "history" is originally set in motion by God, precisely in order to refute the Satanically-instigated calumny to which Job's friends and others fall humanly prey. Thomas's exposition thus interweaves, protreptically, the problem of reconciling the practical and "scientific" elements of Job's "cursing" with the problem of divine providence itself.

JOB'S "DEBATE" WITH ELIPHAZ, BILDAD, AND ZOPHAR (JOB 4-28)

Preliminary Remarks

p 25

Chapters four through twenty-eight of the scriptural text describe a "debate" between Job and his three friends: Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. The friends mistakenly believe that Job suffers because of some previous sin on his part. Each friend accuses Job separately. Job defends his innocence to each in turn. The three accusing speeches, alternating with Job's replies, together form a session of six speeches. This format is then repeated twice, except that Zophar remains silent during the third session. Throughout the interchanges, however, the debate between Job and his friends is never fully resolved. Meanwhile, Thomas's exposition continues to introduce new premises, in the manner we have described earlier, in order to prepare for the eventual resolution of the debate by God himself.

p 25

The entire structure of Job's debate is called, somewhat anachronistically, a *disputatio*, or formal academic debate, such as was familiar to Thomas's thirteenth century reader. †06 In a *disputatio*, a scholar would

debate, such as was familiar to Thomas's thirteenth-century reader.^{†97} In a *disputatio*, a scholar would defend a position on a given theological question or series of questions. Fellow professors and students were expected to object formally and await his replies. Eventually, an impartial professorial authority would resolve the debate by judging the theological merit of each position and counter-position. Such debates were held routinely in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Paris, where Thomas studied and taught. They were considered an important method of teaching and examining students, alongside the method of *lectio*, or "reading" and explaining authoritative texts aloud. Among Thomas's own writings, the method of *disputatio* is illustrated above all by his *Summa Theologiae*, which follows the format of a series of debated questions, with positions chosen and defended, objected to and answered for, by Thomas himself. The method of *lectio*, in contrast, is well illustrated by the *Literal Exposition on Job* itself.

p 26

Yet Thomas's use of the *lectio* method for his exposition on Job, and his use of the *disputatio* method as his model for explaining the dialogue passages of the text in particular, are not uncritical. In the Prologue to his *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas implicitly criticizes the improper use of both teaching methods.^{†97} The teaching of theology remains disorderly and confusing to students, he writes, because of the haphazard expositions of currently available textbooks, because of the idiosyncratic demands of professorial examiners, and because of the tiresome repetitiveness of classroom procedures. Differently stated, Thomas's student-reader may find himself in a situation of having to tell his professors what the professors want to hear, without thereby acquiring a clear and orderly grasp of Christian doctrine in all its ramifications. Thomas wishes to correct this shortcoming. He therefore writes "as befits the erudition of beginners,"^{†98} by rethinking and reorganizing the entire theological curriculum in the interests of improved pedagogy. In this way, Thomas is no simple-minded authority, but a philosophically-minded one. Yet he addresses a practical rather than a strictly theoretical shortcoming of Christian theology as it affects his student-reader. Namely, his reader's grasp and defense of correct conclusions, as required for success in the *disputatio* in which he is cross-examined and judged by his teachers and peers, will not guarantee that he has understood the full religious implications of those conclusions. This shortcoming, we believe, likewise affects the reader of Thomas's *Literal Exposition on Job*. Perhaps, then, Thomas's otherwise anachronistic interpolation of the *disputatio* format within the format of his own *lectio* on Job is designed to alert the reader to that same shortcoming, and to provide a possible means for its overcoming.

p 26

Consider, in this light, the situation of Thomas's Job. He is the perfect student, or indeed professor, of theology—perfectly wise in his intellectual grasp of such Christian doctrines as divine creation,^{†99} particular providence,^{†100} and bodily resurrection.^{†101} In spite or because of his wisdom, however, he remains somewhat unworldly or naive in practical matters. Thus, he is perfectly able to refute his friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, for what amounts to their intellectual shortcomings regarding Christian theology. But he cannot do so without revealing a practical shortcoming of his own. Namely, though perfectly wise, he is somewhat sinful in his manner of communicating his wisdom.^{†102} As we shall see, Thomas's Job upsets his friends by inadvertently giving them the false impression that he is blaspheming.^{†103} According to Thomas, Job must therefore reassess his relationship to his friends, whom he would ultimately convert to the truth of his own viewpoint. The "history" of Job is thus the history of a man who is perfectly wise in the divine truth as taught by the Church, yet who must reconsider the possible sinfulness involved in professing that truth to others in society.^{†104} In other words, his Christian wisdom must become the object of a penitent re-evaluation in his quest for forgiveness from sin. In the course of his sufferings, the need is revealed for a renewed consideration of that wisdom which has hitherto been taken for granted. *A fortiori*, Thomas's exposition induces the student or professor of Christian theology vicariously to re-examine the wisdom he would profess. Learning from Job's example, Thomas's reader too must approach that wisdom in a fuller way than his merely academic education may have provided him with until now.

p 27

Considered pedagogically, Thomas's exposure of the practical shortcomings of Christian theology would be impossible without his protreptic Aristotelianism, understood as the ongoing "love of wisdom," rather than the mere dogmatic profession of wisdom. It is this Aristotelianism which Thomas embodies in the "scientific" design of his exposition as a whole, which we have already compared to a building under construction. Now we may see how the debate format, superimposed on that construction, furthers Thomas's "scientific" design. Both formats share a common basis. Thomas indicates as much when he explains how Job "is proceeding in the manner of a debater." †105 Thomas's explanation is that Job intends from the outset only to rebut the false opinions of his friends, and afterwards to disclose what he himself might believe concerning the truth. The debate format by which Thomas construes the dialogue passages of the text, therefore, agrees with the construction format of his exposition as a whole, in its deliberate incompleteness. That is, both formats are designed to reveal the truth to their respective addressees only incompletely. The incompleteness of Thomas's exposition as a whole consists, as we have seen, in its introducing new premises gradually, albeit prosaically and explicitly, in order to prepare the reader for the eventual resolution of Job's suffering by God. The incompleteness of Job's debating remarks consists, on the other hand, in his introducing new premises merely forensically, if enthymematically and poetically, by way of preparing his friends for his more exhaustive disclosure of the truth later on. Still Job himself fails to provide that promised disclosure. The result is that, whereas Job's forensic incompleteness leads to his ultimate failure to persuade his immediate addressees, Thomas's protreptic incompleteness leads to his possible success, as we shall show shortly. Nevertheless, as we shall also show, Thomas predicates his own success on Job's failure.

The First Session (Job 4-14)

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In the debate itself, Eliphaz is the first to speak. Following the letter of Job's previous words, but not their spirit, Eliphaz is said to misconstrue Job's putative hatred of his present life as despair, Job's bitterness as impatience, and Job's profession of innocence as presumptuousness. Thomas analyzes the details of Eliphaz's three accusations at length, to show their mistaken grounds. In this way, he prepares his reader for Job's subsequent refutations, and for the reactions of the other friends. He adopts the same procedure concerning the speeches of the others. Needless to say, we cannot do justice here to all the details of Thomas's analysis, but must limit ourselves to sketching its main outline.

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At the same time, as we have already indicated, Thomas's own aim, unlike Job's, is not merely forensic, but protreptic. Throughout the entire debate, Thomas avails himself of every opportunity to alert his reader to the merit of the Aristotelian premises which his Job espouses. Opportunities occur in Thomas's amplifications and summaries of the competing positions, as well as in explicit digressions, though these last become less frequent as the debate progresses. Thomas thereby ascribes to Job a Christian-Aristotelian doctrine of providence which agrees, in its major premises and conclusions, with Thomas's own *Summa Contra Gentiles* and *Summa Theologiae*. †106 The connection between the two *summ*as and the *Literal Exposition on Job*, however, involves more than the agreement of premises and conclusions. We also find an implicit critique of the purely intellectual consideration of those premises and conclusions. Recall that the premises and conclusions which Thomas incorporates into his exposition remain subservient to his further purpose in explaining the "history" of Job's debate. The debate eventually culminates in the revelation of Job's sinfulness in attempting to convert his friends to a full understanding of the cause of his suffering merely by arguing with them. †107 Thomas's exposition is accordingly designed to show not only the merit of Aristotelian philosophy for understanding divine providence in a Christian setting, but also its limitations.

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Consistent with this twofold aim, Thomas does not present Eliphaz's first accusation—namely, that Job is impatient [†108](#)—simply intellectually. Commenting on Eliphaz's opening remark,

If we begin to speak to you, perhaps you will be annoyed. But who will be able to check his speech once it is conceived? (4:2)

Thomas finds Eliphaz himself guilty of impatience and foolishness, for being unable to control his impulse to speak out. [†109](#) Eliphaz's impulsiveness likewise affects his subsequent remarks:

Look! You have taught many and strengthened weary hands. Your speeches have confirmed the unsteady and you have stiffened shaky knees. Now, however, a blow has come upon you and you have failed; it has touched you and you are disturbed. Where is your fear, your fortitude, your patience, and the perfection of your ways? (4:3-6)

Eliphaz is understood to exaggerate here, in interpreting Job's "cursing" to mean that Job does not practice the patience he has preached to others in the past. [†110](#) Perhaps surprisingly, Thomas omits excusing Eliphaz, say, on the grounds that he is not familiar with the homonymy of the term "cursing," which Thomas has explained earlier. [†111](#) The reader can only surmise that Thomas's omission is not entirely accidental. In the sequel, Thomas will exploit his reader's latent frustration at the ongoing intellectual incompatibility between Job and his friends. [†112](#) In this way, he emphasizes that their religious differences are practical and moral, as well as intellectual.

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Only concerning Eliphaz's second accusation—namely, that Job is presumptuous [†113](#)—does Thomas begin to elaborate their intellectual differences at all. Commenting on Eliphaz's admonition,

Recall, I beseech you, what innocent man ever perished, or when have straightforward men been destroyed? (4:7),

Thomas reminds his reader to consider that Eliphaz and the other two friends are of the opinion that the adversities of this world do not come to someone except as a punishment for sin, nor prosperity except as a reward for justice. [†114](#) This opinion is shown to underlie Eliphaz's further appeals to a voice of revelation he once heard in a dream, saying,

Will a man be justified in comparison with God? Or will a man be purer than his own Creator? Look! Those who serve Him are not stable, and in His angels He has found wickedness. How much more will these who dwell in mud houses, who have an earthly foundation, be consumed as if by a worm? (4:17-19)

Thomas's Eliphaz interprets his revelation to mean that no one who suffers adversities could excuse himself by maintaining that he is immune from sin. [†115](#) Otherwise, as Thomas explains, if a man without guilt is punished by God, it follows that the man is more just than God, which for Eliphaz is impossible. On the contrary, Thomas's Eliphaz reasons, even angels, being only potentially good, lack the stability of

God, who is unchangingly good. Much less stable is man, whose soul inhabits an earthly body, which Eliphaz compares directly to a house of mud, in order to indicate its mutability, and indirectly to a garment eaten by a moth inside it, in order to indicate how human justice is corrupted from within by evil thoughts, etc. Accordingly, Thomas's Eliphaz finds no condition where human beings are not prone to some sin. We note in advance that Thomas's Job has no wish to disagree with this last premise. In order to show in addition that sin is the cause of adversity, however, Eliphaz is said to posit that everything which happens on earth proceeds from determinate efficient causes, except for the prior existence and numerical arrangement of natural things themselves, and therefore that natural things are governed neither fortuitously nor by natural necessity alone, but in addition by a divine providence operating as one efficient cause alongside others: [†116](#)

Nothing happens on earth without a cause, and pain will not arise from the ground. Man is born for labor and the bird for flying. Therefore I will ward off the Lord by prayer and I will set my eloquence before God, who makes things great and inscrutable and wondrous without number, who gives the rain on the face of the earth and irrigates everything with waters, who sets humble men on high and raises up the mourners with salvation, who dissipates the thoughts of the wicked so that they cannot fill their hands as they had begun to do, who apprehends the wise in their cleverness and dissipates the plan of evil men. (5:6-13)

Thomas subsequently characterizes Eliphaz's position as Stoic. [†117](#) The apparent cogency of Eliphaz's Stoic reasoning, despite its dubious premises, prepares the reader to consider the scope and limits of Thomas's Aristotelian alternative.

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Yet concerning Eliphaz's final accusation—namely, that Job is despairing [†118](#)—Thomas indicates in passing that the intellectual differences between Eliphaz and Job may never be resolved. Thomas proceeds to show that Job's suffering is for Eliphaz tantamount to God's judging and correcting him. This premise will also prove acceptable to Job. But Eliphaz goes further in promising Job earthly happiness as a reward for Job's mending his ways:

Blessed is the man who is rebuked by the Lord. Do not reprove the rebuke of the Lord, then, since He himself both wounds and heals; He strikes and His hands will heal. In six trials He will free you, and in the seventh evil will not touch you. In famine He will rescue you from death, and in war from the hand of the sword. You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, and you will not fear calamity when it comes. In famine and devastation you will laugh and you will not fear the beasts of the land. But with the stones of the regions will be your covenant, and the beasts of the land will be at peace with you. And you will know that your tent has peace, and seeing your beauty you will not sin. Your offspring will be as the grass of the earth. You will enter your tomb in abundance, just as a heap of wheat is reaped in its season. (5:17-26)

Concerning Eliphaz's promise of earthly happiness here, Thomas's Job will disagree most fundamentally. As if to focus attention on just this disagreement, Thomas goes out of his way at the outset of his discussion to remind the reader that Eliphaz remains in accord with the original premise of the entire book, namely, that divine providence governs human affairs as well as the natural order. [†119](#) Yet Thomas adds, evidently more in his own name than in Eliphaz's, that although all adversities are accordingly brought on human beings by divine judgment, nevertheless some are intended to punish those who are incorrigible, while others are intended only to correct those who can improve themselves. This last remark does not specify to which group Eliphaz and the other friends belong. Undoubtedly Thomas's reader is expected to

anticipate that Eliphaz and the others will be shown to be wrong by God at the end of the debate. [†120](#) Indeed, Thomas's reader would therefore seem entitled or encouraged to wonder not only whether Job's friends are among the corrigible in general, but also whether they are among those who are corrigible by means of Job's argumentation in particular.

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However this may be, in his reply to Eliphaz, Thomas's Job in the first place rebuts the accusation of presumptuousness. [†121](#) Thomas uses the occasion to comment further on the fragility of the human condition, to which Eliphaz had appealed in criticizing Job's earlier confession of innocence. [†122](#) Introducing Job's first words,

I wish that my sins by which I have merited anger and the calamity which I am suffering were being weighed in a scale! (6:2),

Thomas finds Job agreeing with Eliphaz that, to be sure, no one is immune from sin, no matter how just one may appear. Nevertheless, Thomas's Job does not consider his confession of innocence presumptuous. According to a premise supplied by Thomas, the sins of the just are not weighty and mortal, but light and pardonable, proceeding as they do from negligence and oversight. [†123](#) Job therefore infers that, if what Eliphaz has been trying to maintain were true, namely, that the adversities of the present life were the proper punishment for sin, it would follow that weighty sins would bring weighty adversities, and light sins light ones, so that the just would never suffer heavily — which is patently false in Job's own case. Only in passing does Thomas's reader learn that Job's basis for disagreement concerns Eliphaz's restricting the horizon of sin and punishment to the present life. [†124](#) In tacit contrast to Eliphaz, Job holds what amounts to the Catholic doctrine of bodily resurrection. Unfortunately, because Job himself proceeds only enthymematically, in the manner of a debater, that doctrine is never made fully explicit or persuasive to Eliphaz and the other friends.

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In the second place, then, Thomas's Job rebuts Eliphaz's accusation of impatience. [†125](#) Job's rebuttal becomes the occasion for Thomas to introduce further Aristotelian premises concerning the soul, to support Job's tacit doctrine of resurrection. Among other things, Thomas reminds his reader that Job's earlier expression of sadness, which struck Eliphaz as impatience, must not be considered Job's merely impulsive reaction to his suffering, a reaction lacking intrinsic wisdom, as the Stoics supposed. [†126](#) Against Eliphaz's implicit Stoicism, Thomas's Job assumes the Aristotelian doctrine that reason can maintain self-control despite attendant emotions. In asking poetically,

Or will it be possible to eat unsavory food which has not been seasoned with salt? Or can anyone taste that which, once tasted, brings death? (6:6),

Job is understood to recognize that, as the bodily senses cannot help trying to avoid what is harmful or disagreeable externally, so internally one cannot help receiving with sadness what the senses apprehend as harmful. Yet it does not follow that sadness absorbs one's reason altogether. On the contrary, where Job remarks, "and let me not contradict the speeches of the Holy One" (6:10), Thomas comments that Job's greatest concern is that his bodily suffering not lead him into vice. [†127](#) Thomas therefore concludes that even if someone like Job were to feel some sadness "according to his sensual side," [†128](#) so long as his reason conformed to the divine will, his sadness would not be the defect of impatience as Eliphaz charges.

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Nor does Thomas find satisfactory Eliphaz's subsequent promise of earthly happiness as Job's reward for patiently mending his ways. †129 Eliphaz's promise appears incongruous. If he means that Job's happiness will be restored in this life, then he is found to overlook the truth that Job has too little time left before death to expect much happiness: †130

My days have passed more swiftly than the warp is cut off by the weaver, . . . (7:6a)

If, on the other hand, Eliphaz means a cyclical recurrence in the future of exactly the same life on earth as in the past, a doctrine said to be maintained by some Jews and philosophers, †131 then he is found to contradict the teaching of Aristotle, with which Job agrees, namely, that bodies which are generated and corrupted do not become regenerated as numerically the same individuals, but only the same in species: †132

. . . and they have been consumed without any hope. Remember that my life is wind and that my eye will not return to see good things, nor will the sight of man look upon me; Your eyes will be upon me and I will not exist. Just as a cloud is consumed and passes by, so he who descends to the underworld will not ascend. Neither will he return again to his house, nor will his place know him any more. (7:6b-10)

Thomas adds by way of assurance that Job is not here denying resurrection as maintained by Catholic faith. On the contrary, as Thomas has already pointed out, Job implicitly maintains that doctrine, albeit anachronistically. Thomas acknowledges the anachronism indirectly while remarking in passing that resurrection is unknown before Christ. †133 Be that as it may, nowhere in his exposition does Thomas show precisely how Job comes to believe in resurrection. The reader is merely told later on that Job avails himself of a combination of wisdom and "the gift of faith." †134 We can only speculate here, consistent with our protreptic hypothesis, that Thomas wishes to present Job as a curious exception to the putative shortcomings of his own time, with whom the Christian reader is intended to identify.

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Finally, in the third place, Thomas's Job rebuts Eliphaz's accusation of despair. Here Thomas finds occasion to elaborate how Job's putative despair is nevertheless compatible with the Aristotelian philosophizing on which his wisdom largely rests. The refutation of Eliphaz proceeds in two stages. †135 In the initial stage, Thomas's Job considers the consequences of following Eliphaz's advice and abandoning his despair. He recognizes from the outset that Eliphaz's advice will prove self-contradictory. Hence he speaks to Eliphaz ironically. "[P]laying the role of an embittered man," †136 as Thomas says, Job wonders aloud:

Am I the sea, or a whale, that You have surrounded me in a prison? (7:12)

Although the Vulgate describes Job as speaking "with the bitterness of my soul" (7:11b), Thomas emphasizes that Job is not simply giving vent to his despair. Thomas understands Job's questioning as a poetic inquiry into the cause of his suffering. †137 To support this interpretation, Thomas digresses at length to note that divine providence operates differently in rational and non-rational creatures. †138 Rational creatures, having free will, are said to incur individual merit or demerit. Hence reward and punishment are appropriate means for governing their actions. On the other hand, non-rational creatures, lacking free will, do not incur individual merit or demerit at all. God enlarges or restricts their actions only

insofar as they are seen to contribute to the good of the universe as a whole. For instance, God restricts the sea from occupying the entire surface of the earth in order to provide a place for land animals and plants. Similarly, God restricts the whale to the depths of the oceans, so that it could not harm marine life elsewhere. It follows that, in the passages just quoted, Job is understood to be inquiring whether the cause of his suffering is like that of the sea or of the whale, namely, not some individual merit or demerit in himself, but some usefulness to others elsewhere in the universe. Of course, Job's friends, lacking his Aristotelian wisdom, will scarcely avoid misreading this inquiry into the cause of his suffering as Job's blasphemous complaint against God. †139

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Meanwhile, Thomas shows a self-contradiction in Eliphaz's advice that Job abandon his despair, by way of explaining Job's statement that God has "surrounded me in a prison" (7:12b). Job's words are implicitly metaphorical. Thomas connects them with the passage immediately following in the Vulgate text: †140

If I say "My bed will console me; I will be relieved by speaking with myself in my blanket," You will frighten me through dreams, and through visions You will strike me with horror. (7:13-14)

This passage suggests two remedies for relieving Job's despair, neither of which would prove successful. The first remedy is the consolation of one's bed, i.e., sleep, which has the effect of mitigating sadness. The second remedy, open to wise men like Job, is speaking with oneself, i.e., consoling oneself through rational deliberation. Yet both remedies are frustrated in Job's case by his disturbing dreams and horrifying visions, which reflect the sad thoughts occasioned by his weakened condition. Despite this double frustration, there is no suggestion that Job is any less wise or philosophical, since he continues throughout his suffering to direct his attention primarily to its cause. †141

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In the concluding stage of rebutting Eliphaz's accusation of despair, then, Thomas's Job shows that his only remaining hope in this life is for God to spare him further suffering. †142 Here Thomas links Job's speculating about providence more explicitly to his aforementioned belief in resurrection. The linkage is established through Job's poetic reflection on how God honors and cares for human beings among all creatures, despite their smallness and short life:

What is man that You make much of him or that You set Your heart towards him? You visit him at daybreak, and right away You test him. (7:1718)

Thomas's explanation of how God "sets His heart" towards human beings recalls his earlier discussion of how God rewards and punishes them according to their individual merits and demerits. †143 The present discussion is therefore introduced by two digressions which reconsider how different creatures are subject to providence according as each contributes to the perfection of the universe as a whole. †144 Providence thereby occurs according to what is perpetual in each creature. Brute animals are said to be perpetual in species but not as individuals, and so God provides only for the good of their species. For instance, a bird or a wolf is killed not on account of its individual merits or demerits, but because the universe is so arranged that one species serves as food for another. Only creatures like human beings, which are perpetual both in species and as individuals, are provided for according to their individual merits and demerits. God's concern for humans therefore consists in supplying spiritual as well as material goods for them. Consistent with man's spirituality, God is said to "test" someone, not in order for God to come to know the person's merits and demerits, but that others might come to know him and that he might come to know himself as well. †145 (Just such a circumstance, Thomas's reader might recall, was the cause of the

know himself as well. [†142](#) (Just such a circumstance, Thomas's reader might recall, was the cause of the "history" of Job's suffering to begin with.) [†146](#) It follows that Job's remark about God's testing him must not be understood blasphemously, as the words of someone disproving God's concern for humanity, but philosophically, "as the words of one inquiring and wondering" [†147](#) about that concern. Such a philosophical dimension, needless to say, is missing from the understanding of the three friends. Only Job, that is to say, wonders why God should have so much concern for a being who on the outside seems so small, fragile, and precarious. [†148](#) In answer to this philosophical question, Job is said to supply the theological belief in resurrection, deliberately intended to counter the friends' implicit restriction of providence to the present life. For Thomas's Job, human beings would not be worthy of God's concern for them as individuals unless there were another life for them after the death of the body. [†149](#)

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Bildad's speech follows. His opening words to Job,

How long will you speak such things, and the pride of the speech of your mouth be multiplied? (8:2),

indicate that he fails to comprehend the intention of Job's previous reply to Eliphaz. Thomas therefore introduces Bildad's words by remarking how misunderstanding a speaker's intention customarily results in two practical failings. [†150](#) One failing is not knowing when a speaker has made his point. The other is being unable to grasp the order of what he says. Bildad's own speech illustrates both failings. Hence Bildad asks, first, how long Job plans to continue his talk, which already seems excessively drawn out (cf. 8:2a); second, he asks about the apparently random complexity and impulsiveness of Job's meaning, which Bildad can only describe as a "high spirit . . . inconstant" (8:2b). Thomas traces both these failings to Bildad's ignorance of Job's belief in resurrection, which has tacitly informed all Job's words so far. [†151](#) It follows that Bildad misconstrues Job to imply that God does not punish sins or reward good deeds, and this implication seems to be contrary to divine justice:

Does God overturn judgment and does the Almighty subvert what is just? (8:3)

Thomas explains Bildad's two-pronged question in a subsequent digression, which notes that justice is corrupted in two ways, namely, by cleverness in the case of someone who is wise, and by violence in the case of someone who is powerful. [†152](#) Bildad is thus understood to maintain that God, being both perfect wisdom and omnipotence, need not undermine a divine judgment by acting as it were cleverly (cf. 8:3a), nor overturn what is just by acting as it were violently (cf. 8:3b). Agreeing with Eliphaz, then, that Job ought to return to God and so recover his pristine prosperity, Bildad devotes the rest of his speech to exhorting Job to overcome any impediments to repentance. One such impediment seems to be that Job's lost children are now dead, and repentance alone cannot be expected to restore them to life. Hence Bildad says:

Even if your children have sinned against Him and He has dismissed them into the hand of their iniquity . . . (8:4)

Thomas interprets Bildad to mean that the death of Job's children does not prevent Job from recovering everything he had lost on account of his sins, since his children died only as a result of their own sins, not Job's. [†153](#) Here Thomas digresses once more, to note how Bildad's mistaken belief that the punishments of the present life are caused simply by past sins leads him to view death as the ultimate punishment. [†154](#)

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In reply to Bildad, Thomas's Job first denies any wish to contradict divine justice or contend with God. He argues that a human being could not contend with God even if he wanted to, since God far exceeds humans in both wisdom and strength. †155 Elaborating Job's discussion of God's overwhelming strength, Thomas meanwhile introduces further Aristotelian premises concerning providence by using occasional "scientific" analogies with the arts. For our own purposes, one example must suffice. †156 In the Vulgate text, Job describes God's power over nature by showing God's ability to shift mountains:

He has moved mountains, and those whom He has overturned in His fury did not know. (9:5)

Thomas comments that mountains are seemingly the most firm and stable of earthly bodies. Though Job's words may therefore suggest that God in shifting mountains, etc., acts simply miraculously, Thomas instead understands them as referring "more fittingly" †157 to the natural order, which is such that everything generated is also corrupted at some determinate time. It follows that the dissolution or ruin of mountains is here described in terms of the concomitant shifting of their parts. In turn, such natural processes are "not unreasonably" †158 attributed to God. To explain, Thomas introduces the analogy of an arrow shot by an archer. †159 Just as the movement of the arrow is fittingly attributed to the archer, who directs it to some end, so the movement of each natural thing is best understood as being directed to some end, whether on its own or by another. Where natural things themselves have no notion of the end to which they are directed, their end must be attributed instead to some superior intelligence, or God. Those whom God "overturns" are then explained by a further, human analogy. †160 A human king might show his power by storming a city suddenly, and the more sudden and unforeseen his action, the greater his power is shown to be. Similarly, Job's additional words are said to mean that God may shift mountains so suddenly that those who dwell on them cannot know beforehand, or else know only that they cannot do anything about it when it happens. Finally, the reference to God's "fury," like other references to anger in Scripture, is to be understood as a metaphor, describing how God uses the natural order to punish or avenge sins, inasmuch as vengeance humanly speaking is associated with anger. †161 This entire discussion, like the others which precede and follow, continues to accustom Thomas's reader to reading the poetic imagery of the scriptural text in a thoughtful, prosaic, humanly plausible way.

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Turning then to the substantive issue between Bildad and himself, Thomas's Job rebuts the opinion common to all three friends that his suffering is a punishment for past sin. †162 Yet because Job neither gives up his own belief in his innocence nor explains that his basis for that belief includes his further belief in resurrection, his arguments remain at cross-purposes with those of his friends. Consider Thomas's account of only one of Job's rebuttals: †163

The earth has been given into the hands of the impious one; he covers the face of its judges. But if it is not he, who is it, then? (9:23)

This rebuttal is understood to criticize the friends' opinion by assuming that God Himself would not enjoy punishing the innocent. Hence, if the friends are correct, God must have handed over the earth to the domination of "the impious one," i.e., the devil, †164 who clouds the minds of earthly judges, so that they inflict punishment on the innocent instead. That Thomas's Job finds this scenario inadequate for explaining the suffering of the innocent, however, is indicated by the text's concluding question, "But if it is not he [sc., the impious one], who is it, then?" (9:23c) Here Thomas underscores the difference between Job's merely forensic argument and his own protreptic argument. He adopts the unusual procedure of explaining

this same verse once again, by quoting two of its three clauses a second time. [†165](#) During his second explanation, Thomas, unlike Job, supplies a reason for the scenario's ultimate implausibility: namely, it is false to say that the earth is given over entirely to the devil. According to Thomas, the fact that the devil is free to do whatever he is allowed to do comes about by divine dispensation, which is such that everything occurs through a reasonable cause. Thomas's Job thus means to say, protreptically, that tracing the cause of innocent suffering to the devil is not enough, so that the friends and he must look elsewhere for a reasonable cause. Yet, as we have said, Job's protreptic intent vis-a-vis his friends remains unsuccessful, because of his enthymematic, merely forensic approach to them.

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Zophar replies next. Like Eliphaz and Bildad, he too misinterprets Job's words in the light of his own belief that Job suffers because of some previous sin. Zophar thus rejects Job's plea of innocence:

For you have said: Pure is my speech and clean am I in Your sight. And I wish that God would speak with you and open His lips to you. I wish that He would show you the secrets of His wisdom and that His law is manifold, and you would understand that much smaller penalties are being exacted from you by Him than your iniquity merits. (11:4-6)

Explaining how Zophar understands Job's sinfulness requires Thomas to digress in order to consider the meaning of sin. [†166](#) Sin is defined as "deviation from the law of God." [†167](#) Whether or how much one is a sinner cannot then be fully known, unless one first knows the "law of God." Zophar's criticism of Job's plea of innocence thus amounts to the objection that Job does not know God's law perfectly. According to Zophar, Job could know this law only if God "spoke" with him directly. Evidently Zophar does not think this circumstance likely to happen, although, of course, God's theophany which ends their debate will eventually prove Zophar wrong. In any case, Zophar speaks here of the "secrets" of God's wisdom (11:6a). Thomas explains Zophar's meaning by another digression, which considers two ways in which men fall short of understanding God. [†168](#) First, God's understanding is "unseen." Alluding to Romans 1:20, Thomas argues that we cannot know the "unseen attributes of God" except "through things which have been made." [†169](#) Zophar's words thereby imply that human beings fall short of understanding the mind of God, as mere products fall short of the "virtue" or skill of their producer. Thomas thus identifies Zophar's "secrets" of God with Paul's "unseen attributes of God," which however are said to be secret or unseen only from our point of view, not God's. [†170](#) Furthermore, the second way in which Zophar finds human beings falling short of understanding God is that God's law is "manifold" (cf. 11:6b). [†171](#) Thomas distinguishes here between human laws, which would bring order to human affairs comparatively simply-mindedly, by means of universal rules which may not cover all particular instances, and divine providence, which extends lawful order in a "manifold" way even to the smallest particulars in the universe, including human affairs. It follows for Zophar that Job either does not know or else underestimates the true extent of his sins as understood by God. Nor does Zophar offer hope that Job, lacking direct communication from God, will ever be able to discover that true extent on his own. Zophar's speech thus prepares Thomas's reader unwittingly for the theophany which ends the entire debate. [†172](#)

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Job's reply to Zophar is addressed equally to the other two friends. [†173](#) Thomas distinguishes Job's threefold intention by assigning a separate part of that intention to each of the three chapters of the Vulgate text comprising his reply. First, Job intends to rebut the practical implication of the three friends' having extolled God's wisdom, power, and justice, namely, that Job himself is ignorant of these attributes. [†174](#) Job's insistence that he is not so ignorant allows Thomas to ascribe a Christian-Aristotelian interpretation of God's attributes to Job. For example, Job does not deny that even the ill-gotten gains of robbers are governed by the "hand of God": [†175](#)

The tents of robbers abound, and boldly do they provoke God, since He Himself has given all things into their hands. Ask the draught-animals, to be sure, and they will teach you, and the flying creatures of heaven, and they will indicate it to you; speak to the earth and it will respond to you, and the fish of the sea will tell you. Who does not know that the hand of the Lord has made all these things? In His hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all the flesh of man. (12:6-10)

According to Job, that everything is in God's hand may be seen simply by "asking" of any of His creatures. [‡176](#) Thomas interprets this "asking" philosophically to mean that all anyone need do is consider carefully the order found in the disposition of creatures' parts and in their actions, to see that everything must proceed from some superior wisdom. Indeed, that creatures are "made" by God means that they must be understood to be in God's power, just as artifacts are in the power of the artisan. [‡177](#) Thomas subsequently extends this same Christian Aristotelianism to human affairs. For example, he comments extensively on Job's words, [‡178](#)

He leads counselors to a foolish end, and judges into bewilderment. (12:17)

Introducing these words with a digression, [‡179](#) Thomas draws an analogy between speculative and practical wisdom in God. Just as God is said to know intuitively the premises and conclusions of the speculative "sciences," and their interrelations, so God may be said to know intuitively all practical ends and means and consequences of human actions. Hence God need not investigate or inquire in order to know how to counsel human beings, or alternatively to disrupt their deliberations. Job's words thus refer to God's power and wisdom over the deliberations of God's adversaries: God can either draw adversaries into a position which does not agree with their starting-point ("He leads counselors to a foolish end . . ." (12:17a), or else God can present a proposal so strongly that adversaries cannot say anything contrary to it (" . . . and judges into bewilderment," 12:17b). Finally, these same attributes are said to be those very ones which also characterize effective debaters in human debates over speculative matters. [‡180](#)

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Second, then, Job intends to rebut the friends' false opinion that human beings prosper in this world on account of their justice and suffer on account of their sins. Here the Vulgate text allows Thomas to interpret Job's words more explicitly in line with his debate format. Job asserts that he desires to bring God into the debate directly: [‡181](#)

But yet I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to debate with God, first showing that you are fabricators of a lie and worshippers of perverse dogmas. And I wish you would keep quiet so that you might be thought wise! Hear my correction, then, and listen to the judgment of my lips. Does God need your lie so that you speak deceit in His behalf? Are you respecting His person and striving to judge in God's behalf? Or will it please Him from Whom nothing can be concealed? Or will He be deceived like a man by your frauds? He himself will charge you, since you respect His person in secret (13:3-10).

Accordingly, Job's purpose in bringing God into the debate is not to argue against Him, as the friends would contend, but only to destroy the friends' errors with divine help. [‡182](#) The friends are guilty of "respecting His person," i.e., of being influenced in their judgment by the person of God instead of by the truth of the issue. [‡183](#) Digressing once more during the course of his explanation of these verses, Thomas considers I Corinthians 15:15— "Now we are found to be even false witnesses of God, since we have

given testimony against God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise if the dead do not rise" — which serves to equate falsehood with being against God. †184 Conveniently, this citation also assumes the truth of resurrection, in anticipation of the third part of Job's present reply to Zophar. Meanwhile, Job now appeals to God directly, to speak out against the friends' calumnies: †185

Show me what great iniquities and sins I have, my crimes and delinquencies. Why do You hide Your face and think me Your enemy? (13:23-24).

Again, however, Job's disputative manner almost guarantees that he will continue to be misunderstood by the friends. Here he asks God to show the causes of his putative punishment, as if these were simply his various "iniquities" (*sc.*, against his neighbor), "sins" (against himself), "crimes" (against God), and "delinquencies" (generally), as the friends believe. †186 God's silence at this point would be sufficient proof for Job that such causes simply do not fit his situation. But the friends' minds are not so easily changed. Indeed, later on these same words would seem to be held against Job, inasmuch as they tend to confirm the friends' initial impression of him that he is a blasphemous sinner. †187

p 43

In the final part of his present reply to Zophar, Job intends to rebut the friends' false promise of earthly rewards for repentance. †188 Here Thomas finds Job spelling out his belief in resurrection, albeit in the easily misunderstood enthymematic manner we have been describing all along: †189

Who would grant me that You would protect me in hell [and hide me] until Your fury passes, and You appoint a time for me in which You may remember me? Do You think that a man who has died will live again? Every day on which I now campaign I wait for my relief to come. You will call me and I will respond to You; to the work of Your hands You will stretch forth Your right hand. (14:13-15)

According to Thomas, Job begins by expressing his natural desire for God's continuing special protection even after death. †190 He compares death to a time when God is angry with a man, since, as Thomas has shown earlier, death occurs when God removes the necessary supports of life, and anger is the scriptural expression for God's withdrawing benefits from man. †191 Thus, Job does not want God to forget him by withdrawing his life-support permanently, but rather to remember him and thereby set a time for his resurrection or return to life. †192 In an unannounced digression from the text, Thomas compares God's hoped for "protection" over man to the care which an artisan gives to a building potentially in need of repair. †193 If the building's materials are in such a state of dissolution as to be impossible to repair, then the artisan will not bother to repair them at all, whereas, on the other hand, the artisan's proceeding to make repairs shows that he must have intended to take lasting care of the building all along. The proper inference would seem to be that God does indeed plan to preserve a man's repaired body after death, though Thomas does not pause to draw it from this analogy alone, presumably because the analogy might equally allow the reader to infer that the soul is meant to outlast the body, as, say, the blueprint or intended design of a building may be said to outlast its materials. †194 Thomas instead mentions the reuniting of man's body with his individual soul after death as only one of two possible explanations for Job's subsequent words. According to one explanation, Job's saying that he will eventually answer God's call means that God will eventually resurrect and transform him from his earthly life of struggle and suffering, and his saying that God will extend His right hand means that resurrection occurs by divine grace, not by nature. †195 Only according to a second, alternative explanation is Job's answering God possibly allowed to refer to the posthumous restoration of the body, and God's extending His right hand then allowed to refer to the soul's natural desire for reunion with the body — a desire which cannot be fulfilled except by God's helping hand. †196 Thomas's evident caution in showing the logical basis for Job's belief in resurrection would seem to

[¶197](#) Thomas's explicit caution in showing the logical basis for Job's belief in resurrection would seem to suggest that this belief is not to be understood simply as the conclusion of a rational argument. Thomas thereby gives his Christian reader further opportunity to wonder how Job could ever seriously hope to persuade his friends merely by arguing with them.

The Second Session (Job 15-21)

p 45

By the beginning of the second session of Job's debate with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, Thomas has sketched in outline the Aristotelianism he would establish in the mind of his Christian reader. Perhaps for that reason he makes considerably fewer digressions in commenting on the second session of Job's debate than on the first, and even fewer on the third. [¶197](#) Now Thomas tends rather to emphasize the practical limitations of the Aristotelianism which he would attribute to his Christian Job. He does so in general, as we have already noted, by understanding Job's failure to persuade his friends about the true cause of his suffering as a failure to convert them to his Christian- Aristotelian viewpoint. To this end, Thomas's comments in the second cycle tend to refer explicitly and in detail to the progress of the debate format in which Job's failure is seen to occur.

p 45

Thomas's Eliphaz begins, as he had during the first session, by taking his inadequate understanding of Job's words as an occasion to reprehend Job calumniously. [¶198](#) Eliphaz continues to misconstrue Job's wish to debate with God, as if it were not Job's loyal trust in God's truth but his blasphemous mistrust of God's justice. [¶199](#) According to Eliphaz, Job's previous words show that he has lost his fear of God, and now contends with God and makes demands of God as if Job were God's equal. Hence Eliphaz judges all Job's words as sinful from the outset:

You accuse in words Him Who is not an equal to you, and you speak what is not advantageous for you. How far you have gone in emptying yourself of fear, and misdirecting prayers before God. For your iniquity has taught your mouth, and you imitate the tongue of blasphemers. (15:3-5)

Thomas indicates Eliphaz's revulsion at Job's desire to debate with God, by way of explaining the accusation that Job "imitate[s] the tongue of blasphemers." [¶200](#) This description is said to fit one who would debate with God concerning God's justice, since to debate concerning something would seem equivalent to doubting it, and anyone who doubts God's justice is just short of denying it.

p 45

Job replies to Eliphaz by objecting that the friends' way of consoling him is improper. He finds them simply repeating in various words their erroneous belief that he has fallen into adversity because of his sins. [¶201](#) The friends are also said to have an unfair advantage over Job in their debate, since he suffers in pain while they do not. [¶202](#) Despite his overwhelming pain, however, it does not follow that Job is inferior to the friends in his "scientific" understanding of the cause of his suffering: [¶203](#)

But what am I to do? If I speak, my pain will not rest, and if I keep silent, it will not withdraw from me. Now, however, my pain has crushed me, and all my limbs have been reduced to nothing. My wrinkles testify against me, and a liar rises up before my face, contradicting me. He has gathered his fury against me, and he has growled at me in his teeth, menacing me. My enemy has looked upon me with his frightening eyes. (16:710)

In order to explain once again how Job can both suffer and understand, Thomas here distinguishes two kinds of pain. Besides outer or sensual pain, there is also inner pain or sadness, stemming from the apprehension of some attendant evil. [‡204](#) Although Job's sensual pain cannot be overcome through his conversation with his friends, Thomas implies that his sadness can. Thomas comments that, in Job's reply to the friends' false accusation of sinfulness, he is led to recognize—from the suddenness, comprehensiveness, complexity, and irresistibility of his suffering [‡205](#)—that its cause can only be the devil himself, who is in turn controlled by God (as the reader himself has already learned from Job's earlier "history"). [‡206](#) Thomas reintroduces the devil here by supplying two alternative interpretations of Job's claim that his facial scars arouse falsehood against him (16:9). According to one interpretation, this claim means simply that Job's irresistible suffering tends to confirm Eliphaz's false opinion that Job has sinned gravely. [‡207](#) According to an alternative interpretation, it means that Job is attributing the friends' calumny to the instigation of the devil, whom he describes in the likeness of an angrily growling beast which menaces and frightens him (cf. 16:10). [‡208](#) In response to that calumny, Job can only turn to God for consolation, in the same way that a man turns to a reasonable colleague for judgment and mutual understanding: [‡209](#)

My wordy friends, my eye pours out for God. And I wish a man were so judged with God as the son of man is judged with his colleague. (16:21-22)

Thomas explains Job's words as tantamount to a rejection of the friends' false promise that Job will recover his temporal prosperity, in favor of the spiritual "hope" that he will achieve human happiness by coming to know the reasons for God's works and judgments while standing before God in a future life.

p 47

Thomas's Bildad fails to fathom the spiritual meaning behind Job's words. Continuing to believe that Job's suffering is caused by his past sin, he accuses Job of speaking pointlessly, presumptuously, and angrily: [‡210](#)

To what end will you cast your words about? Understand first and so let us speak. Why have we been reputed as beasts of burden and why are we contemptible in your sight? Why do you lose your soul in your fury? Will the earth be abandoned because of you and will cliffs be transferred from their place? Will the light of the impious one not be extinguished and the flame of his fire not shine? The light will grow dark in his tent, and the lamp which is over him will be extinguished. (18:3-6)

Bildad's reference to the earth's being forsaken and to cliffs' being shifted from their place is explained here in terms of his conviction that the opinion which he is maintaining is as firmly fixed in common sense as the earth itself and its topography. [‡211](#) Thus Bildad doubts whether Job's contention that he will be proved innocent will displace his own and his friends' view that Job suffers because of some previous sin. Bildad henceforth limits his remarks to elaborating instead what he believes to be the evil consequences of sin. [‡212](#) These consequences include the cessation of the sinner's temporal prosperity, which Bildad compares to the extinguishing of a light. [‡213](#) Thomas digresses briefly to consider how well Bildad's words correspond to the two causes which make for human success, namely, human providence and divine providence. [‡214](#) Human providence is said to enable a person to dispose of individual matters in his life prudently and cautiously, as in the prudence exercised by oneself and one's intimates. Bildad accordingly compares the cessation of human providence to the dimming of a light inside one's tent. Divine providence, on the other hand, occurs when human success proceeds from some superhuman cause. Bildad therefore

On the other hand, ~~others~~ ~~which~~ ~~human~~ ~~success~~ ~~process~~ ~~from~~ ~~some~~ ~~supernatural~~ ~~cause~~. ~~These~~ ~~metaphors~~ compares its cessation to the extinguishing of a lamp which has cast light onto a person from above. Thomas adds that Bildad mentions the light of human providence first, on the premise that a person who has previously dismissed the light of reason in himself, as Job appears to Bildad to have done, subsequently deserves to be left unprotected by divine providence, which is the higher source of that light.

p 48

Job replies to Bildad by confronting the false opinion common to all three friends, namely, that present adversities always come from past sins. †215 Job's main argument is that, if what Bildad and the others believe is true, then God is not an equitable judge, since He has left Job with no remedy from his suffering: †216

Now, at least, understand that God has afflicted me with an inequitable judgment, and He has surrounded me with His scourges. Look! Suffering force I will cry out, and no one will heed me; I will raise an outcry, and there is no one to pass judgment. He has hedged in my path, and I cannot pass, and on my trail He has put darkness.

According to Thomas, Job once more expresses his lack of a way to remedy his suffering by saying that God has surrounded him with scourges (19:6). Subsequently, he distinguishes four kinds of remedies thereby closed to him. On the one hand, he excludes the possibility of help from another human being, whether during the adversity itself, as when someone cries out for another's assistance while being attacked violently (cf. 19:7a), or else after the fact, as when someone who has suffered an injury complains to a judge who then restores and vindicates him officially (cf. 19:7b). On the other hand, he also excludes the possibility of self-help, whether by using bodily power, as when someone tries to remove impediments to his progress along a pathway (cf. 19:8a), or else by using prudence, as when someone tries to look ahead to see how to proceed through shadows (cf. 19:8b). At the same time, Job does not despair of God's help. Thomas's Job, inspired by his proto-Christian faith, is said to express his hope in a future resurrection: †217

I know that my redeemer lives, and on the last day I will rise from the earth. And I will be surrounded by my own hide again, and in my flesh I will see God, Whom I myself am about to see and my eyes are about to behold, and no one else.

During his emphatically Christian explanation of these three verses, Thomas digresses three times, and buttresses his digressions with seven scriptural quotations, six from the New Testament and one from the Old. †218 His first digression considers at length the meaning of "my redeemer lives" (19:25a), not in Old Testament terms, but rather Christologically, by commenting that although humankind had lost its pristine immortality by incurring sin, yet Job has foreseen "through the spirit of faith" how Christ's own resurrected life would become diffused to all human beings and redeem them from sin and death. †219 Similarly, Thomas's second digression considers the expression, "on the last day I will rise from the earth" (19:25a), not as referring to the restoration of Job's bodily health and prosperity, though the surface meaning might suggest this interpretation, but rather as rebutting the Stoic view of eternal recurrence mentioned earlier, in favor of the Christian view of resurrection. †220 Finally, Thomas's third digression supports his interpretation of the words, "and in my flesh I will see God" (19:26b), as indicating not Job's healed flesh on earth but the union of his resurrected body with his immortal soul after death. †221 Though the word "debate" does not appear at all in Thomas's commentary on this chapter, Thomas's Christian interpolations effectively underscore the ultimate and irreducible differences between Job's viewpoint and that of his non-Christian or pre-Christian friends.

p 49

Thomas's Zophar, alone among the three friends, is open to persuasion. As Thomas remarks, Zophar now appears to acquiesce concerning Job's hope of a future life. [†222](#) Yet Zophar is only partly persuaded, since he is unable to abandon entirely his earlier opinion and the opinion which he has hitherto shared with the other two friends:

For that reason my various reflections follow one upon the other, and my mind is seized in different directions. I will hear the teaching by which you criticize me, and the spirit of my understanding will respond for me. (20:2-3)

On the one hand, Thomas's Zophar follows Job's lead in reasoning that the prosperity which an evil man enjoys soon ends in death and his accumulated sins incur retribution afterwards, just as food quickly enjoyed is soon digested and its proper effects absorbed into the body: [†223](#)

. . . and his hands will give back to him his own pain. His bones will be filled with the vices of his youth and will sleep with him in the dust. For since evil was sweet in his mouth, he hid it under his tongue. He will spare it; he does not abandon it and he will conceal it in his throat. His bread in his stomach will turn into the venom of asps within. The riches which he has devoured he will vomit forth, and from his belly God will draw them out.

According to Thomas, that Zophar here endorses a punishment after death is indicated by his expression, "the vices of his youth" (20:11a), which suggests not immediate retaliation for recent sins, but posthumous retribution for lifelong vice. [†224](#) On the other hand, however, Zophar's words are also seen to betray the influence of the opinion which he has shared with the other friends, namely, that the excesses of the impious lead to divine retribution in this life: [†225](#)

When he has been sated, he will be restricted and he will be inflamed, and every pain will rush against him. May his belly be filled so that He may loose against him the anger of His fury and rain down His war over him.

Thomas explains that Zophar's words here are motivated by a kind of zeal for justice, in wishing that the sinner would indeed overindulge in temporal enjoyments so that he might suffer God's anger forthwith—not, Thomas adds, as a son suffers his father's chastisement, resulting in the son's self-improvement, but as an enemy suffers devastation in war, resulting in his extermination.

p 50

Encouraged by Zophar's vacillation, Thomas's Job replies in the hope of converting the three friends entirely. [†226](#) He first draws the friends' attention to the importance of his debate with them, by insisting that it involves more than the question of whether or not he is now being judged fairly by other human beings. [†227](#) If that were the case, Job's own personal sadness would never have been allowed to enter into the debate:

Is my debate against a man, so that I should not deservedly be saddened? (21:4)

Job's words here are understood to imply that it is not human beings who have originally caused his suffering (or sadness), but God. Hence, the debate ultimately concerns God's justice in doing so. Having established the importance of his reply in this way, Thomas's Job proceeds toward converting the friends by rebutting the claim voiced by Zophar that the prosperity of evil persons is soon ended in this life. [†228](#) He disputes Zophar's claim by appealing to, among other things, divine knowledge. [†229](#) The prosperity of the impious, he argues, may well continue unabated in this life, and not by reason of any defect in God's knowledge of human merits:

Will anyone teach knowledge to God, Who judges eminent men? (21:22)

Support for the position to which Job would convert the friends is conveyed by the expression, "Who judges eminent men" (21:22b), for which Thomas offers two possible explanations: either it may mean that God does not need anyone else in order to be instructed on how to judge those who prosper (i.e., are "eminent") in this world, in contrast to human judges who require the testimony of witnesses in order to learn the merits of the people they must judge; [†230](#) or it may mean that God simply understands everything, as is plainly implied by God's having judgment even over the "eminent." [†231](#) In either case, the belief which Thomas's Job is advocating here, namely, that God reserves full punishment for sinners till the next life, also agrees with what is apparent on the basis of human experience, namely, that sinners do not always suffer adversity in this life, nor do they always prosper. Thomas's description of Job's attempt to convert his friends here is reminiscent of the manner in which an impartial professorial authority would resolve a formal academic debate, inasmuch as Thomas says that Job "addresses himself to determining [i.e., formally deciding] the truth" [†232](#) on the basis of his foregoing appeal to divine knowledge. Thomas reserves for the remainder of the debate his elaboration of the shortcomings of Job's attempt to claim impartial authority for himself.

The Third Session (Job 22-28)

p 51

So far, in the first two sessions of the debate, Thomas has emphasized both the intellectual merit of the Christian-Aristotelian premises which his Job espouses, and the practical impossibility of Job's ever fully converting the three friends to the truth of those premises. Thomas's two emphases merge in his comments on the third session, where he elaborates in addition the limitations in principle of any knowledge or "science" which Job might possess concerning divine providence. To this end, Thomas contrasts Job's Christian Aristotelianism with the pure Aristotelianism maintained by the so-called Averroists. [†233](#) Thomas argues implicitly that Job's quasi-professorial intellectualism might not deserve the divine disapproval it will eventually receive, if the Averroists' premise that the human intellect were able to investigate providence adequately by its own unassisted efforts were true. [†234](#) By casting doubt on this premise, Thomas prepares his Christian reader for the final speech of God, which shows that Job's intellectual superiority to his friends is by itself no guarantee of Job's integrity in God's eyes.

p 52

Thomas's Eliphaz is the first to raise the issue of the limits of Job's intellectualism. Among other things, Eliphaz misinterprets Job's previous words, "Will anyone teach knowledge [*scientiam*] to God, Who judges eminent men" (21:22), by which Job has intended to express God's omniscience and omnipotence. [†235](#) Eliphaz mistakenly believes Job to have meant that God somehow lacks any knowledge or "science"

about what is other than divine, with the implication that God cannot exercise providence over human affairs. Eliphaz therefore criticizes Job:

Or do you think that God is loftier than heaven, and that He is exalted over the top of the stars? And you say: For what does the Lord know? And He judges as if through a mist. (22:12-13)

Thomas introduces Eliphaz's criticism with a digression referring implicitly to the Averroists, who maintain that for God to exercise knowledge and providence concerning human affairs would be unworthy of God's divine status. [†236](#) Eliphaz is thereby understood to criticize Job for being a kind of Averroist, for whom God's being above the heaven and the stars means that God knows only God. Otherwise (so the Averroists argue), God's knowledge or "science" would be contaminated by being extended to lesser things, in which there are many defects and disorders. Thomas qualifies this understanding of Averroism by commenting on two remarks which Eliphaz has attributed to Job. [†237](#) In attributing to Job the remark, "For what does the Lord know?" (22:13a), Eliphaz is made to recognize that Averroists allow God's "science" of what is other than divine to extend only to a knowledge of the "nature" or universal causes of human affairs, not to a knowledge of them as particulars. And in attributing to Job the further remark, "He judges as if through a mist" (22:13b), Eliphaz is said to compare the limited "science" of human affairs which the Averroists attribute to God, to the obscure knowledge obtained by perceiving at a distance that there is a man without recognizing clearly who the man is.

p 53

Eliphaz's implicit charge of Averroism is met by Job's stressing God's ultimate incomprehensibility to the human inquirer. [†238](#) No matter where Job turns in the world, he will not gain an adequate "scientific" grasp of God:

If I go to the east He does not appear, if to the west, I will not understand Him; if to the left, what will I do? I will not apprehend Him; if I turn to the right, I will not see Him. (23:3-9)

Going out of his way to supply two alternative explanations for Job's words here, Thomas uses premises derived from Aristotle's *De Caelo* to show the professed limitations of Aristotelian "science" for understanding God. [†239](#) According to one explanation, Job is here excluding God from confinement to any knowable place in the cosmos. According to a second explanation, Job is instead showing that God cannot be fully discovered through the visible "effects" [†240](#) of God which appear in the natural movements of the firmament and the planetary bodies. Yet though God is thereby hidden from Job's "scientific" observation, what happens to Job is not hidden from God. Thomas's Job insists instead that God knows the entire "way" or process of his life, and has caused Job's suffering accordingly: [†241](#)

Nevertheless, He knows [scit] my way, and He will prove me like gold which passes through fire.

God's purpose in afflicting Job is thus for other men to come to know and approve of Job's virtue. Just as gold is tested by fire, not to produce the gold in the first place but rather to show human observers that the substance being tested is true gold, so God is testing Job through suffering, not to produce in Job that virtue which is already apparent to God but rather to make Job's virtue manifest to human beings as true virtue. Nor then can anyone complain that it was not fitting for God to have allowed Job to suffer in light of the obvious rectitude of Job's life. [†242](#) On the contrary, Job himself is seen to maintain that, since the reasons for God's judgments cannot be inferred with utmost certainty by demonstrative proof, inasmuch as

God cannot be known "scientifically" through comparison with any of God's creatures, therefore God's will cannot be known or controlled by them either:

For He himself is alone, and no one can observe His reflections, and His soul has done whatever it wished. (23:13)

p 54

Bildad, however, misinterprets these last words as Job's assertion that he is not being punished for his sins at all. †243 Thomas excuses Bildad's misinterpretation somewhat, by allowing that Job's saying that ". . . no one can observe His thoughts" (23:13) might well be taken to refer to a human being's thoughts rather than to God's, and hence to signify divine rather than human weakness (in a manner which suggests, once again, the viewpoint of the Averroists). At the same time, Thomas criticizes Bildad for forgetting that Job has already argued that God's judgments could not be understood simply in terms of God's strength and magnitude. †244 Nevertheless, ignoring this point, Bildad appeals to God's overwhelming power in ordering the angels and the heavenly bodies and through them the lower bodies. It follows for Bildad that God's justice also far exceeds any human being's: †245

Can a man be justified compared with God? Or does one born of woman appear clean?

Bildad thereby rejects Job's claim of justice and innocence out of hand, as altogether worthless in comparison with God's.

p 54

Bildad's criticism provokes three responses on the part of Job. †246 Each response indicates to Thomas's Christian reader that Job shuns any quasi-Averroistic denial of God's ability to judge the particulars of human affairs. First, Thomas's Job counters Bildad's attempt to frighten him, rather than reason with him, concerning God's power and wisdom. As Thomas comments, Bildad has followed the tactic of someone who prefers not to argue reasonably about a person who is condemned before a judge, but instead tries to win favor by offering to augment the judge's power and wisdom. Job's remarks thus indicate that such offers are useless in the case of God, who is not lacking in either power or wisdom:

Whose helper are you? A weakling's? And are you supporting the arm of One who is not strong? To Whom have you given advice? Perhaps to Him Who has not wisdom? And have you shown your very great prudence? Whom did you wish to teach? Was it not He Who has made [man's] breath? (26:2-4)

Job's reference to God's having made the very breath of a human being is here explained to mean God's being the cause of all "science," inasmuch as God has created the soul by which a human being both lives and understands. Second, then, Thomas's Job counters Bildad's implicit allegation that he has somehow deprecated God's power. †247 Instead, therefore, Job commends God's ability to judge not only nature but also human deeds, both in this life and in the next:

Hell is naked before Him, and there is no cover for perdition. (26:6)

That is, according to Thomas, everything done in the next world is both seen and judged by God, and nothing could be hidden from God's eyes in the way in which it might be hidden from our own. God's

"effects" [†248](#) are even said to extend beyond bodily creatures to spiritual ones, or angels, here called "pillars of heaven":

The pillars of heaven tremble and dread His nod. (26:11)

Thomas's Job thus uses the similitude of servants showing obedience to the will ("nod") of the master, whom they serve not out of fear of punishment but instead from an inner reverence merely akin to fear, which is also manifest in their external movements (or "trembling"). Finally, Thomas's Job counters any presumption that God's "effects," though extensive, adequately reveal God's power as such. Here Job adopts the comparison between the sounds of a small drop and a great thundering: [†249](#)

Look! These things have been said about a part of His ways, and since we have scarcely heard a small drop of His speeches, who will be able to look upon the thunder of His greatness?

Thus, God's works ("ways") are said to afford us only minimal knowledge of God as such—a conclusion soon to be reiterated by God, too, in the speech which culminates the entire debate between Job and his friends.

p 55

Zophar now remains silent, bypassing his expected reply to Job. Thomas explains in passing only that Zophar fails to speak "as if [*quasi*] convinced" by Job's foregoing refutation of Bildad. [†250](#) Meanwhile, Thomas's Job continues his polemic against Bildad, by showing that it is not contrary to divine providence for evil men to prosper in this world or for good men to suffer. Here Thomas makes few references to Aristotle, and these by and large are not obtrusive but are well subordinated to the theological purport of the discussion. [†251](#) As for the temporal prosperity of evil persons, Thomas's Job offers two considerations. First, temporal goods are useless without good souls: [†252](#)

For what is the hope of the hypocrite if he should seize things greedily and God should not free his soul? Will God hear his outcry when distress comes over him? Or will he be able to take delight in the Almighty and invoke God in every situation?

Evil persons who accumulate wealth unjustly are called hypocrites, or pretenders, who must falsely pretend that their actions have not incurred God's wrath. Hence they are deprived of the "hope" [†253](#) that God will hear their prayer in time of necessity, and that God will praise them apart from their worldly success or deprivation. Second, moreover, the unjust person's temporal goods are precarious: [†254](#)

If his children are multiplied, they will be on the sword, and his grandchildren will not have their fill of bread; those who remain of him will be buried in ruin, and his widows will not be mourned. If he accumulates silver as if it were earth and procures clothing like clay, he has indeed procured these things, but the just man will dress himself in them and the innocent man will divide his silver. He has built his house like a moth, and like a groundskeeper he has made a bower.

Thus, families are subject to death and poverty, wealth to dissipation and redistribution, and houses to decay unless someone keeps taking care of them. As for the temporal suffering of good persons, on the

other hand, there is the consolation of spiritual "wisdom," which is available to human beings in this life and which is also preferable to temporal goods. †255 Like the most valuable of temporal goods, namely precious metals, wisdom derives its worth in part from its having a "hidden" or remote source, namely God:

Whence, then, does wisdom come, and what is the place of understanding? It is hidden from the eyes of all living men; it lies hidden from the birds of heaven, also God understands [*intelligit*] its way and He knows its place. For He Himself looks upon the ends of the world and He looks at everything which is under heaven. (28:20-24)

Moreover, unlike temporal goods, wisdom is more valuable for not being confined to a definite place, since it stems directly from God—as Thomas comments, "just as art derives from the mind of the artisan in his work." †256 Thomas's further remarks here indicate that his quasi-Aristotelian analogy with the arts does not mean, however, that human beings could infer God's wisdom simply from considering God's creatures, since, unlike human wisdom, divine wisdom is not derived from creatures, but exists beforehand as their ultimate cause. Still, human beings are said to be able to attain wisdom in this life "by inquiry of reason," †257 albeit under the qualifications already set forth during the present debate and soon to be indicated further by God.

JOB'S "EXAMPLE" (Job 29-31)

p 57

Chapters twenty-nine through thirty-one contain a lament by Job. Thomas regards it as an integral part of the foregoing debate. †258 Here Job is said to show that he has used his past prosperity virtuously (chapter 29), that nevertheless he now suffers greatly (chapter 30), and that throughout he has remained innocent of sin (chapter 31). He holds to his premise that the prosperity of the wicked and the deprivation of the good in this life do not contradict divine providence, since providence compensates the good with spiritual benefits, including the hope of bodily resurrection after death. At the same time, as we have indicated, Thomas's Job has spoken about resurrection, etc., only enthymematically. †259 Addressing pre-Christians, to whom that doctrine has not yet been revealed, he is limited to speaking allusively, in the parabolical language of the Old Testament. Not surprisingly, therefore, his attempt to convert Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar has hitherto failed. Undaunted, Thomas's Job now changes his tactics and turns directly to refuting their mistaken belief that his present suffering is caused by some past sin. To this end, as Thomas comments, Job adduces his personal life "as if in example" [*quasi in exemplo*]. †260

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Yet Job's personal "example" functions as more than just a means for overcoming the rhetorical failure of his enthymematic argument so far. We make this observation in the light of Thomas's implicit appeal to Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric*. According to Aristotle, enthymeme, or incomplete syllogism, and example, or incomplete induction, are two distinct methods of rhetorical persuasion. †261 Enthymeme is suited to forensic rhetoric, or the attempt to show whether past actions have been just or unjust. Example, on the other hand, is suited to deliberative rhetoric, or the attempt to show whether future actions will be expedient or harmful. Assuming Thomas's rhetorical competence here, we may say that Job's shift from enthymeme to example is tantamount to a shift, however unwitting, from a concern with past justice to a concern for future expediency. Job's "example" thus prepares Thomas's Christian reader for the repentance Job is seen to undergo as a result of the speech by God which culminates the entire debate. That is, the subject-matter of Job's "example" notwithstanding, he now appears less concerned to defend his past than to exhort for

the future. In this respect, he begins to retreat from the largely professorial stance he has assumed from the outset of the debate. His rhetoric becomes less disputative, more edifying. Hence his personal "example" no longer simply fits the model of an academic debate, but sets forth a spiritual way of life for others as well as himself to follow. †262 In Job's own words, his "example" is that of a person who is "an eye to the blind man," "a foot to the lame man," "the father of the poor," etc. (29:15-16a) Here, as much as anywhere in the debate, Thomas's Job appeals to the hearts of his addressees even more than to their intellects.

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A single illustration may suffice. Thomas goes out of his way to comment on an anacoluthic passage where Job swears before God that he has never withheld charity from the poor: †263

If I have denied the poor what they wished and have made the eyes of the widow wait; if I have eaten my morsel alone and the orphan has not eaten from it, since from my infancy compassion has grown up with me and from my mother's womb it came out with me!

Presenting Job as a model of charitableness, Thomas comments that Job has never deliberately refused a needy person's request (31:16a), nor so much as hesitated in responding favorably (31:16b), even to the extent of sharing his own personal portion with him (31:17). Job's anacoluthon here is understood to be the protasis of an implicit plea allowing God to inflict on him whatever suffering God wishes if Job has not attended satisfactorily to others. Thomas comments that here Job speaks "very expressly." †264 The widows and orphans to whom Job refers (31:16b-17) are considered to be among those unfortunate poor who are either too frightened to beg insistently (as widows often are) or perhaps too frightened to beg at all (as orphans are). Job himself assigns two causes for his lifelong compassion. In the first place, he has cultivated a habit which developed in childhood and grew with practice (cf. 31:18a), and in the second place, his original disposition to this virtue was an inborn or natural inclination (cf. 31:18b). Thomas's comments thus provide an object-lesson to his Christian reader that Job is not to be judged simply intellectually, but also spiritually. Henceforth the reader is prepared to observe Job's eventual repentance from trying to convert his friends by mere arguments. †265

ELIHU'S "SHARPER ARGUMENTS" (JOB 32-37)

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Following Job's "example," Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar remain silent. Instead, a fourth friend, Elihu, enters the debate. Though younger than the others, Elihu describes himself as superior in wisdom, inasmuch as he has experienced that wisdom does not come from age alone but from divine inspiration: †266

But as I see it, the spirit is in men, and the inspiration of the Almighty gives understanding.

Thomas comments in support of Elihu's claim that wisdom and intelligence depend on divine inspiration by citing Isaiah's description of the Holy Spirit as a "spirit of wisdom and of understanding [*intellectus*]" (Isaiah 11:2). †267 It follows that Thomas considers Elihu to come closer to the truth about Job than Job's other three friends. Indeed, for Thomas, Elihu resembles Job himself in his inspired understanding of the truth. †268 Like Job and unlike the other friends, Thomas's Elihu also believes in resurrection. Thomas makes this inference from Elihu's reasoning for his not deferring to other persons in his own judgment of Job: †269

For I do not know how long I will last, and if my maker will take me after a short time.

Elihu is said to agree with Job here that there will be retribution for one's sins after death, since otherwise there would seem no point to Elihu's being afraid of offending God while aware of the nearness of his own death. Accepting the premise of resurrection, then, Thomas's Elihu would seem perfectly capable of overcoming the intellectual limitations of Job's other friends, who have been misinterpreting Job's suffering all along as an indication of Job's sinfulness. Perhaps for this reason, Thomas's Elihu is said to speak with "sharper arguments" than the other friends. [†270](#)

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Despite his "sharper arguments," however, Thomas's Elihu criticizes Job in a manner scarcely different from the other friends. [†271](#) Surprisingly inconsistent with his belief in resurrection which he shares with Job, Thomas's Elihu comes to agree with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar that Job's suffering is caused exclusively by Job's sinfulness in this life. He finds Job guilty of attributing injustice to God as the cause of Job's suffering in this life. [†272](#) Elihu arrives at this mistaken notion, Thomas says, by misconstruing Job's own enthymematic words, just as the other three friends have done. [†273](#) Evidently, for Thomas, neither divine inspiration nor "sharper arguments," though necessary for arriving at truth, would guarantee against error. For example, recalling Job's words to Bildad, [†274](#)

Behold, I shall cry out when suffering force [*vim*] and no one will hear; I shall raise my voice and there is not anyone who will judge (19:7).

Thomas's Elihu misinterprets them as Job's contentious denial that God is judging him fairly. But in fact, as Thomas comments, Job was not speaking contentiously but rather philosophically (albeit parabolically). In these and like speeches, Thomas remarks, Job "was desiring to know the reasons for divine wisdom." [†275](#) By this remark, Thomas suggests that his philosophical Job wishes only to know the causes of the forces of bodies surrounding him and understands that he will not acquire that knowledge merely because he has spoken his wish aloud.

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Elihu's "sharper arguments," then, despite their dependence on divine inspiration, fail to enable him to judge Job adequately. Thomas connects this failure with Elihu's youthful impulsiveness and his concomitant desire for vainglory. [†276](#) Thomas's Elihu is thus an example of someone in possession of wisdom who, through certain practical shortcomings of his own, misapplies that wisdom. In this regard, Thomas's Job stands to learn not from Elihu's explicit criticisms but only from his bad example. It is the practical defect of misapplying inspired wisdom which Thomas's Job, like his Elihu and like the Christian reader himself, must overcome, and to which God's speech is subsequently addressed.

GOD'S "DETERMINATION" (JOB 38-42:8)

p 61

God's speech begins by addressing Job (38:1-39:32; 40:1-41:25), who responds twice (39:33-35; 42:1-6), and it concludes by addressing Eliphaz as representative of Job's first three friends (42:7-8). Thomas explains that, as human wisdom is not sufficient to comprehend the truth of divine providence, it is

necessary to decide the foregoing debate by divine authority. †277 According to Thomas, the entire speech occurs in the form of a divinely instilled inspiration within Job himself: the "whirlwind" from which God speaks may be understood metaphorically as signifying the unclear origin and disturbing effects of such inspiration in this life. Thomas interprets God's opening words,

Who is that man wrapping his opinions in ignorant speeches? (38:2)

in reference to Elihu. †278 Elihu is now seen to have assumed, without warrant, the role of judge or "determiner" of the debate between Job and the other friends. Henceforth God alone becomes the sole "determiner" of the question about divine providence. †279 Elihu's own "determination" has already been shown to involve many presumptuous and even false statements. †280 Yet Elihu's opinion receives short criticism here, as will the other friends' later. †281 God's main criticism concerns Job. Although, for Thomas, Job's opinion about divine providence remains intellectually correct, Job is nevertheless criticized at length for speaking in such a way as to appear incorrect or blasphemous to others. †282 According to Thomas's own summary, God in his final "determination" thus criticizes the three friends for their false opinions about providence, Elihu for his unwarranted attempt to "determine" the debate, and Job for his immoderate or inconsiderate manner of speaking. †283

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God's criticism of Job, being practical or moral rather than intellectual or philosophical, indicates to Thomas's Christian reader the proper scope and limits of Job's theological discussion of providence. We need only consider the obvious features of Thomas's comments on God's criticism of Job, which begins, †284

Where were you when I was setting the foundations of the earth? Indicate to me, if you have understanding [*intelligentiam*], who set its measurements, if you know, or who stretched the line over it, upon what its bases were founded, or who laid its cornerstone.

To be sure, God's criticism is understood to confirm the Aristotelian view of nature which Thomas has been attributing to Job throughout the debate. Here God speaks "scientifically," in the language of an artisan who sets the foundations of the earth in the same way an architect constructs a building, by figuring its dimensions, surveying its site, sinking its bases, laying its cornerstone, etc. Thomas's commentary accordingly understands the earth as an artfully arranged and supervised structure, open therefore to "scientific" investigation of its causes, even though Job and his like are now being criticized for their failure to apprehend those causes fully. The remainder of God's speech extends this same understanding to the other principal parts of the visible world besides the earth, namely to the seas and the heavens, as well as to various "marvels" arranged within them, such as earthquakes, sea-creatures, and heavenly bodies, and to several noteworthy species of mammals including human beings. †285 Thomas continually interpolates "scientific" observations drawn from Aristotle's (and other Aristotelians') books on natural philosophy, with which the subjects of God's speech are understood to coincide parabolically.

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At the same time, Thomas repeatedly refers to nature, in an edifying way, as God's "effects." †286 This expression does not occur in Aristotle's own writings. Thomas evidently understands by it God's effectiveness in providing for each creature's needs, just as a competent artisan effectively provides for what he has constructed. Yet the full meaning of Thomas's expression here is not merely Aristotelian, but also Christian, since it is understood to imply particular providence—a doctrine altogether absent from Aristotelian philosophizing. †287 A sign of Thomas's Christian intent is that the wonderment provoked in

Aristotelian philosophizing. †287 A sign of Thomas's Christian intent is that the wonderment provoked in Job by God's speech does not lead him to further philosophizing: †288

What can I respond who have spoken lightly [*leviter*]? I will put my hand over my mouth; I have spoken one thing which I wish I had not said, and a second to which I will not add further (39:34-35).

Rather, Job is stunned into silence and repentance. Indeed, Thomas understands Job to repent of his "levity" [*levitas*] or superficiality in having wished to convert his friends to his proto-Christian wisdom merely by debating with them philosophically in the first place.

p 63

Job's repentance is not complete, however, without God's concluding descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan (40:10-41:34). These descriptions further illustrate Thomas's edifying synthesis of "scientific" and religious concerns. On the one hand, Behemoth and Leviathan are identified, literally, with the elephant and the whale, respectively. †289 Here, too, Thomas correlates the scriptural text's descriptions of their natural parts and movements with similar discussions by Aristotle and others. For example, concerning the description of the movement of Behemoth,

His bones are like pipes of bronze, his cartilage like iron plates (40:13),

Thomas comments that the "bones" refer to the elephant's external organs of movement, and the "cartilage" to its interior ones. †290 Thus, the tube-like rigidity of the former is seen to be necessary in order to support the weight of the elephant's body, as is recognized, if not by Aristotle himself, at any rate by Thomas's fellow-Aristotelian, Thomas of Cantimpré, who observes that the elephant's legs "have solid bones without joints." †291 Thomas thereby enhances his reader's purely "scientific" erudition. On the other hand, Behemoth and Leviathan are also identified, figuratively, with Satan, whom they are said to resemble in his power, his voluptuousness, his harmfulness, and especially his indomitability by human beings. †292 For example, the latter part of the verse just quoted is also said to signify the stubbornness of the devil, whose evil designs are humanly unstoppable, and his cruelty, which is impervious to human counterattack. †293 Moreover, for the continuation of the passage just cited,

[he] is the beginning of God's ways. He Who made him will apply His sword (40:14),

Thomas offers a choice of two figurative interpretations. †294 First, God's "ways" may refer to the "works" of creation, of which Satan is said to be among the first. Second, and "more suitable" †295 for Thomas's purpose, God's "ways" may refer to the "works" of providence. Thomas elaborates this second possibility in a digression which considers that God, being good, only benefits and pities creatures, so that God's bringing punishment or adversity on them happens strictly "because of the malice of the rational creature, which was found first in the devil and through his suggestion was passed on to men." †296 It follows that the figurative meaning of the latter half of verse 14 suggests that, as rational creatures like Job suffer from the evil promptings of the devil only by God's will or permission, so they are intended to overcome them only with God's help or grace. Thomas's evident flexibility in construing this figurative explanation concerning Job's suffering indicates that, in his own view, even more important than one's intellectual need for "scientific" plausibility is his religious need for spiritual edification.

CONCLUSION (JOB 42:9-16)

p 64

The concluding verses describe how both Job and his three friends obey God's final instructions given to them in the immediately preceding verse (42:8). †297 They are to allay God's anger by prayer and sacrifice. The friends offer an expiatory burnt offering of seven bulls and seven rams, commensurate with the seriousness of their sin. Job, meanwhile, prays on their behalf. Thomas comments that Job properly obeys and humbles himself not only for his friends' sake, but also for his own, since someone who humbly repents of his own light sin might also obtain pardon for others who sin grievously. Job then succeeds not only in turning away God's anger from his friends, but also in being freed from his own suffering. God in turn restores Job's lost children to him, and doubles his former prosperity, though Job had not asked for either of these favors. Thomas explains the unsolicited reparations in the light of Matthew 6:33: "First seek the kingdom of God and His justice, and all this will be added to you." †298 Thomas adds that the recovery of Job's temporal goods gives a fitting "example" for the Book of Job's Old Testament addressee, in order to induce his conversion to God, as well as a fitting consolation for Job himself, on account of the manifold adversities which had overcome him.

p 65

By analogy, we may conclude that Thomas's *Exposition* as a whole provides a fitting lesson for the Christian reader who, albeit at a much later time than Job, still tends to measure his own religious merit in terms of his intellectual competence in academic debates. Thomas saves the reader from underestimating the requirements for intellectual competence, by introducing him to the merit of Aristotelian philosophy for theological purposes. At the same time, he saves the reader from presuming the sufficiency of intellectual competence, by reminding him of that ultimate "adversary," Satan, against which no human being may prevail without divine grace. Here, as in his *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas builds on the premise that grace does not destroy nature but completes it. †299 The reader is offered the edifying insight that Christian wisdom is more than an academically satisfying argument. It is also humility, prudence, and charity. By stooping to lift his coreligionists who falter along the way to truth, by enlarging the vision of those whose purview is limited to the academic cloister, and by inspiring others with his own divinely inspired genius, Thomas becomes an example of one who is, in the spiritual if not in the literal sense, feet to the lame, eyes to the blind, and a patron to those of us who would be much poorer in spirit without him. †300

Prologue

p 67

Just as in the case of things which are generated naturally there is a gradual development from the imperfect to the perfect state, so it happens in the case of men with respect to the knowledge of truth; for in the beginning what they have attained of the truth is slight, but afterwards, step by step as it were, they come to some fuller measure of the truth. For this reason it has happened that, from the beginning, many men have erred because of imperfect knowledge concerning the truth. Among them were some who denied the existence of divine providence and attributed to fortune and chance everything that occurred. In fact, the opinion of earlier men inclined so strongly to this position that they attributed to chance the things which are generated naturally, as one can perceive from the positions of the early natural philosophers, who posited a material cause only. †1 Some of the later philosophers also, such as Democritus †2 and Empedocles †3 attributed the majority of occurrences to chance. But the diligence of later philosophers

Empedocles, [¶12](#) attributed the majority of occurrences to chance. But the diligence of later philosophers examining the truth with sharper insight has shown with evident proofs and arguments that natural things are controlled by providence; for one would not find such a reliable course in the movement of heaven and of the stars and in the other effects of nature unless all these things were ordained and governed by some supereminent intelligence.

p 67

Although the opinion of the majority of men was confirmed in the belief that natural things were driven not by chance but by providence because of the order which manifestly appears in them, doubt emerged among most men concerning the actions of men. Did human affairs proceed by chance, or were they governed by some providence or superior ordinance? Indeed, the fact that no certain order appears in human events especially fostered this doubt. For good things do not always happen to good men or bad things to bad men. On the other hand, neither do bad things always happen to good men or good things to bad men. Rather, both good and bad things happen to good and bad men indifferently. This fact, then, is what has especially moved the hearts of men to the opinion that human affairs are not ruled by divine providence. Some say that human affairs proceed by chance except insofar as they are ruled by human providence and planning; others attribute their outcome to celestial fate.

p 68

This opinion, however, is found to be especially harmful to the human race, for if divine providence is taken away, no reverence for or fear of God based on truth will remain among men. Anyone can discern easily enough how great an apathy toward virtue and a proneness to vice follow from this condition. For nothing calls men back from wickedness and leads them toward good so much as fear of and love for God. For this reason, the first and most important concern of those who pursued wisdom in a divine spirit for the instruction of others was to remove this belief from the hearts of men. Therefore, after the giving of the Law and the Prophets, the Book of Job is placed first in the number of the Hagiographa, that is, the books written wisely through the Spirit of God for the instruction of men, the whole intention of which turns on showing through plausible arguments that human affairs are ruled by divine providence.

p 68

Now in this book the author proceeds to demonstrate his proposition from the supposition that natural things are governed by divine providence. Now what especially seems to impugn God's providence where human affairs are concerned is the affliction of just men, for although it seems at first sight unreasonable and contrary to providence that good things should sometimes happen to bad men, it can be excused in one way or another as the result of divine mercy. But that just men should be afflicted without cause seems to undermine totally the foundation of providence. Therefore, there are proposed for the intended discussion [¶4](#) as a kind of theme the many grave afflictions of a certain man, perfect in every virtue, named Job.

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Now there have been some men [¶5](#) to whom it has seemed that the Job in question was not something in the nature of things but that he was a kind of parable made up to serve as a theme for a debate over providence, the way men often invent hypothetical cases to debate over them. [¶6](#) And although it makes little difference one way or another to the intention of the book, it is important as far as the truth itself is concerned. For the opinion that Job was not a man in the nature of things seems to be contrary to the authority of Sacred Scripture, for in Ezekiel 14:14 the Lord is represented as saying, "If those three men—Noah, Daniel, and Job—are in that land, they will free their souls by their justice." Now it is manifest that Noah and Daniel were men in the nature of things. For this reason there should be no doubt about the third man named along with them, namely, Job. Also, in James 5:11 is said, "Look! We bless those who have endured; you have heard of Job's suffering and have seen the Lord's purpose." So, then, one must believe that Job was a man in the nature of things.

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Now it is not our present intention to discuss the time in which Job lived or his parentage, even the authorship of this book, whether in fact Job himself wrote it about himself as if speaking of another or someone else related these incidents about him. For we intend briefly as far as we are able, having trust in divine help, to expound according to the literal sense that book which is entitled *Blessed Job*. Blessed Pope Gregory has already disclosed to us its mysteries [:7](#) so subtly and clearly that there seems no need to add anything further to them. [:8](#)

Chapter One

p 71

(1) There was a man in the land of Uz by the name of Job, and that man was simple and straightforward, fearing God and withdrawing from evil. (2) Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. (3) And his possessions amounted to seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, also five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred she-asses, and a very large household. And he was a great man among all the men of the East. (4) And his sons were going and holding banquets at the homes of each one, each on his own day, and they sent invitations to their three sisters to dine and drink wine with them. (5) And when the days of banqueting had gone through a cycle, Job sent for them and sanctified them, and rising at the break of day he offered holocausts for each one. For he was saying: Let my sons not have sinned and have blessed God in their hearts. So was Job doing every day.

p 71

Because, as was said, the whole intention of this book is aimed at showing how human affairs are ruled by divine providence, there is premised as the foundation of the whole debate a history in which is recounted the many afflictions of a certain just man. For the affliction of just men is what most seems to exclude divine providence from human affairs. First, then, this man's character is described, and with respect to his sex it is said that *There was a man*, for the male sex is found to be more robust for enduring troubles. He is also described with respect to his native land when it is said that he was *in the land of Uz*, which is in the East, and with respect to his name when the text says *by the name of Job*. These two items of information seem to have been posited to suggest that this story is not a parable but a real occurrence.

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And lest anyone believe that the adversities which are introduced later happened to this man because of his sins, next is described Job's virtue, by reason of which he is shown to be free from sin. One should know, indeed, that a man sins in three ways. For there are certain sins by which he sins against his neighbor, such as murder, adultery, theft, and others of this kind; certain others by which he sins against God, such as perjury, sacrilege, blasphemy, and the like; and certain others by which each man sins against himself, according to the Apostle in I Corinthians 6:18: "One who fornicates sins against his own body." Now one sins against his neighbor in two ways—covertly by deceit and overtly by violence. This man, however, did not circumvent his neighbor by deceit. Hence is said *and that man was simple*, for simplicity is properly opposed to deceit. He inflicted violence on no one, for the expression *and straightforward* follows, for straightforwardness properly pertains to justice, which consists in equity. According to Isaiah 26:7. "The

path of the just man is straight; straight is the trail of the just man to tread." Now that he did not sin against God is clearly shown by the addition *fearing God*, in which reverence for God is designated. That he also did not sin against himself is shown in the addition *and withdrawing from evil*, because he hated evil on his own account, not only because of harm to his neighbor or offense against God.

p 72

When both the character and the virtue of this man have been described, then, his prosperity is shown next so that the following adversity may be judged more grave in comparison with the preceding prosperity, and at the same time so that it may be shown that, according to God's first intention, not only spiritual but also temporal goods are always bestowed on just men. Sometimes, however, it happens that just men are pressed by adversities for some special reason. Hence, even in the beginning man was instituted in such a way that he would not have been subject to any disturbances if he had persisted in his innocence. Now after the good constitution of one's own character, the mainstay of temporal prosperity consists in relatives, especially in children, who are, in a manner of speaking, part of their parents. Therefore, first Job's prosperity with respect to fruitfulness of offspring is described, when it is said that *Seven sons and three daughters were born to him*. Appropriately, a larger number of males than of females is posited because parents usually prefer sons to daughters, both because that which is more perfect is more desirable and males are compared to females as the perfect to the imperfect, [†1](#) and because sons are usually more ready than daughters to help in managing business affairs.

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Next, Job's prosperity with respect to the multitude of his riches, especially in animals, is shown. As a matter of fact, in the beginning of the human race, because of the scarcity of men, the possession of land was not so valuable as the possession of animals, especially in the East, where to this very day there are few inhabitants in proportion to the breadth of the region. Now under animals first are posited those which especially serve to feed and clothe people, namely, sheep, and so is said *And his possessions amounted to seven thousand sheep*. Second are posited the animals which especially serve to bear burdens, namely, camels; this is the point of adding *and three thousand camels*. Third are posited the animals which serve to cultivate the fields, which is the point of adding *also five hundred yoke of oxen*. Fourth are posited the animals which men use for riding; hence follows the expression *and five hundred she-asses*, which bear the mules which the ancients especially rode. Now under these four kinds of animals are comprised all the others which serve the same purposes; for example, under sheep are comprised all that are necessary for food and clothing, and so on for the other kinds. And since men who possess great riches require a large number of servants to manage them, the text appropriately adds *and a very large household*. Next is posited Job's prosperity with respect to his honor and fame, which extended far and wide; this is what he means by saying *And he was a great man*, that is, honored and renowned, *among all the men of the East*.

p 73

Now to Job's greater commendation is described next the discipline of his house, which was free of those vices which wealth usually engenders. For very often, in fact, an abundance of wealth begets discord, and with reference to this fact we read in Genesis 13:6 that Abraham and Lot were not able to live together, because they wanted to avoid the quarreling that resulted from the abundance of property. Frequently, too, when people who possess many things love them immoderately, they use them stingily. Hence, Ecclesiastes 6:1-2 says, "There is also another evil which I have seen under the sun, and a frequent one among men: the man to whom God has given riches, property, and honor, and his spirit lacks none of the things which he desires. Yet God has not given him the ability to eat of it." From these evils the house of Blessed Job was free, for in that house was harmony and joy and equanimity, which is signified when the text says *And his sons were going and holding banquets at the homes of each one, each on his own day*. This love and harmony not only existed among the brothers but extended even to the sisters. Frequently, sisters are looked down upon by brothers because of the pride which opulence often engenders. Hence is

added *and they sent invitations to their three sisters to dine and drink wine with them*. At the same time, too, there is conveyed in this passage the confidence which was had in the chastity of the daughters, for otherwise they were not to be paraded around in public but were to be confined, according to Ecclesiasticus 26:13: "Keep close watch on a daughter who does not turn away from evil, lest she find the opportunity to do herself harm."

p 73

Now just as frugality and harmony flourished in Job's house, so flourished in Job himself a holy solicitude for purity, which wealth frequently undermines, or at least weakens, according to Deuteronomy 32:15: "The darling grew fat and frisky;" and further on, "He has deserted God, his Maker" and so on. As a matter of fact, Job was so solicitous about his purity that he abstained totally from anything which could pollute him, for the text above (v. 1) said that "he was fearing God and withdrawing from evil." He was also solicitous concerning his sons' purity. He did permit them to have their banquets as a concession to their youth, for certain things are tolerated in young men which are reprehensible in serious persons. And because people at banquets can never, or hardly ever, avoid giving offense, through either tasteless, unrestrained delight, disorderly speech, or even immoderate enjoyment of food, he offered on behalf of his sons, whom he did not prevent from banqueting, the remedy of purification. Hence is said *And when the days of banqueting had gone through a cycle, Job sent for them and sanctified them*. Now the days of banqueting are said to go through a cycle because, since there were seven sons and each one held a banquet on his own day, they were attending such banquets every day of the week in turn. In due course, as if in a circle, or cyclically, the banquet returned to the first son in succession, just as it happens in the case of the days of the week. One should note, however, that although Job allowed his sons to hold banquets, he himself, preserving his own gravity, did not participate in their banquets. Hence it is said that *he sent for them*, not that he went to them himself. Now the manner of sanctification, in which he was sanctifying his sons through an intermediary, can be understood in two ways: either that he had them instructed with wholesome admonitions to make amends if they had sinned at all at the banquets, or else that they had some rite of expiation with which they could expiate such sins, just as there were sacrifices and the offering of the first fruits and tithes even before the giving of the Law. †2

p 74

Now at banquets men sometimes not only incur impurity in the ways just mentioned but also are immersed in more serious sins, even to contempt for God, when, because of wantonness, their reason is engrossed and reverence for God is taken away, as one reads in Exodus 32:6: "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play," that is, to fornicate or to sacrifice to idols. In sanctifying his sons, then, Job not only aided them against light sins but also was eager to afford them a remedy against graver sins, a remedy by which God would be reconciled to them. Hence follows *and rising at the break of day he offered holocausts for each one*. In these words is shown the perfection of his devotion, both with respect to the time of the sacrifice, because he rose at the break of day in accordance with Psalms 5:5: "I will stand before You in the morning" and so on, and with respect to the manner of the offering, because he offered holocausts, which were totally burnt for the honor of God—for a total burning, as it were, is called a holocaust—leaving no portion to be used by the one offering the sacrifice or by the one for whom the sacrifice was offered, as was the case in peace offerings and offerings for sin; †3 and finally, with respect to the number of the sacrifices, because he offered holocausts for each of his sons, for each sin must be expiated by fitting satisfactions.

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Now the text adds the reason for the offering of holocausts, saying *For he*, namely, Job, *was saying* in his heart, being not certain, indeed, but doubtful about the sins of his sons, *Let my sons not have sinned*, namely, in word or deed, *and have blessed God in their hearts*. This expression can be understood in two ways. In one way, the whole text may be understood together, for although it is a good thing to bless God, to bless God over the fact that a man has sinned signifies a will acquiescing in sin, and he is censured on

this score, just as is said against certain people in Zechariah 11:4: "Shepherd the flocks intended for slaughter, which those who had owned them were slaughtering without compassion and selling, saying, 'Blessed be the Lord! We have become rich.'" In another way it may be understood separately, and so the expression *have blessed* is understood "have cursed," for the crime of blasphemy is so horrible that pious lips are afraid to name it by its own name but signify it by its opposite. And fittingly are holocausts offered for the sin of blasphemy, because sins committed against God must be purged with a mark of divine respect.

p 75

Now it usually happens that divine worship is performed devoutly by some people if it should be rare, but when it is frequent it comes into distaste, and this is the sin of sloth, namely, when someone is saddened over a spiritual task. ¶4 Job was not indeed subject to this vice, for there is added *So was Job doing every day*, preserving, as it were, a devotion which persevered in divine worship.

p 75

(6) Now on a certain day when the sons of God had come to stand in the presence of the Lord, Satan too was present among them. (7) And the Lord said to him: Where are you coming from? And he said in response: I have gone about the earth and walked through it. (8) And the Lord said to him: Have you considered my servant Job, that there is no one like him on earth? A simple and straightforward man, fearing God and withdrawing from evil. (9) And Satan said to Him in response: Does Job fear God in vain? (10) Have You not built a wall around him and his house and his whole substance in a circle? You have blessed the works of his hands and his property has increased on the earth. (11) But stretch out Your hand a little and touch all that he possesses. If he does not bless You to Your face . . . (12) The Lord said to Satan, then: Look! Everything that he has is in your hand; only against him do not stretch out your hand.

p 76

After Blessed Job's prosperity has been recounted, his adversity is posited, and first is introduced its cause. And lest anyone think that the adversities of just men come about without divine providence and for this reason decide that human affairs are not subject to providence, it is premised how God has a care for human affairs and dispenses them. Now this premise is proposed symbolically and enigmatically, in keeping with the usage of Sacred Scripture, which describes spiritual things under the figures of corporeal things, as is clear in Isaiah 6:1: "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne lifted up high"; in the beginning of Ezekiel, ¶5 and in many other places. Now although spiritual things are proposed under the figures of corporeal things, nevertheless the truths intended about spiritual things through sensible figures belong not to the mystical but to the literal sense, because the literal sense is that which is primarily intended by the words, whether they are used properly or figuratively. ¶6

p 76

Now one should know that divine providence governs things through such an order that it dispenses the lower beings through the higher ones, for bodies which are able to be generated and corrupted are subject to the motion of heavenly bodies, and similarly, the lower rational spirits united to mortal bodies, namely, souls, are administered through higher incorporeal spirits. ¶7 Now Church tradition has it that among the incorporeal spirits are certain good ones who, preserving the purity in which they were created, enjoy divine glory, never departing from the will of God. And these spirits, indeed, in the Scriptures sometimes are called angels, that is, messengers, ¶8 because they announce divine messages to men, but sometimes are called sons of God inasmuch as they are likened to God through participation in His glory. Now certain spirits are evil—not by nature or by creation, since the author of both natures is God and the Supreme Good can be the cause of only good things, but they are evil through their own fault. Now such spirits are called demons in the Scriptures, and the foremost of them is called the devil—falling down, as it were ¶9-or

else Satan, that is, adversary. †10 Each class of spirits, therefore, moves men to certain actions, the good spirits indeed to good actions but the evil spirits to evil. And just as men are moved by God through the agency of the spirits mentioned above, so too the things which are done through men are said in the Scriptures to be referred to divine examination through the mediation of the same spirits. Therefore, to show that both the good and the bad things which men do are subject to divine judgment, the text says *Now on a certain day when the sons of God had come to stand in the presence of the Lord, Satan too was present among them.*

p 77

Now one should know that angels, who here are called *the sons of God*, are said to stand in the presence of the Lord in two ways: in one way inasmuch as they behold God, as it is written in Daniel 7:10: "Thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and a million stood in His presence"; in another way, inasmuch as the angels themselves and their actions are beheld by God, for those who stand in the presence of some master both behold him and are beheld by him. In the first way, then, the term "to stand in the presence of" fits only the blessed angels who enjoy the vision of God, and not even all of these but only those who are among the higher angels, who enjoy the vision of God more intimately and do not go out to external ministries, according to the opinion of Dionysius; †11 hence, those "standing in the presence" are distinguished from those ministering, on the previously cited authority of Daniel. In the second way, however, the verb "to stand in the presence of" fits not only all the good angels but also the bad ones, and even men, because whatever they do is subject to divine inspection and examination. And on this account it is said that *when the sons of God had come to stand in the presence of the Lord, Satan too was present among them.* And although the things which are administered through the good or through the bad angels are continuously subject to divine inspection and examination, and in this sense the sons of God always stand in His presence and Satan is present among them, nevertheless, *on a certain day* is said following the usage of Scripture, which sometimes designates things which are beyond time through time, in conformity with some things which are said in time. For example, in the beginning of Genesis, God is said to have said some things on the first or on the second day, even though His speaking is eternal, because the things which are said by Him happened in time. †12 So too here, because the deed which is intended here existed in a determined time, the administrators of this deed are said to have stood in the presence of the Lord *on a certain day*, although they never cease to stand in His presence. One should consider also that the things which are done through the good angels are referred to God's judgment in one way, the things done through the bad angels in another. For the good angels intend that the things which they do be referred to God. Therefore it is said that the sons of God came *to stand in the presence of the Lord* as if submitting everything to divine judgment on their own motion and intention. The bad angels, however, do not intend to refer the things which they do to God. Rather, it happens against their will that whatever they do is submitted to divine judgment. Therefore, it is not said of Satan that he came to stand in the presence of the Lord but only that *he was present among them.* Now it is said that he stood *among them* both because of the parity of their nature and to suggest that evils are not from the principal intention [of God] but come upon good men as if by accident.

p 78

Now there is a difference between the things which are done through good angels and through bad, for good angels do only that to which they are moved by divine will and command, for in all things they follow the divine will. Bad angels, however, are in disharmony with God in their will. Hence, the things which they do are inimical to God with respect to their intention. And because we do not usually ask questions about things which we ourselves are doing but rather about things which happen apart from us, the text does not say that the Lord asked anything of the sons of God but only of Satan. This is the point of adding *And the Lord said to him: Where are you coming from?* And one should note that the Lord does not say to him "What are you doing?" or "Where are you?" but *Where are you coming from?*, because those very deeds which are taken care of by demons sometimes come about according to divine will when, through them, evil men are punished or good men are tested. But the intention of the demons is always evil

and inimical to God. Therefore, Satan is asked *Where are you coming from?* because his intention, from which proceeds his whole activity, is inimical to God.

p 78

Now one should know that speaking is taken in two ways, for sometimes it refers to a concept of the heart, whereas other times it refers to the signification by which such a concept is expressed to another. According to the first way, then, God's speaking is eternal, and it is nothing else but the generation of the Son Who is His Word. Now in the second way God says some things temporally, yet differently, as befits those to whom He is speaking. For to men having corporeal senses God has sometimes spoken in a corporeal sound formed in some subject creature, as, for example, His voice sounded at Christ's baptism and transfiguration: "This is My beloved Son." †13 Sometimes, however, God has spoken through an imaginary vision, as one reads very often in the Prophets. †14 At still other times He has spoken with an intelligible expression, and one should understand in this way that God spoke to Satan, inasmuch as He makes him understand that the things which he does are seen by God.

p 79

Therefore, just as God's speaking to Satan is a furnishing of knowledge to him, so Satan's responding to God is not, of course, the transmission of knowledge of something to God but a consideration that all of Satan's actions are open to divine inspection, and according to this way of speaking is said *And he said in response: I have gone about the earth and walked through it.* By what the Lord says to Satan, then—*Where are you coming from?*—God examines the devil's intention and actions; by what Satan responds, however—*I have gone about the earth and walked through it*—Satan renders to God an accounting, as it were, of his actions, so that it may be shown from both statements that all the things which are done by Satan are subject to divine providence. Now by Satan's going about is shown his cunning at seeking out those whom he can deceive, according to I Peter 5:8: "Your adversary the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." Now cunning is fittingly denoted by the words *going about* just as simple justice is denoted by the word *straight*, for the *straight* is "that whose mean does not exceed the extremes." †15 Because, then, a just man's action is not inconsistent with its source, which is the will, and with its intended end, straightforwardness is fittingly ascribed to just men. Now it is the mark of cunning men to pretend one thing and to intend another, and so, that which they demonstrate as a result of their work exceeds the extremes when it does not agree either with the will or with the end. Hence, cunning people are rightly said to go about, and on this account is written "Impious men walk in a circle." †16 One should know, however, that although the devil uses the keenness of his cunning against all men, both good and evil, he achieves the effect of his cunning in the case of evil men alone, who are rightly called "earth." For since man is composed of a spiritual nature and of earthly flesh, man's evil consists in clinging to the earthly goods which belong to him by virtue of his earthly flesh after he has abandoned the spiritual goods towards which he is ordered by virtue of his rational mind. Therefore evil men, inasmuch as they follow earthly nature, are rightly called earth. Satan, then, not only goes about such earth but also walks through it, because in earthly men he completes the effect of his malice. For in walking through is designated the completion of the process itself, just as on the contrary it is said of just men that God walks among them. Hence, the Apostle in II Corinthians 6:16 remarks: "I will dwell in their midst and I will walk among them."

p 79

Another meaning can also be understood from this passage, for the state of the living is threefold: some are above the earth, that is, in heaven, such as the angels and all the blessed; others are on the earth, such as men living in mortal flesh; whereas still others are under the earth, such as the demons and all the damned. Satan neither goes about nor walks through the first group, then, because among the citizens of heaven there can be no malice, just as in heavenly bodies there is found no evil of nature. †17 Now he walks through those who are in hell, but he does not go about them, because he holds them totally subject to his malice, and so it is not necessary to use any cunning to deceive them. Those who are on earth, however, he

malice, and so it is not necessary to use any cunning to deceive them. Those who are on earth, however, he both goes about and walks through, because he tries to deceive them with cunning and attracts some of them to his malice, and these are especially designated by the word "earth," as has been said.

p 80

And that earthly men are designated by the word "earth" is shown clearly enough by the fact that the Lord seems to separate Job from earth, even though he lives on earth. For when Satan had said *I have gone about the earth and walked through it*, there is added *And the Lord said to him: Have you considered my servant Job, that there is no one like him on earth?* For it would seem to have been asked in vain whether one who was claiming that he had gone about and walked through the earth had considered Job, unless God understood His servant Job to be outside the earth. And He shows manifestly in what sense Job is separated from earth in the expression *my servant Job*. For man has been set in the middle, as it were, between God and earthly things, for with his mind he clings to God, whereas by his flesh he is joined to earthly things. Now every mean between two extremes withdraws from one the closer it approaches the other. Therefore, the closer man clings to God the more removed he is from earth. Now to be a servant of God is to cling to God with the mind, for a servant is one who does not exist for his own sake. †18 But he who clings to God with his mind orders himself toward God as a servant of love, not of fear.

p 80

And one should note that earthly affections imitate remotely in some way spiritual affections by which the mind is joined to God, but they can in no way arrive at a similarity with them. For earthly love, and consequently every affection, falls short of the love of God, for love is the source of any affection. Hence, after God has fittingly said *Have you considered My servant Job* is added *that there is no one like him on earth?*, because nothing among earthly things can equal the spiritual. And yet, this passage could also be understood otherwise. For in each saint is some preeminence of virtue with respect to some special practice, on which account we sing in the Church about each of the confessors, "His like has not been found for keeping the law of the Most High," except that in Christ all things were in most perfect excellence. And in this way it can be understood that not one of those living on earth was like Job, inasmuch as Job was preeminent with respect to some practice of virtue. Now the text shows in what way Job was the servant of God and no one on earth was like him when it adds *A simple and straightforward man, fearing God and withdrawing from evil*, which, because these words have been explained above, may be dismissed for the present.

p 81

Now one should consider that God not only orders the life of just men to their own good but also makes it conspicuous to others. But those beholding it are not affected toward it in the same way, for good men, having it as an example, profit from it, whereas evil men, if they are not corrected to become good by its example, fall short of the examined life of the saints, either when they are tormented with envy or when they attempt to pervert it with false judgments, according to the Apostle, II Corinthians 2:15: "We are the good fragrance of Christ to God, both in those who are saved and in those who perish; for some indeed we are the fragrance of death in death, but for others the fragrance of life in life." So, then, God wants the life of the saints to be considered not only by the elect for the progress of their salvation but also by the iniquitous for the aggravation of their damnation, because by comparison with the life of the saints the perversity of the impious is shown to be worthy of condemnation, according to the text of Wisdom 4:16: "The just man who has died condemns the impious who survive." Therefore, the Lord says to Satan *Have you considered My servant Job*, and so on, as if to say: You do indeed go about the earth and walk through it, but only My servant Job can you consider and wonder at his virtue.

p 81

Now the practice of perverse men, whose prince is Satan and whose role he plays here, is usually such that, because they cannot reproach the life of the saints, they calumniate them, charging that they do not act

from a right intention, according to the text of Ecclesiasticus 11:33: "Turning good things to evil he lies in wait, and he will throw blame on the elect." And this appears clear from the addition *And Satan said to Him in response: Does Job fear God in vain?*, as if to say: I cannot deny that Job does good deeds, but he does not do them from the right intention, because of love and honor for You, but because of the temporal things which he has attained from You. Therefore, he says *Does Job fear God in vain?*, for we are said to do in vain that from which we are not able to attain what we intend. Now Job serves You because of the temporal things which he has attained from You. Hence it is not in vain that he fears You by serving You.

p 82

And that Job has attained temporal prosperity Satan shows in two respects. First he shows it with respect to his immunity from evils, namely, because he had been preserved by God from every adversity. This is the point of saying *Have You not built a wall around*, that is, have You not protected, *him* as a wall or rampart protects, with respect to his person, *and his house* with respect to his offspring and household, *and his whole substance* with respect to his possessions. Satan also adds *in a circle* so that the immunity may be shown to be perfect, because whatever is walled in in a circle cannot be attacked successfully from any direction. Second, he shows his prosperity with respect to the multiplication of his goods, and this is the point of saying *You have blessed the works of his hands*. And indeed, since God does everything by speaking, God's blessing is a bestowal of goodness on things. Therefore, God blesses someone's works when He brings them to the good so that they may achieve their due end. And since some good things come to a man without his effort or intention, he adds *and his property has increased on the earth*. So, then, Satan calumniates the deeds of blessed Job as if he did them from an intention of earthly good. Hence, it is manifest that the good things which we do are not referred to earthly prosperity as to a reward; otherwise, it would not be a perverse intention if someone were to serve God because of temporal prosperity. But in a like manner of speaking, temporal adversity is not the proper punishment for sins, and the discussion in the whole book will generally concern this point.

p 82

Now Satan wants to show by its opposite that Job had served God because of the earthly prosperity which he had attained, for if Job were to stop fearing God when the earthly prosperity ceased, it would become manifest that he feared God because of the earthly prosperity which he was enjoying. Therefore, he adds *But stretch out Your hand a little and touch all which he possesses*, namely, by taking it away. *If he does not bless You to Your face*, that is, curse You manifestly, supply "let evil befall me." And one should note that as a result of great adversity the hearts of even truly just men are sometimes moved, but merely pretended just men are disturbed as a result of a trifling adversity as if they have no root of virtue. Therefore, Satan means to imply that Job was not truly just but merely pretending to be, and so he says that if he should be touched even a little by adversity he would murmur against God, that is, blaspheme Him. And he says expressly *If he does not bless You to Your face . . .*, to signify that even in prosperity he blasphemed God in his heart in a way when he preferred temporal goods to His love, but when his prosperity had been removed he would blaspheme Him even to His face, that is, manifestly. And this expression, *If he does not bless You to Your face, . . .* can also be understood otherwise, so that blessing may be taken literally and the sense may be: If You should touch him just a little by taking away his earthly prosperity, may these evils befall me if it should not become manifest that he blessed You before not in his true heart but in his face, that is, in the sight of men.

p 83

And because, as has been said, the Lord wants the virtue of the saints to be known to all men, both good and bad, it pleased Him that just as everyone had seen Job's good deeds, so too his right intention should be made manifest to all; therefore, He wanted to deprive Job of his earthly prosperity so that when he persevered in the fear of God it would be made manifest that he feared God from the right intention and not because of temporal goods. But one should know that God punishes evil men through both good and bad angels, but He never brings adversity on good men except through bad angels; therefore, He did not want

angels, but he never brings adversity on good men except through bad angels, therefore, he did not want adversity to be imposed upon blessed Job except through Satan, and on this account is added *The Lord said to Satan, then: Look! Everything that he has is in your hand*, that is, I hand it over to your power; *only against him do not stretch out your hand*. From this verse one is manifestly given to understand that Satan cannot harm just men as much as he wishes but only as much as he is permitted. One should also consider that the Lord did not order Satan to strike Job but only gave him the power, because "the will to do harm is in any evil man on his own, but the power is only from God." [†19](#)

p 83

It is clear, then, from what has been said before, that this was the cause of blessed Job's adversity—that his virtue should be made manifest to all. Hence, it is also said of Tobias at 11:12 that "The Lord permitted him to be tempted so that the example of his patience might be given to posterity just as that of holy Job." Now one should be careful not to believe that the Lord was induced by Satan's words to permit Job to be afflicted. On the contrary, He ordained it in His eternal disposition to manifest Job's virtue against all the calumnies of impious men; therefore, the calumny is premised and the divine permission follows.

p 83

And Satan departed from the presence of the Lord. (13) Now when on a certain day his sons and daughters were dining and drinking wine in the house of their first-born brother, (14) a messenger came to Job to say: The oxen were plowing and the asses were grazing next to them, (15) and the Sabaeans rushed in and took everything and cut down the herdsmen with the sword, and I alone escaped to tell you. (16) And while that man was still speaking a second came and said: God's fire came down from heaven and consumed sheep and shepherds alike by its stroke, and I alone escaped to tell you. (17) But while that man was still speaking another came and said: The Chaldaeans formed three squadrons and they attacked the camels and took them and also cut down the drivers with the sword, and I alone escaped to tell you. (18) He was still speaking and behold, another messenger entered and said: While your sons and daughters were dining and drinking wine in the house of their brother, (19) suddenly a strong wind rushed in from the direction of the desert and shook the four corners of the house, and collapsing it crushed your children and they are dead, and I alone escaped to tell you.

p 84

After the reason for blessed Job's adversity has been posited, next is shown how such adversity overcame him. And because the whole adversity was imposed through Satan, it is said of him first *And Satan departed from the presence of the Lord*, as if to use the power permitted to him. And it is said expressly that he *departed from the presence of the Lord*, for Satan, inasmuch as the power to harm anyone is permitted to him, is in the presence of the Lord because this happens in accordance with the reasonable will of God, but when he executes the power permitted to him he leaves the presence of the Lord, because he withdraws from the intention of the one permitting him. This point is apparent in the design of the text. For it was permitted to him by God that he be able to harm Job in order to manifest his virtue. Satan did not afflict him on this account, however, but to provoke him to impatience and blasphemy. Now at the same time, in this text, what we said above appears manifestly to be true—that Satan was present among the sons of God, standing before Him in the sense that some are said to stand before Him inasmuch as they are subject to divine judgment and examination, not in the sense that those who see God are said to stand in God's presence. Hence, here too it is not said that Satan cast God from his presence but that he *departed from the presence of the Lord*, as if withdrawing from the intention of His providence, even if he was unable to escape the order of providence.

p 84

Now one should consider that in narrating Job's adversity the opposite order is observed to that in which his prosperity had been narrated. For in the narration of the prosperity the author proceeded from the greater to the lesser examples. beginning with the person of Job himself. and after this he posited his

offspring and then the animals, first the sheep and then the others, and reasonably so, because the permanence which cannot be maintained in person is sought in one's offspring, for whose sustenance there is need of possessions. In the adversity, however, the list is proposed in the opposite order, for the loss of substance is narrated first; second, the crushing of his offspring; third, the affliction of his own person, and this arrangement contributes to the augmentation of the adversity, for one who has been crushed by a greater adversity does not feel a smaller one, but after a smaller one a greater is felt all the more. And therefore, in order that Job might feel its own peculiar affliction from each individual adversity and in this way be more moved to impatience, Satan began to afflict Job with the smaller adversity and proceeded little by little to the greater.

p 85

One should also consider that a man's spirit is more moved by these adversities which overcome him suddenly, for anticipated adversities are more easily tolerated. Therefore, in order that Job might be more moved, Satan imposed adversity upon him at a time of the greatest enjoyment, when it was less possible for one to be reflecting upon adversity, so that the adversity might appear even graver compared to the present enjoyment itself. For "contraries placed next to each other shine forth all the more." †20 And therefore the text says *Now when on a certain day his sons and daughters were dining and drinking wine*, which is especially posited as an indication of their enjoyment, according to Ecclesiasticus 31:35: "Wine was created for enjoyment, not for drunkenness, from the beginning"; *in the house of their first-born brother*, which is posited to lend even greater solemnity. For it is probable that in the home of the first-born a banquet was celebrated more solemnly; *a messenger came to Job to say: The oxen were plowing, so that the loss might seem more intolerable because of the mention of profit, and the asses were grazing next to them*, which is also posited to increase his pain when he considered that the enemy overcame them at a time when they could seize more property at once; *and the Sabaeans, namely, enemies coming from far off, from whom what they had seized could not easily be recovered, rushed in and took everything*, so that if they had left any at all they would not even be sufficient for necessary use and breeding-stock; *and cut down the herdsmen with the sword*, which was a rather grave matter for a just man; *and I alone escaped to tell you*, as if to say: Therefore, it happened by divine disposition that I alone escaped so that you could have the news of so great a loss, as if God intends to afflict you with pain.

p 85

Now immediately after the announcement of this adversity a second is announced, lest, if some interval might intervene meanwhile, he might return to his composure and prepare himself for the suffering and so sustain more easily what follows. And on this account is added *And while that man was still speaking, a second came and said: God's fire*, that is, fire sent by God, *came down from heaven*, so that it might be impressed upon his mind, as it were, that he was suffering persecution not only by men but by God, and so that in this way he might more easily be provoked against God; *and consumed sheep and shepherds alike by its stroke*, as if it were divinely procured that everything be consumed immediately at the touch of the fire, which is beyond the natural power of fire; *and I alone escaped to tell you*. There follows *But while that man was still speaking another came and said: The Chaldaean [came]*, who were fierce and powerful, and to show their power the text adds *[they] formed three squadrons*, so that neither vengeance nor recovery of the loss could be expected. Concerning this loss the text adds *and they attacked the camels and took them and also cut down the drivers with the sword, and I alone escaped to tell you*. The text about the crushing of his offspring follows: *He was still speaking, and behold, another messenger entered and said: While your sons and daughters were dining and drinking wine in the house of their brother*, so that their death would be sadder because Job could be uncertain whether they had been overtaken by death in the state of some sin. For he was sanctifying them and offering holocausts for each one for this very reason, because he feared that they had incurred some sin at their banquets. And lest perchance it could be believed that they repented and provided for their souls, the text adds *suddenly a strong wind rushed in from the direction of the desert and shook the four corners of the house*. This is said to show the force of the wind which beyond usual experience overturned the whole house at once so that from this unusual

the wind which, beyond usual experience, overthrew the whole house at once so that from this unusual occurrence the collapse may be shown to have proceeded from divine will, and so that he might more easily be moved against God when he was afflicted by Him Whom he had served devotedly. And for the greater accession of pain there is added the loss of his slain offspring when the text says *and collapsing, it crushed your children and they are dead*, namely, all of them, so that no hope at all of posterity might remain in the escape of any of the children. And this situation was believed all the more painful because, although all the children were slain, one of the servants was able to escape to incite pain, for there follows *and I alone escaped to tell you*.

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One should consider, however, that since all the adversity just mentioned was induced by Satan, it is necessary to confess that, with God's permission, demons can induce turbulence of the air, stir up winds, and make fire fall from heaven. For although corporeal matter does not obey at their nod either the good or the bad angels for the assumption of different shapes, but God the creator alone, nevertheless, for local motion corporeal nature was made to obey spiritual nature. †21 An indication of this fact appears in man, for at the command of the will alone his members move to carry out the work disposed by the will. Whatever can be done with local motion alone, then, not only good spirits but even bad spirits can do through natural power, †22 unless they are divinely prohibited. Now winds and rains and other such disturbances of the air can be effected solely by the motion of vapors released from earth and water. Hence, the natural power of the demon is sufficient to procure such effects. But sometimes they are prohibited from it by divine power so that it is not permitted to them to do all that they naturally can. Nor is this contrary to what is said in Jeremiah 14:22: "Are there not among the idols of the nations any which give rain?" For it is one thing to rain in the natural course of events, which is the province of God alone, Who has ordained natural causes to this end, but it is another thing to use the natural causes ordained by God for raining at one time to produce rain artificially, or at another time to produce wind extraordinarily, as it were.

p 87

(20) Then Job rose up and rent his tunic, and with shorn head, falling to the ground he worshipped, (21) and he said: Naked I came from the womb of my mother; naked will I return there. The Lord has given; the Lord has taken away; as it has pleased the Lord, so has it been done. Blessed be the name of the Lord! (22) In all these adversities Job did not sin with his lips, nor did he speak anything foolish against God.

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After the adversity of blessed Job has been narrated, there is a discussion here of the patience which he demonstrated in adversity. Now as evidence of the things which are said here, one should know that concerning corporeal goods and concerning the passions of the spirit the opinion of ancient philosophers was different. For the Stoics said that external goods are not the goods of man and that there could be no sadness in the spirit of the wise man over their loss. The opinion of the Peripatetics, however, was that external goods are indeed a kind of goods for man—not his principal goods, of course, but ordered as it were instrumentally toward the principal good of man, which is the good of his mind. And on this account they conceded that the wise man is moderately saddened at the loss of external goods, namely, in such a way that his reason is not engrossed through sadness so that it deviates from straightforwardness. And this opinion is the truer one and agrees with Church doctrine, as is clear in Augustine in his book *City of God*. †23

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Following this opinion, then, Job indeed displayed sadness in adversity, yet such moderate sadness that it was subject to reason, and therefore it is said that *Then Job rose up and rent his tunic*, which among men is usually an indication of sadness. One should note, however, that he says *Then*, namely, after hearing of the death of his children, so that he seems to have been pained over them more than over the loss of his

property. For not to be pained over dead loved-ones seems to be the mark of a hard and insensitive heart, but it is the mark of a virtuous man to experience this not immoderate pain, according to the Apostle in I Thessalonians 4:13: "We do not want you to be in ignorance about those sleeping in death so that you may not be saddened just as the others who have no hope." And this was the disposition in blessed Job. Hence, the state of his mind appeared through his external action. For because his reason stood erect, it is fittingly said that *Job rose up*, although men in pain are more accustomed to prostrate themselves. Because he was in fact suffering sadness, but not a sadness penetrating to the point of disturbing the inmost parts of his reason, he showed in his external actions a sign of his sadness with respect to two things, namely, with respect to things outside the nature of the body, and so the text says *and rent his tunic*, and with respect to things which proceed from the nature of the body, and so the text says *and with shorn head*, which among those who cultivate the hair is usually an indication of pain. Hence, these two signs of sadness correspond fittingly to the premised adversities, for the rending of the tunic corresponds to the loss of property, the shearing of his head to the loss of his children. Now the mind stands erect when it submits humbly to God, for each thing stands at a greater height of nobility the more it stands under its perfective principle, just as air when it submits to light and matter when it submits to form. The fact that the mind of blessed Job had not been cast down through sadness, then, but was persisting in its straightforwardness, is manifested through his humble submission to God, for there follows *falling to the ground, he worshipped* to demonstrate an indication of his humility and devotion.

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And he declared the state of his mind not only with deeds but with words, for he demonstrated rationally that although he was suffering sadness he did not have to succumb to sadness. He demonstrated it first, indeed, from the condition of nature. Hence, the text says *and he said: Naked I came from the womb of my mother*, namely, of the earth, which is the common mother of all; *naked will I return there*, that is, into the earth. And according to this way of speaking, the text of Ecclesiasticus 40:1 says, "A great occupation was created for men and a grave yoke upon the sons of Adam from the day of their coming forth from the womb of their mother to the day of their burial in the mother of all." The text can also be understood otherwise, so that the expression *from the womb of my mother* may be taken literally to refer to the womb of the mother who bore him, whereas in the clause *naked will I return there* it is understood that the word *there* has a simply relative sense. For no one returns again into the womb of his mother, but he does return into that state which he occupied in the womb of his mother in one respect, namely, in respect to the fact that he is a being estranged from human association. Saying this, then, he shows reasonably that a man ought not to be engrossed by sadness because of the loss of external goods, because external goods are not connatural with him but come to him accidentally. This is clear from the fact that man comes into this world without them and goes out of it without them. Hence, if the substantial good should remain when accidental goods have been taken away, a man ought not to be overcome by sadness even if sadness should touch him.

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Second, he shows the same thing from the divine operation, saying *The Lord has given; the Lord has taken away*, and here first his true opinion about divine providence concerning human affairs should be considered. For in the statement *The Lord has given* he confessed that worldly prosperity comes to men not casually nor according to the fate of the stars nor as a result of human effort alone but from divine dispensation, whereas in the statement *the Lord has taken away* he confesses that worldly adversities among men also come about by the judgment of divine providence. Now he introduces the notion that man has no just complaint with God if he should be despoiled of his temporal goods because He Who gave them freely could bestow them either for a time or to the end. Hence, when He takes away temporal goods from a man before the end, the man cannot complain.

p 89

Third, he shows the same thing from the good pleasure of the divine will, saying *as it has pleased the*

third, he shows the same thing from the good pleasure of the divine will, saying *as it has pleased the Lord, so has it been done*. Now it is the mark of friends to want and to reject the same things. Hence, if it proceeds from divine good pleasure that someone be despoiled of his temporal goods, if he loves God he ought to conform his own will to the divine will, so that considering this he should not be engrossed by sadness.

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These three reasons, then, are posited in due order, for in the first reason it is posited that temporal goods are extraneous to a man; in the second, that they are given to a man and taken away by God; in the third, that this happens according to the good pleasure of divine will. Hence, from the first reason it is concluded that a man ought not to be engrossed by sadness because of the loss of temporal goods; from the second that he cannot even complain; from the third that he ought even to rejoice. For it would not be pleasing to God that anyone suffer adversity except for the sake of some good coming from it. Hence, although adversity is bitter in itself and generates sadness, it still ought to be agreeable in consideration of its usefulness on account of which it pleases God, just as it is said of the apostles in Acts 5:41 that "The apostles went rejoicing," and so on. For even over the taking of bitter medicine a person rejoices with reason because of the hope of health, although he is repelled in the sense of taste. And because joy is matter for giving thanks, he concludes this third reason in thanksgiving, saying *Blessed be the name of the Lord!* The name of the Lord is blessed by men, indeed, inasmuch as they have knowledge of His goodness, namely, that He dispenses all things well and does nothing unjustly.

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In this way, then, Job's innocence is inferred when the text says *In all these adversities Job did not sin with his lips*, namely, expressing in words the emotion of impatience, *nor did he speak anything foolish*, that is, blasphemous, *against God*, namely, blaspheming divine providence. For foolishness is opposed to wisdom, which is properly the knowledge of divine matters.

Chapter Two

p 91

(1) Now on a certain day when the sons of God had come and were standing in the presence of the Lord, when Satan also had come among them and was standing in His sight, it happened (2) that the Lord said to Satan: Where are you coming from? And he said in response: I have gone about the earth and walked through it. (3) And the Lord said to Satan: Have you considered My servant Job, that there is no one like him on earth? A simple and straightforward man, fearing God and withdrawing from evil, and still retaining his innocence. But you stirred Me against him to afflict him in vain. (4) And Satan said to Him in response: Skin for skin and all that a man has he will give for his soul; (5) but send forth Your hand and touch his bone and flesh, and then You will see that he has blessed You to Your face. (6) The Lord said to Satan, then: Look! He is in your hand—but preserve his soul.

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Since man's good is threefold, namely, of the soul, of the body, and of external things, they are ordered toward one another in such a way that the body is for the sake of the soul whereas external things are for the sake of the body and the soul. Therefore, just as it is wrong if someone intentionally subordinates the

the sake of the body and the soul. Therefore, just as it is wrong if someone intentionally subordinates the goods of the soul to the advantage of external goods, so it is wrong if someone intentionally subordinates the goods of the soul to the health of the body. And indeed, that Job abounded in the practice of the virtues, which are the goods of the soul, could be sensibly manifest to all. Hence, the Lord had said above to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job" [1:8], and so on. But Satan was inferring calumny, as if Job were devoting himself to acts of virtue because of temporal goods, just as evil men, also, whose prince is Satan, pass pernicious judgment on the intention of good men. But this calumny had been refuted because he still remained steadfast in virtue after the loss of his external goods, and as a result of this steadfastness it was sufficiently shown that his intention had not been turned aside toward external goods. It remained to be shown, then, for a perfect demonstration of Job's virtue, that his intention had not even been turned to the health of his own body. Therefore, once again is introduced the divine judgment by which this fact is manifested. This, then, is the point of saying *Now on a certain day when the sons of God had come and were standing in the presence of the Lord, when Satan also had come among them and was standing in His sight, it happened that the Lord said to Satan: Where are you coming from?* It is not necessary to linger too long on these words since they have been explained above, [†1](#) except to note that because of another action another day is introduced here, just as in the beginning of Genesis different days are also assigned according to the different kinds of things which were being created. [†2](#) Now what Satan responded under examination is shown next when the text says *And he said in response: I have gone about the earth and walked through it.* And this text is interpreted as above. [†3](#)

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And again the Lord proposes Job's virtue to him as remarkable, as above. Hence follows *And the Lord said to Satan: Have you considered My servant Job, that there is no one like him on earth? A simple and straightforward man, fearing God and withdrawing from evil.* But because now a certain virtue of blessed Job had been manifested which had not been manifest before, namely, his constancy in adversity, the text therefore adds *and still*, namely, after the loss of his temporal goods, *retaining his innocence*. From this assertion the Lord shows further that Satan's suspicion had been slanderous and his intention had been frustrated. Hence follows *But you stirred Me against him to afflict him in vain*. Now one should not understand from this statement, *you stirred Me against him*, that God is provoked by anyone to want what He did not want before, as is usual among men—for the text of Numbers 23:19 says that "God is not like man so that He lies, nor like the son of man so that He changes"—but Scripture here speaks figuratively of God's acting in a human manner, for when men want to do something because of someone they are said to be stirred by him. Now God indeed does just as He wants, one thing for the sake of another, but without any stirring of His mind, because from eternity He has had in mind what He was going to do for what purpose. [†4](#) The Lord had disposed from eternity, then, to afflict Job temporally to demonstrate the truth of his virtue, so that every calumny of malicious men would be excluded. Hence, to signify this fact the text says here, *But you stirred Me against him*. Now the phrase *to afflict him in vain* should be understood with respect to Satan's intention, not with respect to God's. For Satan had contrived Job's adversity intending to lead him by it into impatience and blasphemy, which he had not achieved. God, however, had permitted this adversity to declare his virtue, and this had happened. So, then, Job was afflicted in vain with respect to Satan's intention but not with respect to God's.

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Now the thwarted Satan does not rest there but still devises calumny, wishing to show that all the good deeds which Job had done—even the very fact that he had tolerated adversity patiently—he had done not for the love of God but for the safety of his own body. Hence follows *And Satan said to him in response: Skin for skin and all that a man has he will give for his soul.* Now one should consider that Job had been doubly afflicted, namely, in the loss of his possessions and in the loss of his children. Satan intends to say, then, that Job had patiently tolerated both afflictions for the safety of his own body, and this was not the mark of great virtue but was only human and usual among men. This is the point of saying *a man*, as if anyone at all, even one who is not virtuous, will easily give *skin for skin*, that is, someone else's flesh for

his own. For a man who is not virtuous holds out when any other persons, even those most closely related to him, are afflicted bodily rather than he himself. And similarly, any man at all will give all the external goods he possesses *for his soul*, that is, for the preservation of his life. For external goods are sought for the preservation of life, as a supply of food, clothing, and other such things by which man's life is preserved comfortably.

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And since someone could say to Satan, "How can it be proved that Job bore the loss of his children and possessions patiently out of fear for his own skin and his own life?", as if responding to this question he adds *but*, that is to say: If you do not believe my unsupported word, *send forth Your hand*, that is, exercise Your power, *and touch his bone and flesh*, that is, afflict him in his body, not just superficially, as could be signified by touching the flesh, but deeply, as is signified by touching the bone, namely, so that the touch reaches the inmost parts; *and then You will see*, that is, it will be able to be seen manifestly by all, *that he has blessed You to Your face*; this expression should be explained as above. †5

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The Lord wanted to show, then, that Job had not served God because of the safety of his body, just as He had shown above that Job did not serve Him because of external goods. †6 Hence is added *The Lord said to Satan, then: Look! He is in your hand*, that is, I turn over to you the power of afflicting him in the body, *but preserve his soul*, that is, do not take his life from him. For God does not expose His servants to Satan's will totally but in fitting measure, according to the Apostle in I Corinthians 10:13: "He is a faithful God who will not allow you to be tempted beyond your strength."

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(7) *Satan, then, having departed from the presence of the Lord, struck Job with an ulcer most harmful, from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. (8) And he scraped the bloody matter with a shard, sitting on a dung-heap. (9) Now his wife said to him: Do you still persist in your integrity? Bless God and die. (10) And he said to her: You have spoken like one of the foolish women. If we have received good things from the hand of the Lord, why should we not endure the bad? In all these speeches Job did not sin with his lips. (11) Three friends of Job, then, hearing about all the evil which had befallen him, came each from his own place: Eliphaz the Themanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For they had agreed that, coming together, they would visit him and console him. (12) And when they had raised their eyes, from a distance they did not recognize him, and crying out they wept, and having rent their garments they scattered dust over their heads to heaven. (13) And they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his pain was powerful.*

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Having received the power, Satan proceeds to its execution. Hence, the text says *Satan, then, having departed from the presence of the Lord, struck Job* a foul and abominable blow. Hence, also, the text says *with an ulcer*, incurable and painful. Hence, the text says also *most harmful*, and universal, *from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head*.

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Now the afflictions of the sick are usually alleviated by remedies applied externally and by pleasant surroundings, but Job was not alleviated in this way, for there follows *And he scraped the bloody matter with a shard*, in which it is shown that soothing and pleasant medications were not applied to him; *sitting on a dung-heap*, by which it is shown that he was not being restored to health either by the comfort of his location or by the softness of his bedding or by the odor of any sweet fragrance, but rather he was experiencing the opposite. Now this situation can have come about for two reasons—either because, having been stricken by the Lord he afflicted and humbled himself even more harshly of his own accord in

order to obtain mercy more easily, or because he had lost everything that he had and hence was unable to afford himself fitting remedies. The latter is sufficiently probable in view of what the Lord said above. †7 Nor does it seem that Satan did anything less than the power granted to him to do harm.

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The afflictions of men are also usually relieved by consoling words, but exasperating words are spoken to the afflicted Job, so much more provoking as they are proffered by a person close to him. For there follows *Now his wife*, the only one whom the devil (who had cast down the first man through a woman) †8 had left alive in order that through her he might upset the mind of the just man, *said to him*. Now first she bursts forth in these words of derision, saying *Do you still persist in your integrity*, as if to say: At least after so many scourges you ought to recognize that it was useless for you to preserve your integrity, as is also said in the character of certain persons in Malachi 3:14: "Whoever serves God is a fool, and what profit is there that we have kept His commandments?" Second, she proceeds to words of perverse suggestion, saying *Bless*, that is, curse *God*, as if to say: Since adversity overcame you while you were blessing God, curse God to gain prosperity. Finally, she concludes in words of desperation, saying *and die*, as if to say: Consider yourself dead, since nothing is left to you who persist in integrity but that you should die. Or in another sense, *Bless God and die*, that is, since after such great reverence for God you have been afflicted with adversity this way, if you still bless God, nothing remains but that you await death.

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Now the holy man who had born his own discomforts patiently could not bear an insult to God, for there follows *And he said to her: You have spoken like one of the foolish women*. Rightly does he charge with foolishness one who was speaking against divine wisdom. Now he shows that she has spoken foolishly, saying *If we have received good things from the hand of the Lord, why should we not endure the bad?*, and in saying this he teaches the perfect wisdom of man. For since temporal and corporeal goods are not to be loved except for the sake of spiritual and eternal goods, as long as the latter are maintained as the more important, one ought not to be downcast if he should be deprived of the former, nor upraised if he should abound in them. Job teaches us, then, to have such great constancy of spirit that we so use temporal goods, if they should be given to us by God, that we not be raised up in pride for this reason, and that we so sustain the opposite evils that our spirit not be cast down on their account, according to the Apostle in II Philipians 4:12: "I know how to handle humiliation and I know how to handle abundance," and later at 4:13: "I can do all things in Him Who comforts me." Next Job's persevering innocence is concluded when the text says *In all these speeches Job did not sin with his lips*.

p 95

Not only through his wife was the devil trying to upset blessed Job's mind, but also through his friends, who, although they came to console him, nevertheless proceeded to words of rebuke, concerning which the text says *Three friends of Job, then, hearing about all the evil which had befallen him, came each from his own place: Eliphaz the Themanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite*. And because among these men almost the whole debate of this book takes place, one should consider that these three men were in some respect of the same opinion as Job; hence, they are called his friends. In another respect they differed from him while agreeing among themselves. Hence, they are counted together with each other and are distinguished from Job. They agreed with Job that not only natural things but also human things were subject to divine providence, but they differed from him because they thought that a man is rewarded by God with earthly prosperity for the good things which he does and that he is punished by God with temporal adversity for the evil things which he does, as if temporal goods are the rewards of virtue and temporal evils are the proper punishments for sin. Now each of them tries to defend this opinion in his own way as each one's own temperament suggested to him. On this account they are said to have come *each from his own place*. Now Job was not of this opinion, but he believed that the good works of men are ordered toward a future spiritual reward after this life and, similarly, that sins are to be punished by future

punishments.

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Now that the friends of Job just mentioned have come to console him is shown from what follows: *For they had agreed that, coming together, they would visit him and console him*, and in this agreement they showed themselves true friends, not failing him in his tribulations, for the text of Ecclesiasticus 12:9 says that "In a man's sadness and bad fortune is a friend recognized." And indeed, at first the visit was consoling, for to see a friend and to feast with him is most pleasant. They also console him by deeds, by showing signs of their compassion toward him. To these signs of compassion is premised an incitement to compassion when the text says *And when they had raised their eyes, from a distance they did not recognize him*, for his face had been transformed by ulcers, his dress and the rest of his general appearance by the loss of his property. Now the expression *from a distance* should be understood as that distance at which a man can still be recognized. Now this transformation of their friend provoked them to sadness and compassion which they showed by signs, for there follows *and crying out*, namely, from the greatness of their pain, *they wept, and having rent their garments, they scattered dust over their heads* as a sign of humility and dejection, as if they reputed themselves cast down by the dejection of their friend. Now the text adds *into heaven*, so that by this humiliation, as it were, they might provoke the mercy of heaven. Now one should consider that the compassion of friends is consoling either because adversity, like some burden, is borne more lightly when it is carried by several, or more likely because every sadness is alleviated by the admixture of pleasure, but it is very pleasant to have the experience of someone's friendship, especially that which is derived from compassion in adversity and therefore affords consolation.

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Now they consoled him not only by showing their compassion but also by offering him their company, for there follows *And they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights*. Yet one should understand that they did not sit continuously but at suitable hours, for great sadness required a long consolation. But the third thing, which is especially consoling, namely, words, they did not offer, for there follows *and no one spoke a word to him*. Now the reason for their silence is shown when the clause *for they saw that his pain was powerful* is added. This reason is given, more consistent with the opinion of the comforters than with the state of the afflicted man, for when someone's mind has been engrossed by pain he does not accept words of consolation. Hence, also, the poet says "Who but a man lacking in intelligence forbids a mother to weep at her son's funeral?" ^{†9} Now Job had not been so disposed that because of his sadness he could not accept consolation, but rather he was consoling himself according to reason, as appears from his words introduced above.

Chapter Three

p 99

(1) Now after this Job opened his mouth and cursed his day. (2) And he said: (3) Perish the day on which I was born, and the night on which it was said: A man has been conceived. (4) Let that day be turned to darkness; let God above not ask after it, and let it not be in recollection nor let it be illumined by the light; (5) let the darkness obscure it and the shadow of death; let the mist seize it and let it be wrapped in

bitterness. (6) Let the dark whirlwind possess that night; let it not be computed in the days of the year nor numbered in the months; (7) let that night be solitary and unworthy of praise; (8) let them curse it who curse the day, who are prepared to rouse Leviathan. (9) Let the stars be darkened by its mist; let it await the light and not see it nor the break of rising dawn, (10) because it did not shut the mouth of the womb which carried me, nor did it take away the evils from before my eyes.

p 99

As was said above, ¶1 concerning the passions of the soul the opinion of the ancients was twofold, for the Stoics said that sadness does not fall upon the wise man, whereas the Peripatetics said that the wise man is indeed saddened, but in sad circumstances he conducts himself moderately, according to reason, and this opinion accords with the truth. For reason cannot remove the condition of nature. Now it is natural to the sensual nature that it be delighted and rejoice in fitting things and be pained and saddened over harmful things. Reason cannot remove this condition, then, but moderates it in such a way that reason does not turn aside from its straightforwardness through sadness. This opinion also accords with Holy Scripture, which posits sadness in Christ, in Whom there is every fullness of virtue and wisdom. ¶2

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So, then, Job did indeed feel sadness as a result of the adversities previously narrated. Otherwise, the virtue of patience would have no place in him, but his reason did not deviate from straightforwardness because of sadness. As a matter of fact, it overcame sadness instead. To show this, then, the text says *Now after this Job opened his mouth*. Now the text says *after this*, that is, after seven days of silence. From this fact it becomes manifest that the words which follow were uttered according to reason undisturbed by sadness, for if they had been spoken from a disturbance of the mind he would have uttered them before, when the force of sadness was more powerful; for any sadness at all is mitigated by length of time and is felt more in the beginning. Hence, on this account he seems to have kept silent for so long a time, in order not to be judged to be speaking from a disturbed mind. And this is also shown by the statement *he opened his mouth*, for when someone speaks under the impulse of passion he does not himself open his mouth but is driven by passion to speak, for not by passion are we masters of our actions but by reason alone. Now by speaking he shows the sadness which he was suffering, for it is usual among wise men that they express according to reason the emotions of passion which they feel, just as Christ said in Matthew 26:38, "My soul is sad to the point of death," and the Apostle says in Romans 7:15, "For I do not do the good which I wish, but I do the evil which I hate." So, too, Boethius in the beginning of *On the Consolation of Philosophy* disclosed his sadness to show how to mitigate it with reason, and so Job disclosed his sadness by speaking. ¶3

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Hence follows *and cursed his day*, which seems to be contrary to that saying of the Apostle in Romans 12:14: "Bless, and curse not." But one should know that cursing is said in several senses, for since cursing [*maledicere*] is nothing else but speaking evil [*malum dicere*], one is said to curse whenever he happens to speak evil. Now it happens that someone speaks evil to another first by speech which causes evil, just as divine speaking is the cause of the things which are said and the sentence of a judge condemning someone is the cause of the penalty of the one who is condemned, and in this way is understood what the Lord said in Genesis 3:17: "The earth has been cursed in your work;" and in Genesis 9:25: "Cursed be Canaan; let him be the slave of his brothers;" and Joshua at 7:25 cursed Achor who had stolen sacred articles. Second, someone curses another by calling down evil upon him or wishing him evil, as one reads in I Kings 17:43 that "the Philistine cursed David in his ways." Third, it happens that someone speaks evil simply by disclosing an evil, either in the past or in the present or in the future, whether truly or falsely. The Apostle, then, prohibits cursing with such a curse as that by which a person calls down evil on someone else or falsely defames him, but not in the way in which a judge condemns a defendant, or someone demonstrates in an orderly way the true evil of some defendant, either by demonstrating a present evil, telling about a past one, or predicting one to come. So, then, one should understand that Job cursed his day because he

past one, or predicting one to come. So, then, one should understand that Job cursed his day because he denounced it as evil, not according to its nature in which it was created by God, but according to that custom of Scripture by which a time is said to be good or evil on the strength of the things which are done at the time, according to that letter of the Apostle to the Ephesians, 5:16: ". . . making the most of your time since the days are evil." Job cursed his day, then, inasmuch as he recollects that evils happened to him on that very day.

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Now the manner in which he cursed it is added: *And he said: Perish the day on which I was born, and the night on which it was said: A man has been conceived.* Now one should know that although being and living, considered in itself, is desirable, yet being and living in misery in a situation of this kind is to be renounced, although sometimes being in misery may be sustained willingly for the sake of some end. Hence, that miserable life which is not ordered toward some good end should in no way be preferred, according to what the Lord says in Matthew 26:24: "It was better for that man had he not been born." Now reason alone comprehends the good which is expected from some misery, but the force of the senses does not perceive it; as, for instance, the sense of taste perceives the bitterness of the medicine but reason alone takes delight in the goal of health. If someone wanted to express the passion of his sense of taste, then, he would denounce the medicine as bad, although his reason would judge it to be good on account of its goal. So, then, the misery which blessed Job was sustaining could indeed seem to reason to be useful with respect to some purpose, but the lower part of the soul, which was affected by this sadness, could totally repudiate the adversity. Hence, even life itself under such adversity was hateful to Job. Now when something is hateful to us we detest everything by which we have come to it, and therefore Job, following the lower part of the soul, whose passion he intended to express at this point, hated both his birth and his conception as a result of which he had come into this life, and consequently both the day of his birth and the night of his conception, according to that way of speaking by which something good or evil is ascribed to a time as a result of the things which are done in that time. So, then, because in accordance with his sensual side he repudiated a life under adversity, Job wished that he had never been born or even conceived, and this is the meaning of *Perish the day on which I was born*, as if he were to say 'Would that I had never been born!,' and *the night on which it was said*, that is, it could truly be said that *a man has been conceived*, that is, 'Would that I had never been conceived!' He even states them in the proper order, because conception is not taken away by taking away birth but the opposite. Fittingly, too, he ascribes conception to the night and birth to the day because, according to astrologers, a birth in the daytime is more praiseworthy, since the more princely star, that is, the sun, stands over the earth at that time, whereas conception is more frequent at night. A similar manner of speaking is used in Jeremiah 20:14: "Cursed be the day on which I was born, and may the day on which my mother bore me not be blessed."

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Having cursed the day of his birth and the night of his conception, then, he proceeds individually with a curse on each one, first with a curse on the day of his birth, saying *Let that day be turned into darkness.* Now one should consider that, as Jerome says in his Prologue, "from the words of Job in which he says 'Perish the day on which I was born' (v. 3) to that place before the end of the volume where is written 'Therefore I reproach myself' [42:6], there are hexameter verses running in dactyl and spondee"; [¶4](#) and so it is clear that from this point on that book is written in the manner of a poem. Hence, through this whole book the author uses the figures and styles which poets customarily use. Now poets, to move their audiences more powerfully, usually introduce different expressions for the same thought. Hence, here, too, Job, to curse his day in the way we are saying, introduces those qualities because of which any day is usually hateful.

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Now the dignity of day is its brightness, for by this quality it is distinguished from night; this dignity, then, he excludes, saying *Let that day be turned to darkness*, a thought, indeed, which on the surface seems

frivolous and vain. For the day of his birth had passed and was no more. Now what has passed is immutable. How, then, could a day which had passed be turned into darkness? But one should know that some things are said in the manner of a wish to express a view which is held about something. So, then, now the text says *Let that day be turned to darkness*, as if it were being said: The day of my birth ought to have been dark to match the darkness of the misery which I am suffering. For because the sight of the light is delightful according to Ecclesiastes 11:7, "Sweet is the light, and delightful to the eyes is it to see the sun," it is the custom in Scripture that sadness is signified by darkness, according to Ecclesiastes 5:16: "He eats in darkness midst many cares, in bitterness and sadness."

p 102

Now a day is bright in many ways—first, indeed, as a result of the sanctification of God, who orders that it be celebrated, as Exodus 20:8 has it: "Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath day." Therefore, Job removes this brightness from the day previously mentioned, saying *Let God above not ask after it*, as if to say: Let God not require of men that they celebrate this day. For some days are required by God to be celebrated because of some remarkable blessing conferred on mankind on that day, such as the Sabbath in the Old Law because of the blessing of creation ^{†5} and Passover because of the blessing of liberation from Egypt. ^{†6} This fact is also manifest in the festivals celebrated in the New Testament. He wants to signify by this passage, then, that his birth ought not to be computed among the remarkable blessings of God, since he seems to have been born more for misery than for happiness. Second, a given day is bright as a result of the recollection of men, for men usually celebrate some days on which some great and enjoyable things have happened to them, as Herod and Pharaoh celebrated their birthdays. ^{†7} This brightness, then, Job removes from the aforementioned day, saying *and let it not be in recollection*, namely, of men, because, of course, nothing enjoyable happened on that day but rather something sad, as appears from the outcome. Third, a day is bright as a result of corporeal illumination, and this brightness, indeed, is taken away in many ways, first of all by withdrawing the rays of the sun illuminating the earth, as appears when the sun is eclipsed, and with respect to this way he says *nor let it be illumined by the light*; second, by the interposition of clouds or some such things hiding the rays of the sun, and with respect to this way he says *let the darkness obscure it*; third, by the failure of the power of sight, for when someone dies or is deprived of sight, with respect to him the brightness of the day is taken away, and with respect to this way he says *and the shadow of death*.

p 103

Now Job explains in two ways the manner of bringing on the aforementioned darkness: first, indeed, with respect to the order, in the expression *let the mist seize it*. For a day is seized by mist when darkness suddenly and unexpectedly is drawn over a day which was shining before, similar to what appears in the life of Job himself; second, with respect to the kind of darkness, in the expression *and let it be wrapped in bitterness*, by which he means that everything which has been said about the darkening should be referred to the darkness of sadness, for Job seems to observe this practice, that he explains a parable by means of something subsequent. By all these wishes, then, he intends to say only that the day of his birth ought not to be judged a day of joy but of grief, since by his birth he came to a life subject to such great adversity.

p 103

After cursing the day of his birth, then, next he curses the night of his conception in a similar manner of speaking, and first he attributes to it the quality by which the night is rendered more horrible. For since the night, because of its darkness, is horrid in itself, the more the darkness of the night increases the more horrid it becomes, which happens when some great storm arises at night. With respect to this condition Job says *Let the dark whirlwind possess that night*, as if he were to say: It would have been fitting that that night be possessed by a dark whirlwind so that it would fit my life, which is wrapped in so great a whirlwind of adversity.

n 104

Next he removes from that night those attributes which seem to belong to the good side of the night, first with respect to the opinion of men. For since men distinguish times according to the things which are done in time, but at night few, or no, events worth remembering take place, a night is not noted in itself in the memories of men but only in connection with a day. This good, then, he removes from the aforementioned night, saying *let it not be computed in the days of the year nor numbered in the months*, as if to say: That night is not worth remembering, since nothing remarkable happened on it but rather something painful. Now among the nights which are kept in the memories of men, some are not only memorable but celebrated and festive as well, on which men congregate to celebrate some feasts, and he removes this advantage, saying *Let that night be solitary*. Now such a congregation of men takes place on a given night in praise and celebration of that night because of some celebrated deed which is recalled to mind on that night, as is done among the faithful on the night of the Lord's resurrection; therefore, he adds *and unworthy of praise*, for a night is worthy of praise because of some great deed's happening on that night.

p 104

From this passage, then, he intends only to signify that his conception was not anything great nor ordered toward a good, but rather toward the evil of the adversity which he was feeling. Hence, he adds *let them curse it who curse the day, who are prepared to rouse Leviathan*. And this injunction can indeed be explained literally in two ways: in one way, in the sense that by Leviathan is understood some great fish, as seems to fit the things which are said about him in the end of this book: "Or will you be able," says the text at 40:20, "to catch Leviathan with a hook?" From this question one should understand that those who fish for such large fish attack them by night in the darkness; therefore, when day begins to appear they curse the day, because by it their labors and aims are thwarted. In another way it can be understood that by Leviathan is signified the ancient serpent, that is, the devil, according to Isaiah 27:1: "On that day the Lord will punish Leviathan, the coiling serpent, with His great, strong, tough sword." They are prepared to rouse Leviathan, then, who are eager to implement the suggestions of the devil by being ready for the works of iniquity, who curse the day because, as is said in John 3:20, "Everyone who does evil hates the light," and afterwards, at John 24:15: "The eye of the adulterer watches for the darkness," and further on, at 24:17: "If dawn appears suddenly, he thinks it the shadow of death." According to this statement, then, just as according to what he had said—*and unworthy of praise*—he wants the aforementioned night to be hateful to good men; so, according to what he adds—*let them curse it* and so on—he also wants it to be hateful to evil men, for both good and evil men detest adversity.

p 105

Next he excludes from the aforementioned night the qualities which seem to belong to the good side of night by nature, one of which is that the night is decorated by a view of the stars, and he removes this quality, saying *Let the stars be darkened by its mist*. Another quality is that the night is decorated by the hope of day, and he removes this one, saying *let it await the light and not see it*, as if to say: Although it is natural that in the night the light of day is expected, let that night have unending darkness, never to be terminated by the succession of daylight. The darkness of night is indeed totally excluded by the full light of day but diminished by the dim light of dawn. Now he calls down upon the aforementioned night not only that its darkness not be excluded by the day but also that it not be diminished by dawn. Hence, the text says *nor the break of rising dawn*.

p 105

But because what he had said seemed impossible, namely, that neither day nor dawn should succeed the night, he shows the sense in which it was said, adding *because it did not shut the mouth of the womb which carried me*. For the life of a man is concealed in the womb of his mother. Hence, it is compared to the darkness of night, but when by birth it goes forth into the open, it bears a similarity to bright day. For this reason, then, he said that that night had neither a day nor a dawn succeeding it—to show that he desired that his conception had never come to birth nor to childhood, which is understood by dawn, nor to

youth, which is designated by the full light of day. Now he says *because it did not shut the mouth* and so on, not because the night itself shuts the womb, that is, impedes birth, but because this is done at night, for as a result of conception an impediment to the conceived person's coming to birth can become manifest. And because it also seemed unreasonable that someone should detest life, since being and living are desirable to everyone, he shows why he said this when he adds *nor did it take away the evils from before my eyes*, as if to say: I do not detest life for its own sake but because of the evils which I suffer. For even if life in itself is desirable, a life subject to misery is not. And here one should consider that Job seems to have explained in this final conclusion everything which he said figuratively above, which also should be noted in his other speeches.

p 105

(11) Why did I not die in the womb, [or] having come forth from the womb, why did I not perish at once? (12) Why was I taken upon my mother's knees, or nursed at her breasts? (13) For I would now be silent in sleep, and in my sleep I would be resting (14) with the kings and councilors of the earth who build retreats for themselves, (15) or with princes who possess gold and fill their houses with silver. (16) Or as a hidden miscarriage I would not exist, or as those who though conceived have not seen the light. (17) There the impious have ceased from violent disorder, and there those wearied in might have found rest. (18) And those formerly captive, equally untroubled, have not heard the voice of the slave-driver. (19) The small and the great man are there, and the slave free of his master.

p 106

After Job has cursed the day of his birth and the night of his conception to show that he detested the beginning of his life, now he shows that he detests his preservation in life in order to show more manifestly by these remarks that his life is burdensome to him. Now there are two states of life: one concealed, in which those who have been conceived live in the womb, the other manifest, in which men live after their birth from the womb. With respect to the first state, then, he says *Why did I not die in the womb*, and with respect to the second, *[or] having come forth from the womb, why did I not perish at once?*, and he pursues this second question first. Now one should know that the external life is taken away in two ways: sometimes, of course, as a result of some harm overcoming it, either intrinsic, such as a disease, or extrinsic, such as a sword or something of this sort; to this fact can be referred the question *[or] having come forth from the womb, why did I not perish at once?* But sometimes the external life is taken away by the loss of necessary support, which indeed is either extrinsic, such as being carried, being cherished, and other such comforts, and with respect to this type Job says *Why was I taken upon my mother's knees?*, or it is intrinsic, such as feeding, and with respect to this type he says *or nursed at her breasts?*, for the life of an infant requires these services in its beginning.

p 106

And because when someone says 'Why was this done?' he means that it was done uselessly, Job therefore shows next that it would be useless—no, harmful rather—for him to have been kept alive. And indeed he shows it first with respect to the evils which he is suffering now, saying *For I would now be silent in sleep*. Job calls death sleep, indeed, because of the hope of resurrection, about which he will speak more fully later. †8 Now by silence he understands rest from the adversities which he was suffering, as if to say: If I had died immediately after birth I would not be tortured by these evils which I am suffering. Second, he shows it with respect to the goods which he had had at first, for someone could say to him, 'If you had not been kept alive you would not have had the goods which you once had,' but as if in response to this argument, he shows that not even because of those goods ought he to have wished for the preservation of life. For even those who flourish in the greatest prosperity their whole life long are shut in by this end, namely, death. This, then, is the meaning of *and in my sleep*, that is, death, *I would be resting*, that is, I would be immune from the tortures of life, *with the kings and councilors of the earth*. But one should know that it is the intention of those who are established in high places, who especially seem to prosper, either to enjoy their pleasures, and with respect to these people he says *who build retreats for themselves*

order to enjoy their pleasures, and with respect to these people he says *who build treasuries for themselves*, literally, wishing to have privacy for hunting or for other pleasures; or to gather together their riches, and with respect to these people he says *or with princes who possess gold and fill their houses with silver*, as if to say: If I had died immediately after birth, I would now have no less than they have after their deaths who prosper in many goods. Now one should consider that since to rest is predicated only of someone who exists, Job means by these words that man, by reason of his soul, remains in existence after death. Now if someone should object that such kings or princes of whom he speaks perhaps are not resting but are in the punishments of hell, or even that life was useful to Job himself in the sense that he acquired merit for himself, one should notice that, as we said above, ^{†9} Job is speaking now in the character of his sensual side, expressing his feeling, which has room only for the present corporeal goods and evils.

p 107

So, then, after Job has shown that he should not have desired to be kept alive after his birth, he shows next that he should not have desired to come to birth after having been preserved in the womb, explaining what he had said above: "Why did I not die in the womb?" (v. 11) Now one should consider that some fetuses die in the womb before the infusion of the rational soul, which alone is immortal, and with respect to this consideration Job says *Or as a hidden miscarriage I would not exist*, for from such aborted fetuses nothing permanent remains. But some fetuses die after the infusion of the rational soul, and these indeed remain in existence after death by reason of their soul but do not see the light of this world. With respect to this situation Job says *or, supply 'as,' those who, though conceived, have not seen the light*, namely, of the present life. And he shows that he should have chosen this alternative on the grounds that he would not have been subject to the evils of this life. Hence, he says *There*, namely, in the state which they occupy who, though conceived, have not seen the light, *the impious have ceased from violent disorder*, namely, which they inflicted on others by afflicting them, which refers to immunity from the evil of guilt; *and there*, namely, in the state of the dead, *those wearied in might*, that is, warriors worn out by fighting, *have found rest*, that is, have escaped such toil because, as was said, he is speaking now only of rest from the evils of the present life; this passage can also be understood of weariness in any labor at all which someone suffers in working with his strength. *And those who were formerly captive will be there equally untroubled*, that is, free of their former anguish, on equal terms with those who used to hold them captive. There, too, men once oppressed by servitude or slavery *have not heard the voice of the slave-driver* according to what is said in Isaiah 14:4: "How the slave-driver has ceased, the tribute come to nothing." And Job shows that this statement is true by what he adds: *The small and the great man are there* on equal terms because smallness and greatness exist in this life on the basis of the inequality of earthly prosperity. If that inequality is taken away, men remain equals according to nature. The expression *The small and the great man*, then, should be understood in this way: that is, those who in this life were different on the basis of the greatness of earthly prosperity. Nevertheless, one should know that the difference in greatness and smallness in spiritual goods remains even there, but he is not speaking of these goods now, as has already been said. *And there the slave will be free of his master*. Hence, neither slave-driving nor anything of this kind will have a place there.

p 108

(20) *Why was light given to a miserable man and life to these who are in bitterness of soul? (21) Who wait for death and it does not come, like men digging for treasure, (22) and they rejoice powerfully when they have found a grave. (23) To a man whose way is hidden, and God has surrounded him with darkness. (24) Before I eat I sigh, and my groan is like that of flood water, (25) because the fear which I was fearing has overtaken me, and what I was in awe of has happened. (26) Have I not dissembled? Have I not kept silent? Have I not kept quiet? And indignation has come upon me.*

p 108

After Job has detested his own life in many ways, he now detests the life of the whole human race generally, both with respect to those who are in prosperity and with respect to those who are in adversity,

concerning whom he pursues the discussion first as if beginning with the more manifest group. Now one should know that among living things two activities seem to be special, namely, living and learning. And indeed, although learning itself is certainly very delightful and noble, learning those things which afflict a man is painful. Therefore Job says *Why was light given to a miserable man?*, as if to say: What does it profit a man subject to miseries to have the light of learning, when with it he considers the evils by which he is afflicted. Now to live is noble because of the soul, but if the soul should be in bitterness, living itself is rendered bitter. Therefore he says *and* (repeat 'why was life given') *to these who are in bitterness of soul?* And that it is given uselessly he shows by this reasoning, that its opposite is desired by miserable men. Hence, he says *Who*, namely, those existing in bitterness, *wait for death and it does not come*, that is to say, as quickly as they wish. And to show that they wait for death not shrinking from it but desiring it, he adds *like men digging for treasure* who, of course, are kindled with great desire to find a treasure by digging. And because desire, when it is fulfilled, produces delight, he adds *and they rejoice powerfully when they have found a grave*, that is, when they see that they are approaching death, by which they find a grave. Now some interpreters [†10](#) refer this passage to those who dig for treasure, who rejoice when a grave has been found, because in ancient graves are usually found treasures. The first explanation, however, is better.

p 109

And because someone could say that life, even if it should be given uselessly to miserable men, is nevertheless given usefully to those who are in prosperity, to remove this possibility Job adds (supply 'Why was light and life given') *to a man whose way is hidden?* For a man's way is hidden because it is not known where the state of his present prosperity may lead, for the text of Proverbs 14:13 says that "Laughter will be mixed with pain, and grief overtakes the extremes of joy," and the text of Jeremiah 10:23 says that "His own way is not in man." Ecclesiastes 7:1 says, "Why should a man inquire into matters too great for him since he does not know what use it is to him in his life? Or who can tell what will come after him under the sun?" Now Job explains how a man's path is hidden, adding *and God has surrounded him with darkness*, which is manifested, of course, in many ways: with respect to things past and future, according to Ecclesiastes 8:6: "Great is man's affliction, because he does not know the past and cannot know the future through any revelation"; and with respect to things which are near at hand, namely, with respect to men, I Corinthians 2:11 says, "Who knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him?", and with respect to things above, according to I Timothy 6:16: "He," that is, God, "Whom no man has seen nor is any man able to see Him, dwells in inaccessible light"; and in Psalm 17:12 it is said that "He has made the darkness His hiding-place," and with respect to things below it is said in Ecclesiastes 1:8 that "All things are difficult; man cannot explain them in speech." Now God is said to have surrounded man with darkness because God has bestowed upon him such an intellect that he cannot know the aforementioned things.

p 109

Having shown, then, that the life of man is difficult because of man's misery and bitterness, Job adapts to himself what he had said generally, expressing his own bitterness when he says *Before I eat I sigh*, for just as laughter is the sign of joy, so a sigh is the sign of bitterness of soul. By the measure of his sigh, then, he shows the measure of his bitterness. Therefore, his sigh both began early, for he says *Before I eat I sigh*, and was continuous and great. Hence, he adds *and my groan is like that of flood water*, for just as a sigh is the sign of moderate sadness, a groan is the sign of a powerful one which can scarcely be tolerated. Now this groan is compared to the groan of water, for water moves easily and makes the sound of a murmur, and in this way a man in great affliction is provoked to groaning by the mere memory of his misery. Now he adds *of flood water* to show the continuity of his bitterness, for flooding water moves continuously and makes a din.

p 110

But because bitterness of soul is born of misery after the bitterness of soul Job adds an observation about

his own misery, saying *because the fear which I was fearing has overtaken me*. And one should note that a man's misery provoking him to bitterness seems to consist in two things: in the loss of property or person and in the loss of honors. With respect to the first loss, then, Job says *The fear which I was fearing has overtaken me*, that is, the things which I feared have come upon me, and here is expressed the magnitude of his losses and punishments, for the more prudent someone is the more he ponders in the state of prosperity the things which can happen to him in the time of adversity, according to Ecclesiasticus 11:27: "In days of prosperity be not unmindful of evils"; therefore Job, a very prudent man, suffered great misery when the things which he had feared happened to him. Now with respect to the second loss, namely, the loss of honors, Job says *and what I was in awe of has happened*, for awe, according to the Philosopher, 'is the fear of dishonor.' †11 By this remark, then, Job shows that from great glory he had fallen into many disgraces and dishonors.

p 110

Now someone usually suffers misery and bitterness through his own fault, but Job removes this possibility, saying *Have I not dissembled?* And one should know that someone offends, as a result of which he merits punishment from God, in two ways: in one way when, as a result of injuries inflicted upon him, he is provoked beyond measure to vengeance, concerning which it is said in Psalm 7:5: "If I have rendered evil to those requiting me, may I perish deservedly destitute at the hands of my enemies." Now Job removes this way from himself, saying *Have I not dissembled?*, namely, the injuries done to me. In another way one sins when he himself offends another person first, either by words, and he removes this way from himself, saying *Have I not kept silent?*, as if to say: To no one have I uttered insulting or injurious words; or in deeds, and he removes this way from himself, saying *Have I not kept quiet?*, "for the impious are like the raging sea which cannot be quiet" according to Isaiah 57:20. *And* although I am innocent, nevertheless *indignation*, that is, punishment from God, *has come upon me*—for anger in God is not taken as a commotion of His spirit but as a punishment—in which Job recognizes that the adversities of this world do not come about without divine consent.

p 111

If someone should wish to summarize, then, what has been said in this lament of Job, one should know that three points are contained in it, for first he shows that his life is tedious for him; second, he shows the magnitude of the misery which he was suffering in the passage beginning "Before I eat" (v. 24), and so on; third, he shows his innocence when he says, "Have I not dissembled?" (v. 26), and so on.

Chapter Four

p 113

(1) Now Eliphaz the Themanite said in response: (2) If we begin to speak to you, perhaps you will be annoyed, but who will be able to check his speech once it is conceived? (3) Look! You have taught many and strengthened weary hands. (4) Your speeches have confirmed the unsteady and you have stiffened shaky knees. (5) Now, however, a blow has come upon you and you have failed; it has touched you and you are disturbed. (6) Where is your fear, your fortitude, your patience, and the perfection of your ways?

p 113

Although Job's friends, who had come to console him, had kept silent before because of the acuteness of his pain, after Job's speech they gathered the boldness to speak. And Eliphaz the Themanite, who had not taken the words proposed by Job in the spirit in which they had been spoken, speaks first, for he imputed the hatred of the present life which he had said that he was suffering to despair, the magnitude of his bitterness to impatience, and his profession of innocence to presumption.

p 113

First, then, he charges him with impatience, and he begins to speak to him as if to a man subject to the vice of impatience who is indignant because of the words uttered to him. Hence, he says *If we begin to speak to you, perhaps you will be annoyed*, and in this remark he portrays the usual behavior of a very impatient and angry man who cannot bear to hear words to the end but is provoked immediately at the very beginning. Now he adds *perhaps* lest he be condemned for rash judgment, although even in presumptions or suspicions things said or done should be interpreted in the better light. But while he charges Job with impatience, he shows himself guilty of impatience and foolishness, saying *but who will be able to check his speech once it is conceived?*, according to the text of Ecclesiasticus 19:12: "Like an arrow fixed in a dog's thigh, so is a word in the heart of a fool." And yet, even just men, out of divine zeal, sometimes are unable to keep quiet the things which they conceive must be said for the honor of God, according to the text of Jeremiah 20:9: "I said: 'I shall not be mindful of it,'" namely, of the Lord's speech, "nor will I speak further in His name," and a glowing fire, as it were, was kindled in my heart and enclosed in my bones, and I faltered, not able to withstand it."

p 113

Now Eliphaz proceeds further to show manifestly Job's impatience. But he exaggerates his impatience on two counts, namely, from his earlier teaching and from his earlier life: from his earlier teaching, indeed, because it is shameful for a man when he does not practice what he teaches others, according to Matthew 23:3: "For they say but they do not do." Now Job had drawn back many men before from impatience, and in different ways as befitted different men. For there are some who fail by impatience as a result of ignorance when they do not know how to use adversity for virtue, and with respect to these men he says *Look! You have taught many*. Others, however, do indeed act virtuously in adversity at first, but when the adversity lasts, as if fatigued by acting rightly, they fail, and with respect to these men he says *and strengthened weary hands*, namely, by good advice. There are also some men who in adversity fall into doubt whether their adversity comes from divine judgment, and with respect to these men he says *Your speeches have confirmed the unsteady*. There are also some people who might sustain a small adversity, indeed, but who fail under a great adversity as if under a great weight, and with respect to these men he says *and you have stiffened shaky knees*, namely, by your speeches, for the knees of a man carrying a great weight do tremble. But the Lord exhorts Isaiah to fulfill the aforementioned duties, saying at 35:3: "Strengthen feeble hands and stiffen weak knees."

p 114

Now Eliphaz wants to show next that Job did not practice the things which he had taught. Hence, he adds *Now, however, a blow has come upon you and you have failed*, namely, from that firmness of mind which you seemed to have and which you furnished to others, and this remark should be referred to the adversity which he had suffered in goods; *it has touched you and you are disturbed*, that is, you have lost the peace of mind which you seemed to have. And this remark should be referred to the affliction of the body which he was sustaining; hence, also, Satan had said above, "Send forth your hand and touch his bone and flesh" [2:5]. So, then, Job is censured because he has not confirmed his earlier teaching with subsequent patience, contrary to that which is written in Proverbs 19:11: "A man's teaching is recognized by his patience."

p 114

But he also exaggerates Job's subsequent impatience on the basis of the past life which was evident in Job's case, for his virtue, which failed so quickly in tribulation, seems not to have been true, because, as is written in Ecclesiasticus 2:5, "Gold and silver will be tested in fire, but worthy men in the crucible of humiliation." Now someone is kept from failing in tribulations by many virtues: first, indeed, by reverence for God, when men consider that the evils which they suffer come from divine providence, just as Job had said above: "It has happened as it pleased the Lord" [1:21]. To exclude this virtue, Eliphaz introduces *Where is your fear?*, namely, by which you seemed to revere God. Second, some men are preserved safe by firmness of spirit, which indeed has two degrees, for in some men so great is the firmness of spirit that their spirit is not excessively bothered by adversity; this firmness seems to belong to fortitude. Hence, Eliphaz says *Where is your fortitude?*, and fortitude is not taken here in the sense that it keeps a man from succumbing to fear, but that it keeps him from being dejected by sadness. Indeed, some men do suffer a grave emotion of sadness from adversity, but because of a well-disposed reason they are not led astray by it, and this seems to belong to patience, so that the difference between patience and fortitude is such as the philosophers assign between continence and chastity; ¶ therefore, he adds *your patience?* Third, some men are kept safe by love of honorable action and by a horror of acting shamefully, and even if they are inwardly disturbed in adversity they nevertheless do not burst forth, either in word or in deed, into anything improper; on this account he adds *and the perfection of your ways?*, for by ways are understood actions by which, as if by definite ways, one arrives at an end. Or by ways can be understood plans thought out by which someone trusts that he is escaping. Hence, he more easily tolerates adversity.

p 115

(7) *Recall, I beseech you, what innocent man has ever perished, or when have straightforward men been destroyed?* (8) *No, rather have I seen that those who work iniquity and sow pains and reap them* (9) *have perished under God's blast and have been consumed by the breath of His anger.* (10) *The roar of the lion and the voice of the lioness and the teeth of the lion cubs have been broken.* (11) *The tigress has perished because she had no prey, and the lions' cubs have been scattered.*

p 115

After Eliphaz had charged Job with impatience, having taken the opportunity from what Job had said — "Before I eat I sigh" [3:24] — he now intends to charge him with presumption because he had said that he was innocent. Now to show that he is not innocent he takes his proof from Job's adversity, saying *Recall, I beseech you, what innocent man has ever perished, or when have straightforward men been destroyed?* And here one should consider that, as has been said above, it was the opinion of Eliphaz and of the other two friends that the adversities of this world do not come to anyone except as punishment for sin, and conversely, prosperity does not come except as a reward for justice. Hence, in his opinion, it seemed unfitting that anyone who was innocent should perish temporally or that anyone who was straightforward, that is, just on the score of virtue, should be destroyed through the loss of temporal glory, which he believed to be the reward of justice. And this opinion he believed to be true to such a degree that even Job could not disagree with it. Nevertheless he reckoned that, because his mind was disturbed, Job had, as it were, forgotten a truth which he had once known. Hence, he says *Recall*.

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Having posited, then, that adversity does not happen to innocent and straightforward men, next he adds those to whom adversity does happen, saying *No, rather have I seen that those who work iniquity and sow pains and reap them have perished under God's blast and have been consumed by the breath of his anger.* Now inasmuch as he says *I have seen* he means that he has tested these things by experience. Now by those *who work iniquity* he understands those who do injustice manifestly, and especially in harming others, whereas by those who *sow pains and reap them* he understands those who harm others by deception, for they sow pains when they devise calumnies by which they cause others pain, and they reap these pains, indeed, when they bring their own malice to effect, and they consider this a great fruit. And indeed he removes this mistake further with respect to punishment for some fields are usually dried out

indeed, he pursues this metaphor further with respect to punishment, for cornucopias are usually dried out and consumed by the burning wind. Hence, it is said in Malachi 3:11: "I will rebuke for you the devouring scourge," namely, the wind, "and it will not destroy the fruit of your land"; this is the point of saying that they perish under God's blast, as if divine judgment itself, proceeding to the punishment of iniquity, should be a certain blast of wind. Now the very punishment of God is called the breath, that is, the wind, of his anger. Now Eliphaz says not only that they perish but that they are consumed, because not only are they punished in their own persons but their children, too, and their whole household perishes so that nothing seems to be left of them. In this respect he seemed to touch Job, who both had been scourged in his own body and had lost his children, household, and wealth.

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But because it seemed to be against the opinion of Eliphaz that for the sin of the parent the children and the household should be punished (since he himself intends to defend the opinion that adversities in this world are the punishments of sin), responding to this objection he adds *The roar of the lion and the voice of the lioness and the teeth of the lion cubs have been broken*. And in this place first comes up for consideration the fact that man excels the other animals in reason. When, therefore, having neglected reason he follows brutal passions, he becomes like the beasts and takes upon himself the name of the animal whose passion he imitates, as, for example, one who is subject to the passion of concupiscence is compared to a horse or a mule, according to Psalms 31:9: "Do not become like a horse or a mule having no understanding"; because of ferocity or anger, however, he is called a lion or a bear according to Proverbs 28:15: "A roaring lion and a ravenous bear, such is an impious prince over a poor people," and Ezekiel 19:3: "He became a lion and learned to take prey and devour men." So now, too, Eliphaz compares a fierce man to a lion, saying *The roar of the lion*, for roaring is the indication of a lion's ferocity. Now it happens frequently that ferocity is imparted to a husband by the suggestion of his wife, and so the things which a husband does fiercely are imputed to his wife as guilt, as is clear from Herod's wife, who urged him to decapitate John the Baptist. †2 On this account is said *and the voice of the lioness*. Now sometimes the things which some tyrant acquires fiercely are used by his sons luxuriously, and so they take delight in their father's plunder. Hence, they themselves are also not free of guilt, on which account is added *and the teeth of the lion cubs have been broken*, according to Nahum 2:12: "And the lion captured sufficient prey for his cubs." And so he seems to have responded to the premised objection, because when a wife and children are punished for the husband's sin it is not unjust, since they themselves also have been partakers of his guilt—all of which he said wanting to render Job and his household notorious for robbery.

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Nevertheless, what he had said did not seem to pertain to Job, because his wife seemed not to have been punished; therefore, to remove this objection he adds *The tigress has perished because she had no prey*, for those who are accustomed to plunder reckon that they are being punished in not being permitted to plunder. Now one should consider that Eliphaz compares a woman to a lioness because of the ferocity of her anger, and to a tigress because of her readiness or swiftness to anger, for it is said in Ecclesiasticus 25:23: "There is no anger greater than the anger of a woman," and again at 25:26: "All malice is brief compared to the malice of a woman." Also, because Job's children had perished, every one, Eliphaz adds *and the lions' cubs have been scattered*.

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(12) Furthermore, to me was said a hidden word, and stealthily, as it were, my ear received the strains of its whispering. (13) In the horror of a nocturnal vision, when sleep usually seizes upon men, (14) dread held me, and trembling, and all my bones were fear-stricken. (15) And when the spirit passed by in my presence the hair of my flesh stood on end. (16) Someone stood there whose face I did not recognize, an image before my eyes, and I heard a voice as if of a gentle breeze: (17) Will a man be justified in comparison with God? Or will a man be purer than his own Creator? (18) Look! Those who serve Him are not stable, and in His angels He has found wickedness. (19) How much more these who dwell in mud

houses, who have an earthly foundation; they will be consumed as if by a worm; (20) from morning until evening they will be cut down. And because no one understands, they will perish forever; (21) those who will be left, however, will be taken away from them; they will die, and not in wisdom.

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Because Eliphaz had asserted that adversities in this world do not come to anyone except because of his sin, wishing on the strength of this claim to charge that Job and his family had been subject to sins, contrary to what seemed true from the qualities which had manifestly appeared in Job and in his family, he wishes to show that neither Job nor his family was immune from sin. And since, because of Job's authority and fame, his own word seemed invalid, Eliphaz resorts to a greater authority, showing that the things which he is about to propose he has learned from revelation, and to show the sublimity of the revelation he proposes its obscurity, for the more sublime some things are, the less perceptible they are to human regard. Hence, also, the Apostle says in II Corinthians 12:4 that "he was taken into the paradise of God and heard secret words which it is not permitted to man to speak." In this way Eliphaz also speaks here, either truly or falsely, saying *Furthermore, to me was said a hidden word.*

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Now one should consider that some truths, although hidden from men because of their sublimity, are nevertheless revealed to some men manifestly but to others secretly. To escape the charge of boasting, then, Eliphaz says that this truth was revealed to him secretly. Hence, he adds *and stealthily, as it were, my ear received the strains of its whispering*, and here three ways of concealment which usually happen in revelations are hinted at. The first of these is the way in which an intelligible truth is revealed to someone through an imaginary vision, as is said in Numbers 12:6: "If there will be any prophet of the Lord among you, I will speak to him in a dream or in a vision. But not such a one is My servant Moses: face to face will I speak to him who sees God openly and not in riddles." Moses, then, heard this hidden word by way of a clear voice, whereas others heard it by way of a whisper. The second way of concealment is that sometimes, in the imaginary vision itself, some words are uttered containing the truth expressly, such as the text of Isaiah 7:14: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive"; sometimes, however, words are uttered which contain the truth in certain figurative expressions, such as the text of Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot will come forth from the root of Jesse, and a flower," and so on; therefore, when Isaiah heard "Behold, a virgin shall conceive," he perceived the whisper itself, but when he heard "A shoot will come forth from the root of Jesse," and so on, he perceived the strains of a whisper. For figurative expressions are certain strains derived, as it were, from the truth itself through a simile. The third way of concealment is that sometimes someone has frequent and long-lasting divine revelation, as it is said of Moses in Exodus 33:11 that "the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man usually speaks to his friend." But sometimes someone has a quick and passing revelation. This quick way of revelation, then, he signifies in the expression *stealthily, as it were*, for we hear stealthily things which come to us quickly, as it were, and fleetingly.

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Having shown the sublimity of the vision in this way, then, he goes on about the circumstances of the revelation, first about the time, saying *In the horror of a nocturnal vision when sleep usually seizes upon men*. For nighttime, because of the quiet, is more suited to perceiving revelations, for in the daytime, from the tumults of men and from the occupations of the senses, the mind suffers a certain cacophony so that it cannot perceive the whisper of the hidden word.

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Second, he goes on about the disposition of the perceiver. Hence, he adds *dread held me*, for men usually dread strange occurrences; hence, when strange revelations happen to someone, he suffers fear in the beginning. And to show the magnitude of this fear, he adds *and trembling*. For the trembling of the body is an indication of the magnitude of fear. And to magnify such trembling, he adds *and all my bones were*

fear-stricken, as it to say: The trembling was not superficial but powerful, so that it struck even the bones. The text of Daniel 10:8 is similar: "I saw this grand vision and fortitude did not remain in me, but even my appearance was changed in me and I grew faint and had no strength in me." Now next he shows the cause of this fear, saying *And when the spirit passed by in my presence, the hair of my flesh stood on end*. For it is reasonable that in the presence of a greater power a lesser one be struck with amazement. Now it is manifest that the power of the spirit is greater than that of the flesh. Hence, it is no wonder if in the presence of the spirit the hairs of the flesh stand on end—which proceeds from sudden fear—and especially since the presence of the spirit is felt through some strange corporeal sign, for strange things usually induce wonder and fear. And so that the disposition of time might be fitted to this terror which he says he has suffered, he said above "In the horror of a nocturnal vision" (v. 13). For since things cannot be discerned by sight in the nighttime, any commotion, however small, usually induces disturbance in those who reckon that it is something greater, and this is what is said in Wisdom 17:17: "Whether the whistling wind or the sweet song of the birds among the dense branches makes them faint from fear. . . ."

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Third is posited the person making the revelation when the text says *Someone stood there whose face I did not recognize, an image before my eyes*, and here he posits three elements pertaining to the certitude of the vision. For one should know that sometimes, because of the excessive commotion of smoke and mist, dreams either do not appear at all, because the apparitions have been totally stifled, or they appear disturbed and unstable, as usually happens in those who have a fever. Such dreams, since they contain little or nothing of the spiritual, are entirely without significance. When the mist and smoke have settled, however, quiet and orderly dreams appear, and since they are more spiritual because the intellectual faculty is bursting forth into a certain vigor, such dreams are usually truer; therefore, he says *Someone stood there*, by which he shows the stability of the vision. Likewise one should consider that even when they are quiet, dreams are generally the remains of preceding thoughts; hence, a man rather frequently sees in a dream those with whom he usually associates. And because such dreams have their cause from within ourselves and not from some higher nature, they are not of great significance. To remove this likelihood, then, he says *whose face I did not recognize*, by which he shows that such a vision has not drawn its origin from things previously seen but from some more hidden cause. Third, one should consider that such visions, which arise from some higher cause, appear sometimes to people who are asleep, at other times to people who are awake. Visions are usually truer and more certain when they appear to people who are awake than [when they appear] to people who are asleep, because in wakefulness the reason is more free, and because in a dream spiritual revelations are less distinguishable from frivolous and commonplace dreams. Therefore, to show that this revelation was made not to one asleep but to one awake, he adds *an image before my eyes*, by which he signifies that he saw this manifestation with eyes open in wakefulness. He also signified this fact above when he said, "When sleep usually seizes upon men" (v. 13), where he implies that he had not been seized upon by sleep.

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Next Eliphaz narrates the manner of the announcement made to him, saying *and I heard a voice as if of a gentle breeze*. And here one should consider that such apparitions are made sometimes by a good spirit, other times by an evil one. Now either way man suffers fear in the beginning because of the strange vision, but when an apparition proceeds from a good spirit fear is finally resolved into consolation, as is clear from the angel comforting Daniel at 10:18 and of Gabriel comforting Zachariah and Mary in Luke 1. But an evil spirit leaves a man disturbed. By the statement *I heard a voice as if of a gentle breeze*, then, he demonstrates a certain consolation settling previous fear, so that by this statement the vision may be demonstrated to be from a good spirit, not an evil one, by whom lying visions are frequently displayed, according to the text of III Kings 22:22: "I will go out and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." In this way, too, is read III Kings 19:12 about the apparition made to Elijah, that "after the fire [I heard] the whistling of a slight breeze, and there was the Lord." Nevertheless, one should know that even in visions which proceed from a good spirit, sometimes great commotions and horrible voices are heard, as

is clear in Ezekiel 1:4 where is said "And I saw, and behold a whirlwind came from the north," and after many verses is added "And I heard the sound of wings like the sound of many waters" [1:24]; in Apocalypse 1:10 is said "I heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet," but this expression is meant to designate threats or some grave dangers which are contained in such revelations. Since, however, something consoling had to be said here, the voice of the speaker is introduced as similar to a gentle breeze.

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Now finally are posited the words which he claims were revealed to him when he says *Will a man be justified in comparison with God?*, words which he introduces, of course, to confirm his own opinion which he had touched upon above (v. 7), namely, that adversities in this world do not come to anyone except for sin. Therefore, so that no one, because he suffers adversities, might be able to excuse himself by asserting that he is free from sin, he introduces three arguments. The first of these is taken from a comparison to God and leads to an impossible conclusion, for if a man without guilt is punished by God it follows that the man would be more just than God. For since it is the work of justice to render to each one what is his due, if God should inflict punishment on an innocent man to whom no punishment is due, whereas the man who suffers at God's hands has inflicted punishment on no guiltless man—which one must say if he is posited innocent—it follows that the man punished by God would be more just than God, that is, that the man is justified in a comparison with God, namely, since he is justified in a comparison of justice with respect to God. And because this conclusion perhaps might not seem unfitting to someone, Eliphaz leads to another apparently more unfitting conclusion, saying *Or will a man be purer than his own Creator?* For each thing has its purity insofar as it is preserved in its own nature, which it has from its own causes. The purity of each effect, then, depends upon its cause; hence, it cannot surpass its cause in purity. Hence, neither can a man be purer than his Creator, namely, God.

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Eliphaz posits the second argument from a comparison with angels, and it is from the greater [to the less], when he says *Look! Those who serve Him are not stable, and in His angels He has found wickedness.* This statement is indeed plain according to the teaching of the Catholic faith, for the Catholic faith holds that all the angels were created good, of whom certain ones, through their own guilt, fell from the state of straightforwardness, whereas certain others achieved greater glory. Now that the angels fell from the state of straightforwardness seems strange on two counts, one of which pertains to their contemplative force, the other to their active force. For in view of their contemplative force it seems that there ought to have been stability in angels. For it is manifest that the cause of mutability is potency; the cause of immutability is act. For it is by reason of its potency that a thing is disposed toward being or not being, but according as it is more perfect on the side of act it stands more firmly in one state, whereas that which is act in itself is entirely immovable. Now one should know that just as matter is related to form as potency to act, so the will is related to the good. That which is good itself, then, namely, God, is entirely immutable, whereas the wills of other natures which are not the good itself are related to the good itself as potency is to act. Hence, the more they cleave to the good, the more firmly they become fixed in the good. Therefore, since among all other creatures angels seem to cleave more and closer to God, inasmuch as they contemplate Him more subtly, they seem more stable than other creatures. Yet they were not stable. Hence, much less can inferior creatures, namely, men, be judged stable, however much they may seem to cleave to God by worshipping Him, which is to serve Him. But on the side of the active force, it seems that there can be either very little or no wickedness in angels, for the closer the ruler is to pure straightness, the less crookedness it has. But God, in Whom there is pure straightness, directing all things by His providence, disposes the lower creatures through the higher. Hence, in the higher creatures, which are called angels, as if sent by God to direct the others, there seems to be very little or no wickedness. Hence, since wickedness has been found in them, one should believe that in any man, however great he may appear, wickedness could be found. Now one should beware that no one, on the strength of these words, fall into the error of Origen, which even now asserts that all created spirits are unstable and that they can be seduced to wickedness.¹³ For some of them have achieved by grace that they cleave immovably to God, seeing Him in His essence.

Accordingly, even to some men, although they may be of a nature inferior to the angels, it is granted by grace even in this life that they be immune from the wickedness of mortal sin.

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Eliphaz posits a third argument taken from the human condition, to which is joined the conclusion of the preceding argument. Hence, one argument could also be formed from two, and this is what he means when he says *How much more will these who dwell in mud houses?* Now the human condition is such that man's body is constructed from earthly matter, which he designates when he says *How much more will these who dwell in mud houses.* For the human body is said to be of clay because it consists more abundantly of earth and water, the heavier elements, as its movement declares. Hence, in the text of Genesis 2:7 it is said that "God formed man from the slime of the earth." This body of clay, then, is called the house of the soul because the human soul is in some respect in the body just as a man is in a house or a sailor in a ship, namely, inasmuch as it moves the body. Now there have been some men who on this account have said that the soul is not united to the body except accidentally, just as a man is united to a garment or a sailor to a ship. ¹⁴ But to exclude this opinion he adds *who have an earthly foundation*, by which it is meant that the human soul is united to the body as form is united to matter. For matter is said to be the foundation of form in that it is the first part in generation, just as the foundation is the first part in the building of a house. Now he uses this way of speaking in order to attribute to man that which is the soul's, not because the soul is man (as some have posited, saying that man is nothing else but a soul clothed in a body) but because the soul is the more important part of man. Now each thing is usually designated by what is more important in it. Now these two things which he says about the infirmity of man seem to be placed in opposition to those things which he had said above about the excellence of angels, for he seems to place the clause *who dwell in mud houses* in opposition to the clause "Those who serve Him" (v. 18), which is to cleave to Him and dwell in Him spiritually, whereas [he seems to place] the clause *who have an earthly foundation* [in opposition] to the phrase "in His angels" (v. 18). For angels are incorporeal by nature, according to the text of Psalm 103:4: "And He makes His angels spirits."

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Now from the premised condition of men he concludes their miserable outcome, saying that they will *be consumed as if by a worm*. Indeed, this statement can be understood superficially of corporeal death which man necessarily suffers because he has an earthly foundation. Following this interpretation, two types of death can be designated, namely, natural death in the statement *they will be consumed as if by a worm*—for the worm gnaws away the garment because it is begotten from the garment and in this way natural death of the body arises from internal causes—and violent death in the addition *from morning until evening they will be cut down*. For the cutting down of a tree proceeds from an external cause. He says very expressly *from morning until evening* because natural death can indeed be foreseen from certain natural signs, but violent death is entirely unexpected inasmuch as it is subject to different cases. Hence, it cannot be known whether a man will last from morning to evening.

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Nevertheless, one should know that this is not the literal meaning of the words, for above Eliphaz proposed an argument from the defect of sin when he said "In His angels He has found wickedness." Hence, in order that the conclusion may correspond to the premises it is necessary to refer this passage also to sin, by which the life of justice in man is consumed in two ways: in one way by corruption from within, which he signifies when he says *they will be consumed as if by a worm*, for just as a garment is consumed by a worm which is born of it, so the justice of man is consumed by those things which are in man like inflamed tinder—evil thoughts and other such things; in the other way it is consumed by temptation from without, which is noted in the clause *from morning until evening they will be cut down*. But one should consider that temptation from within overcomes a man not suddenly but gradually when, through negligence, someone does not take care to repress the beginnings of sin within himself, according to the text of Ecclesiasticus 10:1: "He who neglects the least things passes away gradually," just as the garment

TEXT OF ECCLESIASTICUS 17:1. HE WHO NEGLECTS THE LEAST THINGS PASSES AWAY GRADUALLY, JUST AS THE GARMENT WHICH IS NOT SHAKEN OUT IS ALSO CONSUMED BY THE WORM; TEMPTATION FROM WITHOUT, HOWEVER, GENERALLY OVERCOMES A MAN SUDDENLY, JUST AS DAVID AT THE SIGHT OF A WOMAN BURST FORTH INTO ADULTERY, †5 and also many have denied the faith under torture.

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Now in whatever way a man may fall through sin, if he should acknowledge his sin and repent, he will receive mercy. But because there is no one who can know all his sins, according to the text "Who understands his sins?", †6 it follows that very many men, not knowing their sins, do not apply remedies to them by which they may be freed. This is the point of adding *And because no one understands*, namely, the lapses of sin, *they*, namely, very many men, as if never having been freed from sin, *will perish forever*. But because there are some people who do apply remedies against sins although they do not fully understand them, like David, who said, "Cleanse me of my hidden faults, Lord," †7 he adds *but those who will be left*, namely, from the number of those who perish forever, *will be taken away from them*, that is, they will be segregated from their company; *they will die*, indeed, because, although a man may repent of his sin, he is still not freed from the necessity of death, but wisdom does not die in them, and this is the point of saying *and not in wisdom*. Or [in another interpretation] the clause *they will die, and not in wisdom* does not correspond to what has just been said but to what he had said above, "They will perish forever" (v. 20), so that the sense may be that they will die without wisdom. Or again, the clause *those who will be left* can be understood of sons left behind when their parents die, who, because of their parents' sins, which they imitate, are themselves also carried off, dying without wisdom. On the strength of all these arguments, then, Eliphaz wants to have it that since man's condition is so frail, he easily falls into sin because, without realizing it, he goes to perdition, both he and his sons; so, although Job did not acknowledge himself a sinner, it had to be believed that he and his children perished because of some sins.

Chapter Five

p 127

(1) *Call, then, if there is anyone to answer you, and turn to one of the saints.* †1

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So, then, after Eliphaz has explained the revelation made to him, because Job could not believe this revelation, he adds *Call, then, if there is anyone to answer you*, as if to say: If you do not believe that this has been revealed to me, you yourself call upon God if perchance He Himself will want to respond to this doubt for you; *and* if you do not think that you will obtain this from God on your own merits, *turn to one of the saints* so that you may be able to know the truth of this matter from God through his mediation. And one should note that he says *to one of the saints* because it is not permitted to pry into occult matters by any way or art through unclean spirits but only through God or through the saints of God, according to Isaiah 8:19: "When they say to you: Inquire of the soothsayers and prophets who hiss in their incantations, does not a people seek a vision from its God instead of from the living or the dead?"

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(2) *Anger kills the foolish man and envy kills the small man. (3) I have seen the foolish man with a firm*
rest and I covered his head; immediately. (4) His nose will be far from salvation and there will be crushed

root and I cursed his beauty immediately. (4) His sons will be far from salvation and they will be crushed in the gateway, and there will be no one to rescue them. (5) And the famished man will consume his harvest, and the armed man will seize him, and the thirsty man will drink up his riches. (6) Nothing happens on earth without a cause, and pain will not arise from the ground. (7) Man is born for labor and the bird for flying.

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Because in the revelation which Eliphaz had mentioned had been made to him there is contained among others the statement that men "who have an earthly foundation are consumed as if by a worm" [4:19], he wants to show this by the different conditions of man. For there is no condition of man in which there is not present a proneness to some sin. Now there are two conditions of man, for certain men are of great and exalted spirit, and they are easily provoked to anger. That is because anger is the appetite for vengeance arising from an earlier offense. Now the more exalted someone's spirit, the slighter the cause at which he thinks himself offended; therefore, he is more easily provoked to anger, and this is the meaning of *Anger kills the foolish man*. Now Eliphaz calls one who is of proud and exalted spirit foolish because through pride a man especially exceeds the bounds of reason, and humility prepares the way to wisdom according to Proverbs 11:2: "Where there is humility there is wisdom"; with this statement, too, the foolishness of anger is consistent, for the angry man, as the Philosopher teaches, does indeed use reason when he seeks vengeance for an offense, but he uses it perversely when he does not observe the moderation of reason in vengeance. ¶2 But the perversion of reason is foolishness. Some men, however, are small-minded, and these are prone to envy. Hence, he adds *and envy kills the small man*, and this is reasonably said. For envy is nothing else but sadness at the prosperity of someone else inasmuch as his prosperity is reckoned to stand in the way of one's own. It is, however, the mark of smallness of spirit that someone should think that he cannot prosper among others who are prospering. So, then, it seems manifest that man, of whatever condition he may be, is prone to some sin. For it would be easy to adduce examples similar to these concerning other sins.

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So, then, by all the things said above, Eliphaz intends to prove that adversities in this world do not come to anyone except in return for sin. Against this proposition there seem to be two objections, of which one derives from the fact that many just men seem to be subject to adversities, but he seemed to resolve this objection by showing that men are quick to sin; the second objection is that some iniquitous men prosper in this world, which he intends to answer next with the argument that their prosperity redounds to their own evil. Hence, he says *I have seen the foolish man*, that is, a man boasting in his riches, *with a firm root*, that is, confirmed in the prosperity of this world, as it seemed, but I did not approve of his prosperity. As a matter of fact, *I cursed his beauty immediately*. And here one should consider that he is speaking of man through the metaphor of a tree. When its root is firm, it has beauty in its branches and fruits; therefore, he compares the prosperity of a man firm in riches to the beauty of a tree which he curses, that is, pronounces to be evil and harmful, ¶3 according to the text of Ecclesiastes 5:12: "There is also another grievous evil which I have seen under the sun—riches kept to the harm of their owner." Now he has added *immediately* to show that he has no doubt at all about this opinion.

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Now what evils come forth from the prosperity of a fool he shows first with respect to his sons. For it frequently happens that when some rich and powerful man brings up sons without discipline, which is characteristic of a fool, his sons fall into many dangers. Sometimes, indeed, because of hatreds which they stir up against themselves, the sons are destroyed without judgment, or even lose their lives when they take no precautions for themselves, using pleasures inordinately, and with respect to this danger he says *His sons will be far from salvation*. Sometimes, however, when they bring calumnies and injuries on others, they are summoned before judges and there condemned, and with respect to this danger he says *and they will be crushed in the gateway*, that is, by the sentence of judges, for judges at one time used to sit in

gateways. Also, because foolish men in prosperity do not hesitate to offend anyone, in adversity they do not find a supporter, and therefore he adds *and there will be no one to rescue them*.

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But because someone could say, 'I do not care what happens to my children as long as I enjoy prosperity in this world,' he posits in the second place evils coming forth for the foolish man himself, both in his property and in his person, saying *And the famished man will consume his harvest*. For frequently, foolish men abounding in riches oppress the poor, who, very often, being unable to sustain their hardships, are forced as if by a certain necessity to seize the goods of the rich. And because such men, living softly, usually lose the vigor of the spirit through the delights of life and are unfit for war, they are easily destroyed by warlike poor men. Hence follows *and the armed man will seize him*, as if without any resistance. And in order that what he had said about harvests be understood generally, he adds *and the thirsty, that is, greedy, man will drink up his riches*.

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Having refuted the previously cited objections, then, he finally adduces reason to prove his principal contention, namely, that adversities in this world do not come upon anyone except in return for sin, and his reason is this: Whatever happens on earth comes about from proper and definite causes. If adversity should happen to anyone in this world, then, this adversity has a definite cause, which seems to be nothing else but sin. This, then, is the meaning of *Nothing happens on earth without a cause*, for we see that all effects proceed from definite causes. As if drawing a conclusion from this fact, he adds *and pain will not arise from the ground*. This is metaphorical speech, for certain herbs are produced without seed, of which it is said that the ground brings them forth spontaneously; therefore, whatever happens without a proper cause, as if without seed, by a certain simile could be said metaphorically to spring up from the ground. Now pain, that is, adversity, will not spring up from the ground, that is, it is not without cause. Now by the statement *Nothing happens on earth without a cause* it is especially made manifest that all things have a natural disposition suited to their proper operation, from which it appears that the natural dispositions of things are not without cause but for the sake of a definite end. Therefore, Eliphaz says *Man is born for labor and the bird for flying*. For it is manifest that because the proper motion which the nature of the bird required is flight, it was necessary that a bird by its nature have instruments suited to flying, namely, wings and feathers. Man, however, because he had reason, by which he could acquire all aids necessary for himself by his own labor, was naturally produced without all the aids which nature has given to the other animals, namely, without armor, without weapons, and without other such things which man was able to provide for himself by his own labor by the industry of his reason.

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(8) Therefore, I will ward off the Lord by prayer and I will set my eloquence before God, (9) Who makes things great and inscrutable and wondrous without number; (10) Who gives the rain on the face of the earth and irrigates everything with waters; (11) Who sets humble men on high and raises up mourners with salvation; (12) Who dissipates the thoughts of the wicked so that they cannot fill their hands as they had begun to do; (13) Who apprehends the wise in their cleverness and dissipates the plan of evil men. (14) By day they will run into darkness and, as if at night, they will feel their way at noon. (15) Henceforth He will make the indigent man safe from the sword of their mouth, and the poor man safe from the violent hand; (16) and there will be hope for the indigent man, but iniquity will check its mouth.

p 130

Because Eliphaz had proposed that everything which happens on earth has a definite cause and had proved it by showing that natural things appeared to have been disposed for the sake of an end, and because this fact, namely, that natural things are for the sake of an end, is the strongest argument to show that the world is ruled by divine providence and that not everything happens by chance, Eliphaz therefore immediately

draws a conclusion from these premises about the rule of divine providence. Now one should know that if divine providence is taken away, then the fruitfulness of prayer and God's knowledge of human affairs, which nevertheless must be posited by one who concedes the rule of providence, are also taken away. Therefore Eliphaz concludes that, since everything which happens on earth is for the sake of an end, it is necessary to concede the rule of providence; *Therefore, I will ward off the Lord by prayer*, as if fruitful prayer exists inasmuch as God disposes human affairs, *and I will set my eloquence before God*, inasmuch as God knows man's deeds, words, and thoughts. For the confirmation of this position he adds those things which especially show divine providence.

p 131

Now one should know that those who deny providence say that everything which appears in the world comes about from the necessity of natural causes, as from the necessity of heat and cold, of heaviness and lightness, and of other such things. Divine providence, therefore, is most powerfully manifested by those things for which no explanation can be given from such natural principles, among which one is the definite magnitude of the bodies of this world. For no reason can be assigned on the basis of any natural principle why the sun or the moon or the earth is of such a size and no greater or smaller. Hence, it is necessary to say that that distribution of sizes is the result of the ordering of some intelligence. This inference he designates in the clause *Who makes things great*, that is, Who disposes things in a definite magnitude. Again, if everything were to come about from the necessity of natural principles, since natural principles are known to us, we would have a way to inquire into everything in this world. There are some things in this world, however, the knowledge of which we cannot attain by any inquiry—for example, spiritual substances, the distances of the stars, and other such things. Hence, it is manifest that not all things proceed from the necessity of natural principles but that things are set up by some superior intelligence, and on this account he adds *and inscrutable*. Likewise, there are certain things which we see whose reason we cannot in any way assign—for example, that stars are disposed in such a pattern in this part of the sky and in another pattern in another part. Hence, it is manifest that this phenomenon does not come about from natural principles but from some higher intelligence, and on this account he adds *and wondrous*. For the inscrutable and the wondrous differ in that the inscrutable is that which itself lies hidden and cannot be searched out, whereas the wondrous is that which does indeed appear but its cause cannot be searched out.

p 131

One should know, too, that some men have posited that the disposition of things according to some numerical order proceeds from God, since from the first simple One only one first effect proceeds in which there is already something of composition and plurality. ¶4 Thus from it [i.e., the One] proceed the Two [i.e., the Dyad] or the Three [i.e., the Triad], which are still less simple, and so according to them the whole multitude of things progresses gradually. According to this position, indeed, the whole disposition of the universe is the result not of an ordination of divine intelligence but of a certain necessity of nature. Hence, to refute this position he adds *without number*, either because things have been brought into being without the necessity of numerical order, or because innumerable things have been produced immediately for us by God, a fact which is especially apparent in the first heaven, in which there are very many stars. In this way, then, Eliphaz shows that the production of things is from God and not from the necessity of nature.

p 132

Next he shows also that the course of the things made is governed by divine providence. And he shows it first in natural things, inasmuch as natural things seem to have been devised for the use of man and other animals, although the natural order of the elements would seem to require something else. ¶5 For if anyone should consider heaviness and lightness in the elements, it is manifest that earth naturally lies beneath water, whereas water lies beneath air and air beneath fire. Now some part of the earth, uncovered by the waters, is found to lie immediately beneath the air, for otherwise breathing animals could not live on earth. And again, lest the earth, uncovered by the waters, be rendered unfruitful and uninhabitable because of its dryness, it is moistened by God in two ways—first, of course, by rain, by which the surface of the earth is

watered, and with respect to this way he says *Who gives the rain on the face of the earth*. In another way it is watered with respect to the springs, creeks, and rivers by which the earth is irrigated, whose source is under the earth just as the source of the rain is in the heavens, and with respect to this way he says *and irrigates everything with waters*.

p 132

Next, Eliphaz shows the operation of providence even in human affairs. And indeed, if human affairs were to run as their disposition seems to require, little or no trace of divine providence would appear in them, but since human affairs run in another way, foolish men who do not consider higher causes attribute this situation to chance and fortune. Solomon speaks in their role in Ecclesiastes 9:11, saying "I saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong nor bread to the wise nor riches to the learned nor favor to the skilled, but [I saw] time and chance in all of them." Now Eliphaz refers this condition to a higher cause, namely, to the providence of God. And [he speaks] first with respect to oppressed men who are raised even from the lowest to high station, and with respect to this situation he says *Who sets humble men*, that is, those cast down, *on high*, and they are transferred from pain to joy, and with respect to this situation he says *and raises up mourners with salvation*. Second, he speaks with respect to the oppressors, of whom there are two classes. For certain men oppress others manifestly through power, and with respect to them is said *Who dissipates the thoughts of wicked men so that they cannot fill their hands as they had begun to do*, because, namely, in the very prosecution of their work they are impeded by God from being able to bring their iniquitous thought to effect. Certain people, however, deceive by cleverness, and with respect to them is said *Who apprehends the wise in their cleverness*, inasmuch, namely, as the things which they cleverly plan turn out the opposite of their purpose, *and dissipates the plan of evil men*, namely, when they are unable to bring about those things which seem to have been wisely planned by them because some impediments have been introduced. Sometimes, however, not only are things cleverly planned impeded in the work, but also their mind is clouded so that in their planning they cannot discern the better plans. Hence, he adds *By day they will run into darkness*, namely, because in a manifest situation they do not know at all what they are doing, *and, as if at night, they will feel their way at noon*, that is, in situations which are not at all doubtful they will doubt, just as if they were in obscure matters.

p 133

And in order that these things should seem to come about by divine providence, he adds the advantages coming forth from the premises. For when the cleverness of malicious people is impeded, the poor are freed from their deceptions, and this is the point of adding *Henceforth He will make the poor man safe from the sword of their mouth*. For those who are clever in evil usually seduce others with persuasive false words, and these words, indeed, are compared to a sword in doing harm according to Psalm 56:5: "Their tongue is a sharp sword." When, however, the operations of powerful, evil people are impeded by God, it is manifest also that the poor are saved. Hence follows *and the pauper safe from the violent hand*. From this statement follow two conclusions, one of which is that men who are powerless in themselves place their trust in divine power, inasmuch as God takes care of human affairs. Hence, he adds *and there will be hope for the indigent man*. The other conclusion is that powerful and iniquitous men hold back so that they may not be totally ruined. Hence follows *but iniquity will check its mouth*, so that, of course, it does not expend itself totally for the destruction of others.

p 133

(17) *Blessed is the man who is corrected by the Lord. Do not reprove the rebuke of the Lord, then, (18) because He Himself both wounds and heals; He strikes and His hands will heal. (19) In six trials He will free you and in the seventh evil will not touch you. (20) In famine He will rescue you from death, and in war from the hand of the sword. (21) You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, and you will not fear calamity when it comes. (22) In famine and devastation you will laugh, and you will not fear the beasts of the land. (23) But with the stones of the regions will be your covenant and the beasts of the land will be at peace with you. (24) And you will know that your tent has peace, and you will know that your house will*

will be at peace with you. (24) And you will know that your tent has peace, and seeing your beauty you will not sin. (25) Your offspring will be like the grass of the land. (26) You will enter your tomb in abundance just as a heap of wheat is reaped in its season. (27) Look! This is just as we have traced it out. Study this once heard with attentive mind.

p 134

As was said above, [†6](#) in the verses above Eliphaz had charged blessed Job both with impatience and with presumption because he had claimed that he was innocent, but now he tries to remove the despair out of which he believed that those words, in which Job had denounced his life, were coming. One should know, then, from what was said above (vv. 8-16) when he claimed divine providence as much in natural things as in human affairs, that he accepts as known that all adversities are brought upon men by divine judgment—on some men, indeed, who are incorrigible, for their ultimate condemnation, but on others, who are improved by their adversities, for their correction, and he claims that these are blessed, saying *Blessed is the man who is corrected by the Lord*. For if correction by a man is salutary, a man who nevertheless cannot know perfectly the due measure and proportion according to which correction can be salutary and a man who is not omnipotent to remove evils and bestow goods, much more ought the correction of an omnipotent and omniscient God be reputed salutary and fruitful. On the basis of this opinion he concludes the argument, saying *Do not reprove the rebuke of the Lord, then*, as if to say: Although you may suffer this adversity at the hand of God because of your sins, nevertheless you ought to reckon that this is, as it were, a kind of rebuke of the Lord to correct you. Hence, you ought not to reprove this adversity so much that you hold your life hateful on account of it.

p 134

And he adds the reason for the aforementioned statements, saying *since He Himself both wounds*, with graver adversity, *and heals*, by taking away evils and restoring goods; *He strikes* with lighter adversity, *and His hands*, that is, His operations, *will heal*, that is, will free you. Eliphaz, then, did not claim that he who is corrected by the Lord is blessed because of a future life, in which he did not believe, but because of the present one, in which, after correction, man obtained from God immunity from evils and an abundance of goods. Hence, next he adds a remark about immunity from evils, saying *In six trials He will free you and in the seventh evil will not touch you*. For since a whole week passes in seven days, a totality is usually designated by the number seven, [†7](#) so that the sense is that after correction no adversity will harm one who is corrected by the Lord. And since, according to Eliphaz's opinion, the more someone has been purged of guilt the less he suffers adversity in this world, he says *in the seventh evil will not touch you*, as if before correction a man is not freed from adversity, but when he begins to be freed from it he is touched but not crushed while God is freeing him, but after the completion of his freeing he is not touched at all. And this statement is indeed true with respect to the mind which, when it places its end in worldly things, is crushed by worldly adversities. When, drawing back its love from them, it begins to love God, it is indeed saddened in adversities, but it is not crushed, since it does not place its hope in this world. When, however, it totally disdains the world, then worldly adversities scarcely touch it. Now this opinion is not true with respect to the body, as Eliphaz understood it, since very excellent men sometimes suffer very grave adversities, according to Psalm 43:22: "Because of you we are being slain all the day long," which is said of the apostles. [†8](#)

p 135

And since he had referred to seven trials, next he enumerates them. [1] Now one should know that sometimes adversity is the result of some particular danger to some person, sometimes even against his bodily life, which is lost by the withdrawal of necessities. With respect to this situation he says *In famine He will rescue you from death*, as if to say: You will indeed suffer famine as one rebuked by the Lord, but as God will be freeing you, you will not come to death because of it, and this is the first trial. [2] Sometimes, however, life is lost by the violence of someone inflicting harm, and with respect to this trial he says *and in war from the hand*, that is, from the power, *of the sword*, as if to say: War will come upon

you, but you will not be delivered into the power of the sword, and this is the second trial. Now corporeal life is also lost by natural death, but this is not counted among the trials since man's nature requires it. [3] Now sometimes personal danger is directed against a man's reputation, which pertains to his social life, and with respect to this trial he says *You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue*. Now the detraction of someone gravely defaming another is called the scourge of the tongue, from which a man is hidden when his deeds, about which he could be defamed, elude the detractor, and this is the third trial. [4] Now sometimes there is adversity from some general danger which can threaten either persons or property. It threatens persons, for example, when an enemy's army overruns a country, when men commonly fear either death or captivity, and with respect to this trial he says *and you will not fear calamity when it comes*, as if to say: When calamity threatens from your country's enemies, you will not fear, and this is the fourth trial. [5-6] Now common danger threatens property either by sterility of the land, which exists in time of famine, or by some devastation of the crops by enemies, and with respect to these two trials he says *In famine and devastation you will laugh*, that is, you will have an abundance which will be the occasion of joy for you, and in this way is treated the fifth and the sixth trials. [7] Now sometimes there is adversity from the attack of brute animals, either in common or in particular, and with respect to this trial he says *and you will not fear the beasts of the land*, and this seems to be the seventh trial in which evil does not touch him.

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Now after immunity from evils he posits abundance in goods, first with respect to the fertility of lands, saying *But with the stones of the regions will be your covenant*, that is, even stony and sterile lands will bear you fruit, according to Deuteronomy 32:13: "So that you might suck honey from a stone" and so on; second, he considers abundance in goods with respect to brute animals, and with respect to this point he says *and the beasts of the land will be at peace with you*, that is, they will not attack you. These two clauses could also be explained another way, so that by stones may be understood hard, coarse men, and by beasts, cruel men. Third, he considers abundance in goods with respect to the men of his household when he says *And you will know that your tent has peace*, that is, your household will be at peace with one another. Fourth, he especially considers abundance in goods with respect to his wife, and with respect to this point he says *and seeing your beauty you will not sin*, as if to say: You will have an honorable and peaceful wife with whom you will be able to live without sin. Fifth, he considers abundance in goods with respect to children. Hence, he says *Your offspring will be like the grass of the land*, that is, you will have many children and grandchildren. Sixth, with respect to a peaceful and quiet death, he says *You will enter your tomb in abundance*, as if in good prosperity, not despoiled of your property, *just as a heap of wheat is reaped in its season*, not anticipated by a sudden, unseasonable death, as it were.

p 136

Now finally he confirms what he had said above, saying *Look! This is just as we have traced it out*. And because he reckons that Job is so absorbed by sadness that he is not thinking much about such things, he renders him attentive, saying *Study this once heard with attentive mind*.

Chapter Six

p 137

(1) Now Job said in response: (2) I wish that my sins by which I have merited anger and the calamity which I am suffering were being weighed in a scale! (3) As the sand of the sea the latter would appear graver. Hence, too, my words are full of pain, (4) because the Lord's arrows are in me, the hurt of which has drunk my spirit, and God's terrors fight against me. (5) Will the wild ass bray when he has grass? Or will the ox bellow when he stands before a full manger? (6) Or will it be possible to eat unsavory food which has not been seasoned with salt? Or can anyone taste that which, once tasted, brings death? (7) The things which my soul did not want to touch before are now my food because of my anguish. (8) Who would grant that my petition come to pass, and that God may give me what I am waiting for, (9) and that He Who has begun may Himself destroy me, that He may loose His hand and cut me down? (10) And let this be my consolation, that He not spare afflicting me with pain. And let me not contradict the speeches of the Holy One. (11) For what is my fortitude, that I should bear up? Or what is my end, that I may act patiently? (12) My fortitude is not the fortitude of stones, nor is my flesh of bronze.

p 137

As is clear from the earlier verses, Eliphaz had noted three points in Job's lament: despair, because he seemed to desire not to exist; impatience or immoderate sadness, because of the sighs and groans which he said he was enduring; and presumption, because he had claimed that he was innocent. †1 And around these three points turned the whole speech of Eliphaz above, in which, to show that Job had been subject to sin and for that reason had endured adversities, he proposed among other things the frailty of the human condition, as a result of which no one can presume to be immune from sin. †2 From here, then, Job takes up the beginning of his response. For it is certain that, because of the frailty of the human condition, no man, however just he may appear, is immune from sin. Nevertheless, in just men sins are not grave and mortal but light and venial, and they come about from negligence and error. Now if it were true, as Eliphaz was trying to claim, that the proper punishments of sins were the adversities of the present life, it would follow that men would suffer grave adversities because of grave sins and light adversities because of light sins, and so just men would never be subjected to grave adversities, which is patently false. This reasoning, then, Job proposes against Eliphaz's debate. Hence is said *Now Job said in response: I wish that my sins by which I have merited anger and the calamity which I am suffering were being weighed in a scale!*, as if to say: I cannot say that there are no sins in me; yet, I am confident that they are not mortal but venial sins; if, then, I have merited from God anger, that is, punishment for such sins, †3 my calamity and my sin ought to have been weighed in the scale of justice, so that the one would match the other equally. But the adversity appears much greater, and this is the point of adding *as the sand of the sea*, that is, incomparably, *the latter*, namely, the calamity, *would appear graver* if the opinion of Eliphaz were true, that adversities in this world are inflicted only according to sins, since it appears that many criminal men, compared to whose sins Job's sins were as nothing, sustain some light adversities.

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Now from this point he proceeds further to excuse himself of the sadness which he had expressed in words, saying *Hence, too, my words are full of pain*. With this conclusion, he infers that his pain was caused by the seriousness of his adversity. Now he adds two causes for his pain. For pain is caused sometimes by the things which someone has already suffered, but other times by the things which he is afraid to suffer. First, then, he assigns a cause of his pain resulting from the things which he had already suffered, saying *because the Lord's arrows are in me*, in which he shows that he had been afflicted unexpectedly, for an arrow comes from far off and unexpectedly. And to show the seriousness of the blow he adds *the hurt of which has drunk my spirit*, that is, has not permitted me to breathe but has totally taken away whatever strength or consolation could have been in me. Next he shows the cause of pain from the things which he was afraid to suffer, saying *and God's terrors fight against me*. For the afflicted are usually consoled by hope of a better state, but when, after an affliction, someone fears similar or greater afflictions again, no consolation seems to remain.

p 138

Now someone could say: You do indeed have a cause for pain, but you ought not to burst forth into words of pain over it. Against this objection Job responds on the basis of reactions which are found in other animals. For man is like other animals in his sensitive nature; hence, reactions which follow upon the sensitive nature are present in man naturally, just as they are in other animals. But what is natural cannot be totally suppressed. Now it is found in other animals that they express the affliction of the heart with the mouth, and he signifies this fact, saying *Will the wild ass bray when he has grass? Or will the ox bellow when he stands before a full manger?*, as if to say, 'No.' The ass brays and the ox bellows rather when they lack necessary food, and in this analogy it appears natural for animals to express internal affliction with the voice.

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Again, someone could say that it is natural that a pain once conceived be expressed vocally, but that it does not pertain to a wise man that he conceive sadness in his heart for any reasons whatsoever, as the Stoics posited. †4 But Job shows that this position is contrary to the sensitive nature. For the senses cannot but recoil from that which is harmful or unfitting, and therefore he says *Or will it be possible to eat unsavory food which has not been seasoned with salt?*, as if to say, 'No,' because, of course, such tasteless foods are not fit to delight the sense of taste. Similarly, man's heart cannot willingly accept things which are not delectable, much less those which are bitter and harmful. Hence, he adds *Or can anyone taste that which, once tasted, brings death?*, as if to say, 'No'; and just as this insensitivity is impossible in an external sense, so it is impossible that things which are apprehended by the internal senses as harmful be received without sadness.

p 139

But since although the wise man may suffer sadness his reason is still not absorbed by it, Job shows next that, although he himself was suffering sadness, yet there was in him the greatest worry and fear that he would not guard himself against sadness, that he would in fact be led by sadness into some vice. To avoid this vice he was hoping for death, and to express his hope he says *The things which my soul did not want to touch before are now my food because of my anguish*, as if to say: The things which my soul abhorred before it now seeks delightedly, and he shows what they are, saying *Who would grant that my petition come to pass?* And so that he may be shown to be proposing this petition not merely from the mouth but also from the bottom of his heart, he adds *and that God may give me what I am waiting for?* And he shows what that petition is, adding *and that He Who has begun, namely, to afflict me, may Himself destroy me*, namely, by death, and this is the point of adding *that He may loose His hand and cut me down?* He calls the divine power with which God had afflicted him the hand of God, and this hand, of course, seems somehow bound by divine will and mercy when it ceases to afflict but is somehow loosed when the divine blow is directed to the end of killing.

p 139

And because Job had said that the things which he did not want to touch before were now his food, he shows how this statement is to be understood, because death, which had been horrible to him, has now become sweet. Hence, he adds *And let this be my consolation, that He*, namely, God, *not spare afflicting me with pain*, that is, not draw back His hand but bring me to death. And Job shows why he hopes for this outcome, adding *And let me not contradict the speeches of the Holy One*, that is, of God, by contradicting His judgments or the sentence by which He has afflicted me. For Job feared that by his many afflictions he might be reduced to impatience so that his reason might not be able to repress his sadness. Now the condition of impatience exists when someone's reason is so reduced by sadness that it contradicts divine judgments. But if someone should suffer sadness according to his sensual side but his reason should conform to the divine will, there is no defect of impatience, and so Eliphaz was charging Job in vain when he said, "Now the stroke has come upon you and you have failed" [4:5], for although he was saddened, he had still not failed.

p 140

Next Job assigns a reason from his own frailty why he feared that he might be induced to contradict the speeches of the Holy One. For such fear could be taken away by two causes: first, if the fortitude of his reason were so great that it could in no way be overcome, as it is in those whose free will has been confirmed by grace. But he did not feel this fortitude in himself. Hence, he says *For what is my fortitude, that I should bear up?*, namely, under any trials whatsoever. Second, fear could be removed if it were necessary to endure the trials and sadness for some brief time. Therefore, to remove this cause he adds *Or what is my end, that I may act patiently?*, as if to say: What limit has been put to my trials so that, expecting it, I may be able to presume that I will keep my patience. And for explanation of these remarks he goes on to say *My fortitude is not the fortitude of stones*, for the fortitude of stones is without sensation. Now a man's fortitude is accompanied by a sense of harmful things, because of which he adds *nor is my flesh of bronze*, that is, without sensation, because, however strong mortal man's reason may be, it is still necessary that on the side of the flesh he experience the sense of pain. And by this observation is excluded the rebuke of Eliphaz, who was censuring sadness in blessed Job. For even if there were fortitude of mind in blessed Job, there was still present on the side of the flesh a sense of pain upon which his sadness followed. At the same time, too, by this observation is refuted the opinion of the Stoics, who say that a wise man is not saddened, of which opinion Eliphaz seems to have been. Blessed Job, however, intends to defend the position which the Peripatetics also posited, that a wise man is indeed saddened, but through reason he strives not to be led into an unsuitable condition. †5

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(13) Look! There is no help for me in myself, and my connections also have left me. (14) He who takes away mercy from his friend abandons the fear of the Lord. (15) My brothers have passed me by like a torrent which speedily passes by in the valleys. (16) The snow will descend upon those who fear the frost. (17) At a time in which they will have been dissipated they will perish, and when they have warmed up they will be released from their place. (18) The paths of their steps are entangled; they will walk into the desert and they will perish. (19) Consider the paths of Tema, the routes of Saba, and wait for a little while; (20) they are embarrassed because I had hope for them; they also came to me, and they were covered with shame. (21) Now you have come, and merely seeing my stroke you are afraid. (22) Have I said: Bring to me and give to me from your substance? (23) Free me from the hand of the enemy and rescue me from the hand of the mighty? (24) Teach me and I will be silent, and if by chance I have been ignorant of something, instruct me? (25) Why have you disparaged my speeches of truth? Since there is not one of you who can censure me. (26) Only to rebuke me do you join fine words together, and you utter your words into the wind. (27) You rush upon an orphan and try to overthrow your friend. (28) But yet, finish what you have begun; give ear and see whether I am lying. (29) Respond, please, without contention, and speaking, judge what is just. (30) And you will not find iniquity on my tongue, nor in my throat will there resound folly.

p 141

Job had shown in the preceding verses that he had felt his pain and had uttered words of pain rationally, but yet he had not been absorbed by pain because of the things which he had suffered. But since sometimes a man, although he may suffer some adversities, guards himself by his own and others' aid and comfort against them in such a way that he conceives little or no pain from them, blessed Job wants to show that he is destitute of such remedies so that from this fact it may appear more evident that he had uttered words of pain reasonably. And first he shows that he, for his part, is destitute of the aforementioned remedies when he says *Look! There is no help for me in myself*. For although some of his goods had been plundered, he could endure this plundering without sadness if he were able to help himself to recover the lost goods and to avenge the injury inflicted, but he could not do this, destitute as he was of all his riches, his children, and the health of his own body.

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Again, there are many things which we cannot do by ourselves which we can do with the help of friends. Therefore, Job shows secondly that he is also destitute of the help of friends when he says *and my connections also*, that is, my intimates and household, *have left me*. And he shows that this is not without guilt on their part, adding *He who takes away mercy from his friend*, namely, in the time of misery, *abandons the fear of the Lord*, that is, the reverence which he ought to have for God, because of Whom and in Whom his neighbor ought to be loved: "Whoever does not love his brother whom he does see—how can he love God Whom he does not see?", as is said in John 4:20.

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Next he shows that he has also been abandoned by his kinsmen, saying *My brothers*, that is, kinsmen, *have passed me by*. He speaks metaphorically of people walking the road together, as if when one falls into a pit the others nevertheless go on, abandoning him. And indeed, they could be excused to some degree if, after they had given him aid for a while, they had dismissed him, either because of weariness or because of despair of helping him. Therefore, so that his kinsmen may be inexcusable, he shows that he was deserted immediately and suddenly by them, which he signifies when he adds *like a torrent which speedily passes by in the valleys*, which moves very swiftly. And so that they may not believe that they have done this with impunity, he adds *The snow will descend upon those who fear the frost*, as if to say: He who departs from justice and mercy because of fear of a lesser danger will be led into greater dangers. Hence Job's brothers, too, who passed him by, unwilling to show him compassion, will themselves sustain sadness in their own losses. And he shows that their dangers are going to be without remedy, adding *At a time in which they will have been dissipated*, that is, in which they will incur some dangers, *they will perish*, namely, totally, *and when they have warmed up, they will be released from their place*. He speaks under the metaphor of the snow of which he had made mention, which, when it has become very firm through freezing, does not melt immediately at the first warming but, when it has not yet frozen, melts immediately at the radiation of the sun, and flows. This, then, is the meaning of *when they have warmed up they will be released from their place*; that is, immediately, at the first onset of adversity as if at the onset of some heat, their whole prosperity will melt. And he shows the cause, adding *The paths of their steps are entangled*. For that which is entangled goes back upon itself in a kind of twisting. Their paths are entangled, then, who seek nothing in their kinsmen and friends except their own advantage, and for this reason, in time of prosperity they pretend friendship but in time of adversity they abandon it. But men who fraudulently seek their own advantage generally fail their hope. Therefore, he adds *they will walk into the desert*. For some men are said to walk into the desert when they fall short of the end of their walking. And not only will their hope be laid aside but the opposite will befall them. Hence follows *and they will perish*, that is, they will be totally destroyed.

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So, then, neither in himself nor in his household nor in his kinsmen did he have help. Next he shows that he had no help in his other friends, either. Hence, he says *Consider the paths of Thema, the routes of Saba*, regions in which he seemed especially to have had friends, for even Eliphaz had come from Thema, *and wait for a little while*, namely, considering whether any men come along these roads to bring me help. This you will not see because *they are embarrassed*, namely, to come to me, *because I had hope for them*, that is, because there was a time when I should have hoped for help from them. For men who do not wish to help are embarrassed to visit those who they think can reasonably ask help of them. *They also came*, some of them, indeed, *to me, and they were covered with shame*, because they did not give me help when they recognized that they should have. Nor is there any wonder about the others, since even you, who seem wiser, fail in this regard. Hence, he adds *Now you have come, and merely seeing my stroke you are afraid*, namely, that perhaps it may be necessary for you to help me. But do not be afraid, since I have requested your help in nothing. For I do not even request of you that you help me with money, and this is the meaning of *Have I said: Bring to me and give to me from your substance?* Nor have I sought help from you in the way against my enemies, and this is the point of adding *Bring me from the land of the*

from you in the war against my enemies, and this is the point of adding *Free me from the hand of the enemy and rescue me from the hand of the mighty?* Nor have I sought from you the help of learning, and this is the meaning of: Have I said *Teach me*, namely, in speculative matters, *and I will be silent, and if by chance I have been ignorant of something, instruct me?*, namely, in carrying it out. Not only do you not offer me help but you even afflict me further with words as much as you can, and this is the point of adding *Why have you disparaged my speeches of truth?*, namely, which I first uttered in my lament, which Eliphaz seemed to reprimand, as has been said. †6 And in order that this detraction may be shown to be inexcusable, he excludes all those things by which anyone who reprimands is excused of detraction. The first of these is the situation in which someone of greater authority reprimands another for guilt, and Job excludes this one, saying *Since there is not one of you who can censure me*. The second is the situation in which someone utters harsh words against another for his good and not to exacerbate the situation, and this is the point of adding *Only to rebuke me*, and not for my good, *do you join fine words together*, that is, compose words carefully so that they seem not to have been spoken lightly. The third is the situation in which someone supports with efficacious reasons the words which he utters against another, and he removes this one, saying *and you utter your words into the wind*, as if to say: Your words are empty, having no force of reason. The fourth is the situation in which someone reprimands another at a time and in a state in which it can be presumed that he may be made better, not worse, as a result. But if someone should wish to reprimand another at a time when he is perplexed in spirit and disposed to anger, he seems to wish not his correction but his subversion. Therefore, he says *You rush upon an orphan and try to overthrow your friend*. He calls himself an orphan because, set down in sadness, he was destitute of any help.

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And lest anyone might think that he was saying this in fear of a contest with them, as if he were not confident of the truth of his opinion and of the justice of his cause, he adds *But yet, finish what you have begun*, so that the truth may shine forth from debating back and forth. Hence, he adds *give ear*, that is, listen, *and see*, that is, consider, *whether I am lying*. For this is the first impediment to finding the truth through debate, when someone does not wish to hear the things which are said by his adversary. The second impediment is a noisy and abusive response to what has been heard, and to remove this impediment he says *Respond, please, without contention*. For contention, as Ambrose says, is "An assault upon the truth with the weight of shouting." †7 The third impediment exists when someone in the debate does not aim at truth but at victory and glory, as happens in quarrelsome and sophistic debates; †8 *and speaking, judge what is just*, namely, so that you may concede the things which seem to you to be true and deny those which seem false. *And if you do this, you will not find iniquity on my tongue*, namely, anything against the justice which is due my neighbor, *nor in my throat will there resound folly*, that is, anything against the wisdom by which one senses correctly about God. For Job intended to defend and prove the truth about both divine and human matters.

Chapter Seven

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(1) *Man's life on earth is a campaign, and like the day of the hireling is his day. (2) Just as the slave desires the shade and as the hireling waits for the end of his work, (3) so I, too, have had unprofitable months, and the nights I have counted laborious for me. (4) If I go to sleep I say: When will I arise? And*

again, I will await the evening and I will be full of pains until dark.

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Eliphaz, wishing in his earlier verses to rescue blessed Job from despair, had promised him a certain earthly blessedness if he would not reproach the Lord's rebuke. [†] Hence, after he has shown the reasonable causes for his sadness, blessed Job wants to show further that Eliphaz's aforementioned consolation, based on the promise of earthly blessedness, is unsuitable. And he shows it first from the condition of the present life, whereas later (v. 5) he shows it from his own condition.

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But concerning the condition of the present life the opinion of men has differed, for some men have posited that ultimate happiness was in this life, and Eliphaz's words seem to follow this opinion. For the ultimate end of man is where he expects the final retribution for good and evil deeds; hence, if man is rewarded in this life by God for good deeds and punished for bad, as Eliphaz was trying to affirm, it seems to follow that the ultimate end of man is in this life. But Job intends to disprove this opinion, and he wants to show that man's present life does not have in it the ultimate end but is compared to it as motion is compared to rest and the road to the destination; therefore, he compares it to those states of men who strive toward some end, namely, to the state of soldiers who strive toward victory in military campaigning, and this is the meaning of *Man's life on earth is a campaign*, as if to say: The present life in which we live on earth is not like the state of victory but like the state of a campaign. He also compares it to the state of hirelings, and this is the point of adding *and like the day of the hireling is his day*, namely, the day of the man living on earth. Now he compares the present life to these two states because of two things which are incumbent upon a man in the present life, namely, that he resist impediments and harmful things, and on this account life is compared to a campaign, and that he perform works useful for an end, and on this account man is compared to a hireling. Now by both examples it is meant that the present life is subject to divine providence, for soldiers do campaign under a general and hired men do wait for their wages from an employer. Also, in these two examples the falsity of the opinion which Eliphaz was defending is sufficiently apparent, for it is manifest that the general of an army does not spare vigorous soldiers from dangers or labors, but as the plan of the campaign requires, he sometimes exposes them both to greater labors and to greater dangers, but after victory has been won he honors the more vigorous soldiers more. So, too, the head of the household entrusts to the better hirelings the greater labors, but on payday he bestows on them greater rewards; hence, neither is divine providence disposed to exempt good men more from the adversities and labors of the present life, but to reward them more generously in the end.

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Therefore, since Eliphaz's whole opinion is undermined by these words, Job strives for their confirmation and demonstrates them with efficacious reasoning. For it is manifest that anything whatsoever rests once its ultimate end has been achieved; hence, it is necessary that, when the human will has achieved its ultimate end, it rest in it and not be moved further to desire other things. But we experience the opposite of this situation in the present life, for man always desires the future as if he is not content with the present; hence, it is manifest that the ultimate end is not in this life but that this life is ordered toward another end, as the campaign is ordered toward victory and the hireling's day is ordered toward the wage. Now one should know that in the present life present circumstances do not suffice, but desire stretches into the future on two accounts: first, namely, because of the afflictions of the present life, and on this account he introduces the example of the slave desiring shade, saying *Just as the slave afflicted by the heat desires the shade* by which he may be cooled; and second, because of the lack of the perfect final good which one does not have here, and therefore he posits the example of the hireling, saying *and as the hireling waits for the end of his work*—for the perfect good is man's end—*so I, too, have had unprofitable months*, that is, I have deemed that past months have passed without profit to me, as months in which I had not gained final perfection; *and the nights*, intended for rest against afflictions, *I have counted laborious for me*, that is, I have deemed them as if they were laborious inasmuch as I was hindered in them from the achievement of the end.

them as if they were laborious inasmuch as I was hindered in them from the achievement of the end.

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Now Job explains in what way he has had unprofitable months and laborious nights, adding *If I go to sleep*, that is, when it is time to go to sleep at night, *I say: When will I arise?*, wishing eagerly for the day. *And again*, when it has become day, *I will await the evening*, always stretching into the future this way through desire. And this desire is indeed common to every man living on earth, but men feel it more or less as they are affected more or less by joys or sorrows. For he who is in joy desires the future less, whereas he who is in sadness desires it more; therefore, to show that this desire is powerful in him, Job adds *and I will be full of pains until dark*, because of which pains the present time is made wearisome for me and I desire the future more.

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(5) *My flesh has been clothed in corruption and with the filth of dust; my skin is dried out and shrunken.* (6) *My days have passed more swiftly than the warp is cut off by the weaver, and they have been consumed without any hope.* (7) *Remember that my life is wind and that my eye will not return to see good things,* (8) *nor will the sight of man look upon me; Your eyes [will be] upon me and I will not exist.* (9) *Just as a cloud is consumed and passes by, so he who descends to the underworld will not ascend.* (10) *Neither will he return again to his house, nor will his place know him any more.*

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Blessed Job had shown above that Eliphaz's consolation based on a promise of happiness in life on earth had been inept in view of the general condition of man's life on earth, but now he intends to show that the same consolation is inept on the basis of his own condition. And he proposes two things which impede him from expecting prosperity on earth, of which the first is the infirmity of the body which he was suffering. For nothing can happen to a man held back by grave infirmity to make him be happy in this life; therefore, he says *My flesh has been clothed in corruption*, as if to say: My body is surrounded all over with the corruption of sores, just as the body is surrounded by a garment. And because wounds tended from the beginning attain health, he shows that his sores have been neglected; hence, he says *and with the filth of dust*, for they had not been tended the way they ought, since he was literally sitting on a dung-heap, as was said above [2:8]. Now healing is expected sometimes, even if sores have been neglected, when the nature is strong, but in Job's case the vigor of his nature had failed; hence, he says *my skin is dried out and shrunken*, namely, because the natural moisture was by now used up, either because of old age or because of infirmity; hence, there seems to be no place that I may expect happiness in this life any more. The second thing impeding his prosperity is that most of the time of his life had already passed; hence, little time remained and he could not expect great happiness in it, and on this account he says *My days have passed more swiftly than the warp is cut off by the weaver*. For man's life is in some respect like weaving, for just as he who weaves a warp adds threads to threads to reach the completion of the warp, which he cuts off once it is completed, so days are added to days so that a man's life may be completed. When it has been completed, however, it is taken away. Nevertheless, he says that a man's days pass more swiftly than the warp is cut off because in the work of weaving the weaver sometimes rests, but the time of a man's life slips away continuously, without rest.

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But someone could say that although most of his lifetime has passed, Job could still expect a return to the state of his past life. For some men have posited that after death, after a great many cycles of years have passed, a man would return to the same course of life which he had lived before, as, for example, Plato in the future will lecture at Athens and will do the same things as he did before, [†2](#) and so, although a man has passed most of his lifetime, he could expect a restoration of happiness in earthly life; therefore, to remove this possibility, Job adds *and they have been consumed without any hope*, namely, of returning to his former days. And to prove this point he adds speaking to God—to Whom he seems to have directed his

Job says this to prove the point he adds, speaking to God — to whom he seems to have directed his discourse from the line "Man's life on earth is a campaign" (v. 1)—saying *Remember that my life is wind*, that is, like the wind. For just as the wind passes and does not return hereafter, so man's life does not return when it has passed, and this is the point of adding *and my eye will not return to see good things*, namely, of the earthly life which I had at one time and have now lost. And just as when my life has passed I will not return to see earthly goods, so neither will I be seen by an earthly eye; hence follows the statement *nor will the sight of man look upon me*. Now he posits these two points to signify that he will not return to human association, which consists chiefly in seeing and being seen, for since sight is the subtlest of the senses it holds primacy in the sensate life. ¶3 But although he has said that after death he will not be seen by the eye of man, he nevertheless confesses that he will be seen by the eye of God in this addition: *Your eyes will be, namely, on me*: for those who have died are visible to God, Who looks upon spiritual things, since the dead live according to the spirit, not according to the flesh which man's sight can look upon.

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Now someone could understand from this passage that God's eyes look at the dead man not according to his present state but just as he looks at future things, as if the dead man is going to return again to the life which he has left. Therefore, to exclude this misunderstanding, he adds *and I will not exist*, as if to say: In this sense do I say that your eyes will be upon me after death, that afterwards I will nevertheless not exist again in the state of this earthly life. And he proves this point with a simile when he adds *Just as a cloud is consumed and passes from existence, so he who descends to the underworld will not ascend*. Now the dead are said to descend to the underworld either because according to the spirit, before the death of Christ everyone descended into hell, or because according to the flesh they are put under the earth. For as far as the discussion at hand is concerned, it makes no difference how it is explained, for he means to say only that the dead do not return to their past life, and he proves this point in a kind of simile, a sufficient proof. For just as the Philosopher teaches in *On Generation II*, ¶4 a kind of circular motion appears in corruptible bodies as well as in incorruptible bodies. There is this difference, however, that in the case of heavenly bodies the same one in number returns following the revolution, just as the same sun in number which sets returns at sunrise, and this is true since the substance is not destroyed in such a change; only the place changes. In the case of the motion of things which are able to be generated and corrupted, however, the same one in number does not return, but the same in species does. For it is clear that, following the annual circular motion of the sun, there occurs a kind of circulation in the disposition of the atmosphere, for in the winter there are clouds, and afterwards in the summer they dissipate. When the winter returns again, the clouds return, yet not the same clouds in number but the same in species, since those clouds which existed before perish entirely. And it is similar in the case of men, for the same men who existed before do not return generation after generation according to number but only according to species.

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On the basis of this explanation, the gist of the argument of those who posited a return to the same life and to the same activities is clear, ¶5 for they believed that the lower bodies are disposed according to the motion of the heavenly bodies; hence, since the same constellation returned after very many periods of time, they believed that the same in number returned. It is not necessary, however, that the same things in number return, as has been said, but only things like them in species. They posited, furthermore, that a deceased man, after fixed periods of time, returned not only to life but also to the same possessions and houses which he had earlier; therefore, to exclude this claim, Job adds *Neither will he return again to his house*. They also posited that he would do the same works as he did before and hold the same offices and honors, and to exclude this claim also he adds *nor will his place know him any more*, that is, he will not return again to his place. And this "place" is taken as the state of the person in that way of speaking in which we usually say: He has an important place in that city.

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Now it is manifest on the basis of these verses that Job is not denying here the resurrection which faith claims, but a return to the life of the flesh which the Jews posit, †6 and certain philosophers have also posited. †7 This position of Job's also does not contradict the narration of Scripture about the fact that some people have been brought back to life in the present world, †8 because the one is done miraculously and the other is done according to the course of nature, as Job is speaking here. One should consider also that he did not therefore say what he said above, "Remember that my life is wind" (v. 7), as if forgetfulness should befall God. Rather, he speaks in conformity with the hypothesis of his adversaries' position, for if God were to promise goods in this earthly life to a man whose life has, as it were, already passed, he would seem to have forgotten, as it were, that man's life passes like the wind without return.

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(11) On this account I, too, will not be sparing in my speech. I will speak in the trial of my spirit; I will converse with the bitterness of my soul. (12) Am I the sea, or a whale, that You have surrounded me in a prison? (13) If I say, "My bed will console me; I will be relieved by speaking with myself in my blanket," (14) You will frighten me through dreams, and through visions You will strike me with horror. (15) Therefore, my soul has chosen hanging and my bones have chosen death. (16) I have despaired; to no avail will I live longer.

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After Job has shown through cogent arguments that the consolation of Eliphaz, who was promising earthly prosperity, was inconsistent, he now shows by a reduction to absurdities that, if he were to rely on that consolation which had been given him by Eliphaz based on the hope of earthly prosperity, since that hope is frivolous, as has been shown, it followed that he would still have to remain in sadness, to utter words of sorrow, and to despair completely. Therefore, as if debating against the position, he concludes *On this account*, namely, because it is vain to expect earthly prosperity, as has been shown, and you would have no way to console from any other source, *I, too*, as if bereft of consolation, *will not be sparing in my speech*, so as not to speak words of lamentation as my mind suggests. This is the point of adding, *I will speak in the trial of my spirit*, that is, as the trial which I am suffering impels my spirit to speak. And not only the external trial but the internal sadness conceived from it was besetting him, and therefore he adds *I will converse with the bitterness of my soul*, that is, I will speak empty and incredible words, as it were, as the bitterness of my soul will serve up to me.

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Now among the other things which embittered men usually say, they are especially accustomed to inquire about the causes for their bitterness, since there is hardly any embittered man who does not seem to himself to have been afflicted either entirely unjustly or more than is just. Therefore Job, playing the role of an embittered man, inquires about the cause of his affliction, saying *Am I the sea, or a whale, that You have surrounded me in a prison?* Here one should note that God's providence works one way in the case of rational creatures and another way in the case of irrational creatures, for in rational creatures are found merit and demerit because of free will, and because of this free will punishments and rewards are due them, whereas irrational creatures, since they do not have free will, neither merit rewards nor incur punishments, but God works with respect to them for their enlargement or restriction as it is consistent with the good of the universe. On the basis of this provision or plan, indeed, it happens that God confines the sea so that it does not occupy the whole surface of the earth, so that there may be a place for the animals and earth-born creatures. Similarly, too, he confines the whale beneath the ocean sea so that it could not be a cause of harm to anyone if it were led into other seas. And therefore Job inquires whether the cause of his affliction is similar to the cause for which the sea or the whale is confined—namely, that he is afflicted not because of any lack of merit on his part but because of some advantage accruing to others from it.

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Now he says that he has been surrounded in a prison because he had been so oppressed by his trial that

Now he says that he has been surrounded in a prison because he had been so oppressed by his trial that neither liberation nor consolation lay open to him in any direction; therefore, he shows next that he has been deprived of those remedies with which the afflicted are usually consoled, one of which is sleep, for sadness is mitigated after sleep. He makes note of this fact when he says *If I say, "My bed will console me,"* namely, at the time for sleeping. Another remedy is the consolation which wise men afford themselves through the deliberation of the reason, and he touches upon this remedy when he says *"I will be relieved,"* namely, from the oppression of sadness, *"speaking with myself"* through the deliberation of the reason, *"in my blanket"*. For when wise men are alone and removed from the distractions of men and of business, then they can speak more with themselves while reflecting upon something according to reason. But those remedies could not help him, because at the time when he ought to have been using these remedies, other impediments by which he was being disturbed were besetting him, namely, terrible dreams and horrible visions. This is the point of adding *You will frighten me through dreams,* namely, those which appear to one in his sleep, *and through visions,* namely, those which appear to one who is awake but deprived of the use of his external senses, *You will strike me with horror.* For nocturnal apparitions are usually similar to daytime reflections, and so, since Job was reflecting during the day on lamentable subjects, he was disturbed by similar apparitions during the night. Infirmity of the body also works to the end that disturbed apparitions appear to people in their sleep.

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So, then, since consolation has been excluded on all sides, no way remains to me of evading so many difficulties except through death; therefore, I prefer death, however abject, to a life so miserable, and this is the point of saying *Therefore, my soul has chosen hanging.* And lest this choice be thought to come from some weak reflection with other strong reflections opposing it, he adds that there is nothing in him so strong that it does not long for death, and this is the point of saying *and my bones have chosen death,* for in Scripture that which is characteristic of strength in man is usually designated by bones.^{†9} And he shows why he chooses death when he adds *I have despaired,* namely, of the hope which you gave me that I may again enjoy earthly prosperity. And he shows why he has despaired, adding *to no avail will I live longer.* In this remark can be understood two objections which Job had posited above (v. 6), namely, that the greater part of his life had already passed and that there was no return after death to the same life, namely, so that he might live on earth. This unsuitable effect, then, overtook Job as a result of Eliphaz's consolation, namely, that he despaired, chose death, and had no way to repress his sadness.

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Spare me, Lord, for my days are nothing. (17) What is man that You make much of him or that You set Your heart towards him? (18) You visit him at daybreak and right away You test him. (19) How long do You not spare me nor let me go to swallow my saliva? (20) I have sinned. What will I do for You, O guardian of men? Why have You set me in opposition to You, and why have I become grievous to myself? (21) Why do You not take away my sin, and why do You not take away my iniquity? Look! Now I will sleep in the dust, and if in the morning You will look for me, I will not exist.

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After Job has shown that the consolation of Eliphaz based on a promise of earthly happiness was leading him to despair and to a longing for death, he shows what is left to him to be hoped for from God, namely, that the trial imposed upon him may cease, and this is the point of saying *Spare me, Lord,* as if to say: I have given up hope of earthly prosperity; it is sufficient that you spare me, that is, stop scourging me. And because a man's smallness and misery usually induce one to spare him, he adds *for my days are nothing,* a remark which appears to refer to man's smallness and to the brevity of his life, both with respect to all mankind generally and specifically with respect to himself, whose days had already passed, as it were.

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Next, however, he pursues both weaknesses, first man's smallness, saying *What is man,* that is, how small

a thing and weak in his body, *that You make much of him* with a kind of honor among the other creatures, *or that You set Your heart towards him*, guarding and protecting him with special care? Here one should consider that, although all things are subject to divine providence and all things achieve their greatness from God according to their own state, yet some obtain it in one way, others in another. For since all the particular goods in the universe seem to be ordered toward the common good of the universe as the part is ordered toward the whole and the imperfect toward the perfect, in this way some things are disposed according to divine providence according as they have a relationship to the universe. Now one should know that according to the way in which some things participate in perpetuity they aim at the perfection of the universe essentially, but according as they fall short of perpetuity they pertain to the perfection of the universe accidentally and not in themselves. And therefore, according as some things are perpetual they are disposed by God on their own account, but according as they are corruptible they are disposed on account of another. Things which are perpetual both in species and in the individual, then, are governed by God on their own account, whereas things which are corruptible in the individual and perpetual in species only are, indeed, disposed by God on their own account according to species but on account of the species only according to the individual, just as the good and the bad which happens among brute animals—namely, that this sheep is killed by this wolf or something else of this kind—is not dispensed by God because of any merit or demerit of this wolf or of this sheep but for the good of the species, since its own food has been divinely ordained for each species. And this is the point of saying *or that You set Your heart toward him?*, namely, when You provide for him because of his good; he does not, however, set his heart toward individual animals but upon the good of their species, which can be perpetual.

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Now he shows how God sets His heart toward man when he adds *You visit him at daybreak*, that is, from the beginning of his birth You minister to him by Your providence the things both corporeal and spiritual which are necessary for life and for making himself great, *and right away You test him* through adversities in which it is apparent how he is disposed toward virtue, since, as it is expressed in Ecclesiasticus 27:6, "The furnace tests the potter's vessels and the trial of trouble tests just men." Now God is said to test a man not so that He Himself may learn what kind of man he is but in order to have others know him and so that the man may know himself. Now these words of Job are not to be understood as the words of one disapproving of the divine concern about men but as the words of one inquiring and wondering, for that which is seen of man externally is something small, frail, and transitory, and so it would seem strange that God would have such great concern for man unless something lay hidden in him which would be capable of perpetuity. Hence, by this inquiry and wonder the opinion of Eliphaz is excluded, since, if there were no other life of man except that life on earth, man would not seem worthy of such great concern about him on God's part; therefore, the very concern which God has especially for man demonstrates that there is another life of man after the death of the body.

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Next he adds another reason, taken from the brevity of life, that God should spare him, proposing it in the form of a question when he says *How long do You not spare me?*, as if to say: The time of man's life is brief, and of the time of my life the greater part has already passed. What limit, then, is expected so that You may spare me if You are not sparing me now, so that I may have some brief period, at least, in which to rest. He signifies this difficulty in the addition *nor let me go to swallow my saliva?* For when men are uttering words they cannot swallow their saliva. It is necessary in speaking, then, that some little pause be made so that saliva may be either spat out or swallowed, and to this brief instant, indeed, he compares the remaining time of his life, as if to say: If You should put off sparing me, no rest from my labors will remain to me, even a rest like the pause during which speakers swallow their saliva. And this reason, too, proceeds from the supposition of Eliphaz's opinion since, if there should be no other life of man but that upon this earth, there will not remain a time when God may spare Job if He does not spare him in this life.

Now someone could say that Job is unworthy to be spared by God since his sins merit that he be afflicted further, according to the opinion of Eliphaz, who thought that he was being scourged because of his sins; therefore, he adds *I have sinned*, as if to say: Let it be granted that I have sinned and on this account I deserve to be scourged; there still remains a reason why You ought to spare me. And he adds to this confession three reasons taken from the infirmity of man why God ought to spare him, the first of which is taken from man's powerlessness to make satisfaction. For man can do nothing by his own strength worthy to make amends for an offense which he has committed against God, and this is the point of saying *What will I do for You, O guardian of men?*, as if to say: If You have such great concern for men, as if You were their guardian, that You require a reason for each of their actions, my strength is not sufficient to do anything because of which You would remit my sins; hence, if this satisfaction is expected, You would never spare me; therefore, this powerlessness notwithstanding, please spare me.

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The second reason is taken from man's powerlessness to persevere. For since the corruption of human nature man cannot persevere without the grace of God; hence, even in Sacred Scripture it is customarily said that God hardens someone or blinds him in the sense that He does not bestow the grace through which he would be softened and see. †10 Here too, then, Job speaks in this way, saying *Why have You set me in opposition to You*, that is: Why have You not given me the grace through which I might persevere in this matter and not be opposed to You through sin? For whoever sins is opposed to God when he resists the divine commands, either those which have been handed down in the written Law or those which have been imparted to man's reason naturally. Now one should know that reason is the strongest among all the powers of the soul, and the sign of this strength is that it rules the others and uses them for its own end. †11 Nevertheless, it happens that reason is sometimes absorbed a little by concupiscence or anger or the other passions of the lower parts, and so man sins. Yet, the lower powers cannot hold the reason bound so that it does not always return to its nature by which it tends toward spiritual goods as toward its proper end. So, therefore, a kind of fight breaks out, even of man against himself, when reason strives against him because, absorbed by concupiscence or anger, it has sinned. And since as a result of past sin proneness toward similar actions has been added to the lower powers because of habit, reason cannot freely use the lower powers to order them toward the higher goods and draw them back from the lower. And so, when man becomes opposed to God through sin, he also becomes grievous to himself, and this is the point of adding *and why have I become grievous to myself?* In this remark it appears that sin has its punishment immediately. So, too, it seems that after this punishment man is to be spared more easily.

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The third reason is taken from man's powerlessness to atone for sin. For man slips into sin by himself, but the remission of sin belongs to God alone; therefore, Job asks: If my punishment ought not to cease as long as the sin remains, and You alone can take away sin, *Why do You not take away my sin* which I have committed against God or against myself? *And why do You not take away my iniquity*, if any has been committed against my neighbor? Now one should consider that Job does not make such inquiries as a rash questioner of divine judgments, but to destroy the falsehood which his adversaries were trying to claim, namely, that only in this life were goods or evils to be expected from God in return for human deeds. Once this has been posited, indeed, the whole rationale of divine judgments is disturbed, by which God punishes men in this life because of sins or forgives sins according as He preordains those men to a future life, either by predestination or by reproof. Now if there were no future life, but only a present life, there would be no reason why God would put off sparing those whom He intends to spare, or justifying and rewarding them; therefore, in order to disclose his intention, Job adds *Look! Now I will sleep in the dust*, as if the end of my life is already at hand when I will die to be dissolved into dust, and because of the uncertainty of death not even tomorrow can be firmly expected. Therefore, he adds *and if in the morning You will look for me, I will not exist*, as if to say: I cannot promise myself a period of life until morning, much less long periods of life in which I can expect that You may spare me if there will not be another life.

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Now one should consider that Job is proceeding in the manner of a debater, for whom it is sufficient in the beginning to refute false opinion and afterwards to disclose what he himself thinks about the truth. One should note, too, that Job in his premised words touched upon three reasons why someone is scourged by God in this life: the first is so that his malice may be restrained lest he be able to harm others, and he touched upon this reason when he said, "Am I the sea, or a whale, that You have surrounded me in a prison?" (v. 14); the second is for the test of a man so that his virtue may be manifested, and he touched upon this reason when he said, "You visit him at daybreak and right away You test him" (v. 18); the third is to punish sinners, and he touched upon this reason when he said, "I have sinned: What will I do for You, O guardian of men?" and so on (v. 20).

Chapter Eight

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(1) Now Bildad the Shuhite said in response: (2) How long will you speak such things, and the high spirit of the speech of your mouth be inconstant? (3) Does God overturn judgment and does the Almighty subvert what is just? (4) Even if your children have sinned against Him and He has dismissed them into the hand of their iniquity, (5) nevertheless, if at daybreak you will stand up before God and pray the Almighty for mercy, (6) if you will walk clean and straight, at once He will wake up to you and He will put the dwelling-place of your justice at peace, to such a degree that your earlier goods will have been small and your latest goods may be very much increased.

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In the verses above blessed Job had responded to the things said by Eliphaz, countering his opinion effectively and profoundly, but Bildad the Shuhite, agreeing in the same opinion with Eliphaz, had not comprehended the profundity of blessed Job; therefore, he speaks against blessed Job's response as men usually speak against opinions not understood. Now men who do not comprehend the minds of speakers usually fail in two ways, one of which is that they do not know when the one who is speaking has reached the proposed end; the other is that they cannot grasp the arrangement of the speaker's speeches. And this failure appears manifestly in Bildad's words, for the text says *Now Bildad the Shuhite said in response: How long will you speak such things?*, for it seemed to him, neither considering nor understanding to what end Job wanted to lead his speech, that Job had drawn out his speech excessively. Similarly, too, he did not grasp the arrangement of the things which Job had said, namely, how they had been connected to each other; therefore, he adds *and [how long will] the high spirit of the speech of your mouth be inconstant?*, for he deemed that Job had uttered many words whose order he himself did not grasp because they were, as it were, the unconnected words of a man speaking inconstant things from the impulse of his spirit without the order of reason.

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And since, as was said, Bildad had not comprehended Job's intention, taking his words in another intention he tries to reduce them to inconsistency. For Job, wishing to exclude above the opinion of Eliphaz, who was positing that adversities in this world happened in return for the sins of men and that sinners scourged

by God would be led back to a state of prosperity if they should be converted, had spoken against both positions, for against the first, as has been explained above, he had said, "I wish that my sins and the calamity which I am suffering were being weighed in a scale!" [6:2] Against the second he had said, "I have despaired; to no avail will I live longer" [7:16], and many such expressions, as is clear from the verses above. Now Job said these things intending that the punishment for sins and the reward for justice are not to be expected from God in this life; Bildad, however, who did not know another life, took these words as if Job intended to say that God does not punish sins or reward good deeds, which seems to be contrary to divine justice; therefore Bildad, speaking up, poses the question *Does God overturn judgment and does the Almighty subvert what is just?*, as if to say: This conclusion follows from your words if God punishes in this world men without sin, or punishes them out of proportion to the sin, or if He does not render good things to those who have turned back to Him. And one should note that justice is corrupted in two ways, namely, through the shrewdness of some wise person and through the violence of some powerful person. Now in God there are both perfect wisdom and omnipotence; yet, He neither overturns judgment, acting shrewdly, as it were, through the wisdom which is understood by the name of God, nor does He subvert what is just, acting violently, as it were, through his omnipotence.

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Now there were two things which seemed to impede the possibility of Job's earlier prosperity being restored to him, even if he were to be converted to God as Eliphaz had said, ^{†1} one of which was that the children whom he had lost were dead, and it could not be expected that they would be resurrected to life by his conversion; therefore, Bildad says *Even if your children have sinned against Him and He has dismissed them into the hand of their iniquity*, as if to say: When you have converted to God you will recover the things which you lost because of your sins; your children, however, have been oppressed by death not on account of your sins but on account of theirs; hence, it is not against the opinion of Eliphaz—according to which he had said that through conversion you will return to prosperity—if your children will not be resurrected after you have converted. And one should note that, since he believed that the punishments of the present life happen in return for sins, but the ultimate of the present punishments is death, man seems to have been punished perfectly for sin when he is brought to the point of death for sin; therefore, he expressly says *and He has dismissed them into the hand of their iniquity*, as if into the power of their own sins, so that they might be led down without any tether to the ultimate penalty for their sins.

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Now there is another thing which seemed to impede a return to his earlier prosperity—the fact that most of Job's lifetime had already passed and little remained, as Job had said above; ^{†2} hence, it did not seem that in that little bit of time his earlier prosperity could be sufficiently restored to him even if he were to convert to God, and therefore Bildad promises him that after his conversion a compensation of quantity for time will be made, so that, namely, he may obtain much greater wealth than he had before because he was going to have it for a little bit of time. And therefore Bildad first describes to him the manner of the conversion due, for which three things are required, the first of which is that the sinner rise without delay from his sin, and this is the meaning of *nevertheless, if at daybreak*, that is, at the first opportunity, *you will stand up before God*, having abandoned your sins, according to Ecclesiasticus 5:8: "Do not delay converting to the Lord." The second requirement is that a man make satisfaction for his sins, and with respect to this requirement he says *and pray the Almighty for mercy*. For among the works of satisfaction prayer seems to be preeminent, as it were. The third requirement is that the man persevere in guarding himself from a relapse of sin, and therefore he says *if you will walk clean and straight*, namely, guarding yourself from uncleanness of the flesh and from the injustices by which your neighbor is injured. Now having described the perfect conversion in this way, he adds the promise of prosperity, saying *at once He will wake up to you*. For God seems to be sleeping, as it were, when He permits just men to be afflicted, but to be awake when He is defending them, according to Psalm 43:23: "Get up! Why are you sleeping, Lord?" And he adds the effect of this awakening, saying *and He will put the dwelling-place of your justice at peace*, as if to say: Your house and household were disturbed at the time of your sin, but in the time of your justice they will have

peace. And so that Job could not complain about the brevity of the time, he again promises an excess of prosperity, saying *to such a degree that your earlier goods will have been small*, namely, in comparison with the following goods, and this is the point of adding *and your latest goods may be very much multiplied*, in such a way that the magnitude of your prosperity may compensate you for the time which you have spent in adversity.

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(8) Go ahead! Question the earlier generation and diligently investigate the memory of your fathers. (9) For we are yesterday's men and we do not know, since our days are like a shadow upon the earth. (10) They themselves will teach you and from their heart they will utter fine words. (11) Can the bulrush live without moisture or can the sedge-bed grow without water? (12) Although it is still in flower and not plucked by a hand, it withers before all the grasses. (13) So are the ways of all who forget God, and the hope of the hypocrite will perish. (14) His folly will not please him and just like a spiders' web is his confidence. (15) He will rely upon his house and it will not stand firm; he will prop it up and he will not rise up. (16) It seems moist before the sun comes up and in its springing up its bud goes out. (17) Upon a heap of rocks its roots will thicken and among the stones it will abide. (18) If someone will pull it up from its place, its place will deny it and say: I do not know you. (19) For this is the joy of that road, that others sprout again from the earth. (20) God will not cast out the honest man nor will He stretch forth His hand to malicious men (21) until your mouth be filled with laughter and your lips with jubilation; (22) those who hate you will be clothed in confusion and the tent of wicked men will not stand.

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Bildad the Shuhite, defending in the preceding verses the same opinion as Eliphaz the Themanite, had proposed that men who had been divinely punished for sin in the present life would return to a state of prosperity after their conversion, and from this point on, indeed, he intends to prove this thesis. Now he proves it in two ways: first, indeed, from experience; second, from analogy. For experience in particular things is especially effective for proving a point, and so much more so the longer it has been observed and found infallible. Now those experiences which require a long time are especially proved through the memories of the ancients, and therefore, for the proof of his proposition, Bildad resorts to the memories of the ancients, both with respect to the ancients themselves when he says *Go ahead! Question the earlier generation*, and with respect to immediately preceding generations when he says *and diligently investigate the memory of your fathers*, that is, the things which your fathers remember. Now the questioning of an earlier generation is accomplished by considering the written records of ancient exploits and the things which are reported about the ancients through tradition, and since many tales are both written and narrated about ancient affairs in the form of legends, so that no one might conclude from this that he is deceived, Bildad sends Job back to his fathers, who can narrate things which they have seen. Now he shows the necessity for this investigation when he adds *For we are yesterday's men*, born yesterday, as it were, *and we do not know* ancient exploits on this account. And he says this, indeed, to show the brevity of our life; hence, he adds *since our days are like a shadow upon the earth*, for a shadow passes quickly, namely, immediately, when the obstacle to the light is removed, and when the body at whose interposition the shadow is made moves, the earlier shadow passes and another succeeds it. So, too, a man's days are in continuous passage as long as some succeed to others and others to others. Now he shows what advantage he gains from the preceding investigation when he adds *They themselves*, namely, the earlier generations and fathers questioned, *will teach you* the truth about the premised matters, either the fathers by their words or the ancients by their written records and tradition; *and from their heart they will utter fine words*, an expression which he adds to show the truth of this doctrine, as if to say: They will teach only what they have perceived with the heart since they have no reason to deceive.

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Next he introduces an analogy taken from corporeal things for the proof of his proposition. And he posits an example from two plants which grow on land, one of which, namely, the bulrush, that is, the reed

an example from two plants which grow on land, one of which, namely, the bulrush, that is, the reed, needs for its preservation the moisture in the earth; hence, he says *Can the bulrush live without moisture?* Now the other plant, that is, the sedge, requires watery places, and these are broad grasses, pointed at the tip, which grow only in watery places; hence, he adds *or can the sedge-bed grow without water?* For the place in which such grasses grow is called a sedge-bed. And he shows that the bulrush requires moisture and the sedge-bed water, since by the mere removal of the moisture or the water they are easily dried out when no other reason for their drying out exists. There are, however, two reasons for drying out in other plants which grow on land. One is natural, because of advanced age; the other is violent, when they are rooted out. When neither of these reasons is present, however, the bulrush and the sedge-bed dry up from the mere removal of moisture and water, and this is the meaning of *Although it is still in flower*, that is, although it is still in its youth and vigor, by which advanced age is excluded, *and not plucked by a hand*, by which violence is excluded, *it withers before all the grasses*, that is, most easily in comparison with all other grasses.

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Now Bildad adapts this example to his proposition. And here one should consider that he understood man's adherence to God in this way to be the cause of his worldly prosperity, just as moisture is the cause of the greenness of grass, and he thought so because he reckoned man's good to be earthly prosperity. It is manifest, however, that man's good depends on his clinging to God, and therefore he believed that Job's earthly prosperity was failing because he was not clinging to God. And this belief is indeed true concerning spiritual happiness, which is man's true good, but not concerning earthly prosperity, which is computed among the smallest goods, serving as it does as a means to the true happiness of man. Therefore, he adds *So are the ways of all who forget God, and the hope of the hypocrite will perish*. And here one should consider that to the two examples posited above he adds two corresponding examples here. For the sedge-bed requires manifest water for its greenness and dries out through its removal, whereas the bulrush requires water concealed in the earth and moistening it, and it is dried out through failure of that water. Similarly, too, there are some who, according to his opinion, perish because of the fact that adherence to God is manifestly taken from them, namely, because they manifestly perform works contrary to God, and he signifies them as those *who forget God*. For men who are not afraid manifestly to act evilly seem to put reverence for God entirely behind them and not to remember Him. There are some, however, who according to Bildad's opinion perish because of the removal of a concealed adherence to God, and these are the hypocrites, who pretend externally to cling to God but whose hearts are turned toward earthly things; therefore, speaking of the hypocrite he has emphasized hope, whereas speaking of those who forget God he has emphasized ways, that is, operations, since the works of those who forget God, but the hope of the hypocrite, are turned away from God.

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Now Bildad shows how the hope of the hypocrite perishes when he adds *His folly will not please him*, and here one should consider that the hypocrite has a vain heart indeed, and one negligent toward spiritual things but concerned with respect to temporal things. This situation pleases him, indeed, as long as it goes well for him in temporal things according to his hope; but if temporal things should be taken away from him, then it necessarily displeases him that he has not had a true, firm heart with respect to God. Therefore, he says *His folly will not please him*, that is, when adversity comes it will displease him that he has not had a straightforward heart toward God; his concern which he had for temporal things will fail him entirely, and this is the point of adding *and just like a spiders' web is his confidence*, that is, the things in which he trusted will easily be broken, just like a spiders' web, for he trusted not in divine help but in the strength of his house, that is, in the abundance of his riches, in a multitude of kinsmen, and in other such things, but these will easily fail him; hence follows the observation, *He will rely upon his house*, that is, he will have the confidence of his stability in the prosperity of his house, *and, nevertheless, it will not stand firm*, since when it will lack divine help it will fall. Now it happens that someone who foresees adversities in the future prepares some supports for himself and for his house against the adversities, but even this will not

neip nim, for there follows *ne wuu prop u up*, namely, with some remedies against the adversities, just as some props are applied to a house which threatens collapse, *and nevertheless he will not rise up*, neither he nor his house, to the state of prosperity.

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Now to this opinion which he had expressed on the frailty of confidence he adapts the premised analogy about the bulrush. For confidence seems to be placed in the bulrush for two reasons: first, of course, because of its proper greenness, which nevertheless quickly fails when the sun arrives and dries out the moisture of the earth, and with respect to this fact he says *It seems moist*, namely, the bulrush, *before the sun comes up* to take away its greenness; *and in its springing up*, namely, of the bulrush, *its bud goes out*, for it seems to grow up quickly and produce its proper fruit. Similarly, the hypocrite seems to profit, since fortune smiles upon him in the beginning, but when the sun, that is, trial, comes, his prosperity quickly fails. Second, confidence can be placed in the bulrush for other reasons, namely, either because of the multitude of other bulrushes clinging together with it or because of the solidity of the place in which it grows when it comes up in a stony place. Therefore, he says next *Upon a heap of rocks its roots*, namely, the bulrush's, *will thicken*, inasmuch as the roots of many bulrushes are joined together, as he says with respect to the first reason; with respect to the second he says *and among the stones it will abide*. So, too, some hypocrite can also have confidence in his stability, not only because of his own prosperity but also because of the multitude of his kinsmen and household, or even because of the strength of the kingdom or city in which he lives. But this confidence of his fails him just as it happens with respect to the bulrush, for there follows *If someone will pull it up*, namely, the bulrush, *from its place*, its place *will deny it and say: I do not know you*, as if to say: The bulrush is uprooted from its place in such a way that no trace of it appears in the place, nor does its place operate at all so that that same bulrush may be planted again. And he adds the reason, saying *For this is the joy of that way—or, of that life—that others sprout again from the earth*, as if to say: The growth and life of bulrushes abiding in some place does not tend by a natural appetite toward this end, nor is it preserved through this outcome, namely, that the same bulrush in number which was uprooted be replanted, but that others of the same species spring up again. So it is, too, when someone is separated by death or by other means from some society of strong men—he is immediately handed over to oblivion, as it were, according to Psalm 30:13: "I have been given to oblivion as if I have died out of the heart," but such a society rejoices in those who succeed him, according to Ecclesiastes 4:14: "Let another born in the kingdom be consumed by want. I have seen all the living who walk in the sun with the second young man who rises up in his place." Now these passages have been introduced to show that although some prosperity sometimes befalls evil men, still it is not a firm prosperity in which they can trust, but it passes quickly; hence, it must be deemed worthless.

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Now he shows next what he intends by all the things said above, saying *God will not cast out the honest man*, that is, He will not keep him at a distance from Himself so as not to sustain one who adheres to Him with simple heart; *nor will He stretch forth His hand to malicious men*; that is, He will not help them so that their prosperity may be confirmed. And since Job could say: Whatever you may say and whatever you may wish to confirm with analogies, I have still found Him opposed to me who suffer adversity although I was simple, and my malicious adversaries have prevailed against me—to exclude this possibility Bildad adds *until your mouth be filled with laughter and your lips with jubilation*, as if to say: What I have said is so true that you will perceive it in yourself if only you will be simple, in such a way, namely, that from the prosperity which will follow your happiness will burst forth into the laughter and jubilation which usually result from great joy; on the contrary, *those who hate you will be clothed in confusion*, that is, they will be confounded manifestly and in many ways, so that in this way confusion may be like a garment to them. And lest this seem impossible to anyone because of the present prosperity in which they seem to flourish, he continues *and the tent of wicked men will not stand*, for by the tent, in which most of the eastern peoples usually live and have their riches and furnishings, can be understood everything which pertains to the prosperity of life in this world. One should consider, however, that Bildad made mention of the hypocrite

and of the simple man since he reckoned that Job had not been truly holy but a hypocrite, and that on that account his prosperity was not firm, but he promises that there will be prosperity for him if he will begin being a simple man.

Chapter Nine

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(1) And Job said in response: (2) Truly, I know that it is so that a man is not justified placed next to God. (3) If he will wish to contend with Him, he will not be able to respond to Him one for a thousand. (4) He is wise of heart and strong of might. Who has resisted Him and had peace? (5) He has moved mountains, and those whom He has overturned in His fury did not know. (6) He moves the earth from its place, and its columns will be shaken. (7) He commands the sun and it does not rise, and He conceals the stars as if under a seal.

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Blessed Job, in his response above in which he had responded to Eliphaz's words, seemed to have passed over one thing which Eliphaz had proposed about the justice of God when he had said, "Will a man be justified in a comparison with God?" [4:17]. As a matter of fact, he seemed to be speaking to God in a kind of contentious debate when he said, "Am I the sea, or a whale" [7:12], and so on, and again, "How long are You not sparing me?" [7:19], and so on. And therefore Bildad the Shuhite, replying to blessed Job's response, began with a defense of divine justice, saying, "Does God overturn judgment?" [8:3], and so on, and on this same note he terminated his speech when he said, "God will not cast out the simple man" [8:20], and so on. Therefore, blessed Job in this response first shows that he does not want to contradict divine justice, nor does he want to contend against God, as they suspected, and this is the point of saying *And Job said in response: Truly, I know that it is so*, namely, that "God does not overturn judgment," and that "He will not cast out the simple man," as Bildad proposed; *and I also know that a man is not justified placed next to God*, that is, compared to Him, and he says this in response to what Eliphaz had said above, "Will a man be justified in a comparison with God?"

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And next Job shows by a kind of sign how he knows this. For when someone is just in comparison with another he can contend with him freely and securely, since justice and truth are manifested by mutual discussion. It is safe for no man, however, to contend with God. Therefore, he adds *If he will wish to contend with Him*, namely, man with God, *he will not be able to respond to Him*, namely, man to God, *one for a thousand*. One should know that the largest of the numbers which in our usage has its own name is a thousand, for all the larger numbers are named by replication of the lower numbers, as for example, ten thousand, one hundred thousand. This happens reasonably, for according to certain of the ancients the species of numbers extend to ten, for afterwards the earlier numbers are repeated—and this fact, indeed, is manifest according to the naming, whatever the case may be according to the truth of the matter. Now the cube of the number ten is one thousand, for ten times ten times ten are one thousand. Job, therefore, took the number one thousand, as the largest of the named numbers in our usage, for a determinate number however large. What he says, then—that man cannot respond to God *one to a thousand*—is the same as if he were to say that no determinate measure of number can measure how much divine justice exceeds human justice, since the latter is finite whereas the former is infinite.

human justice, since the latter is finite whereas the former is infinite.

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Now Job shows next that man, in contending, cannot approach God in any proportion when he says *He*, namely, God, is *wise of heart and strong of might*. For contention is of two kinds: one kind in which one contends in debate, and this kind depends upon wisdom; another kind in which one contends by fighting, and this kind depends upon strength. In both kinds, however, God exceeds man, because in both strength and wisdom He exceeds all strength and wisdom. And next he shows each of these excesses, but first the excess of strength, which he begins to show, indeed, with reference to men when he says *Who has resisted Him and had peace?*, as if to say: No one. One should know that a man obtains peace from someone more powerful in one way and from someone less powerful or equally powerful in another. For it is manifest that a more powerful man acquires peace from a less powerful man by fighting against him, just as when a powerful king wages a war against some rebel in his kingdom and, obtaining victory, restores the peace of the kingdom. Similarly, too, even from an equally powerful man one sometimes obtains peace by fighting, for although he may not be able to overcome him, he nevertheless fatigues him by the constancy of fighting so that he may be led back to peace, but one never obtains peace from a more powerful person by resisting or fighting but by submitting to him humbly. This, then, is the evident sign that God's strength exceeds all human strength—the fact that no one can have peace with Him by resisting but only by obeying humbly; hence, Isaiah 26:3 says: "You will keep the peace, the peace, because we have put our hope in You," but impious men who resist God cannot have peace, according to what is said in Isaiah 57:21: "There is no peace for impious men, says the Lord," and this is what is meant here: *Who has resisted Him and had peace?*

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Next he shows that God's strength exceeds all the strength of natural things, and he shows this, indeed, as much in the higher bodies as in the lower. ¶1 In the lower bodies, indeed, he shows it from the fact that He moves according to His will those things which seem to be especially stable and firm among the lower bodies. Among the mixed bodies, ¶2 then, to which he makes the transition after men, mountains especially seem to be firm and stable, to the stability of which the stability of saints is compared in the Scriptures, according to Psalm 124:1: "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion." And yet, God moves mountains by His power, and this is the point of adding *He has moved mountains*, which can indeed be done, although miraculously, by divine power—since this seems to be promised in return for firmness of faith, according to Matthew 21:21: "If you will have faith and will not hesitate, if you will say to this mountain: Raise yourself up and cast yourself into the sea, it will be done," and I Corinthians 13:2: "If I will have all faith so as to move mountains"—nevertheless, it seems more fitting that this be referred to the natural course of things. For the order of nature has it that everything which is generated naturally is also corrupted at a determinate time; ¶3 hence, since the generation of mountains is natural, it is necessary that at some time the mountains be naturally destroyed, and this indeed natural corruption of mountains he calls a moving, because the dissolution and ruin of mountains happens with a kind of moving of their parts. Now not unreasonably does he attribute to divine power the things which happen naturally, for since nature acts because of an end, ¶4 but everything which is ordered toward a certain end either directs itself toward that end or is ordered by another directing it toward its end, it is necessary that a natural thing which does not have knowledge of its end so that it can direct itself by its own efforts be ordered toward its end by some superior intelligence. The whole operation of nature, then, is compared to an intellect directing natural things toward an end, whom we call God, just as the motion of the arrow is compared to the archer; ¶5 hence, just as the motion of the arrow is fittingly attributed to the archer, so the whole operation of nature is fittingly attributed to divine power; hence, if mountains are overthrown by the operation of nature, it is manifest that the stability of mountains is overcome by divine power. Now sometimes it happens among men that some king by his own power takes by storm some strong city, and the quicker and less foreseen it happens, the more the king's power is demonstrated. The fact that mountains are moved, then, especially attests to divine power when it happens suddenly and unforeseen, as it were, so that even by those who

live around the mountains and perish through their overturning it cannot be known ahead of time. This is the point of adding *and those whom He has overturned in His fury did not know*, as if to say: So suddenly does God work so great a feat that even those people who live around the mountains cannot know ahead of time, which becomes evident from the fact that if they were to know ahead of time they would take precautions for themselves so that they would not be overturned. Now he adds *in His fury* to show that God sometimes manages natural operations according to the order of His providence insofar as it is necessary to punish the sins of men, with whom He is said metaphorically to be angry when He exercises vengeance against them, which among us is usually the effect of anger. †6

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Now from the mixed bodies he passes to the elements, †7 among which the firmest and most stable seems to be the earth, which, as the center of all motion, is immobile, †8 and yet sometimes in some of its parts it moves naturally as a result of confined vapor, as philosophers report, †9 and this is the point of adding *He moves the earth from its place*, not totally in its whole extent, of course, but when some parts of it are agitated, as happens in an earthquake. In this movement, indeed, even mountains are shaken, which are, as it were, columns based on the earth. Hence follows the clause *and its columns will be shaken*. By columns can also be understood literally the columns and whatever other edifices seem to cling to the earth, which are shaken in an earthquake; or by columns can be understood the lower lands and the inmost parts of the earth, because, just as the stability of a house is made firm on columns, so the stability of the earth proceeds from the center, toward which all parts of the earth naturally tend, and by consequence, all the lower parts of the earth are the supports and columns, as it were, of the upper parts. And so, since an earthquake proceeds from the deep parts of the earth, it seems to be caused by the shaking of the columns, as it were, of the earth.

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Now finally he proceeds to the heavenly bodies, which also yield to divine power. Now one should consider that just as immobility and rest are of the nature of the earth, so it is of the nature of the sky that it be always moving; †10 therefore, just as the power of the earth is shown to be overcome by divine power through the motion which appears in it, so the power of a celestial body is shown to be overcome by divine power because of the fact that its motion, through which the rising and setting of the sun and other stars happens, is impeded; therefore, he adds *He commands the sun and it does not rise*. And this indeed is not said on account of the fact that sunrise is impeded according to the truth of the matter, since the motion of the sky is continuous, but because sometimes it apparently seems not to rise—for example, when the atmosphere is so cloudy that sunrise cannot appear in its usual brightness to those living on earth. But since such cloudiness happens through the operation of nature, it is fittingly attributed to divine precept, by which all of nature is regulated in its operation, as has been said. †11 And that he understands in this way that the sun does not rise inasmuch as the sunrise is concealed appears manifestly from what is added: *and He conceals the stars as if under a seal*. For the stars do seem to be concealed, as it were, when the sky is covered by clouds so that the stars cannot be observed.

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(8) He alone extends the heavens and He walks upon the waves of the sea. (9) He makes Arcturus and Orion and the Hyades, and the interiors of the South. (10) And He makes great things, and inscrutable things, and marvelous things of which there is no number.

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After blessed Job has shown the might of divine strength, here he begins to show the profundity of divine wisdom. Now, however, he proceeds in the opposite order from before, for in the first instance he began with a show of divine strength in human affairs and proceeded to celestial bodies, whereas here he begins with celestial bodies and proceeds to human affairs. And he does this reasonably, for the wisdom of the Maker is shown in the fact that He makes stable works: therefore, in his show of divine wisdom he begins

MARKET IS SHOWN IN THE FACT THAT HE MAKES STABLE WORKS, THEREFORE, IN HIS SHOW OF DIVINE WISDOM HE BEGINS with the more stable creatures as from creatures having the more evident mark of divine wisdom. Now the might of any strength is shown by the fact that it can change some things from their state—hence, men are usually tested in the lifting or hurling of stones, in the wrestling of men to the ground, and such things—and therefore, when he was showing the might of divine strength he began with the things in which the change appears rather manifestly.

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So, then, to show divine wisdom he begins with celestial bodies, saying *He alone extends the heavens*. Now one should know that God's wisdom appears especially commendable on three counts: first, of course, in that He can measure any great expanses with His understanding and wisdom, and with respect to this fact he says *He alone extends the heavens*. For in the extension of the heavens is expressed the greatness of their quantity. So, then, God alone is said to have extended the heavens, inasmuch as He alone could give the heavens such great quantity measured by His wisdom. Second, God's wisdom appears commendable in that it reduces into a certain order things which are variable and fluctuating into uncertainty, as it were, and makes them subject to its governance, and with respect to this fact he adds *and He walks upon the waves of the sea*. For the waves of the sea seem to be very disorderly inasmuch as they are borne around by the shifting winds, now in this direction, now in that. And yet, God walks upon them inasmuch as He subjects them to His governance. Third, God's wisdom appears commendable from the fact that God has fashioned according to the plan of His wisdom many things which appear marvelous to men and whose plan they cannot investigate. These things are especially the marvels which appear in the situation and disposition of the stars, which have nevertheless been placed very wisely and reasonably by God. And he enumerates these marvels, indeed, beginning at the north pole and proceeding to the south pole; hence, he says *He makes Arcturus*. Arcturus, indeed, is a certain constellation in the heavens which is called Ursa Major and has seven bright stars which never set for us but always circle the north pole. There follows *and Orion*. Orion is a certain constellation, very evident in the heavens because of its size and the brightness of the stars, which are said to be in Taurus and Gemini. There follows *and the Hyades*, which are certain stars existing on the breast of Taurus, as it is called, and they are also very notable to see. There follows *and the interiors of the South*, and here one should consider that to those people who live on the equator, if any do in fact live there, [†12](#) both poles are visible, since their horizon cuts the equator at right angles; therefore, it is necessary that it pass through both equatorial poles. Hence, both poles are rendered visible to those living on the equator, as has been said, but for those withdrawing from the equator and approaching the north pole, the north pole is elevated above the horizon and the south pole is depressed according to the measure of the distance from the equator; hence, to us who are in the northern hemisphere, the south pole can never be visible, and similarly, the stars in its vicinity are concealed from us according to the degree by which we are separated from the equator. These stars are called here *the interiors of the South* since they are concealed from us as if pushed down and hidden under the horizon. [†13](#)

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And lest anyone believe that divine wisdom has manifested itself only in the heavenly bodies just mentioned, Job shows next that God has made many other similar things, countless to us, when he says *And He makes great things*, in which, namely, God's wisdom appears commendable because of the uniformity of its greatness. This verse corresponds to the statement "He alone extends the heavens" (v. 8); *and inscrutable things*, which, namely, men cannot find out because of their instability, which are nevertheless ordered by divine governance. This verse corresponds to the statement "And He walks upon the waves of the sea" (v. 8); *and marvelous things*, whose reasons, namely, men cannot consider although they have been made by God according to reason. This verse corresponds to the statement "He makes Arcturus" (v. 9), and so on. Now the addition of *of which there is no number* must be referred to each attribute, yet in such a way that divine works may be understood to be innumerable for men but numerable for God, Who makes "everything in number, weight and measure." [†14](#)

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(11) If He comes to me, I will not see [Him]; if He goes away, I will not understand Him. (12) If He should question a man unexpectedly, who will answer Him? Or who can say to Him: Why do You do thus and so? (13) [He is] God Whose anger no one can resist and to Whom bow those who carry the world. (14) How great am I, then, that I may respond to Him and speak with Him in my own words—(15) I who will not respond even if I consider myself somewhat just, but I will ward off my judge by earnest prayer. (16) And when He hears me invoking Him, I do not believe that He will listen to my voice; (17) for He will grind me to pieces in the whirlwind and multiply my wounds also without reason; (18) He will not allow my spirit to rest and He fills me with bitterness. (19) If strength is sought, He is the mightiest; if equity of the judgment, no one dares to give testimony for me. (20) If I wish to justify myself, my mouth will condemn me; if I show myself innocent, He will prove me wicked. (21) Even if I am simple, my soul will not know this very thing and my life will weary me.

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Blessed Job, wishing to show that it is not his intention to contend with God, has shown by very many indications the profundity of divine wisdom in natural things. Now, however, he wishes to show the profundity of divine wisdom in human affairs. Now one should consider that three functions seem to belong to the director of human affairs. The first is that he dispense the precepts of justice and other benefits to his subjects. The second is that he examine the actions of his subjects. The third is that he subject to punishments those whom he finds guilty. In these three functions, then, Job shows the immense profundity of divine wisdom: first, indeed, since God provides His benefits to His subjects so profoundly and subtly that it is incomprehensible even to those who receive them, and this is the point of saying *If He comes to me, I will not see [Him]; if He goes away, I will not understand Him*. And here one should consider that in the Scriptures God is said to come to a man when He bestows His benefits on him, either by enlightening his understanding or by inflaming his love or by benefiting him in any way whatsoever; hence, it is said in Isaiah 35:4: "Our God Himself will come and save us," but on the contrary, God is said to withdraw from a man when He takes away from him His benefits or His protection, according to Psalm 9:22: "Why have You withdrawn far off, Lord? Why do You despise me in opportunities, in trial?" Now it happens sometimes that God permits either trials or even some spiritual defects to befall some men in order to procure their salvation, as is said in Romans 8:28: "For those who love God, everything works together for the good." In this way, then, God comes to man, by procuring his salvation, and yet man does not see Him since he does not perceive His benefit, but on the contrary, God does not take from many men His manifest benefits, which nevertheless turn to their destruction; therefore, it is said that God withdraws from a man in such a way that the man does not understand that He is withdrawing. In this way, then, the profundity of divine wisdom appears in the dispensation of its benefits.

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Now the profundity of divine wisdom is shown secondly in the examination of human actions, since, of course, He examines them so subtly and effectively that no one can escape His examination by any cavilling whatsoever, and this is the point of saying *If He should question a man unexpectedly, who will answer Him?* Now God questions a man when He leads him back to consider his conscience, either by inspiring him internally or by provoking him externally with benefits or scourges, according to Psalm 10:6: "The Lord questions the just and the impious man." Now a man would respond to God sufficiently when there was found in him nothing which could justly be blamed by God, which happens to no man in this life according to Proverbs 20:9: "Who can say: My heart is clean, I am free of sin?" Now Job expressly says *If He should question a man unexpectedly*, since if a period of time for answering should be given a man, he can wash away his sins through penitence. Now sometimes it happens that someone is found remiss in examining the excesses of others, fearing that his own excesses, too, may be examined by others in turn, but God does not have to fear this reversal so that He should become indulgent in His examination since He does not have a superior who can pass judgment on His deeds; therefore, the question is added *Or who can say to Him: Why do You do thus and so?*, as if finding fault with God.

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Now the profundity of divine wisdom is shown third in the punishment of sinners, since, no matter where a man turns, no cleverness, no power can turn aside God's vengeance, according to Psalm 138:7: "Where will I go away from Your spirit, and where will I flee away from Your face?" This is the point of saying [*He is*] *God Whose anger no one can resist*, for anger, as it is attributed to God in the Scriptures, does not imply commotion of the spirit but vengeance. †15 Now next he introduces the proof of this statement: *and to Whom bow those who carry the world*. Now the celestial spirits, by whose ministry all corporeal creation is divinely cared for, as Augustine says in *On the Trinity* III.4, †16 should be understood to carry the world. Now these celestial spirits bow to God because they obey Him in all things, according to Psalm 102:20: "Bless the Lord, all you His angels, His ministers who do His will"; so, then, since the angels obey God, it is manifest that the whole course of corporeal things which is administered through the angels is subject to divine will, and so from no creature can man have help to flee the vengeance of God, according to Psalm 138:8: "If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I descend to hell, You are there"; as a matter of fact, as is said in the Book of Wisdom 5:21, "The world will fight with Him against the foolish ones." The kings and princes of the world who bow to God also could be understood to carry the world, according to Proverbs 8:15: "Through Me kings rule"; or, since not even kings themselves can resist divine anger, [this may be said] so that from this example the same conclusion may be able to be drawn more certainly concerning others.

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So, then, having shown in many ways the immensity of divine power and the profundity of divine wisdom, Job concludes his proposition, namely, that it is not his intention to contend with God, and this is the point of saying *How great am I, then*, that is, how powerful, how wise, *that I may respond to Him*, namely, to God, the most powerful and wise, when He questions *and speak with Him in my own words*, examining His deeds and saying "Why do You do thus and so?", as if he were to say: I am not sufficient to contend with God, for contention consists in presenting positions and responding to them. Now sometimes it happens that someone, even if he is not very powerful or wise, is still not afraid to contend with any judge at all because of the security of his conscience, but Job excludes in his case even this reason for contending with God, saying *I who will not respond even if I consider myself somewhat just*, namely, *I will not respond* to God examining me, as if I were defending my own justice, *but I will ward off my judge by earnest prayer*, as if seeking not judgment but mercy. Now he expressly says *if I consider myself somewhat just* to designate the uncertainty of human justice by the expression *if I consider myself*, according to Paul, I Corinthians 4:4: "I have nothing on my conscience but I am not justified in this," and to show that man's justice is small and imperfect when referred to divine examination, on which account he says *somewhat*, according to Isaiah 64:8: "All our just deeds" are thus, in His eyes, "like polluted rags."

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Now he shows what he achieves from his prayer for mercy when he adds *And when He hears me invoking Him, I do not believe that He will listen to my voice*. For sometimes it happens that God heeds not a man's prayer but his advantage, for just as a doctor does not heed the prayer of a sick man demanding that the bitter medicine be taken away — if the doctor should not remove it because he knows that it is healthful, he nevertheless heeds his advantage, since in this way he induces the health which the sick man most desires — so God does not take away the trials from a man set down in the midst of trials, although he prays for mercy, since He knows that they contribute to final salvation. And so, although God may truly heed him, the man set down in the midst of miseries still does not believe that he is being heeded. And he shows why he does not believe, adding *for He will grind me to pieces in the whirlwind*. And, as is his custom, he explains what has been said metaphorically, adding *and multiply my wounds also without reason*. For to grind to pieces is the same as to multiply wounds, that is, trials, and this grinding to pieces is *in the whirlwind*, that is, in horrible obscurity, which is the point of saying *without reason*, namely, without a reason which is manifest and perceptible by the afflicted man. For if the afflicted man were to perceive the

reason which is manifest and perceptible by the afflicted man. For if the afflicted man were to perceive the reason why God is afflicting him and that the afflictions are useful to him for his salvation, it is manifest that he would believe that he had been heeded, but since he does not understand this, he believes that he has not been heeded. Therefore, he is afflicted not only externally but internally, just as the sick man who might not know that he will achieve health through the bitter medicine would be afflicted not only in the sense of taste but also in the spirit. Therefore, he adds *He will not allow my spirit to rest*, for the spirit rests, although the flesh has been afflicted, because of the hope of an end, as the Lord teaches in Matthew 5:11-12: "You will be blessed when men curse you." Afterwards he adds, "Rejoice, since your reward in heaven is great." And so, when I am afflicted externally and do not rest internally, *He fills me with bitterness*, namely, inside and out.

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One should also consider that with that passage, "And when He hears me invoking" (v. 16), and so on, he has explained evidently what he had said obscurely above: "If He comes to me, I will not see [Him]" (v. 11). For it should be observed almost everywhere in Job's sayings that things said obscurely are explained through some subsequent statements. And since he had said briefly and summarily above, "How great am I that I may answer Him?" (v. 14), next he explains this expression more amply where he also assigns a reason why he does not respond but prays the judge for mercy. For that someone may respond boldly to a judge can happen in two ways: first, of course, if the judge should be a weak one who cannot coerce the person subject to him, but Job excludes this alternative, saying *If strength is sought*, namely, in God, to coerce those subject to Him, *He is the mightiest*, exceeding all might; second, one responds boldly to a judge because he has confidence concerning his case, which sometimes happens because he has many defenders, but he excludes this alternative, saying *if equity of the judgment* is required, namely, in accordance with which someone with many witnesses on his behalf is absolved, *no one dares to give testimony for me*. For man's understanding does not conceive that a man's justice may be greater than the truth of the God who refutes him. Sometimes, though, although a man may not have other witnesses on his behalf, he still has confidence in his case, relying upon the testimony of his conscience. But the testimony of conscience cannot prevail for man against divine refutation, and Job shows this fact through several degrees. For the testimony of conscience has three degrees, the highest of which is that in which one's own conscience gives him testimony that he is just, according to Romans 8:16: "The spirit itself gives testimony to our spirit that we are sons of God." But this testimony does not prevail against divine censure; hence, he says *If I wish to justify myself*, that is, If I wish to say that I am just while God is objecting to me that I am impious, *my mouth will condemn me*, that is, it will render me worthy of condemnation for blasphemy. The second degree is that in which, although one does not presume to be just, his conscience nevertheless does not censure him for any sin, according to I Corinthians 4:4: "I have nothing on my conscience." But this testimony does not prevail against God, either; hence, he says *if I show myself innocent*, that is, if I wish to show that I am without sin, *He will prove me wicked*, inasmuch as He will manifest to me or to others sins of which I am not conscious since, as is said in Psalm 18:13, "Who understands his sins?" The third degree is that in which someone, although he may be conscious of a sin on his part, still presumes either that he had no evil intention or that he did not act out of malice and deceit but out of ignorance and weakness. But this testimony does not prevail for a man against God, either; therefore, he says *Even if I am simple*, that is, without the deceit or duplicity of a wicked intention, *my soul will not know this very thing*. For a man cannot catch the flowing motion of his affection, both because of its variation and because of its confusion and the impulse of many passions, because of which the text of Jeremiah 17:9 says, "Wicked is the heart of man, and inscrutable; who will know it?" And because of such ignorance that a man does not know himself nor his state, their own life is rendered wearisome even to just men, and on this account he adds *and my life will weary me*.

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(22) *The one thing which I have said is this: He consumes the innocent and the guilty. (23) If He scourges, let Him kill at the same time, and let Him not smile over the punishments of the innocent. (24) The earth has been given into the hands of the impious, even as he covers the face of its judges. But if it is not he who*

nas been given into the hands of the impious one; he covers the face of his judges. But if it is not he, who, then, is it? (25) My days have been swifter than a foot-racer; they have fled and they have not seen the good; (26) they have passed by like ships carrying fruit, just like an eagle flying toward food. (27) When I say: I will speak this way to no avail, I change my face entirely and I am tortured by pain. (28) I was afraid of all my works, knowing that You would not spare a transgressor. (29) But if I am still so impious, why have I labored in vain? (30) If I will bathe as with the waters of snow, and my hands shine as if very clean, (31) You will still dip me in filth and my clothing will detest me. (32) For I will not be responding to a man who is like me nor one who can be heard with me in judgment on an equal footing; (33) there is no one who would be able to refute both sides and to lay his hand on both. (34) Let Him take His rod from me and let the dread of Him not frighten me. (35) I will speak and I will not fear Him, for I cannot respond when I am in fear.

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After blessed Job has shown that it is not his intention to contend with God, he proposes the subject about which he was having the debate with his adversaries. For Eliphaz had said that punishments are not sent by God except for sins, †17 and against this position Job had spoken in his response above, †18 and since Bildad had tried to claim Eliphaz's opinion, Job again repeats his own opinion, saying *The one thing which I have said is this: He consumes the innocent and the guilty*, as if to say: Not only upon sinners but also upon the innocent is death, which is nevertheless the greatest of the present punishments, †19 sent by God, and so it is not true what you say, that only for his own sins is man punished by God. Now that death is from God is said in Deuteronomy 32:39: "I will kill and I will make live," but since death is sent by God upon all in common, there is one thing which seems harsh—namely, that the innocent, in addition to the death shared in common, sustain many adversities in this life, and Job intends to investigate the reason for this situation; therefore, he adds *If He scourges, let Him kill at the same time*, as if to say: Granted that the scourge of death is common to all, it would still seem reasonable that God ought not to inflict upon the innocent, who are not guilty of sins of their own, another punishment beyond the death that is due to common sin. For if, as you say, there is no other reason except sin why punishment can justly be inflicted upon anyone, whereas it is manifest that the innocent suffer punishment in this world, it seems to follow that they are punished without reason as if the punishments themselves were pleasing in themselves to God; therefore, he adds *and let Him not smile over the punishments of the innocent*, for we usually smile over those things which are pleasing to us in themselves.

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Now if it is inconsistent that the punishments of the innocent should be pleasing to God in themselves, but the innocent are frequently found to be punished on earth, another inconsistency seems to follow, namely, that those punishments do not proceed from divine judgment but from the malice of some unjust master who has power on earth and punishes the innocent; hence follows *The earth has been given into the hands of the impious one*, as if to say: If the punishments of the innocent who are nevertheless punished on earth are not pleasing in themselves to God, it will be necessary to say that God has committed the rule of the earth to some impious one, †20 by whose iniquity judgment on earth is perverted so that the innocent may be punished. And this is the point of adding *He covers the face of his judges*, that is, He clouds their reason with greed or hatred or love so that they may not follow the truth of the judgment in judging. *But if it is not he*, namely, the impious one to whom the earth has been handed over, by whom, namely, the punishment of the innocent is caused, *who, then, is it?*, namely, the cause of this punishment? For it cannot be said, as has been shown, †21 that this situation is from God, having supposed your position that sin alone is the cause of the present punishments. Now the statement *The earth has been given into the hands of the impious one* is indeed true in some respect, inasmuch, namely, as earthly men are left by God under the power of the devil, according to the saying "He who commits sin is the slave of sin"; †22 strictly speaking, however, it is false, for dominion over the earth has not been conceded to the devil absolutely, so that, namely, he can freely do on it what he wishes, but whatever he is permitted to do proceeds from the divine disposition which dispenses everything according to reasonable cause; hence, the very fact that the

innocent are punished does not depend absolutely on the malice of the devil but on the wisdom of God permitting it. Hence, if sin is not the reason for the punishment of the innocent, it is not sufficient to reduce it to the malice of the devil, but there must be some further reasonable cause because of which God permits it, and therefore he expressly says *But if it is not he, who, then, is it?*, as if to say: If the devil's malice is not sufficient reason for the punishment of the innocent, it is necessary to investigate another reason. †23

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To investigate the reason why the innocent are punished in this world, then, he first proposes the ruin which he had sustained in the loss of his goods, showing the mutability of the present prosperity by a comparison with those things which seem to be swiftest in this world. But one should consider that toward the prosperity of this world different people are differently disposed, for some people have prosperity itself for an end, hoping for nothing beyond it, and to this side seemed to incline the opinion of those who set up all rewards and punishments in this life. Now such men do not pass up the prosperity of this world but the prosperity of this world escapes from them when they lose it. Other men, however, among whose number was Job, do not place their end in the prosperity of this world but aim at another end, and such men themselves pass up the prosperity of this world more than they are passed up by it. Now for those who aim at some end, three things are necessary: the first is that they not fix their heart on any other thing by which they can be retarded from their end but hasten to achieve it, and therefore he posits first the example of a foot-racer who aims at the end of his course in such a way that he incurs no delay on the way; hence, he says *My days have been swifter than a footracer*, and in these words he demonstrates both the instability of the present fortune and his own intention aiming at another end; *they have fled*, as if having found no peace of mind in the things of this world; hence follows *and they have not seen the good*, namely, toward which my intention was bearing, which is the true good; hence, I do not deem myself remunerated for my justice. But if you think that the present prosperity is remuneration, by its removal I, an innocent man, have been punished. Second, it is required that one who is aiming at some end acquire for himself those things by which he may be able to reach his end, just as it is necessary for one who wishes to be healed to acquire the medicines by which he may be healed. Similarly, it is necessary for one who wishes to reach the true good to seek out the virtues by which he may be able to achieve it; hence, he adds *they have passed by like ships carrying fruit*, and in this verse he also demonstrates two things: both the instability of the present fortune, since ships carrying fruit hasten to sell it so that it does not spoil through delay, and the eagerness to aim at an end, as if to say: My days have not passed by empty, but I have accumulated virtues by which I am aiming to achieve the end. Third remains the achievement of the end; hence, he says *just like an eagle flying toward food*, and in this verse, too, are designated the two things just mentioned, for an eagle is a bird of swift flight, especially when he is impelled by hunger and has for his end the food by which he is restored.

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Since in these words, then, he had, as it were, implied that he was just and innocent, and this implication had been deemed presumptuous by his adversaries, †24 he begins to confer about his innocence with God, Who alone is the judge of conscience; hence, he adds *When I say in my heart*, that is, *I will speak this way to no avail*, so that, namely, I may be just and innocent, *I change my face entirely*, that is, from the confidence which I had felt about my innocence to a certain concern for investigating my sins, *and I am tortured by pain*, reflecting in the examination of my own conscience, so that, perhaps, I may not be punished for any sin. And he adds the reason for his pain, saying *I was afraid of all my works*, for it is a great reason for pain for anyone when he has great concern about some matter and yet falls into the situation which he was eager to avoid. He, however, was setting great concern around all his works, fearing that he would deviate from justice in some way, and this is the point of saying *I was afraid of all my works*. And the reason why he was so afraid in his every work was fear of the severity of divine judgment. Hence is added *knowing that You would not spare a transgressor*, unless, namely, he should be converted, since, as is said in Psalm 7:13, "If you will not be converted, He will brandish His sword." *But if*, after so great an eagerness for innocence, *I am still so impious* that I have deserved to be punished by

God with such grave punishments, *why have I labored in vain* in such great concern for preserving my innocence? For one is said to labor in vain who aims by his labor at an end which he does not attain.

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But since man's purity, however great it may be, is found deficient when referred to divine examination, therefore next he shows that when he says that he is pure and innocent, he understands that he is pure and innocent for a man, not as one withdrawing in no way at all from the straightforwardness of divine justice. Now one should know that there are two classes of purity: one, indeed, of the innocent person, the other of the penitent person; both, however, are imperfect in man if they should be compared with the perfect straightforwardness of the divine standard. Therefore, he says with respect to the purity of the penitent, *If I will bathe*, that is, if I will be eager to purge myself of my sins, *as with the waters of snow*, which are said to be very cleansing. With respect to the purity of the innocent person, however, he adds *and my hands shine as if very clean*, that is, if in my works, too, which are designated by the hands, no uncleanness should be found but the brightness of justice should shine on them—now he says *as if very clean* to insinuate that perfect cleanliness cannot exist in a man—if, he says, I will be so clean, *You will still dip me in filth*, that is, I will be demonstrated to be filthy compared to Your justice and convicted by Your wisdom. For always in human works some defect is found, sometimes, indeed, out of ignorance because of the debility of reason, but sometimes out of negligence because of the weakness of the flesh. Sometimes, however, some infection of some earthly affection is mixed even in good works because of the flightiness of the human heart, which does not persevere fixed in the same state; hence, something is always found in human works which falls short of the purity of divine justice. Now when there is some unclean person who nevertheless has some show of justice externally, the signs of justice which appear externally on him do not suit him, and therefore he adds *and my clothing will detest me*, for by external clothing are designated the works by which man is covered, as it were, according to Matthew 7:15: "They come to you in sheep's clothing." One's clothing abominates him, then, when a man's external works, which pretend to justice, do not agree with his internal works.

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Now next he shows on the basis of two qualities in which God excels man, namely, the purity of His justice and the authority of His majesty, why a man, however pure he may be, cannot defend himself from being convicted by God as impure. With respect to the first, then, he says *For I will not be responding to a man who is like me*, as if to say: If any man were to wish to convict me as impure I could resist him if he were to object to me that his conception of the perfect purity of justice could not be preserved in man, but I cannot respond in this way to God, in Whom no defect is found. With respect to the second quality he says *nor one who can be heard with me in judgment on an equal footing*. For when two men contend with each other they can have a judge who examines the words of both, but this cannot be the case between God and man for two reasons. One reason is that there must be in the judge a higher wisdom to be a standard, as it were, by which the statements of both sides may be examined. Now it is manifest that divine wisdom is the first standard by which the truth of all positions is examined, and on this account he adds *there is no one who would be able to refute both sides*, as if to say: There is not another being superior to God on the basis of whose greater wisdom divine wisdom can be corrected. The other reason is that there must be in the judge a greater power with which he can bind both sides, and Job excludes this qualification, saying *and to lay his hand on both*, that is, to coerce both, for this coercion is excluded by the immensity of divine power which he has shown above. [†25](#)

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And because, as has been said, [†26](#) he intends to search into the reason why the innocent are punished in this world, he shows next what could impede him from this search and the intention with which he wishes to search into it. Now he could be impeded from this search by two conditions: first, of course, by the affliction which he was suffering, for men whose minds are occupied with sadness cannot search subtly, and with respect to this impediment he says *Let Him take His rod from me*: second by the reverence

and with respect to this impediment he says *let Him take His fear from me*, second, by the reverence which he had for God. For sometimes men, out of a certain reverence which they have for God, omit to search into the things which are God's, and with respect to this impediment he says *and let the dread of Him not frighten me*, as if to say: May He allow my spirit to rest from the affliction which I suffer, and may it not be imputed to irreverence on my part that I debate over divine matters. In this way I will be able to search. Hence follows *I will speak and I will not fear Him*, that is, [I will speak] as if I did not fear Him; *for I cannot respond when I am in fear*, that is, when out of reverence for Him I am called back from searching. Now one should know that sometimes the fear of God does not call back from the search into divine matters those who fear God when, namely, they search into divine matters with a desire to know the truth, not in order to comprehend the incomprehensible, but always with this guide, that they subject their understanding to divine truth; they are, however, recalled by the fear of God from searching into divine matters as if wishing to comprehend them and not regulating their understanding by divine truth. So, then, by these words Job intends to show that with this guide he is searching into these things which pertain to divine providence so that he may subject his understanding to divine truth, not so that he may impugn divine truth, which would be contrary to reverence for the fear of God.

Chapter Ten

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(1) My soul is weary of my life; I will release my eloquence against myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. (2) I will say to God: Do not condemn me; point out to me why You judge me so. (3) Does it seem good to You if You should calumniate and oppress me, the work of Your hands, and aid the plan of the impious? (4) Are Your eyes of flesh, or do You also see just as a man sees? (5) Are Your days like the days of man, and are Your years like human times, (6) so that You inquire into my iniquity and search out my sin? (7) And know that I have done nothing impious, since there is no one who can rescue me from Your hand. (8) Your hands have made me and molded me entire all around, and are You casting me down so unexpectedly? (9) Remember, please, that You made me just as You made the mud and You will reduce me to dust. (10) Did You not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese? (11) You have clothed me in skin and flesh; You have fitted me together with bones and sinews. (12) You have bestowed upon me life and mercy and Your visitation has protected my spirit. (13) Although You may conceal these things in Your heart, yet I know that You remember everything.

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After Job had proposed above [9:22ff.] that the innocent as well as the impious are tried in this world and had touched upon one reason for the punishment of the innocent which could be reckoned, namely, that the earth, as if abandoned by God, has been exposed to the will, as it were, of an iniquitous power which punishes the innocent at will, having discounted this explanation because it contains manifest inconsistency, he inquired who was the punisher of the innocent and why, and he intends to pursue this question here. Before he proceeds to the investigation, however, he shows the spirit in which he is speaking here, for he speaks in the role of an afflicted man, according to the conceptions which his sorrow affords him. Hence, first he posits the weariness which he is suffering in this life because of the trials which he is suffering, which are so grave that they render even life itself wearisome, for although it is delightful to live, it is still wearisome to live in anguish; hence, he says *My soul is weary of my life*. Now just as a man to whom life is delightful chooses to live, so a man to whom life is wearisome chooses to be

deprived of life, and therefore he adds *I will release my eloquence against myself*, for what is destructive of someone is against him. A man speaks against himself, then, when he chooses to be deprived of life. But he expressly says *I will release*, for many times a man suffers some disturbances in his heart because of some passion, either of sadness or of desire or of anger or of any other passion whatsoever, but yet he represses with his reason all the disturbances in such a way that he does not proceed to an external word. But when his reason, wishing to show what it is suffering internally, brings forth the hidden disturbances into words, then it is said to release the eloquence that was held back, as it were, before, and on this account he adds *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, as if to say: The words which I will utter externally show my internal bitterness, so that he may give one to understand that he is speaking in the role of an embittered man. But again, so that it may be understood that that release of eloquence is not due to reason's being overcome by sorrow, he adds *I will say to God: Do not condemn me*, for when reason is conquered by passion, a man murmurs against God and sometimes proceeds to blasphemy, but when reason remains straightforward in the midst of a man's trials, it submits to God and expects a remedy from Him, saying to God, *Do not condemn me*. At the same time, too, in this text he addresses himself to the question, for since he had asked above [9:24] what was the reason for the punishment of the innocent in this world, here at last he confesses that God is the author of punishment when he asks that he not be condemned by Him, according to I Kings 2:6: "The Lord brings death and He brings life," the text by which the heresy of the Manichaeans is refuted. ¶1

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Now having premised these remarks and having supposed that God is the author of punishment, he inquires about the reason for his own punishment, saying to God, *point out to me why You judge me so*, that is, make me know the reason because of which I am being punished by You. For he knew that reason's investigation cannot reach the goal of truth unless it be divinely instructed. Now it is necessary for a man to know the reason for his punishment, either for correction or so that he may sustain the scourges more patiently. He proceeds to the inquiry into this question, however, under a kind of disjunction, for it is necessary that he who is being punished be either innocent or a sinner. Now Job proceeds first supposing that he is innocent, and because we reach a knowledge of divine things through human things, he proposes two ways in which the innocent are sometimes punished in a human judgment.

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The first way is the result of the malice of the one punishing, as the result of which it happens in three ways that punishments are inflicted on the innocent: sometimes, indeed, when through cunning they heap calumnies upon the innocent, and with respect to this way he says *Does it seem good to You if You should calumniate?* Sometimes, however, they oppress the innocent through power, and with respect to this way he adds *and oppress me, the work of Your hands*; sometimes, however, they do not punish the innocent for their own motive but, since they inordinately love some impious persons, they help them even in the oppression of the innocent. Hence, there is added *and aid the plan of the impious?* But one should consider that sometimes, because of different natures, one and the same quality can be both good and bad, as, for instance, it is indeed good for a dog to be irascible but bad for a man. Now no one of sound mind entertains any doubt whether God works anything out of malice, for there cannot be any evil in the supreme good. But it can happen that something which pertains to divine goodness is evil in man, as, for instance, not to show mercy according as mercy cries out against suffering, which divine goodness nevertheless requires in keeping with its own perfection, is indeed vituperated in man. Now it is manifest that the three activities cited—calumny, oppressing the innocent, and aiding the plan of the impious—are evils in men; hence, he calls into question whether they can be goods for God, and so he does not ask 'Do You calumniate and oppress [the innocent]?' but *Does it seem good to You to calumniate and oppress me?*, as if he supposes it is reliable that God never does anything but what seems good to Him, and this is truly good. Likewise, one should consider that things which exist naturally are not imputed to anyone as a fault or an evil; it is natural, however, that each thing destroy its opposite; hence, God, too, Who is supremely good, hates the things which are done against Him and destroys them, according to Psalm 5:7:

"You hate all who work iniquity; You will destroy," and so on. Therefore, if men had not been made by God but by the opposite principle, as the Manichaeans allege, ^{†2} it would seem good that God oppress men for their own sakes. To exclude this error, then, he says not simply *that You oppress me*, but he adds *the work of Your hands*. Likewise, it seems good that God should fulfill the wishes of just men, but those who want to calumniate the innocent man or oppress him are not just but impious, and especially if they should wish to do this not out of ignorance or accidentally but on purpose and deliberately; hence, since Job supposes himself innocent in the first part of the inquiry, it follows that those who wished to oppress or to calumniate him according to a deliberate plan are impious, and therefore he expressly says *and aid the plan of the impious*.

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Having removed this reason, then, since this cannot seem good to God, since he is the work of God's hands and since his enemies who had oppressed him are proved impious, he proceeds next to the second way in which the innocent are sometimes afflicted in a human judgment. For sometimes it happens that when some innocent man is falsely accused before a judge, the judge, to search out the truth, subjects him to torture, acting in accordance with justice. But the reason for this situation is the defect of human knowledge, and this defect of knowledge is threefold: one defect, of course, is that all man's knowledge proceeds from sense, and since the senses are corporeal and of corporeal things, the judge cannot know the internal conscience of the accused. To exclude this defect from God, then, he says *Are Your eyes of flesh*, as if to say: Do You know by corporeal senses, so that You see only corporeal things and cannot know internal things? Now he posits eyes because vision excels among the other senses. The second defect is that a man cannot even see through the corporeal senses all corporeal things, for he cannot know what is happening in remote and concealed places, a defect which he removes from God, saying *or do You also see just as a man sees*, so that, namely, You cannot know the hidden things also which happen everywhere. The third defect of human knowledge is the result of time, both because a man knows more things from day to day, and also because, over a long period of time, he forgets the things which he knows, so that this way he has to learn them again, as it were. He removes this defect from God, then, saying *Are Your days like the days of man*, so that, namely, Your knowledge increases from day to day; *and are Your years like human times*, so that, namely, in the course of time some of Your knowledge decreases? And he adds so *that You inquire into my iniquity and search out my sin*, that is, so that You may inquire through scourges whether I have sinned by my work and am iniquitous in my mind, just as men search out sins through torture? And so, finding no sins in me after such an inquiry, *know that I have done nothing impious*, as if You cannot know this by any other means if You do not search out my sins with scourges. And do this freely, without contradiction, *since there is no one who can rescue me from Your hand*. For sometimes judges abandon this inquiry by torture when those who ought to be tortured are rescued from their hands.

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And since he had said above (v. 3) that he was the work of God's hands, in order to show on this account that it cannot seem good to God that He oppress him for His own sake, as if He were delighted in his oppression, he manifests what he had supposed; hence, he adds *Your hands have made me*. And lest anyone believe, according to the Manichaean heresy, ^{†3} that man's soul was made by God whereas the body was formed by the opposite author, he adds *and molded me entire all around*. He says *all around* since the body seems to be all around the soul just as clothing is all around the one clothed, or as the house is all around the inhabitant. He says *entire* to refer to each member of the body. He says *molded* to allude to the fact that man is said to have been formed from the mud of the earth. Now by hands is understood the divine operation; hence, he says *hands* in the plural, since, although there is one divine power operating, its operation is nevertheless multiplied in its effects, both because of the diversity of the effects and also because of the variety of the intermediate causes by the mediation of which it produces its effects. Now he adds *and are You casting me down so unexpectedly?*, since it seems to be unexpected that someone who has produced something should corrupt it without manifest reason, for one who makes something wishes

it to exist—he makes it, in fact, so that it may exist—whereas one who corrupts it wishes it not to exist; therefore, if a person should destroy what he made before, it seems to be an unexpected change of the will, unless some manifest reason should arise anew as a result of which it may appear that what earlier had to be made must be corrupted. Now such an unexpected change of the will cannot happen to God, and therefore, as if in wonder, he asks *are You casting me down so unexpectedly?*, as if to say: This seems inconsistent if You should now destroy without reason one whom You made before. Or the expression *made me* can refer to the constitution of the substance, whereas the expression *and molded me entire all around* can refer to the things which accrue to the substance, whether they be the goods of the soul or of the body or of external fortune.

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And since he has posited generally that he had been made and molded by God, he specifically pursues the manner of his making by analogy with someone who wishes to remind someone of something which he seems to have forgotten. He explains everything to him part by part, so that even so it may be led back into his memory. Now God seems to forget the benevolence which He has toward His product when He exposes it to corruption, for He conducts Himself in the manner of a forgetful person, and according to this manner it is said in Psalm 12:1: †4 "How long, Lord, will You forget me—forever?" Therefore, he says *Remember, please, that You made me just as You made the mud*. And here one should consider that he is mentioning the two makings of man—first, indeed, that which pertains to the first institution of nature, alluding to what is said in Genesis 2:7: "God formed man from the mud of the earth," and therefore he says *that You made me just as You made the mud*, and here he also seems to touch upon the composition of man from the first elements. And since it was also said to the first man, "You are dust and to dust you will return," †5 next he adds *and You will reduce me to dust*, an expression which also fits the natural material. For it follows that the things which are generated from earth should be dissolved into earth according to the order of nature. But one can wonder about this, since it seems a greater feat to form man from earth than to keep a man once formed from being reduced to dust; hence it is that God, Who has formed man from mud, permits him to be reduced to dust—whether, namely, this is solely the result of the necessity of the material, so that man in this respect may have no advantage over the other things which are formed from earth, or this is the result of divine providence punishing some guilt of man.

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Now next he touches upon the making of man with respect to the work of propagation, according as man is generated from man. And here one should consider that he attributes all the works of nature to God, not in order to exclude the operation of nature but in the way in which things which are done through second causes are attributed to the principal agent, as the operation of the saw is attributed to the artisan. For the very fact that nature operates it has from God, Who has instituted it for that purpose. Now in the generation of man the release of the semen occurs first, and with respect to this fact he says *Did You not pour me out like milk?*, for just as semen is the overflow of nourishment, †6 so too is milk. Second, however, occurs the joining together of the corporeal mass in the woman's womb, and with respect to this fact he adds *and curdle me like cheese?*. For the male's semen is so related to the material which the female furnishes in the generation of man and other animals as the coagulant is in the production of cheese. †7 Now third occurs the distinction of the organs, whose consistency and might, indeed, result from the sinews and bones, †8 but they are surrounded externally by hide and flesh; hence, he says *You have clothed me in skin and flesh; You have fitted me together with bones and sinews*. Fourth is the animation of the fetus, especially with respect to the rational soul, which is not infused until after the organization of the matter; †9 now together with the rational soul are divinely infused into man certain seeds of virtues, some, indeed, in common with all men, but some especially to some men according as some men are naturally disposed to one virtue, others to another. †10 Now Job says below, "From infancy pity grew up with me, and it came out of the womb with me" [31:18]; hence, here too he says *You have bestowed upon me life and mercy*. Finally, there is the preservation of life as much in his mother's womb as after his coming out of the womb, and this preservation indeed is partly through natural principles but partly through other benefits of God added to

protection, indeed, is partly through natural principles but partly through other benefits of God added to nature, whether they pertain to the soul, to the body, or to external goods, and with respect to this fact he adds *and Your visitation has protected my spirit*. For just as God is said in the Scriptures to withdraw from someone when He takes His gifts away from him, so He is said to visit him when He bestows His gifts on him.

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Now so that no one could believe on the basis of what he had said to God— "Remember, please, that You made me just like the mud" (v. 9)—that he was of the opinion that forgetfulness could befall God, he excuses himself of this charge, adding *Although You may conceal these things in Your heart, yet I know that You remember everything*. Now God is said by analogy with man to conceal something in His heart when He does not show through an effect what He has in His knowledge or affection. So, therefore, he says that God conceals in His heart the things cited before, since it is not shown in effect that He recognizes as His making one whom He seems to cast down so unexpectedly.

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(14) If I have sinned and You have spared me until now, why do You not allow me to be clean of my iniquity? (15) And if I will be impious, woe is me! And if just, I will not lift up my head filled with affliction and with misery. (16) And because of pride You will capture me like a lioness, and returning You torment me marvelously. (17) You put up Your witnesses against me and You multiply Your anger, and the punishments campaign against me.

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Job inquired above into the reason for his punishment, having supposed that he was innocent, [†11](#) but now he proceeds to inquire if he is being punished because he is a sinner. And he shows first that he is not being punished for sin, using the following reasoning: If he did commit sin, he seems especially to have committed it in the time of prosperity. Now if sin is the whole reason why some men sustain adversities in the present life, and the effect is posited once the cause is posited, it would be necessary that adversity would follow immediately when anyone sins. It was manifest, however, that Job, in the time of his prosperity, observed the same way of living; hence, if he sinned by living this way, he had sinned long before he suffered adversity. It would be necessary to say, then, since adversity did not follow immediately after the sin, that God spared him for that time during which He did not inflict adversities. Now it is inconsistent to say that God would impute again for punishment a sin which He has spared. It does not seem right, then, that he be punished now for a sin committed by him before. This, then, is the point of saying *If I have sinned, namely, in the time of my prosperity, and You have spared me until now*, since, namely, You did not inflict adversity right away, *why do You not allow me to be clean of my iniquity?*, as if to say: Why, since You have reputed me at some time as pure by sparing me my iniquity, do You punish me now again as if I am not pure.

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Next he adds another reason, too, which is as follows: If sin is the whole reason for the present adversities, it would follow that the just would not suffer adversities in this world as sinners do. Now we see that adversities are common both to the just and to sinners alike, and this is the point of saying *And if I will be impious, woe is me!*, that is, I sustain adversities; *and if I either was before or have just now become just, I will not on this account lift up my head*, as if I have been raised up from misery. I say this *being filled with affliction* with respect to sorrows, *and with misery* with respect to poverty and embarrassment. Now in fullness he designates the abundance of affliction and misery, and he seems to be saying this against the statement of Eliphaz and Bildad, who had said that if he were to be converted he would be freed from adversity. Against this position he says that, even if he has been made just, he still is not relieved of misery on this account, although for his preceding sins, if there were any, he has already been punished sufficiently, a position which he designates through the fullness of affliction and misery.

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And since Eliphaz had imputed to him as pride the fact that he was saying that he was innocent, he adds *And because of pride You will capture me like a lioness*. For Eliphaz had said above in denoting Job, "The roar of the lion and the voice of the lioness and the teeth of the lion cubs have been broken" [4:10]; therefore, he says *because of pride You will capture me like a lioness*, as if to say: You cause me to be deemed by these who grasp my words as a lioness because of pride. And this very fact, that he was deemed evil in this way, was for him punishment on top of punishment; hence, he adds *and returning You torment me marvelously*, as if before You came afflicting me by taking away my property and wounding my body, and now again You have returned and You torment me through my friends, which is marvelous, since from friends I ought rather to receive consolation; or rather, he says this since a man is especially afflicted when he is mocked by friends. Now he shows what kind of torment it is, adding *You put up Your witnesses against me*, for Eliphaz, when he seemed to be defending God's justice, and his companions similarly, spoke against Job, accusing him of sin, and in doing this they were demonstrating that they were God's witnesses, as it were; *and in this way You multiply Your anger*, that is, the effect of Your anger, when You punish me in many ways, *and the punishments campaign against me*, as if they are impugning me with a certain authority and without contradiction. For soldiers usually attack with royal authority and without any contradiction a person who is reputed a criminal.

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(18) Why did You lead me forth from the womb? I wish that I had been consumed lest any eye might see me. (19) I would have been as if I were not; I would have been transferred from the womb to the tomb. (20) Will not the fewness of my days be finished soon? Let me go, then, so that I may lament my pain a little (21) before I go, and do not return, to the shadowy land covered by the mist of death, (22) the land of misery and of shadows where the shade of death and no order but everlasting horror dwells.

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Job had terminated his inquiry on the point that, whether he was just or a sinner, he was subject to many trials, and lest anyone might be able to believe that God was delighting in his trials, he wishes to inquire whether this can be true. Now it seems inconsistent that anyone would produce his effect to be ill disposed, since every agent rather aims at the good in his effect. Now he supposes, as is clear from what has gone before (vv. 3, 8), that he is the work of God, and therefore he asks Him *Why did You lead me forth from the womb?*, as if to say: On this account did You have me born, in order to subject me to trials? And since someone could say that even to be in trials this way is better than simply not to have been born, he excludes this possibility, saying *I wish that I had been consumed*, namely, in my mother's womb, *lest any eye might see me*, that is, that I might not be suffering embarrassment because of such great evils which the eyes of men behold in me. And yet, if I had been consumed in my mother's womb I would have had the dignity of being without the misery which befell me existing, and this is the point of saying *I would have been a participant*, as it were—that is, I would have participated in that which is good in being—as if *I were not*, that is, I would be immune from the evils of this life as if I had never been, for it is not the dignity of a human being that he be preserved forever but that man should die at last and be transferred to the tomb which is prepared for the dead person so that some memory of him may remain after his death. Even I would not have been without this remembrance; hence follows *I would have been transferred from the womb to the tomb*.

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Now no one who is delighted in someone's punishments is found to be so cruel that he does not let up even a little from afflicting him. Granted, then, that God were not the cause of man's birth; man's days are still brief, especially in comparison to the eternity of God, and even that brevity, when a man has already passed a great part of his life, is expected to be ended quickly. This is the point of saying *Will not the*

fewness of my days, since all the days of my life are few, *be finished soon*, since a great part of that very fewness is already past? It is no big thing, then, if You should leave off striking me further, and this is the point of concluding *Let me go, then*. And if it seems harsh to You that I be without afflictions even for an hour, it is certain that, even if You leave off striking me, there remains to me no reason for joy but only for pain. This is the point of adding so *that I may lament my pain a little*, namely, the pain which I have received from the preceding strokes. Now he says this because he deemed that he was still being struck as long as his friends, concerning whom he had said, "You put up Your witnesses against me" (v. 17), were chiding him.

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And since one could respond to him, 'On the contrary, you must rather be afflicted here for a short time; when you pass from here you will find consolation,'—which was possible in two ways: in one way by returning again to this life, †12—he excludes this possibility when he says *before I go*, namely, through death, *and do not return* to live again. This exclusion can be explained in two ways: in one way by saying that he is not returning to a similar way of living, as certain people maintained; †13 or better, one should say that he is speaking in the manner of a debater—according to the opinion which his adversaries hold—before the truth is manifested. Now below Job will manifestly indicate the truth of resurrection; †14 therefore, in all the preceding passages he speaks of resurrection supposing the opinion of those with whom he was debating, who did not believe that there was another life except this one, †15 but [did believe] that men are either punished or rewarded in this life alone for the good and the evil deeds which they do. In the other way he could expect consolation after the end of this life in the very state of death, but Job excludes this possibility, saying *to the shadowy land*, namely, to which I will go after death.

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This phrase, too, can be explained in two ways: in one way, with reference to hell, to which the souls of all men, even the just, descended before Christ, although the just did not suffer sensible punishments there but only shadows, whereas the others suffered both punishments and shadows. But since Job had spoken as if it were doubtful whether he himself was just, as the truth of the matter was, or a sinner, as his friends falsely charged, he describes hell in common terms with respect to both good and evil men. Accepting hell in common terms in this way, then, he calls it *the shadowy land* inasmuch as it lacks the brightness of the divine vision. It is said to be *covered by the mist of death* with respect to original sin, which is a mist leading to death. It is called *the land of misery* with respect to the punishments which the condemned suffer there. It is called *the land of shadows* with respect to the obscurities of actual sins in which the evil ones are involved. Now the *shade*, that is, the likeness, *of death* is said to be there since they are afflicted as if they were always dying. Now there is said to be *no order* there, either because of the confusion of minds which the damned suffer or because of the fact that the same order is not observed there as here. For here fire burns and gives light, which is not the case there. Now *everlasting horror dwells* there since, although they are always in pain from the present punishments, they nevertheless always fear future punishments.

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But since those against whom he was debating did not posit the immortality of the soul in such a way that it would remain after death, and Job himself is still speaking in accordance with their positions, the passage is better explained in the literal sense, so that the whole thing refers to the body which is buried in the earth and converted into earth. Therefore, he says *to the shadowy land* with respect to the very property of the earth, which is dark in itself. But although it is dark in itself, yet the living who dwell upon the earth are illuminated by the light of the air covering the earth, but the dead do not enjoy that light; hence, he adds *and covered by the mist of death*, as if to say: Death brings it about that after death one does not enjoy the light which the living enjoy. Now sometimes it happens that, although some living person may not enjoy the light surrounding the earth, yet, existing in some hidden place on earth, he enjoys what he desires according to his appetite and considers truths according to his understanding. But the dead lack this enjoyment; hence, he adds *the land of misery* with respect to the lack of all things desirable, *and of*

shadows inasmuch as the consideration of truths is lacking. Among other things, too, in which the living take delight, the chief one is human society with its due order, according to which certain people rule, others are underlings, and still others are servants, but the dead are deprived of this order; hence, he adds *where the shade of death*, as if to say: Among the dead there are only shades according to the reckoning of the living, as is said in Wisdom 17:4: "Sad-appearing specters gave them a fright"; *and no order*, since without a difference of honor and dignity the condition of the dead is similar; *but everlasting horror dwells*, with respect to the living for whom the dead are a horror, as if to say: There is nothing in the state of the dead except what men shudder at, and this condition will be everlasting among them if they do not return to life.

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So, then, Job, inquiring into the reason for his trial, shows that it is not from some impious being into whose hand the earth has been given [9:24ff.], not from God oppressing him on a false charge (v. 3), inquiring into a crime (v. 4), punishing sins (vv. 14ff.), or taking pleasure in punishments (vv. 18ff.); hence, the reason for his trial still remains in doubt. And Job pursues all these points in order to induce his opponents necessarily to posit another life in which just men are rewarded and evil men are punished, since if that position is not posited, no reason can be given for the trial of just men, who, it is certain, are sometimes troubled in this world.

Chapter Eleven

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(1) Now Zophar the Naamathite said in response: (2) Will the man who speaks much not also listen? Or will a wordy man be justified? (3) Will men keep silence for you alone, and when you have mocked others will you be refuted by no one? (4) For you have said: Pure is my speech and clean am I in Your sight. (5) And I wish that God would speak with you and open His lips to you. (6) I wish that He would show you the secrets of His wisdom and that His law is manifold, and you would understand that much smaller penalties are being exacted from you by Him than your iniquity merits. (7) Will you perhaps comprehend God's tracks, and will you find out the Almighty perfectly? (8) He is higher than heaven, and what will you do? He is deeper than hell, and whence will you know Him? (9) Longer than the earth is His measure and wider than the sea. (10) If He will overturn all things or compress them into one mass, who will contradict Him? Or who can say to Him: Why are You acting in such a way?

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Job had said above that, among the other evils which he was suffering, he was being marvelously tormented by his friends, who were rising up against him like witnesses for God [10:17], and Zophar, touched by this word, responded. Hence is said *Now Zophar the Naamathite said in response: Will the man who speaks much not also listen?*, as if to say: You have spoken inordinately much; hence, it is no wonder that you have been criticized by your friends, since, if the man who speaks much were not criticized, the inconsistency would follow that men, from the very fact that they are loquacious, would be deemed just. Hence follows *Or will a wordy man be justified*, that is, be deemed just? And since Job could say that he ought to be deferred to because of his dignity, Zophar excludes this possibility, adding *Will men keep silence for you alone, and when you have mocked others will you be refuted by no one?* For he

understood that the others had been mocked both in that Job had called them God's witnesses [*ibid.*] and in that he had said above, "Why have you disparaged my speeches of truth?" [6:25]; therefore, he says that Job ought not to be surprised if others, too, should speak against him. But perhaps he could say that they had nothing to say against him or against his words, and to exclude this possibility Zophar adds *For you have said: Pure is my speech*. He takes this from what Job had said above: "And you will not find iniquity on my tongue, nor in my throat will there resound folly" [6:30]; *and clean am I in Your sight*. Job had not said this expressly, but he did want them to take from his words that he had maintained that he had not been punished for sin, either from his statement, "Know that I have done nothing impious" [10:7], or from what he said above, "Have I not dissembled? Have I not kept silent" [3:26]?

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Now one should consider that, since sin is deviation from the law of God, ¶1 neither sin nor its degree can be fully known unless God's law be known, "for the straight is the judge of itself and of the deviant"; ¶2 therefore, because Job was saying that he was free from sin, or that he had not sinned as gravely as he was being punished, from this claim Zophar reckoned that Job did not happen to know the law of God perfectly; therefore, he says *And I wish that God would speak with you and open His lips to you*. He seems to say this as an insult to Job, since Job had said, "Point out to me why You judge me so" [10:2]. It can also be said that God speaks simply to a man when He inspires in his heart something of His own wisdom, according to the text of Psalm 84:9: "I will listen to what the Lord God speaks in me." Now God opens His lips when, through some effects, He reveals something to men, for by the lips are formed externally the words by which we express the internal conceptions of the heart.

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Now one should consider that we fail to understand divine matters for two reasons: first, of course, because, since we can only know the "unseen attributes of God through things which have been made," ¶3 but things which have been made fall far short of the power of the Maker, it is necessary that there remain many things to be considered in the Maker which are hidden from us, and these things are called the secrets of God's wisdom, concerning which he says *I wish that He would show you the secrets of His wisdom*. The second reason is that we cannot comprehend to the full even the very ordering of creatures as it is dispensed by divine providence, for it functions one way in human rule and another in divine. For among men, the higher one is in ruling the more his ordinance extends to more universal matters alone, whereas he leaves the particulars to be dispensed by lower rulers, and so the law of the rule of the higher ruler is universal and simple. But the higher God is in ruling, the more His ordinance extends even to the smallest matters; hence, the law of His rule is not only secret, if we look to the high merit of the ruler exceeding the whole comparative merit of the creature, but also manifold, dispensing all things, even the most isolated and least important, in a fixed order; therefore, he adds *and that His law is manifold*.

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And indeed, it is possible to consider this condition not only in natural things insofar as they are subject to divine rule but also in human affairs. For the laws of man, since their legislators could not look to every single case, look to certain universals which happen in the majority of cases. But the way in which universal human statutes are to be applied to individual deeds is left to the prudence of the administrator; hence, man can fall short of straightforwardness in many instances in which he is nevertheless not in violation of a man-made law. But divine law, according as it exists in the wisdom of God, extends to all particulars, even the smallest, and so it cannot happen that a man should be at variance with straightforwardness in any matter and not be in violation of divine law. Therefore, since man cannot attain to an inspection of divine law itself, insofar as it is in the secret of God's wisdom, and as a consequence he cannot know its multiplicity, it sometimes happens that he does not think that he is acting against God's law when in fact he is, or he thinks that he is sinning a little when he is sinning much; hence, he adds *and you would understand*, namely, if the secrets of God's wisdom and the multiplicity of His law had been shown to you, that much smaller penalties are being exacted from you by Him, that is, in sustaining these

to you, *that much smaller penalties are being exacted from you by Him, that is, in sustaining these punishments, than your iniquity merits*, iniquity which you either do not recognize as such or else rate as small. And in this text Zophar seems to be criticizing what Job had said above: "I wish that my sins by which I have merited anger and the calamity which I am suffering were being weighed in a scale. As the sand of the sea the latter would appear graver" [6:2].

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And since Zophar had supposed that there was some secret in divine wisdom which had not yet been shown to Job, so that this supposition could not be denied he confirms it through what follows, saying *Will you perhaps comprehend God's tracks*. Tracks are the signs of one proceeding along a way. Now God's works are called his ways, †4 and the production of creatures by God is understood as a kind of proceeding of God towards His creatures, inasmuch as divine goodness, derived from Him in Whom it exists simply and supremely, proceeds by degrees to its effects when superior creatures are found to be better than inferior creatures. God's tracks, then, are certain signs found in creatures by which God can to some extent be known through creatures. But since the mind of man cannot know even the creatures themselves totally and perfectly, it is much less able to have perfect knowledge about the Creator Himself, and therefore he goes on, asking *and will you find out the Almighty perfectly?*, as if to say: If you cannot know the creatures perfectly, much less can you know the Creator. And he says expressly *will you find out*, because through a kind of inquiry reason proceeds from effects to the cause, and when it knows the cause through its effects we are said to come upon it.

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It is no wonder that the Creator is not perfectly known if the creatures are not perfectly known, since even if the creatures were perfectly known the Creator still would not be. For the cause can be known perfectly through the effects only when the effects equal the power of the cause, †5 which cannot be said about God; therefore, Zophar adds *He is higher than heaven, and what will you do? He is deeper than hell, and whence shall you know Him? Longer than the earth is His measure and wider than the sea*. These things are said metaphorically, for it ought not to be understood that God, who is incorporeal, extends in corporeal dimensions, but he describes the greatness of His power in terms of corporeal greatness, since, however great corporeal quantities seem to be in height or depth or length or breadth, they still fall short of the greatness of God's power, which could make greater things. Therefore, he expressly named God "Almighty" before (v. 7). From this text, then, he shows that God cannot be found perfectly in His creatures, since, even if it were granted that all creatures were perfectly known, power equal to that of the Creator could not be known from them. What means, then, can be taken to come to know the power of God, since it exceeds every creature? And he signifies this difficulty when he says *what will you do?*, and *whence will you know Him?*.

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Now not only does divine power exceed every creature in producing but also in preserving, for there is no preservation of a creature except by God, nor is there any power in a creature which could resist the divine will if it did not wish to preserve the creature itself further; therefore, Zophar adds *If He will overturn all things*, reducing them to nothingness, namely, by taking away their being, *or compress them into one mass*, inducing confusion by removing the order by which He distinguishes things, *who will contradict Him?*; that is, what power of a creature will be able to be contrary to Him, preserving either itself or other things in being against His will? But lest anyone should say that although nothing could be preserved in being except through Him, He nevertheless preserves things in being as if under an obligation, to exclude this claim Zophar adds *Or who can say to Him: Why are you acting in such a way?*, as if exacting from Him an accounting for a past debt.

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(11) For He Himself knows the vanity of men, and seeing iniquity, does He not consider it? (12) A vain

man raises himself to pride, and like the foal born to the onager thinks himself free. (13) You, however, have strengthened your heart and you have stretched out your hands to God. (14) If you will remove from yourself the iniquity which is in your hand, and if injustice will not remain in your tent, (15) then you will be able to lift up your face without stain, and you will be stable, and you will not fear. (16) Your misery, also, you will forget, and like waters which have passed by you will not recollect it. (17) And the splendor of noon, as it were, will rise up for you at twilight, and although you thought yourself consumed, you will rise like Lucifer. (18) And you will have confidence because hope has been proposed to you, and when you have been buried you will sleep securely; (19) you will rest and there will be no one to frighten you, and very many will pray in longing for your face. (20) The eyes of the impious, however, will fail, and the means of escape will vanish from them, and their hope is the abomination of the soul.

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After Zophar has shown that in divine wisdom there is something secret which is incomprehensible to man, he proceeds to manifest another point which he had supposed before, namely, that God exacts punishment for sin from man, and, indeed, to manifest the fact that God knows the deeds of men; hence, he says: Rightly do I say that smaller penalties are being exacted from you by God than your iniquity merits, *For He himself knows the vanity of men*, that is, the vain deeds of men. Now things are usually called vain which are unstable because they are not stabilized on due ends. The vanity of man, then, comes from the fact that his heart is not fixed on truth, by which alone it can be made stable. And because it withdraws from the truth, it works iniquity when, of course, it seeks that which appears good in place of that which is good; hence, he adds *and seeing iniquity* going forth from the vanity of men, *does He*, namely, God, *not consider it*, namely, to punish it? For a judge who sees a sin seems to pass over it without consideration when he neglects it and does not care to set a penalty for it, which, it seems, ought not to be said of God. Since He Himself sees the vanity of men, then, He exacts a penalty for the iniquity.

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Now just as it happens as a result of vanity that a man inclines toward iniquity, so as a result of the same vanity it comes about that a man does not deem himself to be subject to divine judgment, and therefore Zophar adds *A vain man raises himself to pride*, so that, namely, he does not believe that he is subject to his superior, and this is the point of adding *and like the foal born to the onager thinks himself free*. The onager is an ass of the forest whose foal is born free of the dominion of man, whereas the foals of asses which are possessed by men are born in the service of men; therefore, men who do not think that they are subject to divine judgment deem that they have been born like the foals of the onager, although they see that other men of the same condition are coerced by divine judgment. Zophar seemed to be saying this in derision of blessed Job, understanding from his words that he wished to contend with God as if on an equal footing since he had said, "Let Him take His rod from me and let the dread of Him not frighten me; I will speak and I will not fear Him" [9:34]; therefore, he adds *You, however, have strengthened your heart*, namely, to defend your iniquity. And yet, along with this strengthening of the heart, you *have stretched out your hands to God* in prayer, namely, when he said above, "I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me'" [10:2]. Therefore, your prayer is useless, for prayer is useful when a man dismisses his iniquity first and afterwards asks God to cease punishing him. And this is the point of adding *If you will remove from yourself the iniquity which is in your hand*, namely, so that you may desist from the iniquitous work which you still have before your hands, *and if injustice will not remain in your tent*, namely, so that you may restore what you have received unjustly and laid up in store, or so that you may correct your household, for whose delinquencies masters are sometimes punished because of their negligence in correcting them, *then you will be able to lift up*, namely, to God in prayer, *your face without stain*, namely, of guilt. And in this way condemnation will cease, first of all with respect to the future; hence, he adds *and you will be stable*, namely, so that you may not be disturbed further by trials, *and also you will not fear* future dangers. And since sometimes, although he may not fear about the future, a man is nevertheless afflicted for things which he has lost or suffered, Zophar adds *Your misery, also*, namely, which you have suffered thus far, *you will forget* because of the abundance of goods to come. And with this example he confirms his

you may forget because of the abundance of goods to come and that the example he contains the argument when he adds *and like waters which have passed by you will not recollect it*, which he says because a man, when the calm returns after a rainstorm, forgets the preceding rains or because the waters of rivers flow very swiftly and no memory of them remains after they pass.

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But since above Job had opposed two arguments to the promise of prosperity in this life—namely, the devastation of his own body when he said, "My flesh has been clothed in corruption" [7:5] and the passing of the days of his life when he said, "My days have passed more swiftly," and so on [7:6], to exclude both objections Zophar adds *And the splendor of noon, as it were, will rise up for you at twilight*, as if to say: Although it may seem to you that your days have passed away and your life is at its end, as if at twilight, yet such great prosperity can still come upon you that it will, as it were, lead you back to the joy of your youth. For just as by twilight old age is understood, so by noon youth is understood. Now he calls the brightness of earthly prosperity splendor. In opposition to what Job had said about the consumption of his own body, however, he adds *and although you thought yourself consumed*, namely, because of the infirmity which you have suffered, *you will rise like Lucifer*, that is, your body will return to its former beauty.

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And since Job had said a second time above that his days had been consumed "without any hope" [7:6], Zophar adds *And you will have confidence because hope has been proposed to you*. Also, since Job had disapproved above of the opinion of those who were saying that a man returns again after death, after the passage of many centuries, to this way of life [7:6ff.], Zophar says not that hope of this return but that hope according as a man lives after death in the memories of men has been proposed to him. This remembrance, indeed, happens in two ways: in one way, from the tombs in which the bodies of the dead are interred so that the memory of those who have died may be preserved; hence, they are even called monuments, and with respect to this way he says *and when you have been buried you will sleep securely*, as if to say: No one will violate your sepulcher, nor will you even have to fear that anyone may try; hence, he adds *you will rest, and there will be no one to frighten you*; in another way, the dead live in the memories of men because of the good deeds which they did while they were alive, as a result of which their life would be missed, and with respect to this way he adds *and very many will pray in longing for your face*, that is, very many will earnestly wish for your presence or show reverence for your tomb, recounting your benefits.

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And since he had promised these rewards if Job would be willing to depart from his iniquity, he shows next that these rewards are not granted to iniquitous men; therefore, he adds *The eyes of the impious, however, will fail*, since, of course, the good things which they wish for they will not obtain. For someone's eyes are said to fail when he looks to get hold of something to which he cannot attain. And just as they do not acquire the desired goods, so, too, they cannot avoid the evils which they suffer or fear; hence follows *and the means of escape will vanish from them*, namely, since they will not be able to escape their evils. After death, however, they will not be venerated or missed but abominated because of the evils which they have done, and this is the point of adding *and their hope is the abomination of the soul*, that is, all that can be hoped concerning them after death is that they be abominated.

Chapter Twelve

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(1) Now Job said in response: (2) Are you alone men, then, and will wisdom die with you? (3) I have a heart, too, just as you do, nor am I inferior to you. For who does not know these things which you know? (4) Whoever is derided by his friend as I am will invoke God, and He will heed him. For the simplicity of the just man is derided, (5) his light is despised in the reflections of the rich, prepared for the appointed time. (6) The tents of robbers abound, and boldly do they provoke God, since He himself has given all things into their hands. (7) Ask the draft-animals, to be sure, and they will teach you, and the flying creatures of heaven, and they will indicate it to you; (8) speak to the earth and it will respond to you, and the fish of the sea will tell you. (9) Who does not know that the hand of the Lord has made all these things? (10) In His hand is the soul of every living thing, even the breath of all the flesh of man.

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In the preceding words Zophar, in order to mock Job, who seemed to be asking for a debate with God, as it were, had tried to show that man cannot comprehend the secrets of God's wisdom. And, as can be concluded from his words and from the words of the other friends, their whole intention turned on three points, for first they were eager to say some magnificent things about God, extolling his wisdom, power, and justice, so that on this account their cause might appear more favorable; second, they were applying such magnificent assumptions about God to certain false dogmas, namely, that men prospered in this world because of justice and were tried because of sins, and that after this life there was nothing to be expected; third, in light of such claims, because of the adversity which Job was suffering, they accused him as though he were an iniquitous person and made certain empty promises to him if he would desert his iniquity, namely, that "after he was buried" he would sleep "securely," and that at twilight noonday splendor would arise for him [11:18, 17], promises which Job deemed as mockeries, and around these points Job's whole response revolves. First, then, he speaks against them because they were extolling themselves, proposing certain great things about God as if they themselves alone knew them and Job did not, and so is said *Now Job said in response: Are you alone men, then?*, which follows if you deem that you alone know about the greatness of God these things which all men know. And since wisdom consists in the knowledge of God's greatness, it follows that if you alone know these things, then wisdom resides in you alone, and so, when you cease to be, wisdom ceases to be; therefore, he adds *and will wisdom die with you?*, as if to say: It is inconsistent either that you alone are men or that you alone are wise.

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But since they could say, 'We are not the only ones who know, but you still do not know,' he responds in addition *I have a heart, too*, namely, to know these things, *just as you do, nor am I inferior to you*, namely, with respect to this knowledge. And so that this remark could not be ascribed to arrogance, he adds *for who does not know these things which you know?*, as if to say: It is no big thing if I say that I know the things which you know since it is no big thing to know them, since anyone knows them, but in deeming that I do not know these things you seem to hold me in contempt, as if I do not know what everybody knows; hence, he adds *Whoever is derided by his friend as I am*, namely, by you when you deem me unwise, *will invoke God, and He will heed him*, since where human help is absent there especially divine help is present, according to Psalm 26:10: "When my father and mother abandoned me, the Lord nevertheless raised me up," and in this argument he seems to respond, as it were, to that which Zophar had said above: "Then you will be able to lift up your face" [11:15], as if to say: It behooves me to wait no longer to pray with confidence, since by the very fact that I am derided by my friends hope is given to me of resorting to God.

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Now Job shows why someone who has been mocked by his friend is heeded by God, adding *For the simplicity of the just man is derided*, where he shows both who they are who are derided and why, and also by whom when he adds *his light is despised in the reflections of the rich*. For to be derided is the mark of one who is deficient in resources, whereas to deride is the mark of one who abounds in them. Those who abound in virtues, however, do not mock those who are deficient in virtues but rather show compassion and help them if they can, but those who abound in temporal goods are especially used to mocking those who are deficient in them, and especially when they show no zeal for acquiring temporal goods. But the zeal of just men is not to acquire temporal goods but to pursue straightforwardness; hence, they abstain from fraud and deceit, the means by which riches are generally acquired, and for this reason they are deemed simple. Therefore, just men are derided as much as possible. Now the reason for their being mocked is their simplicity; yet, it is not mocked as a manifest evil but as a concealed good; therefore, simplicity here is called *light* because of the brightness of justice, but it is *despised in the reflections of the rich*, namely, of those who posit their end in riches. For one who posits the highest good in riches must reflect that some things are more good the more they contribute to acquiring riches; hence, it is necessary that the simplicity of just men, by which the multiplication of riches is impeded, be contemptible to them. But although the very simplicity of just men is despised in the reflections of the rich, it is still not defrauded of its due end in its proper time; hence, he says *prepared for the appointed time*. He does not say this, however, as if at some time of the present life some earthly prosperity is to be rendered to just men in return for their simplicity, but he leaves undetermined what that appointed time may be and the end for which the simplicity of just men may be prepared, for the debate has not yet arrived at this point, but the end will be shown in the following parts. So, then, Job insinuates in a concealed way the reason why he is mocked by his friends, whom he calls rich, since they were positing the prosperity of this world as the end of man as if it were the reward of man's justice. Job himself, however, in his own simplicity, was not seeking this reward but another in its appointed time; therefore, he had confidence that if he invoked the Lord he would be heeded by Him.

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Furthermore, since rich men who mock the simplicity of the just man do not stop at this but proceed to contempt for God, hence is added *The tents of robbers abound*. For it follows, since some men posit their end in riches, that they seek out every way to achieve this ultimate end, either by fraud or by any other way, and so they become robbers, and when they rob they abound in riches. Now from this abundance follows contempt for God; hence is added *and boldly do they provoke God*. For someone does something boldly when he believes that what he is doing is good, for when conscience gnaws him over evil, not without fear does a man perpetrate evil, since, as is said in Wisdom 17:10: "Since wickedness is fearful, it has been given for the condemnation of all." Those who posit the ultimate end in riches, however, for this very reason estimate that all things are good through which they achieve this end. Now it is manifest that when they acquire riches by robbery they provoke God by acting contrary to His justice; hence it follows that they provoke God boldly. Or, in another sense, as a result of riches a man is raised up to pride, deeming that through them he is sufficient unto himself, and for this reason he despises God boldly, trusting in his riches according to Deuteronomy 32:15: "The beloved grew fat and frisky."

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But since Job had said that the tents of robbers who provoke God abounded, so that no one might perchance respond that such abundance is not from God, he adds *since He himself has given all things into their hands*, that is, into their power, since the power of harming someone is only from God, whereas the will to do wrong is only from oneself; therefore, insofar as they rob, they challenge God, but they have the resulting abundance from God. And he proves this point next when he adds *Ask the draft-animals, to be sure, and they will teach you, and the flying creatures of heaven, and they will indicate it to you; speak to the earth and it will respond to you, and the fish of the sea will tell you*. Now he shows what all those things may answer when questioned, adding *Who does not know that the hand of the Lord has made all these things?* The point, then, is that they all confess that they have been made by God. Now a man

questions the creatures when he considers them diligently, but they respond when questioned when, through his consideration of them, a man perceives that such great ordinance as is found in the disposition of their parts and in the order of their actions could exist in no way but by the dispensation of some superior wisdom. Now if such creatures were made by God, it is manifest that they are in God's power, just as artifacts are in the power of the artisan; therefore, he adds *In His hand*, that is, power, is *the soul of every living thing*, and not only of other animals but *even the breath of all the flesh of man*. Now if they are in His power, it is manifest that no one can have them except from Him, according to Daniel 4:14: "The Most High dominates in the kingdom of men, and He will give it to whomever He wishes." It is manifest, then, that no man can have the land and the animals about which he had spoken above, in which consist human riches, unless God has given them into his hand, and so, if robbers have abundance, God has given it into their hands. By this argument, then, is refuted the opinion of those who posited that riches are given by God for the merit of justice, since they are given by God even to robbers.

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(11) Does not the ear distinguish words and the mouth of one eating, flavor? (12) In the ancients there is wisdom, and in much time prudence. (13) With Him is wisdom and strength; He Himself has counsel and understanding. (14) If He destroys something, there is no one to rebuild it, and if He shuts a man in, there is no one to open his bonds. (15) If He will contain the waters, everything will dry up, and if He will loose them, they will overturn the land. (16) With Him is strength and wisdom; He Himself knows both the deceiver and the one who is being deceived. (17) He leads counselors to a foolish end and judges into bewilderment. (18) The belt of kings He loosens, and He girds their waists with a rope; (19) He makes priests inglorious and He throws down the aristocrats, (20) utterly changing the speech of those who speak the truth and taking away the teaching of the elders; (21) He pours out contempt upon the princes. And He relieves those who had been oppressed; (22) He reveals the depths stripped of their shadows and He leads forth into light the shade of death; (23) He multiplies the races and destroys them, and when they have been overturned, He restores them to wholeness. (24) And He changes the heart of the princes of the people of the land, and He deceives them so that in vain they march along a trackless way. (25) They will feel their way in shadows and not in light, and He will make them wander about as if drunk.

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Since Job had posited above that the things which Zophar had said about the excellence of divine greatness were manifest to everyone, he intends to show here that this information can come to men's notice through the experience of divine power and wisdom in human affairs. Hence, first he manifests how men arrive through experience to a knowledge of things, saying, *Does not the ear distinguish words*, namely, when it hears them, *and does not the mouth of one eating distinguish flavor?* Since experience is from sensation, he fittingly manifests through the judgment of the senses the power of experience, and especially through hearing and taste, since hearing, among all the senses, is most able to be trained; hence, it is most valuable to the contemplative sciences. Now taste is perceptive of the foods which are necessary to man for life; hence, through the judgment of taste he signifies the experience which one has of the elements of an active life. And on this account, from the judgment of the two senses he shows the power of experience as much in speculative as in practical pursuits when he adds *In the ancients there is wisdom*, which pertains to contemplation, namely, since the ancients heard many things; *and in much time prudence*, which pertains to action, since, namely, in much time men taste many things, useful or harmful.

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So, then, having manifested the power of experience, he adds what men can experience of God when he says *With Him is wisdom and strength; He Himself has counsel and understanding*. Here he gives to God four attributes, which are arranged in an order, for the first, indeed, is to know what is concealed, which pertains to understanding. Now the second is to find in active affairs, from the things which man understands, of course, suitable ways to some end, which pertains to counsel, just as in speculative matters also man deduces through the things which he understands reasons to know certain conclusions. Now the

also man deduces through the things which he understands reasons to know certain conclusions. Now the third attribute is for the purpose of having a right judgment about the things which man finds out, which pertains to wisdom. The fourth attribute is for the purpose of executing ably the things which someone judges ought to be done, and to this attribute pertains strength.

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Since, however, experience proceeds from sensible things which, although they are prior with respect to us, are nevertheless posterior simply and with respect to nature, †1 he therefore begins to show how men can experience divine strength, and first, indeed, in human affairs themselves. For we see that some men are totally destroyed, either by death with respect to their natural being or by every kind of rejection with respect to their civic being, although they may yet have many protectors. Hence, when they cannot be helped by men so that they do not come to destruction, it is manifest that this destruction happens from some concealed cause both divine and excelling human power, since human power cannot resist it, and this is the point of saying *If He destroys something, there is no one to rebuild it*. Likewise, we see that some men are impeded in their processes, even if they may not be totally destroyed, although they may have very many directors. Hence, it is manifest that this destruction results from some even more excellent power; hence is added *and if He shuts a man in*, by involving him in various difficulties, *there is no one to open his bonds*, that is, who can extricate him; hence, Ecclesiastes 7:14 says, "No one can correct one whom God has despised."

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Next Job shows how men can experience divine power in natural things, especially with respect to rains and droughts. Hence, he says *If He will contain the waters*, namely, so that they do not fall in rain, *everything will dry up*, namely, everything which sprouts from the earth; *and if He will loose them* in great abundance *they will overturn the land*, as happens in floods. And although it results from some natural causes that sometimes the rains cease to the point of every degree of drought, whereas sometimes they abound to the point of overturning the land, this condition is nevertheless not taken away from divine power, which also has ordained these very natural causes to their own effects; so, therefore, as if concluding from premises, he adds *With Him is strength*.

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Next, as he begins to go on to the second point, he adds *and wisdom*, as if proposing what he intends to manifest. Now it is the property of wisdom that through it one may have a right judgment about things. But he judges rightly about the truth of things who can discern how someone deviating from the truth is deceived; therefore, to show that in God there is wisdom, he adds *He himself knows both the deceiver and the one who is being deceived*, that is, by right judgment He discerns the deceptions by which someone misses the truth from the right knowledge of the truth. And indeed, Job makes this supposition from the fact that he and his friends commonly agree on the proposition that human affairs are subject to divine judgment, about which God could not judge unless He knew man's sins, among which deceptions and frauds hold a great place.

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Next Job shows through those things which appear in human affairs that with God there is counsel. Yet on this point one should consider that just as God knows the principles of the speculative sciences and their conclusions and their order with respect to one another, He nevertheless does not receive knowledge of conclusions through principles but knows all things from the first simple insight. So, too, in the practical †2 sciences He knows both the ends and those things which are for the end and the ways which are expedient to achieve certain ends; yet, He does not inquire into the ways from the ends as we do when we take counsel. Therefore, just as there is said to be reason in God inasmuch as He knows the order of principles with respect to their consequences, and yet it does not befit Him to investigate anything through the mode of reason as reason does, so counsel is said to be with Him not through the mode of inquiry but through

the mode of simple and absolute knowledge. Now the profundity of someone in counsels can depend on two things: first, of course, when by the subtlety of his counsel he leads his adversaries, even if they should seem to be trained in counsels, to that which is necessary for them—to arrive, when all their ways fail, at an unsuitable end—and with respect to this ability he says *He leads counselors to a foolish end*, namely, by impeding with the profundity of His counsel the ways which they find to avoid such an end. Now second, the profundity of someone in counsels is shown when he is able by the subtlety of his counsel to lead his adversaries to the point that they do not know what they ought to do, and with respect to this ability he adds *and judges into bewilderment*. Now he means wise judges who usually have right judgment about what is to be done. And just as it happens in speculative debates that someone is held to be an effective debator who can lead his adversary to an unsuitable position or affirm the proposition in such a way that nothing can be said to the contrary, so does God also do against His adversaries, since He both leads them to perdition by the ways which they themselves choose and affirms His own truth and works in such a way that they cannot be disturbed by His adversaries.

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And since Job had said this generally, he manifests it next by specific examples, showing how all the things which seem to excel in human affairs are led by the profundity of divine counsel *to a foolish end* and *into bewilderment*. Now in human affairs kings excel in power, and with respect to them he says *The belt*, that is, the swordbelt, *of kings He loosens*. For in the sword-belt their power is designated, according to Psalm 44:4: "Gird yourself with your sword upon your thigh, most powerful one"; *and He girds their waists with a rope* when they are dragged into captivity, in which expression is denoted the greatest failing of their power. Now priests excel with respect to the reverence in which they are held, concerning whom he adds *He makes priests inglorious*. Now men of the first rank and counselors of a city or kingdom seem to excel in their prudence in counsels, and concerning these people he adds *and He throws down the aristocrats*, that is, He deceives them. Now philosophers excel in the consideration of the truth, and of them he says *utterly changing the speech of those who speak the truth*, that is, of those who are eager to speak the truth, for sometimes God clouds their minds by taking away His grace so that they cannot find the truth, and consequently they cannot speak it, according to Romans 1:22: "In saying that they are wise they have become foolish." Old men also excel in the direction of young men, and concerning them he adds *and taking away the teaching of the elders*, either because the old men become senile or because they are totally taken away from public life, according to Isaiah 3:1: "The Lord will take from Jerusalem the judge, the prophet, the seer, and the elder." Now princes excel in the authority which they have of giving orders to others, and concerning them he adds *He pours out contempt upon the princes*, namely, so that they may be despised by those who ought to obey them.

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All these statements, then, seem to pertain to the statement "He leads counselors to a foolish end" (v. 17), but the fact that sometimes some men are promoted from the lowest state to the highest seems to pertain to the expression "and judges into bewilderment" (*ibid.*), and with respect to this situation he adds *And He relieves those who had been oppressed*, so that this verse may refer to powerless men oppressed by the power †3 of greater men who sometimes, after the oppressors have been cast down, are elevated to the state of power. With respect to those, however, who are men of no glory but who lie unnoticed in the lowest state, he adds *He reveals the depths stripped of their shadows*, that is, He leads to glory by revealing them to others men placed in the lowest state and on this account unknown, existing in the shadows, as it were. With respect to those who are deemed ignorant and foolish, however, he adds *and He leads forth into light the shade of death*. For the shade of death seems to be ignorance or stupidity, since through knowledge especially living things are distinguished from non-living things; *He leads forth*, therefore, *into light the shade of death* when He either imparts wisdom to the ignorant or demonstrates that those who were wise but whose wisdom was unknown before actually are wise. Job says this so that what was said in this way, *He relieves those who had been oppressed*, may be said as if in opposition to the statement "The belt of kings He loosens" (v. 18) but the addition *He reveals the depths stripped of their shadows* may be said

things are revealed" (v. 18), but his addition reveals the depths stripped of their shadows may be said against the statement "He makes priests inglorious" (v. 19). But the addition *and He leads forth into light the shade of death* may be said against everything which follows. Now just as he had said that such an alternation of exaltation and dejection was made by God with respect to individual persons, he shows this same thing also with respect to the whole human race, adding *He multiplies the races*, so that, namely, they may increase in the great number of men, *and destroys them*, that is, He destroys them either by wars or pestilences, *and when they have been overturned*, either by these misfortunes or by the oppression of some one or of some men who preside unfairly, *He restores them to wholeness*, that is, He leads them back to a good state.

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Having shown, then, that in God there is strength, wisdom, and counsel, finally he shows that in Him is understanding, which we have said pertains to the knowledge of concealed things, especially those things which lie hidden in the heart. Now Job shows that God knows these things by the fact that He works in the hearts of men, and so He knows the concealed things of the heart as He knows His own effects. Therefore, he says *And He changes the heart of the princes of the people of the land*, namely, with respect to their will. Hence, it is said also in Proverbs 21:1: "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord; whithersoever He wishes, He will incline it," and although God inclines the wills of all men, yet special mention is made of kings and princes because their wills have greater weight inasmuch as many men follow their wills. With respect to understanding, however, Job adds *and He deceives them*, which, indeed, is said not because He leads them into false opinion but because He takes away His light from them so that they may not know the truth, and He clouds their reason so that they cannot find suitable ways to achieve the evils which they propose. Hence follows *so that in vain they march along a trackless way*, that is, so that they proceed along unsuitable ways by which they are unable to arrive at their end. Now it happens that someone errs in his actions in two ways: in one way through ignorance, and with respect to this way he says *They will feel their way in shadows and not in light*, so that ignorance is designated by shadows and knowledge by light. Now some men feel their way through ignorance in the manner of blind men when they consider only what they sense right in front of them, by touching it, as it were; in another way, some men err in their actions because of passions by which their reason is bound up in particulars, so that it does not apply universal knowledge to their actions, and with respect to this way he adds *and He will make them wander about as if drunk*. For reason is thus bound up by passion as if by a kind of drunkenness.

Chapter Thirteen

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(1) *Look here! My eye has seen all these things and my ear has heard, and I have understood each one.* (2) *I also know things according to your knowledge and I am not inferior to you.* (3) *But yet I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to debate with God,* (4) *first showing that you are fabricators of a lie and worshippers of perverse dogmas.* (5) *And I wish you would keep quiet so that you might be thought wise!* (6) *Hear my correction, then, and listen to the judgment of my lips.* (7) *Does God need your lie so that you speak deceit in His behalf?* (8) *Are you respecting His person and striving to judge in God's behalf?* (9) *Or will it please Him from Whom nothing can be concealed? Or will He be deceived like a man by your frauds?* (10) *He Himself will charge you, since you respect His person in secret.* (11) *As soon as He*

moves Himself, He will throw you into confusion and His terror will rush upon you. (12) Your memory will be compared to ashes and your necks will be pushed back down into the mud.

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After Job had shown that the excellence of divine power could be known by experience, as if in conclusion he adds *Look here! My eye has seen all these things and my ear has heard*, as if to say: I know partly by sight and partly by hearing the previously cited effects by which divine strength and wisdom are shown,^{†1} nor has my knowledge rested in these sensible effects, but from them I have ascended to an understanding of truth. Hence, he adds *and I have understood each one*, namely, what each effect demonstrated about God or His wisdom or understanding or counsel or strength. Hence, excluding their boasting by which they seemed to be putting themselves before Job by proposing magnificent things about God, he adds *I also know things according to your knowledge*, namely, things which pertain to God's magnificence, *and I am not inferior to you*, as if I were knowing them either less or less perfectly or I were learning them only from you.

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But since Zophar had proposed divine excellence to criticize Job for undertaking to debate with God,^{†2} he adds *But yet I would speak to the Almighty*, as if to say: Although I understand from His diverse effects the excellence of divine wisdom and power no less than you do, I am nevertheless not reasonably changed by this understanding from my purpose of wishing to address God, moved to open my heart to Him Who is the examiner and judge of hearts and to seek out the truth from Him Who is the teacher of all truth. Hence, he adds *and I desire to debate with God*, not, indeed, that I wish to disapprove His judgments but to destroy your errors. If they were supposed, it would follow that there was injustice with God; hence, he adds *first showing that you are fabricators of a lie*, since they had invented the lie that Job had led an iniquitous life. Now they had arrived at this lie because they were in error concerning the faith with which God is worshipped, believing that in this life only was made the retribution of merits and punishments. Therefore, he adds *and worshippers of perverse dogmas*, for whoever deviates from the true knowledge of God worships not God but his own false dogmas. Now the expression *first showing that you* is not to be understood in this way, as if first in the order of the following teaching he is going to destroy their bad dogmas and afterwards debate with God, but that, while he intends to debate with God, it is foremost in his intention that he should destroy their dogmas.

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Now sometimes it happens that people make proposals that are plausible though false, but when they do not know how to defend them or prove them convincingly, they manifest their lack of wisdom in their speech, and this was happening to Job's friends; therefore, he adds *And I wish you would keep quiet so that you might be thought wise!*, since the very fact that you defend and prove your false dogmas unsuitably demonstrates that you are unwise. Since, then, you propose false dogmas and use unsuitable means for their manifestation, you therefore need correction, and this is what he concludes, adding *Hear my correction, then*, with which I will correct your process, *and listen to the judgment of my lips*, with which I will condemn your false dogmas.

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Now first Job intends to correct their unsuitable process, for since they were positing that rewards and punishments of good and evil works are returned in this life, it was necessary for the defense of God's justice that they adopt certain lies. For since it is manifest that certain innocent and just men are pressed by adversities in this life, it was necessary to impose charges upon those just men to defend God's justice, and so they charged Job, whom they saw afflicted, with impiety. Now whoever defends the truth with lies does not use a suitable means; therefore, Job says *Does God need your lie?*, as if to say: Is it necessary that lies be adopted to defend divine justice? For whatever cannot be defended except through lies cannot be true. Now when someone tries to lie against manifest truth, he is forced to invent some deceitful and fraudulent

NOW when someone tries to lie against manifest truth, he is forced to invent some deceitful and fraudulent ways to gloss over the lie with some fraud. So they, too, when they tried to lie against Job's justice, which was manifest to everyone, used certain deceits, namely, pointing to human frailty, which easily slips into sin, and comparing it to divine excellence, so that in this way it might be deemed more probable that Job had been iniquitous than that God was unjust; therefore, he adds *so that you speak deceit in His behalf?*, since they were speaking deceit in God's behalf, as it were, when they deceitfully tried to impose impiety on Job so that they might defend the proposition that God is just.

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Now they could say that they were not saying anything against Job deceitfully but were only saying what they thought. Job shows, then, that if this were true, although they were acquitted of deceitfulness, they were slipping into another vice, namely, into respect of persons, which excludes justice on the part of the one judging. For it is respect of persons if someone contemns another's apparent justice or denies it because of the greatness of the other disputant although he does not know his justice. If Job's friends judged him to be iniquitous, then, although they saw manifest justice in him, and they did so solely out of consideration for divine greatness, although they could not understand according to their own dogmas how Job might justly be punished by God, in their own judgment, by which they condemned Job, they seemed, as it were, to be respecting the person of God. And therefore Job adds *Are you respecting His person and striving to judge in God's behalf?* He says this expressly, since one strives to judge in another's behalf who does not know his justice and yet tries to invent any ways whatever to show that his cause is just.

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Now sometimes it happens that one person, by defending another's cause fraudulently, pleases him, even if he is just. This can happen in two ways: in one way because he does not know that his cause is unjust. Hence, it pleases him that he is defended by someone, and Job excludes this way from God, saying *Or will it please Him*, namely, God, that you are striving to judge unjustly in His behalf, since this cannot be unknown to Him, on which account he adds *from Whom nothing can be concealed?*; in the other way, when he whose cause is being defended through fraud is deceived by the frauds of the defender so that he deems his defense to be just, and Job excludes this way from God also, adding *Or will He be deceived like a man by your frauds?* So, then, it is manifest that divine goodness and justice do not need a lie for their defense, since truth can be defended without a lie. From this consideration it is also clear that if this unsuitable conclusion—that God's justice needs a lie for its defense—should follow from the positing of their dogmas, it would become manifest that the proposed dogmas are false.

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But one should consider further that he who uses a lie to show God's justice or goodness not only does a thing which God does not need but even goes against God by this very act, for since God is truth, but every lie is contrary to the truth, whoever uses a lie to show God's magnificence by this very fact acts against God. And this fact is manifestly clear according to the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:15, where he says, "Now we are found to be even false witnesses of God, since we have given testimony against God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise if the dead do not rise." To say, then, that God raised the dead, if it should not be true, is against God, although it may seem ostensive of divine power, since it is against God's truth. So, then, those who adopt a lie to defend God not only do not receive a reward as if they were pleasing to Him, but they even merit punishment as if they were acting against Him. Therefore, he adds *He Himself will charge you, since you respect His person in secret*. And he says *in secret* since, although they seemed externally to plead God's cause as if knowing God's justice, in their consciences this was what they did not know—the justice according to which Job had been punished. And so, with respect to the secrecy of their hearts, they respected God's person when they strove to defend His justice falsely.

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Now he shows how God will charge them adding *As soon as He moves Himself He will throw you into*

Now he shows how God will charge them, adding as soon as he moves himself, he will show you the confusion, as if to say: You, merely because you are not suffering adversity, debate with a tranquil mind about God's justice, but if trial should come upon you—which he calls the commotion of God in that manner of speaking in which punishment in Scripture is called the anger of God †3—your mind will be thrown into confusion, especially since it is not established on truth. And since they deemed no other things as goods or evils except these temporal things, when they guarded against sin so that no evils might come upon them they seemed to wish to serve God only because of the fear of the present evils. Therefore, he adds *and His terror will rush upon you*, as if to say: The only thing on account of which you fear God, namely, the present adversity, will come upon you, according to what is said in Proverbs 10:24: "That which the impious man fears will come upon him." And since they themselves had vainly promised Job that even after death he would remain in the memory of men, †4 he himself promises them the opposite as if mocking them, saying *Your memory will be compared to ashes*, for just as ashes last a little while after the consumption of the wood, so the fame of man passes quickly after death. Hence, to expect fame after death seems vain. They also had promised him immunity and that a certain reverence would be had toward his tomb after death, †5 but considering this promise, too, to be of no value, he promises them the opposite, saying *and your necks will be pushed back down into the mud*, designating power and dignity by their necks, which he says are to be pushed back down *into the mud*, that is, into a contemptible and weak situation.

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(13) Be quiet a while so that I may speak whatever my mind suggests to me. (14) Why do I tear my flesh with my teeth and carry my soul in my hands? (15) Even if He kills me I will hope in Him, but I will still charge my own ways in His sight, (16) and He himself will be my savior, for every hypocrite will not come into His sight. (17) Hear my speech and perceive the riddles with your ears. (18) If I am judged, I know that I will be found just. (19) Who is there to be judged with me? Let him come! Why am I being consumed in silence? (20) Two things only do not do to me, and then I will not hide from Your face: (21) Keep Your hand far from me and let Your strength not frighten me. (22) You call me and I will respond to You, or, certainly, let me speak, and You respond to me. (23) Show me what great iniquities and sins I have, my crimes and delinquencies. (24) Why do You hide Your face and think me Your enemy? (25) Against the leaf which is snatched up by the wind do You show Your power? And do You persecute a dry straw? (26) For You write bitter things against me, and do You wish to consume me for the sins of my youth? (27) Have You put my foot in the shackle and observed all my paths and considered the tracks of my feet (28)—I who am, as it were, rottenness to be consumed and a garment which is eaten by the moth?

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After Job has corrected the process of his friends, who were striving to defend divine justice with lies, he now proceeds to destroy their false dogmas under the figure of a divine debate, and first he seeks an audience as if he is about to say grand things, saying *Be quiet a while so that I may speak whatever my mind suggests to me*. He adds this injunction lest perchance they say, 'You are speaking foolishness, and therefore you are not to be listened to,' but it is not hard to listen for a little while to whatever someone may speak. Or he adds this request to designate that he is going to speak not by making up lies or inventing deceits but by saying what he has in mind.

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Now his friends had placed two charges against Job, namely, impatience and boasting, †6 both of which he excludes from himself so as not to seem to be about to speak either from anger or from pride in the following debate. Now one should consider that impatience happens as the result of an overabundance of sorrow not moderated by reason, and overabundant sorrow induces despair. Now as a result of despair it happens that a man values little the health of body and soul. To exclude impatience from himself, then, he says *Why do I tear my flesh with my teeth?*, as if to say: There is no reason why I should despair of the health of my body through impatience in the manner of those who, despairing of corporeal life, eat their

own flesh when they are oppressed by hunger; *and* again, why do I *carry my soul in my hands?*, that is, there is no reason why I should value little the health of my soul. For that which is carried in the hands is easily lost; hence, it seems that its loss is not much feared, for what someone fears to lose he carefully puts away. And he adds the reason why he ought neither to tear his flesh through impatience nor carry his soul in his hands, saying *Even if He kills me I will hope in Him*, as if to say: Do not believe that because of the temporal evils which I am suffering I have ceased to hope in God, for if my hope were in God because of temporal goods only I would be forced to despair—just as he said above, "I have despaired" [7:16]—but since my hope is in God because of spiritual goods which remain after death, even if He afflicts me to the point of killing me the hope which I have in Him will not cease. But since inordinate hope degenerates into presumption, on this account he adds *but I will still charge my ways in His sight*, as if to say: I do not hope in Him in this way, as if I must be freed by Him even if I will persevere in sin, but because He will free me if I will repudiate my sins, and this is the point of adding *and He Himself will be my savior*, namely, if my sins will be displeasing to me. Now Job shows why God saves those who charge their own ways in His sight when he adds *for every hypocrite*, that is, pretender, who, although he is iniquitous, nevertheless professes himself just and does not charge his own ways in God's presence, *will not come into His sight*. Hence, he *will not come into His sight* so that he may see God, in Whom the ultimate salvation of man consists, as he will explain at greater length below; ¶7 yet, he will come into His sight as if to be judged by Him. So, then, he has excluded from himself not only impatience but also presumption of innocence when he professes that he charges his own ways in God's presence so that in this way every calumny of his friends may cease.

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Next, as he is about to begin the debate, he first renders his listeners attentive in two ways: in one way, indeed, by the concealment of the things to be said—for when we profess that the things about to be said are difficult, the listeners are rendered more attentive—hence, he says *Hear my speech and perceive the riddles with your ears*. An obscure speech which pretends one thing on the surface and signifies another thing internally is called a riddle; in another way, however, he renders them attentive from the certitude of the truth of the things which are about to be said. Hence, he adds *If I am judged, I know that I will be found just*, a statement, of course, which he does not make about the justice of his life, since he has said above, "I will charge my own ways in his sight" (v. 15), but about the truth of the teaching concerning which they were contending as if in a trial. Now in a judgment he is found just in whose favor the verdict is brought; hence, when someone is demonstrated to be speaking the truth in a debate, he is found just as if in a judgment.

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After he has rendered his listeners attentive, then, he determines the method of his debate, for he wishes to debate as if contending with another debater, and this is the point of adding *Who is there to be judged with me?*, that is, with whom I may debate concerning the truth? *Let him come*; that is, let him come forward to debate! Now he adds the reason why he intends to debate concerning the truth, saying *Why am I being consumed in silence?* For a man is consumed little by little in the course of the present life, especially when he has been subjected to infirmity as Job had been. Now he is consumed in silence who runs through the present life in such a way that he nevertheless leaves no trace of his wisdom through teaching; therefore, lest Job suffer this fate, he has determined not to keep silent about the truth, so that, although consumed in his body after death, he might live on in his teaching. Or this determination can refer to another intention, for when someone expresses externally a pain which he suffers in his heart, his spirit is somehow soothed, but by keeping it silent internally he is more anguished by his pain and is somehow consumed by his own silence.

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Since Job had sought an opponent to debate, then, saying *Who is there to be judged with me?*, and had said above, "I desire to debate with God" (v. 3), from now on he speaks as if he has God present and is

debating with Him. Now a debate of man against God seemed inappropriate because of the excellence by which God excels man, but one should consider that truth does not vary depending on the diversity of persons; hence, when someone speaks the truth he cannot be overcome no matter with whom he debates. Now Job was certain that he was speaking the truth inspired in him by God through the gift of faith and wisdom; hence, confident of the truth, he was asking that he not be pressed by the divine strength, neither through the evils presently inflicted nor through fear of others to be inflicted, and this is the point of saying *Two things only do not do to me, and then I will not hide from Your face*, as if to say: I will not fear to debate with You. For those in fear usually hide from the face of those whom they fear. Now he shows what those two things are, adding *Keep your hand far from me*, that is, do not strike me with the present scourges, *and let Your strength not frighten me* with respect to future scourges. For in these two ways a man can be impeded from being able to defend by debating even the truth which he most certainly knows, when he is either molested in the body or concerned in the soul by fear or some other passion.

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Now a debate takes place between two persons, namely, one putting up a question and the other responding to it. Beginning the debate with God, then, he gives Him the option of choosing either role, either of putting up the question or of responding; hence, he says *You call me and I will respond to You*, as if to say: You put up a question and I will respond to it, *or certainly, let me speak*, putting up a question, *and You respond to me*. Now he says this figuratively, showing that he is prepared for either part, either to defend the truth which he professes or to impugn what might be said against the truth. But first he gives God the part of putting up the question, saying *Show me what great iniquities and sins I have, my crimes and delinquencies*. And here one should consider that Job's friends seemed to debate against Job as if pleading God's cause, according to what he said above: "Are you respecting His person and striving to judge in God's behalf?" (v. 8) Now Job's friends were putting up against him the charge that he had been punished for his sins. He seeks, then, that this be objected to him by God, saying *Show me what great iniquities and sins I have, my crimes and delinquencies*, as if to say: If it is so that You are afflicting me for my sins, as my friends, trying to speak in Your behalf, are calumniating, I ask You to show for what sins You are afflicting me so gravely. Hence, he does not say 'what iniquities I have' but *what great iniquities*, since, if there is no other reason for the present adversities than the sins of men, as Job's friends opined, it is necessary that those sins which are punished with the greatest afflictions be the greatest sins. Now some sins are sins of commission, which are done against negative precepts of the law; others are sins of omission, in which affirmative precepts are neglected. Now some offense is committed against a precept of the law in three ways: **1** in one way, because it is something harmful to a neighbor, such as theft, homicide, and sins of this kind, which are properly called *iniquities* since they are contrary to the equity of justice which is due to another person; in another way, according to which man sins against himself by the disorder of his own act, as appears especially in sins of gluttony and extravagance, and these are called *sins*, as kinds of disorders of man; in a third way, some sins are committed directly against God, such as blasphemies, sacrilege, and sins of this kind, and these, because of their gravity, are called *crimes*. Omissions, however, are properly called *delinquencies*.

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Then, as if the one to whom he had given the part of putting up the question were keeping silent, Job himself assumes the part of objecting the question and inquires about the reasons for his punishment. And first, since someone could say that God punished him as an enemy, he excludes this reason when he says *Why do You hide Your face and think me Your enemy?* For it seems iniquitous that someone should, without reason, think another man an enemy to him. Now there cannot be a suitable reason for enmity except an offense. It is manifest, then, that God thinks a man an enemy to Him when his sins are manifested. But Job had asked that his sins be shown to him, and they had not been shown to him; therefore, the reason why God was unfriendly to him was not apparent, and this is what he insinuates, saying *Why do You hide Your face?*, as if he were hating Job secretly for a concealed reason. For the face of a man who hates is open when he is not concealing the reason for his hatred.

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Second, since someone could say that God punished him to show His power in his case, he also excludes this reason when he says *Against the leaf which is snatched up by the wind do You show Your power?* For it is not fitting that someone very strong should wish to show his power in the case of something very weak. Now the human condition is compared to a leaf which is snatched up by the wind, since man is both frail in himself and weak as a leaf, which easily falls, and is led along by the passage of time and the variety of fortune no less than a leaf by the wind. Hence, it does not seem to be fittingly said that God punishes any man for the sole purpose of showing His own power in the man's case.

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Third, since someone could say that God punished him because of sins which he committed in his youth, he also excludes this reason, saying *And do You persecute a dry straw? For You write bitter things against me, and do You wish to consume me for the sins of my youth?* For a man in his youth is compared to green grass, but in his old age he is compared to a dry straw, as it were. To punish a man in old age for the sins of his youth, then, seems the same thing as if someone were to rage against a straw for a defect of the green grass. But one should consider that in this inquiry he does not withdraw from this opinion, that the adversities of man are brought on as a result of divine judgment, and to signify this opinion he says *You write bitter things against me*, as if bitter things, that is, men's adversities, proceed from the writing of divine opinion.

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Fourth, since someone could say that although Job has not committed grave sins, he has still committed some sins, without which the present life is not lived, and for these he has been punished in this way, he also excludes this reason, saying *Have You put my foot in the shackle and observed all my paths and considered the tracks of my feet—I who am, as it were, rottenness to be consumed and a garment which is eaten by the moth?* And here one should consider that those who are put in a prison shackle are bound in such a way that they cannot get away from the shackle. Now just as a man's foot is constrained by the shackle, so man's process is constrained by the law of divine justice, from which it is not permitted to turn away, and this is the point of saying *Have You put my foot in the shackle?* Now it pertains to divine justice that it evaluate the deeds of men, not only what each one does but also with what spirit or with what end; therefore, he says *Have You observed all my paths*, with respect to deeds, *and considered the tracks of my feet*, with respect to the affection of the doer or even with respect to any circumstances of the work. Now it seems unreasonable that God should have such great diligence about the acts of men if they totally cease to be through the death of the body—which, indeed, is sometimes natural, but sometimes violent; hence, he adds a remark about each, saying—*I who am, as it were, rottenness to be consumed* with respect to natural death, *and a garment which is eaten by the moth* with respect to violent death, as if to say: If, as my friends suspect, there is no other life but the present life which man loses either by way of rottenness or by way of being cut down, it would seem unreasonable that God would have a care for the acts of men with such great strictness that He would punish man even for the smallest sins and negligence.

Chapter Fourteen

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(1) Man born of woman lives a brief time and is filled with many miseries. (2) He grows up like a flower and is trodden down and flees like a shadow and never remains in the same state. (3) And You consider it worthy to open Your eyes over such a one and to lead him with You into judgment. (4) Who can make clean one conceived of unclean seed? Are you not the only one? †1

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And since that which was said last offers a great way to the inquiry of truth, he is more insistent on manifesting this way, and what he had said of himself as an individual he applies generally to the whole human race. And here first he explains the frailty of the human condition: with respect to his origin when he says *Man born of woman*, as if from a frail thing; with respect to his duration when he says *lives a brief time*; and with respect to his condition when he says *is filled with many miseries*, where he seems to explain, as it were, what he had said above: "Against the leaf which is snatched up by the wind do You show Your power?" [13:25]

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Second, he excludes the things of which a man could boast, of which the first is the beauty of the body with which a man is endowed in his youth. But that boast is nothing, since it passes swiftly in the manner of a flower; hence, he says *He grows up like a flower and is trodden down*, namely, easily; second is fame, which does not last a long time; hence, he says *and flees like a shadow*, for no trace or memory of a passing shadow remains; third is the might and the power with which someone tries to preserve himself and his property, and against this boast he says *and never remains in the same state*. And these three boasts can refer to the three statements above, for a man born of woman grows up like a flower and is quickly trodden down, but he lives so short a time that he flees like a shadow of which no trace remains. But he is filled with many miseries in such a way that if he should at one time or another possess prosperity and joy, yet he would never remain in the same state.

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Third, he wonders at the diligence of divine providence with respect to man, for it seems wonderful that God has such great care for so frail and despised a thing. Now although all things are under divine providence, yet divine concern with respect to man is especially apparent in three areas: first, with respect to the fact that God has given man laws and precepts for living, and he touches this area when he says *And You consider it worthy to open Your eyes over such a one*, in that manner of speaking in which someone is said to open his eyes over someone when he directs him and considers his ways; second, with respect to the fact that God rewards man for good deeds and punishes him for evil, and he touches this area when he says *and to lead him with You into judgment*; third, with respect to the fact that God furnishes him with virtues with which he preserves himself clean against the foulness of sin, and he touches this area when he says *Who can make clean one conceived of unclean seed?* The seed of man is indeed unclean, not according to nature but according to the infection of concupiscence. Yet, a man conceived from this unclean seed is sometimes found to be clean through virtue. Now just as the power to make warm that which is cold belongs to that which is warm in itself, so the power to make clean that which is unclean belongs to one who is clean in himself; therefore, he adds *Are You not the only one*, namely, clean truly and in Yourself? For purity and cleanness are found perfectly in God alone, in Whom there can be neither potentiality nor any defect; hence, whatever is clean or pure in any way has its cleanness and purity from God.

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(5) Man's days are brief; the number of his months is with You; You have established his limits, which will not be able to be passed. (6) Withdraw a little while from him so that he may rest until his wished-for day may come, even as the hired-man's.

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Job had wondered at the divine esteem for men, since man is still of such frail and wretched condition if the state of the present life is considered, but this wonder would cease if it were considered that after this life another life is reserved for man in which he remains forever. From this point on, then, he tries to show this fact. He premises, then, as if supposing what he intends to show, the brevity of the present life when he says *Man's days are brief*, and the fact that the very measure of human life is determined by God when he says *the number of his months is with You*, just as we say that the number of those things whose number is established by us is with us. And again he premises the immutability of divine determination when he says *You have established his limits which will not be able to be passed*, for the divine disposition is not deceived; hence, for man to live either longer or shorter than the divine disposition has disposed is impossible, although it may be contingent that this or that man die now or before if he should be considered in himself. Now, too, the limits of human life have been predetermined according to some corporeal causes—for example, according to constitution or something of this kind—beyond which man's life cannot be extended, although it could fail before from some accidental cause. But man's life cannot surpass the limits predetermined according to divine providence, under which all things fall either toward the more or toward the less.

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Job also premises the expectation of a second life when he says *Withdraw a little while from him so that he may rest until his wished-for day may come, even as the hired-man's*. And here one should consider that, just as the sun is the cause of the day, so God is the author of life. Now when the sun withdraws, day ends and night comes. By God's withdrawal, then, Job understands the termination of the present life, which man has from God. Now the present life is filled with many trials, for on this account was it said of man that he "is filled with many miseries" (v. 1); and since rest seems to be the end of labor, he calls death rest. Therefore, he says *Withdraw a little while from him so that he may rest*, that is, take away Your power by which You make man live so that he may die. But man's death is not forever; he will be restored again to immortal life. The state of human death, then, however long a time resurrection is deferred, is brief in comparison to the state of future immortality. Hence, he says expressly *a little while*, for from other things which perish not to return God withdraws not a little while but for eternity. But from men, who perish in such a way that they may rise again, he withdraws for a moderate time. Now it was said above that the life of man on earth is like the day of the hiredman desiring the time of payment [7:1]; the time of man's retribution, however, is not in this life, as Job's friends opined, but in that life to which man is restored by resurrection. Therefore, he says *so that he may rest*, that is, so that he may die, yet not forever but *until his wished-for day may come*, just as the hired-man's day on which he receives his pay is wished-for, and here for the first time Job has disclosed his intention, for he does not deny that the present adversities are punishments in the sense that God does not remunerate or punish men's acts, but he maintains that the time of retribution is properly in another life.

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(7) A tree has hope if it is cut off; it grows green again and its branches sprout. (8) If its root has grown old in the earth and its trunk has died in the dust, (9) at the mere whiff of water it will sprout and will produce foliage as when it was first planted. (10) But when a man has died, been stripped and consumed, where, I ask, is he? (11) As if the waters should withdraw from the sea and the river, emptied, should dry up, (12) so man, when he has fallen asleep, will not rise again; until heaven is worn away, he will not awake, nor will he rise up from his sleep.

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Having posited his opinion, Job proceeds here to its manifestation, and first he shows that man, as things appear in this life, is in a worse condition than certain even of the lowest creatures which are restored after

death, as especially appears in the case of trees. Now the life of a tree, just as the life of man, fails in two ways, namely, by violence and by nature. With respect to the violent failure of the tree, then, he says *A tree has hope if it is cut off*, that is, a natural aptitude to be restored again, since *it grows green again* on its own if it should be planted; *and its branches sprout*, in which it is shown to recover a perfect life as before. Now with respect to the natural failure of a tree he adds *If its root has grown old in the earth*, since it is not able to draw in nourishment because of the failure of its natural power, and so, consequently, *its trunk has died in the dust*, that is, it has been reduced through rot to dust in some part, *at the mere whiff of water it will sprout*, that is, when rain comes, as a result of the rottenness of the wood, which has fertilizing power, *and will produce foliage*, namely, of leafy branches, *as when it was first planted*. Now this situation is not found in man in the course of the present life; hence, he adds *But when a man has died, been stripped and consumed, where, I ask, is he?* And Job posits three things which man loses by degrees, for first the soul is separated from the body, and to this separation pertains the expression *when a man has died*; second, he loses the coverings and decorations of the body, which remain to a man for some time after death, but afterwards he is stripped even of these, and to this separation pertains the expression *stripped*; at last, even the very structure of the body is loosened, and to this separation pertains the expression *and consumed*. When these separations have been completed, no remains of man appear to the senses; hence, among those who believe that nothing exists except the sensible and corporeal, man seems totally reduced to nothingness. Expressing the doubt of these men, then, he says *where, I ask, is he?*

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Now one should consider that those things which do not perish totally seem to be able to be restored, as has been said of cut or aging wood (vv. 7-9), but it seems impossible that those things of which nothing remains are again restored, as if the water of the sea or of a river were totally dried up. Now man, as has already been said, †2 seems to be consumed by death in such a way that nothing remains of him; hence, according to this reasoning it appears that it is impossible that he be restored again to life, and this is the point of adding *As if the waters should withdraw from the sea and the river, emptied, should dry up, so man, when he has fallen asleep*, that is, when he has died, *will not rise again* from death. Now it seems to be equally impossible both that the incorruptible be corrupted and that, having been totally corrupted, it be restored again. Now heaven is incorruptible, †3 and therefore he adds *until heaven is worn away, he will not awake*, coming back to life, as it were, *nor will he rise up from his sleep* to perform the works of life, as if to say: Just as it is impossible for heaven to be worn away, that is, to be corrupted, so it is impossible that a dead man rise again. And this, indeed, as has been said, †4 is said on the supposition that nothing remains of man after death, according to what was said: "Where, I ask, is he?" (v. 10) Or this passage can refer to the opinion of those who posited that the whole corporeal universe must be corrupted and restored again, and, of course, they posited that in this restoration the same men would return, †5 so that the sense may be: While this world lasts, man will not rise again from the dead. Now the Catholic faith posits not that the substance of the world but that the state of this world which now exists will perish, according to the text of I Corinthians 7:31: "The shape of this world is passing." This changing of the world according to its shape, then, can be understood here by the wearing away of heaven, for a common resurrection of the dead at the end of the world is expected, according to the text of John 11:24: "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

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(13) Who would grant me that You would protect me in hell and hide me until Your fury passes and You appoint a time for me in which You may remember me? (14) Do You think that a man who has died will live again? Every day on which I now campaign I wait for my relief to come. (15) You will call me and I will respond to You; to the work of Your hands You will stretch forth Your right hand. (16) Indeed, You have counted my steps, but spare my sins. (17) You have, as it were, sealed my delinquencies in a sack, but You have cared for my iniquity.

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After Job has shown what can be conjectured about the resurrection of man from things which appear to the senses, he posits here his own opinion about resurrection. Now it would be very horrendous and miserable if man, through death, were to fail in such a way that he would never be restored to life, since every being naturally desires to be. †6 Hence, Job shows his desire concerning future resurrection, saying *Who would grant me that even after death You would protect me in hell*, that is, that You would hold me in the special care with which You protect men, *until Your fury*, that is, the time of death, *passes*—since, as was said above, †7 man's death happens by taking away the divine operation preserving his life. Hence, he had said, "Withdraw a little while from him" (v. 6), for God seems to be angry with a man when he takes away from him the benefit of life, especially since we believe that death has come from the sin of the first man. Now Job explains how he wishes to be protected even in hell, adding *and You appoint a time for me in which You may remember me?* For God seems to have forgotten man when He takes away from him the benefit of life; He remembers him, then, when He leads him back to life. To appoint a time in which God may remember a man who has died, then, is nothing else than to appoint a time for resurrection. And he very fittingly calls this protection, for when an artisan, having dismantled his artifact, does not intend to restore the building, such as a house or something of this kind, from the same material again, he seems to take no care of the material of the dismantled building, but when he does intend to restore the building from it he guards it diligently so that it does not perish. This guardianship, then, he calls protection.

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After he has expressed his desire concerning rising again, then, since desires sometimes are for even impossible things, next he puts under question whether that which he has desired will be at some future time; hence, he adds *Do you think that a man who has died will live again?* And he shows what he himself feels about this matter, saying *Every day on which I now campaign I wait for my relief to come*. And here one should consider that above he had compared the life of man on earth to a military campaign and to the days of a hired-man, since both soldiers and hired-men expect something after their present state; †8 therefore, just as above he expressed the state of resurrection in terms of the wished-for day of a hired-man, †9 so now, too, he shows the same thing under the metaphor of the soldier. And one should note that he does not expect the wished-for end in any part of the time of this life, since he assigns all the days of this life to the state of a military campaign, saying *Every day on which I now campaign*. One should note likewise that he does not expect another life similar to this one, since then that life also would be a military campaign, but he does expect a life in which he would not campaign but triumph and reign; therefore, he says *I wait for my relief to come*, as if to say: This whole life long I campaign, subject to change, labors, and anguish, but I expect to be relieved to the state of the other life which is without labor and anguish. And of this relief the Apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 15:51: "We will all indeed rise again, but we will not all be relieved."

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And lest anyone believe that man is relieved into the state of the other life by natural power, he excludes this possibility, adding *You will call me and I will respond to You*, as if to say: The future relief will proceed from the power of Your voice or from Your command, according to the text of John 5:28: "All who are in tombs will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear it will live." For to call pertains to command, but to respond pertains to obedience, by which the creature obeys the Creator. But since the dead will not only rise again to life at God's command but will be relieved into a certain higher state, and this will happen through divine power, he adds *to the work of Your hands You will stretch forth Your right hand*, as if to say: The man who rises again will not be the work of nature but the work of Your power, to which work, indeed, You will stretch forth Your helping right hand when, by the aid of Your grace, he will be exalted into the glory of newness. Or, what he says, *You will call me and I will respond to You*, can refer to the restoration of the body, because he adds *to the work of Your hands You will stretch forth Your right hand*, to the soul which naturally seeks to be united to its body, to which God will stretch forth His helping right hand when the soul will achieve through divine power what it is not able to achieve by its own power.

by its own power.

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Having posited his opinion on the future resurrection of the dead, then, Job returns to that which he had wondered at above—that God considers so solicitously the works of men—when he said "Have you observed all my paths and considered the tracks of my feet?" [13:27]; hence, he adds *Indeed, You have counted my steps*, as if to say: It is no wonder now if You examine the deeds of men so diligently, since You are reserving him for another life. Now one should consider that divine providence is attentive to human acts in two ways: first, in that it examines and evaluates them, which is signified in what Job says: *Indeed, You have counted my steps*, for we count those things for which we have diligence. And lest it seem to anyone to be a mark of great severity that God would examine frail man's deeds with such great diligence, next Job intimates God's proneness to spare when he says *but spare my sins*, as if to say: Although You may count them, I nevertheless retain this hope that You may spare them. Second, however, divine providence is attentive to human acts in that it preserves in its memory the good or evil deeds of men to pay back good or evil for them; hence, he adds *You have, as it were, sealed my delinquencies in a sack*, for the things which are sealed in a sack are diligently preserved. And lest that sealing exclude divine mercy, he adds *but You have cared for my iniquity*, as if to say: You reserve punishment for sins in such a way that You nevertheless take care of delinquencies through penance.

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(18) The falling mountain vanishes and the rock is transferred from its place; (19) waters hollow out stones and by flood-waters little by little the earth is consumed. And will You therefore destroy men similarly? (20) Did You make him mighty for a little while so that he might pass away forever? Will You change his face and send him away? (21) Whether his children will be noble or ignoble, he will not understand. (22) Yet his flesh will suffer pain while he lives and his soul will grieve over him.

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After Job has posited his opinion about future resurrection, he fortifies it here with plausible reasons, and the first reason is taken from a comparison of man to inferior creatures, which are totally consumed without hope of restoration. For everything which is generated is subject to corruption; †10 hence, even mountains, although they may seem very firm, are nevertheless dissolved by certain causes after the passage of some periods of time, and this is the point of saying *The falling mountain vanishes*. Rocks, too, although they may seem very strong, are nevertheless hewn out, either by violence or from some natural cause, and this is the point of what follows: *and the rock is transferred from its place*. Stones, too, although they may seem very hard, are nevertheless hollowed out by water, and this is the point of adding *waters hollow out stones*. The earth, too, although it may seem very stable, is nevertheless changed little by little from its disposition, and this is the point of adding *and by flood-waters little by little the earth is consumed*. Now it would be unfitting if the reason for the corruption of man and of the things just mentioned were the same; therefore he concludes, as if it were unfitting, *and will You therefore destroy men similarly?*, as if to say: It is not fitting that men should be corrupted similarly to the other corporeal creatures, for the creatures just mentioned are totally corrupted; hence, they are not restored the same in number. Man, however, although he may be corrupted according to the body, nevertheless remains incorruptible according to the soul, which transcends the whole class of corporeal beings, so that in that way the hope of restoration remains.

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Next Job introduces reasons for the same proposition taken from the properties of man. Now man excels all the inferior creatures in two properties, one of which is operative power, for man is master of his own act through free will, a property which belongs to no other corporeal creature, and for this reason man is more powerful than any other corporeal creature; hence, he even uses the other creatures for his own sake. Now the other property in which he excels is intellective knowledge, and although it is in the mind, some

indication of it nevertheless appears in the body, especially in the face, which man has very different from the other animals. As a result of these two properties it appears that man is not corrupted in such a way as the others are so that they do not exist forever. With respect to the first of these properties, then, he says *Did You make him mighty for a little while so that he might pass away forever?*, as if to say: It is not fitting that You have given such great might to man for a short time, in such a way that he would not exist forever afterward, for it would seem foolish if someone were to make a very strong instrument in order to use it for a short time and afterwards throw it away altogether. Now the power of each corporeal creature is determined for finite effects, but the power of free will is directed toward infinite actions. Hence, this very fact attests to the power of the soul to last into infinity. Now with respect to the second property, namely, to understanding, he says *Will You change his face and send him away?*, as if to say: It is not fitting that You change his face, that is, differentiate him from other animals, and yet dismiss him from the state of life forever, never to return, like the other animals. Now by 'face' intellective knowledge is usually meant, because it is the property of a rational creature. †11 Now intellectual knowledge can only fit an incorruptible substance, as is proved by the philosophers. †12

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Now someone could say that although man does not return to life after death he still does not pass away forever, inasmuch as he lives, in a manner of speaking, in his children—a thought with which Bildad's words also resounded when he said above, "This is the joy of that way, that others sprout again from the earth" [8:19]. But Job excludes this response, adding *Whether his children will be noble or ignoble, he will not understand*, as if to say: Man grasps the eternal good through understanding; hence, he also naturally desires it. Now a good which consists in the succession of children cannot satisfy the intellectual appetite if a man should be totally consumed by death so that he does not exist forever, since the intellectual appetite does not rest except in the understanding of a good. Now man does not understand the good which consists in the succession of children, neither while he lives nor after death, if he totally ceases to be through death. The intellective appetite of man, then, does not tend toward the eternity of this good but toward the good or evil which he has in himself; hence, he adds *Yet his flesh will suffer pain while he lives and his soul will grieve over him*, and here he distinguishes a double pain: one of the flesh in the apprehension of sense, but the other of the soul from the apprehension of the intellect or imagination, which is properly called sorrow and here is called grief. †13

Chapter Fifteen

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(1) Now Eliphaz the Themanite said in response: (2) Will a wise man respond as if speaking into the wind and fill his stomach with passion? (3) You charge with words one who is not your equal, and you speak what is not expedient for you. (4) As much as you can you have rid yourself of fear and you have taken prayer from God's presence. (5) For your iniquity has taught your mouth, and you imitate the language of blasphemers. (6) Your mouth will condemn you, not I, and your lips will respond for you. (7) Were you born the first man and formed before all the hills? (8) Have you heard God's counsel, and will His wisdom be inferior to you? (9) What do you know which we do not? What do you understand which we do not? (10) Both the elders and the ancients are much older among us than your fathers. (11) Is it a grand thing that God console you? But your depraved words prohibit this. (12) Why does your heart lift you up,

and why do you have astonished eyes, as if pondering great things? (13) Why does your spirit swell against God, so that you utter from your mouth such speeches?

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Having heard Job's words, Eliphaz does not respond to the profundity of his opinions but strives to reproach by trickery some words uttered by Job, considering them according to the surface meaning of the words themselves and not according to the profundity of their understanding. And first, indeed, he reproaches what Job had said in the beginning of his speech: "I have a heart, too, just as you do, nor am I inferior to you" [12:3], and in this verse, indeed, he scores him on two counts: first, for empty boasting, since he commends himself, and this is the point of saying *Will a wise man respond as if speaking into the wind*, for one who composes his words to gain glory seems to speak into the wind; second, for anger, because he had begun to speak by chiding them when he had said, "Are you alone men, then" [12:2], and so on; therefore, he adds *and fill his stomach with passion*, that is, fill his spirit with anger?

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Next he reproaches him for having said "I desire to debate with God" [13:3], and again, "Two things only do not do to me and then I will not hide from Your face" [13:20], and so on, and in this reproach he scores him on many counts: first, indeed, for pride, since he contends against one greater than himself, and this is the point of saying *You charge with your words one who is not your equal*; second, for foolishness, since Eliphaz deemed such a debate harmful; hence, he adds *and you speak what is not expedient for you*, namely, by debating with God. And he shows why it is not expedient to debate with Him on the grounds that such a debate seems to exclude two very necessary considerations, of which the first is fear of God, for one who fears someone does not presume to contend with him. Hence, Job had also said above, "Let your strength not frighten me" [13:21]; therefore, Eliphaz adds here *As much as you can you have rid yourself of fear*, since, namely, you have tried to exclude from yourself the fear of God. The second consideration is prayer to God, for it is not the same thing to contend with someone as to ask him. Therefore, he adds *and you have taken*, that is, taken away, *prayer from God's presence*, contrary to what Eliphaz had said above: "Therefore I will ward off the Lord" [5:8]. Now Job had debated with God not out of pride but out of confidence in the truth, but Eliphaz rashly judged that this action proceeded from iniquity. Hence, he adds *For your iniquity has taught your mouth*, and it is apparent from the effect that you blaspheme; hence follows *and you imitate the language of blasphemers*. For a blasphemer is one who denies God's justice, and one who debates with God about His justice seems to imitate the language of the blasphemer, for to debate about something seems to be characteristic of one who has doubts about it, and doubting is close to denying.

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Eliphaz, then, wishing to speak against Job's debate, first says that Job has spoken so manifestly badly that he does not need another reproacher; his very words indicate his malice. This is the point of saying *Your mouth will condemn you, not I, and your lips will respond for you*, as if to say: Your words need no other respondent; they destroy themselves. Yet he shows in many ways that the debate previously mentioned was not fitting, first, indeed, by a comparison of Job to all creatures, for if any creature could contend with God, this task would especially suit the first and most excellent creature, a condition which did not suit Job. Hence, Eliphaz says *Were you born the first man and formed before all the hills* so that for this reason, namely, it suits you to debate with God for the whole human race or for all of creation? Second, he shows it by a comparison of Job to God, for one can debate fittingly with someone about his deeds who knows the reasoning by which the one with whom he is debating works, which, indeed, he can know in two ways: in one way by learning it from him, in the other way by making a judgment on the deeds of the other through superior wisdom. But neither of these ways suits Job in the comparison of man to God, and this is the point of saying *Have you heard God's counsel* with respect to the first way, *and will His wisdom be inferior to you* with respect to the second, so that in this way you may be able to debate with God? Third, he shows it by a comparison to other men, than whom Job appears to be no more

knowledgeable so that he may presume to debate with God on the strength of a trust in greater knowledge. Hence, he says *What do you know*, namely, through faith or revelation, *which we do not?* *What do you understand*, through natural knowledge, *which we do not?* But since Job could boast of knowledge received from others, he adds *Both the elders*, namely, in the dignity of their knowledge and life, *and the ancients in time are much older among us than your fathers*, that is, than your teachers from whom you received your knowledge, or, literally, than your ancestors. Now by greater age he wishes to be understood greater wisdom, since through the experience of a long time a person is rendered wiser. †1 Fourth, on the part of Job himself he shows that his debate with God has been unfitting; first, indeed, since it was harmful to him, explaining what he had said above: "You speak what is not expedient for you" (v. 3). Hence, he says *Is it a grand thing that God console you?*, as if to say: It is easy for God to lead you back to a state of prosperity "since He Himself both wounds and heals" [5:18], as he had said above, *But your depraved words*, by which you provoke more the anger of God against you, *prohibit this*. Second, he shows that the debate was vain and proud, as if explaining what he had said above: "Will a wise man respond as if speaking into the wind" (v. 2)? Hence, he adds *Why does your heart lift you up*, namely, through pride, so that you presume so much on your wisdom? And he shows the sign of pride, adding *and why do you have astonished eyes, as if pondering great things?* For when someone considers some great and wonderful things he is led into a stupor, and hence it happens that he has astonished eyes. Third, he shows that his debate was presumptuous and impious, explaining what he had said above: "You charge with words one who is not your equal" (v. 3). Hence, he adds *Why does your spirit swell against God, so that you utter from your mouth such speeches?*, with which, namely, you provoke God to a debate?

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(14) What is man that he may be spotless and that he may appear just though born of a woman? (15) Look! Among His holy ones not one is immutable and the heavens are not clean in His sight. (16) How much more abominable and useless is man who drinks iniquity like water?

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After Eliphaz has reproached Job because he had challenged God to debate, an action which seemed to pertain to a presumption of wisdom, he now reproaches him for a presumption of justice, since he had said, "If I am judged, I know that I will be found just" [13:18]. Eliphaz, indeed, impugns this statement, first because of the frailty of the human condition, through which man avoids sin with difficulty, and hence he says *What is man that he may be spotless?*, and even does good works with difficulty; hence, he adds *and that he may appear just though born of a woman?* since, as is said in Proverbs 15:5, "In abundant justice is the greatest virtue," a statement which does not seem to suit one who has his origin from the lowliest thing. Second, he impugns the same statement on the basis of a comparison to the more sublime creatures; hence, he adds *Look! Among His holy ones*, that is, the angels, *not one is immutable*, namely, by his own nature, but only by the gift of divine grace, so that he cannot be turned aside toward sin; *and the heavens*, which hold the highest place of purity among bodies, *are not clean in His sight*, that is, by comparison to Him, since they are material, corporeal, and changeable. Third, he impugns the same statement on the basis of the personal condition of Job himself, as if concluding from the major: †2 *How much more abominable*, through sin, *and useless*, through the failure of justice, *is man who drinks iniquity like water*, that is, who commits iniquity as if it were nothing and without any observation. For one who drinks wine with some observation drinks so as not to become inebriated, an outcome which is not observed in drinking water. He scores Job on this point, then—that he easily inclined toward sin just as someone easily and readily is disposed to drink water.

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(17) I will show you; listen to me; what I have seen I will tell you: (18) Wise men acknowledge and do not hide their fathers, (19) to whom alone has been given the land, and the alien will not pass through them. (20) All his days the impious man is proud, and the number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain. (21) The sound of a woman is chosen in his own house, and although she may be a prostitute, he will not forsake her. (22) The

the sound of terror is always in his ears, and although there may be peace, he suspects treachery. (22) He does not believe that he can return from the darkness to the light, expecting a sword at every hand. (23) When he stirs himself to look for bread he knows that the day of darkness has been prepared in his hand. (24) Trial will frighten him and distress will wall him in like a king who prepares for battle. (25) For he has stretched his hand against God and against the Almighty he has strengthened himself. (26) He has run against him with head erect and he is furnished with a fat neck. (27) Grossness has covered his face and from his flanks the fat hangs down.

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After Eliphaz has reproached Job because he had challenged God to a debate and because he was presuming on his justice, he now reproaches him about the words which he had used in debating, especially about "Do You think me Your enemy? Against the leaf which is snatched up by the wind do You show Your power?" [13:24], and "Have You put my foot in the shackle?" [13:27], and so on. And first he excites attention, saying *I will show you*, namely, what you were asking of God; *listen to me* attentively. Now he manifests the source from which he can show it, adding *what I have seen*, namely, finding it out from my own understanding, *I will tell you*, and again, I will not blush to say what I have heard from others, introducing them as an authority, that *Wise men acknowledge and do not hide their fathers*, from whom, namely, they have received their wisdom, for this is the mark of foolish and proud men, that what they have received from others they ascribe to themselves. And he shows on the strength of their dignity why they ought not to be hidden when he adds *to whom alone has been given the land*, and this phrase can refer indifferently and in the same sense either to the wise or to their fathers, whom he wishes to be understood as also wise. For the land is said to have been given to the wise men alone since they are the masters of earthly goods, using them for their own good, whereas foolish men use them for their own harm, according to the Book of Wisdom 14:11: "Creatures were made as a snare for the feet of foolish men." And again, to show the dignity of the same people he adds *and the alien will not pass through them*, namely, since those who are aliens from wisdom cannot be counted in the fellowship of wise men; or, since wise men are not supplied by foreigners. For an alien is said to pass through those who are conquered by and subjected to some alien.

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After Eliphaz has rendered his listener attentive, then, he now tries to respond against the words of the debating Job, from which he has understood two things: first, indeed, that Job was living in anguish and fear, as if God were pursuing him and setting ambushes for him, since he had said, "Do you think me your enemy?" [13:24] and "Have you observed all my paths" [13:27]. Second, he believed that Job was in doubt about his being consumed, since he had said, "You write bitter things against me, and do You wish to consume me for the sins of my youth?" [13:26]. He speaks first, then, against the first of Job's apprehensions and second against the second, in that statement "He will dwell in desolate cities" (v. 28). He shows first, then, the root from which the suspicion mentioned before arises in Job's heart—that it arises from his impiety and his will to do harm. Hence, he says *All his days the impious man is proud*, that is, he exalts himself against God and to the harm of men. Now he calls not the days of his life but the days of power or prosperity his days. But since the will to do harm belongs to man from himself whereas the power is from God, [13](#) he cannot know for how long the power of implementing his impious will is given to him. Hence is added *and the number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain*. And from that uncertainty follows suspicion and fear, which he describes next when he says *The sound of terror is always in his ears*, namely, since at any rumor whatsoever he fears that some plot is being hatched against him, as if confident of no one, and on this account he adds *and although there may be peace he suspects treachery*, that is, although no one may be undertaking any plot against him, he is nevertheless afraid of everyone because of his own impious will, by which he would be ready to harm anybody.

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Now when anyone has fears about some of his enemies he can hope for liberation, even if he should

succumb at the time, through the help of friends. He who is confident of no one, however, but has fears about everyone cannot hope that he may be relieved after being oppressed, and therefore he adds *He does not believe that he can return from the darkness to the light*, that is, from the state of adversity to the state of prosperity, *expecting a sword at every hand*, that is, seeing enemies threatening him from every direction. And he says this especially because Job had said, "I am, as it were, rottenness to be consumed and a garment which is eaten by the moth" [13:28], and by this remark Eliphaz understood that Job despaired of his liberation. Now sometimes it happens that some tyrant, even if he should fear all strangers, nevertheless has some familiars and household with whom he mingles securely, but when his malice is superabundant he fears even his household with whom he lives. Hence follows the statement *When he stirs himself to look for bread, he knows that the day of darkness*, that is, of death, *has been prepared in his hand*, as if to say: Not only does he suspect treachery in things done outside the household, in which he has the necessity of mingling with strangers, but also in things done in the household, eating and drinking and things of this kind, believing that death is being prepared for him by members of his own household. And since he himself has fears about everyone in this way, he does not rest, but he is always plotting something against those whom he fears, and so the occasion of fear increases for him. Hence, he adds *Trial will frighten him*, namely, threatening him through the actions of others, *and distress will wall him in*, namely, through the fear of the heart from every direction, *like a king who prepares for battle*. For a king who prepares for battle is so distressed by the fear of losing that he nevertheless tries to destroy his enemies.

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Now Eliphaz shows by what merit an impious, tyrannical person comes to so great a misery of fear, adding *For he has stretched his hand against God*, by acting against God, *and against the Almighty he has strengthened himself*, that is, he has used against God the power given to him. And he shows how Job has acted against God, adding *He has run against him with head erect*, that is, by acting pridefully. For through pride man most resists God, to whom he ought to be subject through humility, according to Ecclesiasticus 10:14: "It is the beginning of man's pride to desert God." And just as he who loves God is said to run in His way because of the readiness of his will to serve Him, so, too, the proud man, because of the presumption of his spirit, is said to run against God. Now pride usually arises from an abundance of temporal things, ^{†4} and so there follows *and he is furnished with a fat neck*, namely, by acting pridefully against God. For fatness is caused by an abundance of fluids, by which he signifies the abundance of temporal goods. Now just as humility is the beginning of wisdom, ^{†5} so, too, pride is the impediment to wisdom; hence follows the observation *Grossness has covered his face*, for by the covering of the face is designated the impediment to knowledge. The opulence which is the cause of pride is found not only in him but extends also to his associates; hence follows *and from his flanks the fat hangs down*. Through all these expressions Eliphaz intends to signify that as a result of opulence Job has fallen into pride, through which he has raised himself up against God and practiced tyranny against men; therefore, he has come into such suspicion that he suspects God as his adversary and ambusher.

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(28) *He will dwell in desolate cities and in deserted houses, which have been turned into tombs.* (29) *He will not be enriched, nor will his substance persevere, and he will not send his root into the earth.* (30) *He will not come back from the darkness; flame will dry his branches and he will be borne away by the breath of his mouth.* (31) *Let him not trust in vain, deceived by error, that he is to be redeemed at any price.* (32) *Before his days may be fulfilled he will perish, and his hands will dry up.* (33) *His grapes will be blighted just like the vineyard in the first blossoming, and like the olive tree dropping its blossom.* (34) *For the gathering of the hypocrite is sterile, and fire will devour the tents of those who receive gifts willingly.* (35) *He has conceived pain and he has brought forth iniquity, and his womb prepares deceits.*

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After Eliphaz has shown the distresses of fear which the impious man suffers even when he is in the state

After Eliphaz has shown the distresses of fear which the impious man suffers even when he is in the state of prosperity, because of what Job had said—"You write bitter things against me, and do You wish to consume me for the sins of my youth?" [13:26]—he speaks now of the bitter things by which he is consumed when he has been cast down into adversity. Among the other bitter things he posits first that he is being made a fugitive. Now it is the usual practice of fugitives that they seek hidden and uninhabited places, and therefore he says *He will dwell in desolate cities and in deserted houses, which have been turned into tombs*. For such places are the usual refuges of fugitives. The second bitter thing is that he is stripped of his wealth; hence, he says *He will not be enriched*, namely, so that he may acquire wealth again, *nor will his substance persevere* so that he may be able to retain the wealth acquired before. He posits as the third bitter thing the impossibility of recovering it, saying *and he will not send his root into the earth*. For if a tree should be uprooted and planted again it grows strong if it should send its root into the earth, but if it should not be able to send its root into the earth it cannot grow strong again. And as if explaining this point he adds *He will not come back from the darkness*, that is, from the state of adversity, and he assigns the reason for his not returning to the light, adding *flame will dry his branches*. For if a tree has been uprooted, while the branches are green there still remains hope of restoration since they can be sown or planted, but if the branches should be burned, no further hope of recovery remains. Now man's branches are children and other related persons, through whom man sometimes rises again from a state of adversity, but Job's children had been killed and his family had perished; even he himself had been oppressed by infirmity, and Eliphaz implies this fact when he adds *and he will be borne away by the breath of his mouth*, that is, by the pride of his words, so that he could not in any way hope for recovery, not even from God, Whom the pride of words offends. Hence, he adds *Let him not trust in vain, deceived by error, that he is to be redeemed at any price*, that is, that he is to be freed from trial by any help. He posits as the fourth bitter thing the shortening of his life; hence, he adds *Before his days may be fulfilled he will perish*, that is, he will die before the time of life may be completed, *and his hands will dry up*, that is, his children and kinsmen will fail. And he adds an example, saying *His grapes will be blighted just like the vineyard in the first blossoming*, and this blighting, indeed, usually happens as a result of cold, by which he signifies an external persecution; *and like the olive tree dropping its blossom*, which usually happens from some internal cause, by which he signifies the meriting of adversity on the part of the very one who is suffering. Hence, concerning this meriting he adds *For the gathering of the hypocrite is sterile*, that is, those things which are gathered by the hypocrite are rendered fruitless, *and fire will devour the tents of those who receive gifts willingly*. For sometimes it happens according to divine judgment that those things which have been acquired in an evil way are easily consumed, and he says this in scoring Job for rapacity and hypocrisy, as if adversity befell him because of such sins. He also adds a third sin, namely, deceitfulness; hence follows *He has conceived pain*, that is, he has contrived in his heart how to inflict pain on another, and the conception of this pain, indeed, produced harm unjustly inflicted; hence follows *and he has brought forth iniquity*. Next he adds the method by which he may accomplish this end, saying *and his womb prepares deceits*. For it is the mark of hypocrites to inflict harm on others not manifestly but deceitfully. Now by womb is understood the heart, in which spiritual conceptions take place as corporeal conceptions take place in the womb.

Chapter Sixteen

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(1) Now Job said in response: (2) I have frequently heard such remarks; you are all burdensome

consolers. (3) Will your windy words have an end? Or is there any trouble for you if you should speak? (4) I, too, could speak things similar to you, and I wish that your souls were in the place of mine. (5) I would console you with speeches, too, and I would shake my head over you; (6) I would strengthen you with my mouth and I would move my lips, as if sparing you. (7) But what am I to do? If I speak, my pain will not rest, and if I keep silent, it will not withdraw from me. (8) Now, however, my pain has crushed me, and all my limbs have been reduced to nothing. (9) My wrinkles give testimony against me, and a liar rises up before my face, contradicting me. (10) He has gathered his fury against me, and he has growled at me in his teeth, menacing me. My enemy has looked upon me with frightening eyes. (11) They have opened their mouths over me; they have pierced through my jawbone with their reproaches; they have contented themselves with my punishments. (12) God has shut me up with the iniquitous one and has betrayed me into the hands of impious men. (13) I, formerly the wealthy man, suddenly have been ruined. He grasped my neck; He shattered me. He has set me up as His target; (14) He has surrounded me with His lances; He has wounded my loins; He has not spared me, and He has poured my intestines on the ground. (15) He has cut me down with wound upon wound; He has rushed upon me like a giant. (16) I have stitched together a sack over my skin and I have covered my flesh with ashes. (17) My face has grown swollen from weeping and my eyelids are misty. (18) I have suffered these things without iniquity of my own hand, when I was making pure prayers to God. (19) Earth, do not cover my blood, and do not let my outcry find in you a hiding-place. (20) For look! In heaven is my witness and my conscience is on high.

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In his response Eliphaz had spoken rather harshly against Job. Hence, Job, in the beginning of his speech, charges him with improper consolation—first, because he repeated the same remarks frequently, he himself as well as his friends; hence, Job says *I have frequently heard such remarks*, as if to say: Your speech always turns on the same subject. For with different words they were aiming at the same end, namely, at charging that Job had fallen into adversities for his own sins; therefore, he adds *you are all burdensome consolers*. For the duty of a consoler is to say the things by which pain may be softened. A burdensome consoler, then, is one who speaks the things which exasperate the spirit more. Nevertheless, these things could be excused when exasperating words were uttered for some good use and contained truth, or even when they were said briefly and in passing, but if someone should go on falsely, uselessly, and at great length with exasperating words to sadden another, he would seem to be a burdensome consoler. Hence, Job adds *Will your windy words have an end?* For in saying *Will your windy words have an end?* he shows that they were lingering at great length on exasperating words. But in saying *windy words*, he shows that they were useless and false, having no solidity.

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Now he shows next that there was not parity on both sides in this debate because Job's friends were speaking without trouble; hence, he says *Or is there any trouble for you if you should speak?*, as if to say: You speak at such great length to calumniate me, then, since you feel no trouble from this situation. Job, however, was being troubled. And lest anyone should believe that this debate was easy for Job's friends because of their eminent knowledge but troublesome for him because of a defect of knowledge, he excludes this belief when he shows that if he were not being depressed by adversity and if he were in the state of his friends, he could speak similarly. Hence, he says *I, too, could speak things similar to you*, namely, if I were not weighed down by adversity. And he expresses a desire for the opportunity of experiencing this thing for himself, saying *and I wish that your souls were in the place of mine*, namely, so that you would be suffering the adversity which I am suffering. And indeed, he says this not from a feeling of hatred or from the spite of vengeance, but so that they might be recalled from the cruelty which they were practicing in exasperating Job by their words when they realized that similar words would be rough on them if they were spoken to them. Hence, he adds *I would console you with speeches, too*, namely, with speeches similar to those with which you console me, *and I would shake my head over you*, as a sign of compassion or as a sign of reproach, just as you charge me. And also *I would strengthen you with my mouth* so that you would not fail through impatience, *and I would move my lips*, namely, to speak, *as if*

sparing you, that is, pretending that I was speaking out of the mercy which I had for you, just as you are doing in my case.

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So, then, it would be easy for me to speak, as it is for you, if I were in your state, but now I am impeded by pain which is not removed either by speaking or by keeping silent. Hence, he adds *But what am I to do? If I speak, my pain will not rest, and if I keep silent, it will not withdraw from me*. Now pain is of two kinds: †1 one kind, of course, internal, which is called sadness, coming from the apprehension of some inherent evil, whereas the other kind is external pain, which is pain according to sense—for example, a pain coming from the dissolution of a continuum or from something of this kind. The first of these two pains, then, can be taken away by speaking together, but not the second; therefore, next he shows what he understands about this second pain, which is not taken away by words, saying *Now, however, my pain has crushed me*, that is, impeded me from being able to use my reason freely and easily as I used to before. †2 For when there is vehement pain in the senses, it is necessary that the attention of the soul be distracted or impeded from the consideration of intellectual matters. And he shows what he understands about corporeal pain, adding *and all my limbs have been reduced to nothing*. For all his members were affected by sores, as it was said above that "Satan struck Job with an ulcer most harmful, from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head" [2:7].

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And not only does the wasting of my members cause me sensible pain; it is also used to bring charges against me. For Job's friends, seeing him so covered with sores, on the basis of this fact were charging that he had sinned gravely, thinking that this had happened to him as punishment for sin, and this is the point of what follows: *My wrinkles give testimony against me*. For the body is wrinkled because of the consumption of moisture as a result of infirmities just as it is as a result of old age. †3 Now he shows how the wrinkles give testimony against him, adding *and a liar rises up before my face, contradicting me*. For Eliphaz had told the falsehood that Job had fallen into this infirmity because of sin. †4 Or it can be said that Job understood through the Holy Spirit that his adversity had been procured by the devil with God's permission. Hence, whatever he suffered, either in the loss of property and children or in the ulceration of his own body, or even in the troublesomeness of his wife and friends, he attributed totally to the devil as instigator. He calls Eliphaz a liar raised up before his face, then, because he understood that his friends were contradicting him at the instigation of the devil. And according to this sense, what follows—*He has gathered his fury against me*—is plainer. For the devil seems to have gathered his whole fury against Job when he attacked him with every means of harming him. And not only has he afflicted me in the past but he menaces me even into the future, and this is the point of what follows: *and he has growled at me in his teeth, menacing me*. And he speaks through the metaphor of a beast which, in menacing a man, readies his teeth against him. Now he says this because Eliphaz had announced before that evils to the point of death were menacing him in the person of the impious one. †5 Job understood, however, that such threats in the mouth of Eliphaz had been procured by the devil; therefore, he said that he had growled at him in his teeth.

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Now Eliphaz not only had used menacing words against him in predicting evils but he had also judged unfavorably concerning his deeds, calling him impious and a hypocrite; †6 therefore, he adds *My enemy has looked upon me with frightening eyes*. For someone looks at another with gentle eyes when he interprets his deeds kindly, but when he interprets good deeds in a bad light, then he looks on him with frightening eyes; therefore, he adds *They, namely, my friends, instigated by my enemy, have opened their mouths over me*, and he explains this statement, adding *They have pierced through my jawbone with their reproaches*. For one who says something improper to someone to his face is said to pierce him in his face. Now Job's friends had said many improper things against him, upbraiding him for many sins. And since just men are happy about justice when they see sins punished, according to Psalm 57:11, "The just man will be happy when he sees vengeance." Job's friends, deeming themselves just but Job a sinner, were

...and so happy when he sees vengeance, see his friends, looking themselves just, and so a singer, were rejoicing in a way over his punishments, as if they were applauding divine justice, and so there follows *They have contented themselves with my punishments.*

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And lest anyone should believe that Job was of the opinion that such punishments had not been inflicted on him by God, since he had said that he had been afflicted by an enemy, to exclude this belief he adds *God has shut me up with the iniquitous one*, that is, the devil, namely, turning me over to his power, *and has betrayed me into the hands of impious men*, referring to those who, at the instigation of the devil, had afflicted him either by words or by deeds. For Job understood that his afflictions had been imposed upon him by the devil, of course, but with God's permission, and of this understanding he shows four evident signs. First is the fact that Job did not fall from the greatest prosperity gradually, as is usual in human affairs, but that he was totally ruined suddenly, and it does not seem possible that this happened by sudden disaster but as a result of divine ordination alone. This is the point of saying *I, formerly the wealthy man, have been ruined suddenly*. And in the expression *wealthy man* is designated the abundance of riches, whereas in the expression *the* is designated the brightness of his fame, because of which he was pointed out by everyone. Now the second sign is that he was ruined totally, and to signify this total ruin he adds *He grasped my neck; He shattered me*. And he speaks in the metaphor of some very strong man who, having grabbed the neck of some weak person, might break it and in this way totally take him from life. For just so did Job seem to have lost the state of prosperity totally. The third sign is that Job was crushed not by one adversity but by many coming together at one time, as was narrated above, [¶7](#) and with respect to this situation he adds *He has set me up as His target*, which, namely, is set up to be hit by different arrows. Therefore he adds *He has surrounded me with His lances*, and here he describes in three ways the multitude of his adversities. For first he shows that he has been wounded externally in his possessions, and to this fact pertains the remark *He has surrounded me with His lances*, for the external things around us are foreign, as it were. Man, then, is surrounded by lances of adversity when he suffers loss in external things. Now second he says that he has been stricken internally with respect to the affliction of persons, and this is the point of adding *He has wounded my loins*, as if to say: Not only have I been lanced from all sides but the wounds have reached the internal parts, in which there was delight, which are signified by the loins, in which there is delight or even the origin of generation. [¶8](#) Hence, by the loins his crushed children can also be designated. And, moreover, he shows the multiplicity of the stroke by the bitterness of the wound when he adds *He has not spared me*, such as by drawing back His hand from the stroke in order not to hurt more gravely. But He has injured very gravely, and this is the point of adding *and He has poured my intestines on the ground* since, namely, He crushed to death all his sons and daughters in one ruin. Third, he shows the multitude of the strokes from the things which he suffered in his own person; hence, he adds *He has cut me down*, namely, in my own person, *with wound* of a very bad ulceration *upon wound* of the death of my children. The fourth sign is that because his trial proceeded from divine providence, it could neither be resisted nor could a remedy be applied, according to what was said above at 9:13: "God, Whose anger no one can resist, . . ." and this is the point of adding *He has rushed upon me like a giant*, whom a weak man cannot resist because of the magnitude of his power. And all these signs can be understood either of God, Who has shut Job up, or better of the iniquitous one, namely, the devil, with whom He has shut him up.

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Job mentioned all these things about the magnitude of his adversity, then, to show that he could not contend with his friends on equal footing because they were immune from such adversities. But Eliphaz had scored him for pride, saying, "Why does your heart lift you up?" and so on [15:12], and the more detestable was this pride the graver were the adversities through which it could have been corrected, according to what is said against certain men in Psalm 34:16: "They have been wasted and have not felt the goads of conscience." Having described his adversity, then, next he shows himself humiliated, first with respect to his external dress when he says *I have stitched together a sack over my skin*. For such dress is a sign of humility, as one reads concerning the Ninevites in Jonah 3:5. Similarly, too, ashes are used to

sign of humility, as one reads concerning the Ninevites in Jonah 3:5. Similarly, too, ashes are used to acknowledge one's own frailty—hence, Abraham said in Genesis 18:27, "I will speak to my Lord, since I am dust and ashes"—hence, he adds *and I have covered my flesh with ashes*. For one reads above that he was sitting "on a dung heap" [2:8] as a sign of humility. Second, he shows his humility by copious weeping, of which he posits two signs: first, the swelling of his face when he says *My face has grown swollen from weeping*. For the copious matter of tears, rising to the head, swells the faces of those who weep. Second, however, is the impairment of sight, and this is the point of adding *and my eyelids are misty*, namely, from weeping. For the sight of the eyes is literally impaired because of the flow of moisture.

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Now from the things which he premised about the gravity of his adversity and about the magnitude of his humiliation someone could suspect that he himself, as if acknowledging the gravity of his own sins, humiliated himself by doing penance, deeming that he had been afflicted for his sins, as Eliphaz wished to imply, saying "Look! Among His holy ones not one is immutable," and so on [15:15]. Therefore, to remove this suspicion he says *I have suffered these things without iniquity of my own hand*, and by this claim he excludes from himself sins of commission. Now he adds *when I was making pure prayers to God* in order to exclude from himself the sin of lack of devotion and omission. By this claim he seems to be responding to what Zophar had said above at 11:14: "If you will take away the iniquity which is in your hand, you will be able to lift up your hand without blemish." But to exclude the innocence of Job, Eliphaz twice already had used the argument based on the frailty of earthly nature. For above at 4:18 he had said, "Look! Those who serve Him are not stable; how much more these who dwell in mud houses?" And later at 15:15 he had repeated the same objection, saying, "The heavens are not clean in His sight; how much more abominable and useless is man." To exclude this argument, then, Job adds *Earth, do not cover my blood*, and he understands by blood the affliction of his body. Now this blood would be covered if it had been shed for guilt, for in this way it would not have glory, but it would be covered by the earth if, on the pretext of earthly frailty, a presumption were made about a preceding guilt. Now if his blood was shed without guilt he had a just complaint against the one shedding it, as is said in Genesis 4:10: "Look! The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the earth." But this outcry would go unnoticed if his complaint seemed unjustified, like the complaint of one who has been punished for guilt; therefore, he adds *and do not let my outcry find in you a hiding-place*, namely, so that as a result of the frailty of the earthly manner of life I may seem to complain unjustly, as if I have been punished for guilt. Now it is true that it is difficult for man to enjoy the earthly manner of life without the iniquity of mortal sin. Yet it is not impossible, with the help, through grace, of God, Who is the witness even of internal purity; †9 therefore, he adds *For look! In heaven is my witness*, as if to say: Therefore, the earth cannot cover my blood since the testimony of heaven is greater than the presumption on the frailty of the earth. Now this witness of heaven is suitable, since it examines the secrets even of conscience; hence, he adds *and my conscience is on high*, as if to say: Therefore, in the lowest place on earth my outcry cannot find a hiding-place, since my conscience is known on high.

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(21) *My wordy friends, my eye pours out for God. (22) And I wish a man were so judged with God as the son of man is judged with his colleague! (23) For look! The brief years pass, and I walk a path along which I will not return.*

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After Job has described the magnitude of his adversity and his humility and innocence, †10 he proceeds further to reproach the empty consolation which his friends repeated to him again and again, namely, concerning the hope of recovering his temporal prosperity, of which Eliphaz had said above, "Is it a big thing that God should console you?" [15:11] and so on. Hence, intending to show the emptiness of this consolation, he premises *My wordy friends*, as if to say: They promise empty words to me. For my consolation is not in recovering my temporal goods but in obtaining the enjoyment of God, and this is the

point of adding *my eye pours out for God*, that is, it weeps with desire for God, according to Psalm 41:4: "My tears were my bread day and night, while it was said to me daily, 'Where is your God?'"

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And as an explanation of what he had said, he adds *And I wish a man were so judged with God as the son of man is judged with his colleague!* For a man is judged with his colleague while each one is present to the other in person, and they present their reasons in turn for themselves. He desired, then, to stand in the presence of God and to know the reasons for the divine works and judgments in which human happiness consists, in the hope of which was his consolation, not in the empty words of his friends in which they promised the recovery of temporal prosperity. To show the emptiness of this promise, then, he adds *For look! The brief years pass*, since, namely, "man . . . lives a brief time," as was said above [14:1]. Now a great part of Job's lifetime had already passed; hence, brief years remained to him in which, even if there were prosperity, it would not bring him great consolation because of the brevity of time. Now there were some men who believed that man, after death, returned again to the course of the present life, and in this way it could seem that Job could have consolation in the hope of recovering earthly prosperity, at least in that future life. †11 To exclude this possibility, then, he adds *and I walk a path along which I will not return*. For man in this mortal life through the process of age tends toward death, and in this process there can be no repetition so that, namely, man may once again be a boy and walk through the ages of this life.

Chapter Seventeen

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(1) My spirit will be enfeebled, my days will be shortened, and only the tomb is left to me. (2) I have not sinned, and my eye lingers on bitter things. (3) Free me and set me next to You, and then let anyone's hand fight against me. (4) Their heart You have put far from learning; on this account they will not be exalted. (5) He promises booty to his allies, and the eyes of his sons will fail. (6) He has set me up as a proverb of the people and his example before them. (7) My eye has misted over at the indignation, and my members have been reduced as if to nothing. (8) Just men will be stunned over this, and the innocent man will rouse himself against the hypocrite. (9) And the just man will hold to his way, and he will add strength to pure hands.

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Job had shown above the multiplicity of his affliction, the humiliation and the innocence of his mind, and the brevity of life to which one is unable to return, by which the wordiness of his friends was conclusively proved. In this chapter, then, he intends to manifest the things premised and finally to bring to an end their ignorance. Now first he begins to manifest what he had said about the process of human life, and he premises the reason for the brevity of life when he says *My spirit will be enfeebled*. For the life of the body is lived through vital spirits which are diffused from the heart to all the members, and as long as they last in the body the body lives. †1 But when the power of natural heat begins to weaken in the heart, such spirits diminish, and Job, of course, designates this diminishing and weakening as the enfeeblement of the spirit. And he adds the effect of this cause, saying *my days will be shortened*. For weakness of the vital spirit abbreviates the days of life. And lest anyone should believe that the enfeebled spirit is going to be strengthened again in the species of this mortal life, to exclude this belief he adds *and only the tomb is left*

to me, as it to say: After the brief days of this life have been finished, nothing of the present life is left to me except the tomb and what befits the tomb.

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Next he shows in another way the emptiness of their consolation. For they were consoling him by saying that such adversities had come upon him because of sins and if he did penance for them he would return to prosperity. But excluding this belief he says *I have not sinned*, namely, since he did not have a vexing conscience about any grave sin on account of which he had incurred such serious adversities. Hence, he even says below at 27:6, "And in fact my heart has not reproached me in my whole life"; therefore, this is not contrary to what is said in John 1:8: "If we have said that we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves." With this claim he expresses what he had said above about his innocence: "I have suffered these things without iniquity of my own hand" [16:18]. Now he adds *and my eye lingers on bitter things*. Now he says *bitter things* in the plural because of the many adversities which he had listed above; he says *lingers* since, although he has humbled himself in the midst of his bitter things, sewing a sack over his skin, the bitter things still persevere nonetheless. Now he attributes bitter things to the eye because of the weeping, about which he had said above, "My face has grown swollen from weeping" [16:17], and again, "My eye pours out for God" [16:21], since his eye was weeping in the midst of the bitter things in such a way that it was aiming at divine help alone. Therefore, the injunction *Free me is* added here. For he understood that he could be freed only by Him Who had shut him up with the iniquitous one. Now he was not asking that he be freed from adversity in the same way as those who attain earthly prosperity after adversity; he was asking to be admitted to spiritual loftiness. Hence, he adds *and set me next to You*. For since God is the very essence of good, it is necessary that one who has been set next to God be freed from evil. Now man is set next to God inasmuch as he approaches Him with his mind, through knowledge and love, but, of course, this approach happens imperfectly in the state of the way, in which man suffers attacks, and since he has been set next to God he is not overcome by them. Now man is perfectly set next to God with his mind in the state of the ultimate happiness in which he can no longer suffer attacks, and this is the state which he shows that he desires when he says *and then let anyone's hand fight against me*, since, namely, however much any persons may wish to attack me, if I have been perfectly set next to You, no one's attack will bother me. This, then, is the expectation in which Job had his consolation in the midst of bitter things, hoping that he would be set next to God where he could not fear the attacks.

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Now his wordy friends did not understand this spiritual consolation of Job, and so he adds *Their heart You have put far from learning*, namely, from Your spiritual teaching, by which You teach man to scorn temporal goods and hope for spiritual goods. And since they put their hope in temporal and lowly things alone, they cannot arrive at the spiritual height to be set next to God, and this is the point of adding *on this account they will not be exalted*. And from the fact that they have been put far from spiritual learning it proceeds that Eliphaz was promising Job only temporal goods in consolation, [†2](#) and this is the point of adding *He promises booty to his allies*, that is, the acquisition of temporal goods which cannot come to one unless another loses them; hence, the acquisition of temporal goods is likened to pillaging. Now it is not universally true that after doing penance men recover temporal prosperity, since not even the good always enjoy temporal prosperity; hence, he adds *and the eyes of his sons will fail*. He calls his sons those who, believing in his promise, hope for temporal goods from the good things which they do, but when they do not attain them their eyes fail, as if sinking down from their hope. Now just as Eliphaz was promising temporal goods to those doing good, so he was claiming also that all temporal adversities come about because of the sins of the one who suffers them. And since Job had suffered many adversities, he set him up as an example to the people, and this is the point of adding *He has set me up as a proverb of the people and his example before them*, since, namely, he was setting Job up as an example to assert his opinion about the cause of adversities, as if Job had been punished for sin.

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Now it is a mark of the zeal of just men that, seeing the correctness of divine judgments being perverted by false doctrine, they are indignant; therefore, Job next shows the greatness of his zeal in two ways: first, by a kind of disturbance of the mind—"For anger through vice blinds the eye, but anger through zeal disturbs the eye," as Gregory says †3—and therefore he adds *My eye*, namely, the eye of reason, the sight of which is disturbed by the anger of zeal, *has misted over at the indignation*; second, by the fact that anger, through zeal, creates a kind of commotion from pain even in the body. Hence, the text of I Maccabees 2:24 says that Mattathias, seeing Judea sacrificing to idols, "was pained, and his kidneys trembled violently." Here, then, is added *and my members have been reduced as if to nothing*, so much, namely, does man's body seem to languish through pain. Now someone could believe that that misting of the eye was contrary to justice and that the indignation was contrary to innocence; therefore, to exclude this belief he adds *Just men will be stunned over this*, as if he were to say: It is also the part of just men that, seeing the teaching of evil men, they should be astonished, and above he called this astonishment a misting over. Now there follows the statement *and the innocent man will rouse himself against the hypocrite*, as if to say: It is not contrary to innocence if someone who is indignant through a zeal for justice should be stirred up against a hypocrite who perverts true teaching. And since, as was said, †4 anger through zeal disturbs the spirit but does not blind it, so a just man is astonished or misted over from zeal which nevertheless does not withdraw from justice, and this is the point of adding *And the just man will hold to his way*, since, namely, he will not desert it because of the anger of zeal. For such anger does not precede reason but follows it; †5 therefore, it cannot separate man from justice. For anger through zeal is useful, since it makes man rise up against evils with a greater strength of spirit, and this is the point of adding *and he will add strength to pure hands*, stirred up, namely, by zeal. Hence, too, the Philosopher says in *Ethics* III that anger helps strength. †6

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(10) Therefore, all of you, convert and come, and I will not find among you any wise man. (11) My days have passed, my reflections have been scattered, tormenting my heart. (12) They have turned night into day, and again after the darkness I hope for the light. (13) If I do hold up, the lower world is my home; in the darkness have I made my bed. (14) I said to the rottenness: You are my father; to the worms: You are my mother and my sister. (15) Where, then, is my expectation now? And who considers my suffering? (16) Into the deepest part of the underworld will descend all my possessions. Do you think that there at least there will be rest for me?

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After Job has proposed the arguments by which the opinion of Eliphaz is refuted, at this point he gathers the premises and orders them to show his thesis. And first he stirs interest, saying *Therefore*, since, namely, the things said before are true, *all of you* and your fathers, who, namely, have come together against me, *convert* from your errors, *and come* to consider the truth, and when you have inspected it, it will be clear how far you are from true wisdom. This is the point of adding *and I will not find among you any wise man*. He says this to check the boasting of Eliphaz, who had said above at 15:9, "What do you know which we do not?" and so on; and again, "Wise men acknowledge" [15:18], and so on.

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Now in this place Job especially intends to show their lack of wisdom in that they promised him the consolation of temporal prosperity. †7 In rebuttal he first proposes that the time of his life has in great part already elapsed, and this is the point of saying *My days have passed*. Then he proposes the evils which he is suffering when he adds *my reflections have been scattered*, that is, impeded from the quiet contemplation of wisdom because of the sharpness of bodily pain. This is the point of adding *tormenting my heart*, namely, since his reflections had been led away from the sweet consideration of truth into the bitterness by which his heart was being tormented. Now not even night, which is the time set aside for man's rest, interrupted this torment of the heart; hence, he adds *They have turned night into day*, since, namely, because of the reflections previously mentioned he was spending the night as sleepless as the day. Now it is impossible to suffer the lack of sleep at night then during the day since during the day man's spirit is relieved

is graver to suffer the lack of sleep at night than during the day, since during the day man's spirit is relieved by the company of men and by the sight of daylight. Therefore, when the night was sleepless for him he desired it to be finished quickly, and this is the point of adding *and again after the darkness I hope for the light*, that is, I hope that the light of day may come again after the darkness of night.

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But since Eliphaz was inducing him to tolerate all his adversities patiently in expectation of the future,^{†8} Job therefore shows next what seems to be left to him of temporal things in the future. Hence, he says *If I do hold up*, that is, carry such pains patiently, nothing remains for me except inhabiting a tomb, and this is the point of saying *the lower world is my home*. Now he calls the tomb the lower world according to the opinion of those against whom he was debating, who did not believe that man's soul remains after death but only the body in the tomb, which they called the lower world since it is situated beneath the earth.^{†9} Now man lying in the tomb suffers darkness both because of the lack of sensation and also because of the lack of external light; therefore, he adds *in the darkness have I made my bed*. Now just as man, when he is born of his parents, assumes an origin by reason of which he contracts an affinity with them, so after death, lying in the tomb, he is dissolved into rottenness and the worms which are generated from his body. Therefore, he adds *I said to the rottenness: You are my father; to the worms: You are my mother and my sister*, as if to say: With no other temporal thing will there remain to me an affinity in the tomb except with rottenness and with worms.

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As if deducing from these premises to an inconsistency, then, he concludes, saying *Where, then, is my expectation now?*, as if he were saying: If I were consoled because of the expectation of temporal prosperity, my expectation would be vain. And again he deduces to a greater inconsistency, adding *And who considers my suffering?*, as if to say: If I hold up through patience, nevertheless nothing remains but the tomb and its darkness, rottenness, and worms. If, then, I were to have patience because of the temporal goods to be merited from God, it would follow that God was not considering my patience, and that is to deny providence. And lest perchance someone might say that even in the tomb temporal prosperity would be given him by God, he therefore adds, as if mocking, *Into the deepest part of the underworld will descend all my possessions*, that is, whatever is mine will be brought down to the tomb, which alone remains to me. *Do you think that there, at least, there will be rest for me?*, that is, even there must I expect earthly prosperity? It is manifest that this proposition is ridiculous.

Chapter Eighteen

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(1) Now Bildad the Shuhite said in response: (2) To what end will you cast your words about? Understand first and so let us speak. (3) Why have we been deemed beasts of burden and why are we contemptible in your sight? (4) Why do you lose your soul in your fury? Will the earth be abandoned because of you and will cliffs be transferred from their place? (5) Will the light of the impious one not be extinguished and the flame of his fire not shine? (6) The light will grow dark in his tent, and the lamp which is over him will be extinguished. (7) The steps of his power will be circumscribed, and his own counsel will cast him down. (8) For he has put his feet in the net, and he walks in its meshes. (9) His foot will be held by the snare, and thirst will blaze up against him. (10) Hidden in the earth is his snare, and

will be held by the snare, and thirst will surge up against him. (10) Thunder in the earth is his snare, and his trap upon the path. (11) From all sides fearful things will frighten him, and they will wrap around his feet.

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Since Bildad the Shuhite could not comprehend with his understanding the premised words of blessed Job, he thought that what he himself did not understand was being uttered idly even by the speaker. Hence, in the beginning of his response he says *To what end will you cast your words about?* And here he seems to charge him on three counts: first, with inefficacy of speech, as if the premised words of Job had no efficacy to confirm anything, and this charge is signified in the expression *To what end*; second, he charges him with an empty multiplication of words, as if Job's premised words lacked the weight of considered opinions, and this charge is signified in the expression *words*; third, he scores him for the disordered connection of the words, and this charge is signified in the expression *will you cast. . . about*. For one is said to cast words about who scatters them in a disordered fashion, although this third charge could also refer to a display of elation. Now these three faults in someone's speech come from a defect of understanding. Now a confrontation with one who is lacking in understanding is useless. Therefore, he adds *Understand first and so let us speak*, as if to say: Since you speak ineffectively, frivolously, and in a disordered fashion, it is clear that you are lacking in understanding. Hence, first apply yourself so that you may understand, and afterwards we will be able to confront each other. Next he charges him with presumption since he had not deemed them wise when he said, "I will not find among you any wise man" [17:10]. Responding to this charge, then, he adds *Why have we been deemed as beasts of burden and why are we contemptible in your sight?* For a man who lacks wisdom seems like beasts of burden and contemptible, since in wisdom consists the honor and glory of man. Next he reproaches him for wrath since he had said, "My eye has misted over at the indignation" [17:7], a remark which he had misunderstood, believing that it was such indignation which had taken from him the light of wisdom, not waiting for what he had said afterward: "And the just man will hold to his way" [17:9]. Therefore he adds *Why do you lose your soul in your fury?* For one loses his soul in fury who, on account of fury, departs from wisdom and justice, which especially are the goods of the soul.

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Having premised these remarks, then, in which he scored Job's person for a lack of understanding, for presumption, and for fury, he approaches next the principal proposition on which the controversy turned, namely, that the adversities of the present life were punishments for sins. Against this proposition Job had said, "I have not sinned, and my eye lingers on bitter things" [17:2]. But since Bildad was unable to use reasons for the assertion of his opinion, he wished to affirm his opinion as the firmest on the basis of common opinion. Therefore, he compared it to things which cannot be removed, namely, to the earth and to cliffs. Hence, he says *Will the earth be abandoned because of you and will cliffs be transferred from their place?*, as if to say: This opinion, that adversities happen in return for sin, is firm, like the earth and cliffs. Will it be able to be removed, then, because of your debating-points so that you may be proved innocent?

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Next he pursues his opinion more extensively, telling one by one the evils which come about for sinners, among which he puts first the cessation of prosperous successes. These he compares to light since "He who walks in the light does not bump into anything," as is said in John 11:9. Hence, they seem to walk in the light for whom all their undertakings succeed prosperously in answer to their prayer. Therefore, concerning the loss of this light, that is, prosperity, he says *Will the light of the impious one not be extinguished*, that is, will his prosperity not cease? Now just as corporeal light proceeds from the flame of a fire, so, too, the brightness of prosperity proceeds from the emotion of man as long as that which he wishes comes to him. Therefore he adds *and the flame of his fire not shine?* For by fire the ardor of love is usually signified, according to Song of Songs 8:6: "Its brilliance is the brilliance of fire and flames." Now one should consider that the prosperity of human success proceeds from two causes: sometimes, of course,

from human providence—for example, when a man prudently and cautiously disposes each and every thing. With respect to this cause he says of the cessation of prosperity *The light will grow dark in his tent*, since, namely, both he and his household will lack wisdom in their counsels; sometimes, however, the prosperity of human success proceeds from a higher cause, namely, from divine providence. With respect to this cause, describing the cessation of prosperity he says *and the lamp which is over him will be extinguished*, not, of course, so that it may not shine on him but so that it may not throw light on the impious one. And well has he called the providence of man light, as something borrowed from another, but the providence of God a lamp, as something shining by itself. Now he has premised of the light of human providence that, by the fact that man dismisses the light of reason, he seems to merit that he not be protected by the light of divine providence.

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Next after the cessation of prosperity he adds a discussion about adversity, concerning which he first posits the impediments to operation and to endeavor. Now man strives to arrive at the effect of his operation in two ways—in one way through his own strength, and against this way he says *The steps of his power will be circumscribed*, since, namely, the endeavor of his strength could not have ample progress. In the other way, man endeavors to obtain something through wisdom, and with respect to this way he says *and his own counsel will cast him down* when, namely, what he has thought out as useful becomes damaging to him. Now he says that the cause of these impediments proceeds from his sin itself when he adds *For he has put his feet in the net*. For just as one who willingly puts his foot in the net prepares himself for capture, so he who willingly throws himself into sinning disposes himself so that his progress may be impeded, according to Proverbs 5:22: "His own iniquities catch the impious man." And just as there are various meshes in a net, so, too, in sin there are many varieties by which men are ensnared in various ways. Therefore, he adds *and he walks in its meshes* when, namely, he proceeds from one kind of sin to another or from one way of sinning to another. And since he willingly throws himself into dangers and does not desist but always proceeds farther, he will therefore sometimes feel the impediment. Hence, he adds *His foot will be held by the snare*, that is, the progress of his will and his operation will be impeded by some opposition.

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Now such harms proceed from three causes for those proceeding in sin: first, on the part of the sinner himself, who the more he sins, the more he increases in himself the desire for sinning. With respect to this cause he adds *and thirst will blaze up against him* since, namely, sometimes a sinner considers according to reason that something is harmful to him, but a burning desire for sinning compels him to act against his opinion. Second, the cause of the harm is sometimes the result of the very things in respect to which one sins, as the text of Ecclesiastes 5:12 says: "Riches are kept to the detriment of their owner." Now such harms come sometimes from things already acquired, and with respect to this cause Bildad says *Hidden in the earth is his snare* since, of course, in earthly things themselves lies hidden some danger by which a sinner's feet may be captured. Sometimes, however, such harms come forth when man is on the way to acquiring goods, and with respect to this situation he says *and his trap upon the path* because, of course, before the sinner can achieve what he seeks, dangers lie in wait on his very way. Third, such harms are caused on the part of other men whose ambushes and attacks are feared. Hence, he adds *From all sides fearful things will frighten him*, since, as is said in Wisdom 17:10, "Although wickedness is timid, it has been given for the condemnation of all men." Now since man is on guard against everyone, it is necessary that in many instances his acts be impeded. Hence, he adds *and they will wrap around his feet* so that, namely, he cannot proceed freely anywhere.

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(12) *His might will be enfeebled by hunger, and may fasting assail his ribs. (13) Let it devour the beauty of his skin, and let his arms be consumed by first-born death. (14) Let his confidence be ripped violently from his tent and let destruction tread upon him like a king. (15) Let the associates of one who is not*

from his tent, and let destruction tread upon him like a king. (15) Let the associates of one who is not dwell in his tent; let sulphur be sprinkled in his tent. (16) Below let his roots dry out, but above let his harvest be ruined. (17) Let the memory of him perish from the earth and let his name not be celebrated in the streets. (18) It will expel him from the light into the darkness, and it will transfer him from the world. (19) His seed will not exist, nor any descendants among his people, nor any remains in his regions. (20) On his day, the youngest men will be stunned, and horror will assail the first citizens. (21) These, then, are the tents of an iniquitous man, and this is the place of one who does not know God.

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Bildad had premised the punishments of sinners which pertain to external adversities, but here he begins to pursue punishments pertaining to their persons. Now one should consider that sins themselves implicate the sinner in external adversities; therefore, he pursued external adversities by predicting them as if with some certainty. Now corporeal punishments do not seem to be caused directly by the sins themselves, except perhaps some, especially gluttony and riotous living, by which one sins against his own body. Therefore, he does not pursue corporeal punishments by denouncing them but rather by imprecating them. Now he premises the corporeal punishments preceding death, and since life is preserved by nourishment, first he imprecates the removal of nourishment from it, by which man first begins to be weakened, and with respect to this weakening he says *His might will be enfeebled by hunger*. Next, however, when nourishment fails, even life is taken away, and with respect to this taking away he adds *and may fasting assail his ribs*. By this expression is signified the weakening of the vital operations, the source of which is the heart, which is contained under the ribs. Now the goods of the body, which begin to be enfeebled by hunger, are totally consumed by death. Now the special goods of the body seem to be beauty and strength. Therefore, he adds *Let it devour the beauty of his skin* since, namely, beauty is considered in the external appearance, *and let his arms*, in which especially strength is noticed, *be consumed by first-born*, that is, early death, coming before the end of the natural life-span. Now a dead man is carried out of his house, and with respect to this fact he adds *Let his confidence be ripped violently from his tent* since, namely, he has put his hope not in God but in the opulence and in the glory of his house, from which he is cast out after death. Now having been cast out of his house, he is closed up in the tomb where he is totally annihilated by death, and with respect to this fact he adds *and let destruction tread upon him like a king* since, namely, death, full of power like a king's, treads him into dust. Now after he has gone out of his house, the dead man's household, with whom he had an association in life, remains, and with respect to this fact he adds *Let the associates of one who is not*, that is, of the dead man, who has now ceased to be in the midst of human affairs, *dwell in his tent*. Now the household, after the master's death, goes into mourning and demonstrates some signs of sadness, either with respect to dark and dirty garments or even with respect to some foul odors, and with respect to this practice he says *let sulphur be sprinkled in his tent*, by which are understood all the things which can be signs of sadness just as good odors are taken as a sign of happiness.

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Now when a man has died, frequently everything which was his perishes, and showing this next Bildad begins first with things growing in the earth, of which certain things which have been planted still remain after he has died. With respect to these things he says, *Below let his roots dry out* so that, namely, if he has sown or planted anything it may be destroyed so that it may not bear fruit. Certain crops, however, have already been brought to fruition, and with respect to these he adds *but above let his harvest be ruined*, and this remark can refer to some business just begun or already nearly finished. Next he proceeds to the fame which remains of a man after his death, through which some men desire to live in the memories of men and have renown even after death. Hence, he adds with respect to the deletion of the sinner from the memories of men *Let the memory of him perish from the earth*. Now with respect to the cessation of his celebrated fame he adds *and let his name not be celebrated in the streets*, and he says this expressly since there is no celebration of one's name except among the multitude, which is usually found in the streets. And so, when the memory and the celebration of his name ceases, the brightness of his renown will be changed into the darkness of perpetual oblivion, and this is the point of adding *It will expel him from the light into the*

darkness of perpetual oblivion, and this is the point of adding *it will expect him from the light into the darkness*, that is, from worldly renown into oblivion. Now when his fame ceases and his body has been consumed by death, nothing of him will remain any longer in the world, since Bildad and his associates were of the opinion that the soul did not remain after death; **†1** *and it will transfer him from the world* so that, namely, nothing of him may remain in the world. But since parents also live in their children, to exclude this possibility he adds *His seed will not exist*, since his children will die, *nor any descendants among his people*, since neither grandsons nor great-grandsons will remain, nor any one at all belonging to him; hence, he adds *nor any remains in his regions*, that is, neither blood relations nor household through whom the memory of him may be retained.

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Now he shows what effect in the hearts of other men follows from this situation when he adds *On his day*, which, namely, is the day of his destruction, *the youngest men will be stunned*, that is, the younger members of the populace will be stunned with very great wonder, unable to consider how such great renown as the sinner's has suddenly been reduced to nothing. And with respect to the elders he adds *and horror will assail the first citizens*, namely, those fearing that something similar may befall them. And this consideration seems to have induced Bildad to respond to what Job had said above at 14:21: "Whether his children will be noble or ignoble, he will not understand. Yet his flesh will suffer pain while he lives," and with this statement Job seemed to have refuted the threats of his friends or their promises about future events happening after death. But here Bildad responds that such misfortunes which happen after death, even if the dead man should not know about them, are nevertheless inflicted by God—such penalties—for the reproof of others.

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And since he had premised certain punishments of the sinner pertaining to the way of the present life, but certain others pertaining to the end of the way, namely, to death or to the things which happen after death, therefore, as if in summation, he adds *These, then, are the tents of an iniquitous man*, that is, his progress on the way of the present life. For wayfarers use tents. With respect to the ultimate end, however, which is, as it were, the end of a motion, he adds *and this is the place of one who either through disbelief or through disobedience does not know God*.

Chapter Nineteen

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(1) Now Job said in response: (2) How long do you afflict my soul and wear me away with your speeches? (3) Look! You have confounded me ten times and you are not ashamed of crushing me. (4) Certainly, if I have been ignorant, my ignorance will be with me, (5) but you raise yourselves up against me and you charge me with my reproaches. (6) Now, at least, understand that God has afflicted me with an inequitable judgment, and He has surrounded me with His scourges. (7) Look! Suffering force I will cry out, and no one will heed me; I will raise an outcry, and there is no one to pass judgment. (8) He has hedged in my path and I cannot pass, and on my trail He has put darkness. (9) He has stripped me of my glory and He has taken away the crown from my head. (10) He has destroyed me on all sides and I am perishing, and He has taken away my hope as if from an uprooted tree. (11) His fury has been aroused against me and so He has treated me as His enemy. (12) His handiwork came at the same time and they

against me, and so they have treated me as their enemy. (12) Certainly some of the same time and they made themselves a way through me and they besieged my tent in a circle. (13) My brothers He has put far from me, and my acquaintances have left me like strangers. (14) My relatives have abandoned me, and those who knew me have forgotten me. (15) The tenants of my house and the maids have treated me as a stranger, and I have been like a foreigner in their eyes. (16) I called my servant and he did not respond to me; with my own mouth I entreated him. (17) My wife shuddered at my breath, and I prayed to the sons of my loins. (18) Foolish men also have despised me, and when I had withdrawn from them they disparaged me. (19) My former advisers have detested me, and one whom I especially loved has opposed me. (20) My flesh having been consumed, my bone has adhered to my skin, and only my lips have been left around my teeth. (21) Pity me, pity me, you, my friends, at least, since the hand of the Lord has touched me. (22) Why do you persecute me like God, and glut yourselves on my flesh?

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In his premised words Bildad seems to have aimed at two goals: first, at refuting Job about foolishness, pride, and fury, and by this refutation he intended to afflict him similarly to his other friends. ^{†1} Therefore he says *How long do you afflict my soul?* Second, he aimed at confirming his own opinion that the adversities of the present life come about in return for sins, a subject which he had pursued comprehensively by enumerating various adversities without introducing other proof. ^{†2} With respect to this goal Job adds *and wear me away with your speeches*, that is, fatigue me with words, not convince me with proofs? Now it is tolerable if someone should speak against his friend once, but if a man should multiply such words he seems to be a person of confirmed malice. Hence, he adds *Look! You have confounded me ten times*, both by speaking yourselves and by listening to me with a certain indignation. Now before this response Job is found to have spoken five times if we should begin with the speech "Perish the day on which I was born" [3:3], ^{†3} and his friends are found to have responded to him five times. ^{†4} Now they ought to have ceased the affliction of the afflicted from embarrassment, at least, if not because of friendship. Hence, he adds *and you are not ashamed of crushing me*, namely, burdening me as much with reproaches as with a flood of words. Now among other reproaches Bildad seems to have scored him for ignorance when he said, "Understand first and so let us speak" [18:2]. This ignorance ought indeed to have been tolerated by friends, and he should have been excused for it. It should not have been thrown up to him for a reproach, especially in a time of adversity; therefore, he adds *Certainly, if I have been ignorant, my ignorance will be with me*, as if to say: It burdens you not at all, only me; hence, it did not befit you in the midst of adversity to throw ignorance up to me as a reproach. Therefore, he adds *but you raise yourselves up against me*, namely, showing your excellence, *and you charge me with my reproaches*, that is, reproaches which pertain to me alone and do not burden others.

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After he had premised these remarks pertaining to the refutation of his friends, he addresses himself to pursuing the principal proposition, intending to show that what they were saying—that the present adversities always come about because of past sins—is false. On the basis of this hypothesis he leads immediately from the principle to an inconsistency, saying *Now, at least, understand that God has afflicted me with an inequitable judgment*, as if to say: If adversities come about only in return for sins, God's judgment, according to which He has afflicted me gravely, though I was not sinning gravely, is inequitable. Now he says *Now, at least*, since up to this point he has not listed his adversities as particularly as he does now. Now he says that he has not only been afflicted by adversities but has also been shut in by them in such a way that he cannot find a way of evading them. Hence follows *and He has surrounded me with His scourges* since, namely, the scourges themselves have removed the way of remedies, and he begins to pursue this second point first. Now in adversities a remedy can be found, first, through human help, and it can be found in two ways: one way in the very deed itself, for example, when someone is being violently oppressed by one man and has assistance from another. To exclude this way he says *Look! Suffering force I will cry out, and no one will heed me*, as if to say: If I were to cry out against those who are violently oppressing me, no one would heed me to bring help. In the other way, a remedy can be found after the deed, for example, when someone who has suffered injury complains to a judge who restores him and

good, for example, when someone who has suffered injury complains to a judge who restores him and vindicates him according to his sentence. Excluding this way he adds *I will raise an outcry, and there is no one to pass judgment*; that is, if I were to raise an outcry by complaining, no judge would be present to free me by his judgment. Second, a remedy is found in adversities by the man himself who evades the adversities, and he does this in two ways: in one way through power, and he excludes this way, saying *He has hedged in my path and I cannot pass*, as if to say: He has set so many impediments to my progress that I cannot remove them. In another way man evades adversities through prudence, and to exclude this way he adds *and on my trail He has put darkness*, namely, so that I may not see how I am to proceed.

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Next, after he has excluded the remedies he adds the adversities, beginning with the external goods which he has lost. Among these he posits first the loss of honor and glory when he says *He has stripped me of my glory* since, although before he was held in honor and reverence, then even the younger men were mocking him, as is said below at 30:1. Second, he posits the loss of dignity when he adds *and he has taken away the crown from my head* since he who before was sitting "like a king with his army standing round about him," as is said below at 29:25, now "scraped the bloody matter with a shard, sitting on a dung-heap," as was said above at 2:8. Third, he posits the loss of external things when he says *He has destroyed me on all sides*, namely, by the devastation of all his external goods, *and I am perishing* while the adversity lasts since there is no hope of recovering. Hence, he adds *and He has taken away my hope as if from an uprooted tree*. For as long as a tree clings to the earth with its roots, it has the hope, if its branches will have been cut off, that it may green up again, but if its roots should be torn out of the earth, it must dry up and perish. So he, too, as if his roots had been torn out, had no hope of recovering temporal prosperity. †5

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Now there are two roots of hope: one, of course, on the side of divine help, the other on the side of human help. Now the root of hope on the side of divine help seemed to have been torn out because God seemed to be gravely angered at him, according to the opinion of those who posited divine punishment solely in the adversities of this life. Hence he says *His fury has been aroused against me*, and he says this to designate the vehemence of His anger. For fury is anger inflamed. †6 Now usually the more vehement fury is the more quickly it passes, and in this way hope in an angry person can remain for the future, but if anger should pass into hatred, no hope seems to remain any longer. To signify this situation he adds *and so He has treated me as His enemy*. One does not hope for a remedy from an enemy, however. Now he posits a sign of divine anger and hatred when he adds *His bandits came at the same time*. He calls bandits the Sabaeans, the Chaldeans, and the demons who had devastated his goods at the same time as if by agreement, and he calls them God's bandits as if this devastation happened by divine order, as Job's friends also were saying. †7 Now the bandits just mentioned plundered Job openly without any reverence or fear. Hence, he adds *and they made themselves a way through me*, as if to say: They plundered me just like an enemy who is found on the way. They also attacked him totally and perseveringly, and with respect to this fact he adds *and they besieged*, namely, perseveringly, *in a circle*, that is, totally, in every respect, *my tent*, that is, the goods of my house.

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Next he shows that the root of hope which consists in human help has been torn up, showing that he could expect no help from those from whom it seemed more likely to come. First he lists those who have been separated from the habitation of his house, beginning with his brothers, saying *My brothers He has put far from me* so that, namely, they may be either unwilling or unable to help me. Next he posits familiar friends when he adds *and my acquaintances have withdrawn from me like strangers*, namely, not bringing me help. Now with respect to relatives or those joined to him by any other bond, he adds *My relatives have abandoned me*, not bringing me help. But with respect to those with whom he had at one time associated, he adds *and those who knew me*, namely, as a familiar friend at one time, now in my trial *have forgotten*

me, namely, not caring about me. After these people he addresses himself to listing his household, saying *The tenants of my house*, namely, who used to serve me, *and the maids have treated me as a stranger*, namely, not caring about my afflictions, *and I have been like a foreigner in their eyes* since they obviously despise me utterly. Next, concerning the disobedience of servants he adds *I called my servant and he did not respond to me*. Now he also adds proud contempt: *With my own mouth I entreated him*, that is, I had to deal with him not with an order but with prayers, because he despised me. Next he lists persons especially closely connected, namely, his wife and children. Now the presence of her husband is usually especially delightful to a wife, unless perhaps he should be rendered horrible by some grave corruption, and to signify this fact he adds *My wife shuddered at my breath*, namely, because of the stench of the sores by which he was being rendered horrible to her. Now it is the place of children to fulfill the wish of a parent at his nod alone, but as a result of great contempt for a parent it comes about that a father, to whom reverence must be shown by a son, must entreat his son suppliantly, and to show this fact he adds *and I prayed to the sons of my loins*. But this remark seems contrary to what was said above at 1:19, that his sons and daughters were crushed by the ruin of the house. It can be said, however, that some small children had survived who had not been present at that banquet, or perhaps some children of his children who, imputing the death of their own parents to their sins, despised Job himself for his.

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After he had said that he was despised by his household and by outsiders, then, he shows next that he was despised by both foolish and wise men. Now it is characteristic of foolish men that they despise those whom they see in misery since they think that only earthly goods are to be honored. Therefore, he says *Foolish men also have despised me*, namely, in their heart when I was present, *and when I had withdrawn from them they disparaged me*, namely, pronouncing with the mouth what they were afraid to say in my presence. Next he says that he is also despised by the wise, whom he once had had as familiars. Hence, he says *My former advisers*, namely, men whom I used to admit to my counsel because of their wisdom, *have detested me, and one whom I especially loved has opposed me*. Perhaps he says this because of one of those who were present who was opposing him rather seriously.

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So then, having premised the adversities which pertain to external things, he adds a remark about the consumption of his own body, saying *My flesh having been consumed, my bone has adhered to my skin* since, namely, because of the gravity of his illness his flesh had been consumed so that his skin was adhering to his bones. But since the lips are fleshy and adhere to the teeth as if to bones, to except them, then, he adds *and only my lips have been left around my teeth*. And by this remark he seems to imply obscurely that, although all the other functions of his members were ceasing, only the function of speech had remained to him.

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When he has listed his adversities, then, he invites his friends to compassion, doubling his plea for pity because of the multitude of his miseries, saying *Pity me, pity me, you, my friends, at least*, since I have been abandoned by others. Now the cause of their pitying is his misery, which is so much the more grave as it is induced by the stronger cause; †8 therefore, he adds *since the hand of the Lord has touched me*. For he understood that he had been stricken by God. Now it does not seem decent that a man should add affliction to one afflicted; therefore, he adds *Why do you persecute me like God?*, as if to say: The persecution from God is sufficient for me, but it would be your place rather to offer consolation. Now he shows how they were persecuting him, adding *and glut yourselves on my flesh?*, a question which properly pertains to disparagers who are said to feed on human flesh inasmuch as they are delighted by the infirmities of others. †9 For the flesh is the weakest part of an animal.

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(†2) Why should you pity me that you speak as he said? Why should I pity you that they have persecuted me?

(23) *who would grant me that my speeches be written down: who would grant me that they be engraven in a book* (24) *with an iron stilus, or on a sheet of lead, or certainly that they be carved on flint?* (25) *For I know that my redeemer lives, and on the last day I will rise from the earth.* (26) *And I will be surrounded by my own hide again and in my flesh I will see God,* (27) *Whom I myself am going to see and my eyes are going to behold, and no one else. This hope of mine is stored up in my breast.* (28) *Why then do you say now: Let us persecute him and let us find the root of the word against him.* (29) *Flee, then, from the face of the sword, since His sword is the avenger of iniquities, and know that there is judgment.*

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Job had said above that his hope had been taken away "as if from an uprooted tree" (v. 10), and he said this, of course, referring to the hope of recovering temporal prosperity, to which his friends many times urged him on. Now he has shown in many ways above by reducing their arguments to various inconsistencies that he should not have this hope (vv. 11-20), but now he manifestly discloses his intention, showing that he had not said the things said before as if despairing of God but because he had a higher hope in Him, related not to present but to future goods. And since he was about to say grand and wonderful and certain things, he first shows his desire that the opinion which he was about to give be perpetuated in the faith of posterity. Now we transmit our sense and our words to posterity through the function of writing. Therefore, he says *Who would grant me that my speeches be written down*, namely, the things which I am about to say about the hope which I have affirmed in God, so that my speeches may not be deleted by forgetfulness? Now things which are written in ink are usually deleted by the long passage of time; therefore, when we wish some writing to be preserved for a long time, we write it down, not only by means of writing but by some impression on either hide or metal or stone. And since what he was hoping for was not going to be in the near future but is reserved to be fulfilled in the end of time, he therefore adds *Who would grant me that they be engraven in a book with an iron stilus* as if by some impression made on hide *or*, if this is insufficient, by some stronger impression made on *a sheet of lead or*, if even this seems insufficient, *certainly that they be carved* with an iron stilus *on flint*.

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Now he shows what these speeches are which he would like to be preserved with such great care, adding *For I know that my redeemer lives*, and he expressly assigns this remark by way of giving a reason. For that which we do not hold for certain we do not take care to commit to memory. Therefore, he says expressly *For I know*, namely, through the certitude of faith. Now this hope is in the glory of future resurrection, concerning which he first assigns a reason when he says *my redeemer lives*. And here one should consider that man, who had been constituted immortal by God, incurred death through sin, according to the text of Romans 5:12: "Through one man sin entered into this world, and through sin, death," and from this sin, of course, the human race had to be redeemed through Christ, a redemption which Job foresaw through the spirit of faith. Now Christ redeemed us from sin through death by dying for us. He did not die, however, in such a way that death engulfed Him since, although He died in His humanity, He nevertheless could not die in his divinity. Now in accordance with the life of divinity, even humanity has been restored by rising again to life, according to II Corinthians 13:4: "For although He was crucified in accordance with our weakness, yet He lives by the power of God." And the life of the risen Christ, moreover, will be poured out to all men in the common resurrection. Hence, the Apostle also adds in the same place: "For we, too, are weak in Him, but we will live in Him by the power of God in us"; hence, the Lord says in John 5:25: "The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear it will live, for just as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted to the Son also to have life in Him." The life of the Son of God, therefore, is the principal cause of the resurrection of man, and this life did not take its beginning from Mary, as the Ebionites said, [†10](#) but it always was, according to Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ yesterday and today and even for all ages." Therefore, he expressly does not say 'My redeemer will live' but *lives*. And for this reason he predicts the future resurrection, determining its time when he adds *and on the last day I will rise from the earth*. And here one should consider that certain men, positing that the movement of heaven and this state of the world will last forever, have posited that after a

fixed number of revolutions of years, with the stars returning to the same positions, dead men may be restored to life. †11 Now since the day is caused by the movement of heaven, if the movement of heaven will last forever there will be no last day; therefore, to remove the error just mentioned he says expressly *on the last day* and agrees with the opinion of the Lord, Who says in John 6:40: "I will raise him up on the last day."

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There were others who said that men will rise, resuming not earthly but certain heavenly bodies, †12 but to exclude this belief he adds *And I will be surrounded by my own hide again*, and he says this expressly since he had said above that only the hide had remained around his bones. Now by this very manner of speaking he assigns a reason for the resurrection, namely, so that the soul may not always remain denuded of its proper covering. Again, there were others who were saying that the soul would resume the same body which it had put aside, but under the same condition, so that, namely, it would need food and drink and would exercise the other carnal works of this life, but he excludes this belief, adding *and in my flesh I will see God*. For it is manifest that man's flesh is corruptible according to the state of the present life: "Now the body, which is corrupted, weighs down the soul," as is said in Wisdom 9:15; therefore, no one living in this mortal flesh can see God. But the flesh which the soul will resume in resurrection will be the same in substance, of course, but will have incorruptibility by divine gift, according to the Apostle, I Corinthians 15:53: "It is necessary that this corruptible body put on incorruptibility"; therefore, that flesh will be of such a condition that in no way will it impede the soul from being able to see God but will be entirely subject to it. In ignorance of this fact, Porphyry said that "In order to become blessed, the soul must flee every body," as if the soul, not man, is going to see God. †13 To exclude this belief Job adds *Whom I myself am going to see*, as if to say: Not only will my soul see God but *I myself* who consist of soul and body. And to show that the body will also share in that vision in its own way, he adds *and my eyes are going to behold*, not because the eyes of the body are going to see the divine essence but because the eyes of the body will see God made man. They will also see the glory of God shining in His creation, according to Augustine at the end of *City of God*. †14 And so that it may be believed that the same man in number, not only the same in species, is going to be restored to see God, he adds *and no one else*, namely, in number—so that it may not be believed that he expects such a restoration of life as Aristotle describes in *On Generation and Corruption* II.11, saying that when things whose substance is corruptible have been moved, they are repeated the same in species, not the same in number. †15

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Having premised these things about the reason for resurrection, then, about the time and the manner, the glory of the one rising, and His identity, he adds *This hope of mine is stored up in my breast*, as if to say: My hope is not in the earthly things which you vainly promise but in the future glory of resurrection. Now he expressly says *is stored up in my breast* to show that he had this hope concealed not only in words but in his heart, not doubtful but most firm, not as if it were cheap but as if it were most precious, for what is concealed in the breast is held in secret, is firmly preserved, and is deemed dear.

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Having shown the depth of the hope which he had in God, then, he excludes their calumnies which they were seeking against him, as if he had cast away hope in and fear of God since he was not putting hope in temporal things. Hence, he adds *Why then do you say now: Let us persecute him*, namely, as if I were despairing of God or not fearing God, *and let us find the root of the word against him*, disapproving of my words as if I have denied God's providence. I do not deny it but claim it, saying that rewards and punishments are being prepared by God for man even after this life; therefore, he adds *Flee, then, from the face of the sword*, that is, of the divine vengeance reserved for you in the future life although you may flourish in temporal prosperity, *since His sword is the avenger of iniquities*, that is, the vengeance which He Himself will apply properly after death; *and know that there is judgment*, not only in this life but also after this life in the resurrection of good and evil men.

Chapter Twenty

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(1) Now Zophar the Naamathite said in response: (2) For that reason my various reflections follow one upon the other, and my mind is snatched in different directions. (3) I will hear the teaching by which you criticize me, and the spirit of my understanding will respond for me. (4) This I know from the beginning, since man was put on earth, (5) that the praise of impious men is brief and the joy of a hypocrite is about like a pin-point. (6) If his pride ascends all the way into heaven and his head touches the clouds, (7) like a dung-hill he will be thrown out in the end, and those who had seen him will say: Where is he? (8) Like a dream flying away he will not be found; he will pass like a vision in the night. (9) The eye which had seen him will not see him and no more will his place look upon him. (10) His sons will be ruined by want and his hands will give back to him his own pain. (11) His bones will be filled with the vices of his youth and will sleep with him in the dust. (12) For since evil was sweet in his mouth, he hid it under his tongue. (13) He will spare it; he does not abandon it and he will conceal it in his throat.

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Having heard Job's opinion about the hope of future life, Zophar seems to have acquiesced; hence, after this his second response he did not speak in opposition a third time. Nevertheless, there was still something in his heart which did not permit him to withdraw entirely from his prior opinion. For he thought that, although in a future life retributions and punishments might be made for merits, as he had learned from Job, nevertheless it still did not seem to him that the prosperity and adversity of this life were dispensed to men by God in return for the merit of virtues or sins. Therefore, as if partly convinced and partly still holding on to his first opinion, he says *For that reason*, namely, because of the things which you say about hope in a future life, *my various reflections follow one upon the other*. And in order that such various reflections not be understood to pertain to the same opinion, as when someone thinks through various reasons to the same conclusion he adds *and my mind is snatched in different directions*, namely, I am led by the force of the reasons which can be adduced for each opinion now to one conclusion, now to the other, as if the force of the reasons were not sufficient to resolve the contrary reasons. For it seemed to him that he ought not to repudiate Job's opinion about hope in a future life. Therefore, he adds *I will hear the teaching by which you criticize me*, namely, believing what you said about future resurrection, but nevertheless I still do not totally dismiss my first opinion. This is the point of adding *and the spirit of my understanding will respond for me*, as if to say: My understanding still has something to respond for its own opinion.

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Now to Zophar it seemed very certain and proved by experience that although evil men enjoy some prosperity it is nevertheless brief and is also quickly brought to an end in this life, either by an early death or by some subsequent adversity. This is the point of adding *This I know*, namely, considering *from the beginning since man was put on earth*, as if he were saying from the beginning of the human race, *that the praise of impious men is brief*. For sometimes they are praised to some degree because of some signs and beginnings of goodness which appear in them, but they are immediately clouded over as a result of the iniquitous works which appear in them. Therefore, the joy which they have from the favor which they

receive from their pretense passes in a short time. This is the point of adding *and the joy of a hypocrite is about like a pin-point*, as if it will pass in a moment, since afterwards it is recognized by its fruits, as is said in Matthew 7:16. For sometimes it happens that, as a result of the favor which one has gained in a brief time from his pretense, he is raised to some lofty state. Hence, he shows next that not even this state will be stable for him when he says *If his pride ascends all the way into heaven*, that is, if because of the lofty state which he has attained he should ascend to such great pride that he does not deem himself liable to fall, as an earthly creature, but immovable, as a celestial one, *and his head touches the clouds*, so that, namely, he may be promoted beyond the common state of men, *like a dung-hill he will be thrown out in the end*, either through an early death by which he is rendered a human cadaver, worthless and detestable like dung—according to Jeremiah 9:22, "The dead body of a man will fall like dung on the surface of the field"—or because his malice will be uncovered and he will be deemed worthless by everyone, according to Ecclesiasticus 9:10: "Every woman who is a prostitute will be trodden under foot like dung on the road." Now when his pride has been cast down astonishment will rise in the hearts of men from so sudden a dejection, and the reverence which was had toward him will cease. Hence is added the observation *and those who had seen him will say: Where is he?*, either wondering at him or despising him.

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And to show that his dejection is irreparable Zophar adds *Like a dream flying away he will not be found*, for just as a bird is easily removed from the eyes of men by flying away, so, too, dreams are easily removed from human knowledge. And since no trace, even a weak one, remains of them, not even a testimony to someone by which it can be sought back if it should be lost, therefore the knowledge of it passes irreparably. And Zophar similarly gives one to understand that the downfall of impious men is irreparable. And he shows that the reasons for this irreparability are many: first, of course, on the part of the sinner himself who perishes. Hence it is said that *he will pass like a vision in the night*, which is, in fact, the vision of an impermanent phantom; therefore, after it has ceased there is no possible return to it. Now a daytime vision is of something permanent, and if someone has ceased to see it he can run back to see it again. And similarly, as long as a sinner remains, if adversity should come to him he can hope for restoration. But when he himself has passed from this life there is no further hope of restoration. Now second, he shows that his downfall is irreparable on the part of other men when he adds *The eye which had seen him will not see him*. For things which withdraw from the eyes also pass easily from the memory. Hence, the dead, who are withdrawn from human sight, are easily given over to oblivion so that in this way they neither have glory in the memories of men, nor do their friends care to offer them more ample help. Third, he shows the reason for his irreparability since he cannot return to his prior state; hence, he adds *and no more will his place look upon him*. For a man cannot return after death to the same manner of living. And not only he himself will be cast down, passing in his own person and withdrawn from the eyes of men, never to be restored to his own place, but his sons, too, will be punished for his sin. Hence follows the observation *His sons will be ruined by want*, namely, by the just judgment of God, so that, since he has sinned for his sons' riches he may be frustrated in his hope even in this when his sons have become paupers.

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Next, as if acquiescing at last in the opinion of Job, he also adds something about the punishments of future life, saying *and his hands will give back to him his own pain*, that is, in return for the works of the sins which he committed he will suffer pain in punishments. And that that retribution of pain is to be understood after death appears through the addition *His bones will be filled with the vices of his youth and will sleep with him in the dust*, as if to say: Even after death, when his flesh will be dissolved into dust, when only his bones remain in the tomb, he will suffer punishment for his sins, not only those which he committed in old age but also those which he committed in youth, a time which is more inclined to sin. And he shows the reason why he is punished for sins even after death, adding *For since evil was sweet in his mouth he hid it under his tongue*, and he speaks metaphorically of a man eating sweet food, who does not swallow it quickly but holds it a long time in his mouth in order to be delighted longer. Hence,

explaining this metaphor he adds *He will spare it*, namely, the evil or sin which is sweet to him, not wishing to destroy it, and he would destroy it, of course, by letting it go. Hence follows *he does not abandon it*. Now he shows why he does not abandon it, adding *and he will conceal it in his throat*, that is, he will manifest it to no one, and on this account no one will dissuade him from his hidden sin, nor apply any remedy which is applied to those who confess their sins. This, then, is the reason why someone's sins are punished after death, because he did not want to give them up in life.

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(14) His bread in his stomach will turn into the venom of asps within. (15) The riches which he has devoured he will vomit forth, and from his belly God will draw them out. (16) The head of asps will rise, and the viper's tongue will kill him. (17) Let him not see the rivulets of the river torrent of honey and butter. (18) He will atone for all that he has done, and yet he will not be consumed. According to the multitude of his inventions, so too will he sustain [punishment]. (19) Since he has stripped the house of the poor man, breaking it in pieces, he has stolen a house and not built it. (20) Nor is his belly sated, and when he has the things which he had desired he will not be able to possess them. (21) Nothing has remained of his food. For this reason nothing will remain of his goods. (22) When he has been sated he will be restricted and he will be inflamed and every pain will rush against him. (23) May his belly be filled so that He may loose against him the anger of His fury and rain down His war over him. (24) He will flee weapons of iron and he will rush upon the bronze bow, (25) drawn, and coming out of its bow-case and flashing for his bitterness. Horrible demons will advance and come over him. (26) All darkness has been hidden in his secrets. There will devour him the fire which is not enkindled; abandoned in his tent he will be afflicted. (27) The heavens will reveal his iniquity and the earth will rise up against him. (28) The offspring of his house will be open; it will be dragged away on the day of the Lord's fury. (29) This is the portion of the impious man from God and the inheritance of his words from the Lord.

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Since Zophar had said that the bones of the impious man must be filled with the vices of his youth, namely, so that he may be punished for them after death, ¶ he now pursues more widely the topic of his punishments, and first he shows that the goods which he had in this world will turn to evils for him. And he uses the metaphor of someone eating, whose food is sometimes converted to evil. This happens in two ways: in one way, when undigested food remains inside and is converted into venomous humors, and with respect to this way he says *His bread in his stomach will turn into the venom of asps within*, as if to say: Just as sometimes food which has been eaten turns into venomous humors, so also the goods which he had in this world persistently until his death will turn to the bitterness of death for him. In the second way, food which has been eaten, if it cannot be digested, is sometimes cast out by vomiting with detestation and pain. So, too, it sometimes happens by divine judgment that sinners lose painfully, as if they were undigested, the temporal goods which they acquire in this world because they do not use them well. Hence, he adds *The riches which he has devoured*, that is, acquired rapaciously, *he will vomit forth*, that is, he will lose with detestation, *and from his belly*, that is, from his ownership, *God will draw them out*, since, namely, by divine judgment they will be taken from him with a certain violence.

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And not only will the goods which he had turn to evil for him but he will also suffer evils at the hands of his enemies, both in word and in deed; therefore, he posits two examples, the first, of course, of the asp, which kills by biting. Hence, he says *The head of asps will rise*, namely, against him, to bite him, by which figure is signified some prince of evildoers or even the devil attacking him. He posits a second example of a viper, which spreads venom with his tongue; hence follows *and the viper's tongue will kill him*, by which statement is understood some harm or other coming from the tongue of man like venom from the tongue of a viper.

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Next he adds the punishment from the privation of goods when he adds *Let him not see the rivulets of the river torrent of honey and butter*. Now honey and butter are similar in this sense, that each one is sweet to eat, but honey is collected from flowers by the good office of bees, whereas butter is taken with the assistance of men from the milk of domestic animals. Hence, by honey can be signified some delectable good or other coming forth without the industry of men, whereas by butter is designated some delightful good coming forth from human endeavor. Now a torrent comes over one suddenly and unexpectedly. In the word *river* is designated abundance because of the multitude of waters, whereas in the word *rivulets* is designated the distribution of goods. For not all men have all the temporal or all the spiritual goods, but some have the former and some have the latter. One is given to understand, then, that in Zophar's opinion the sweetness of goods comes forth abundantly and unexpectedly for good men, both from human assistance and from divine providence, without human industry but according to some ordered distribution, of which, he claims, the sinner is deprived. And since sometimes as a result of the multitude of his punishments man fails so that he is unable to sustain further punishments, he adds that although a sinner may be punished in many ways in this life he is nevertheless further reserved for the punishments of the future life. Hence follows *He will atone for all that he has done*, that is, for each of his sins he will suffer punishment, *and yet he will not be consumed*, namely, according to the spirit, which is reserved for future punishments.

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Next Zophar shows the fittingness of the punishments to the crimes when he adds *According to the multitude of his inventions*, that is, of sins which he carefully reflected upon, *so too will he sustain [punishment]* since, namely, the punishment will correspond to the crime with a certain fittingness. And first he manifests this point with respect to the crime of rapacity, in which he posits two crimes in order. The first of these is violent plundering, which he signifies, adding *Since he has stripped the house of the poor man, breaking it in pieces*, signifying the violence, of course, in the breaking, and the plundering in the stripping. Second, he posits the crime of neglect of restitution, and with respect to this crime he adds *he has stolen a house and not built it*, as if to say: The things which he took from the house or which he destroyed in breaking up the house he has neglected to compensate. Now he adds a fitting punishment for this crime, saying *Nor is his belly sated*, as if to say: Since "he has stripped the house of the poor man" (v. 19), not allowing him to be sated by his own goods, therefore his appetite is not sated either by the goods which he rightly possesses or by those which he has acquired unjustly since, as is said in Ecclesiastes 5:9, "the avaricious man will not get his fill of money, and he who loves riches will take no profit from them." With respect to this second point he adds *and when he has the things which he had desired, he will not be able to possess them* since either he will be taken away from them or they will be taken away from him. And it is fitting that he lose them against his will since he did not wish to restore of his own accord the things which he took.

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Next Zophar manifests the same point in the crime of voracity, which he posits when he adds *Nothing has remained of his food* since, namely, whatever he had he converted to his own uses, reserving nothing for the need of other men. And he adds a fitting punishment, saying *for this reason nothing will remain of his goods*, namely, for him, since he will lose them all, and this is a fitting punishment inasmuch as he did not wish to reserve any of his goods for others; hence, it is just that nothing be reserved for him. With respect to the fact that he has consumed his surplus goods for his own uses, however, he adds another fitting punishment, saying *When he has been sated, he will be restricted*, and he speaks in the metaphor of a man who eats too much, whose entrails, compressed by excessive food, are restricted. Through this metaphor is signified the fact that a man who spends his surplus for his own uses or who has acquired surpluses for himself will suffer a certain restriction, unable to dispose of all his acquisitions correctly, as is clear in Luke 12:18 about the rich man whose field had produced such abundant crops that he wished to destroy his barns to make more ample ones. Now from a restriction of the intestines follows inordinate heat and

anxiety; hence, he adds *and he will be inflamed*. Similarly, those who gather together many possessions for themselves in a disorderly fashion are afflicted by excessive care. Finally, as a result of surplus food, pain usually reaches all the limbs. Hence, he adds *and every pain will rush against him*. Similarly, too, many pains arise for those who have gathered together surplus goods when they suffer losses in many ways.

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Zophar, therefore, considering that the impious man's satiety is harmful to him, as if from a zeal for justice wishes on him a satiety of temporal goods so that he may suffer punishment. Hence follows *May his belly be filled*, namely, with an abundance of temporal goods, *so that He*, namely, God, *may loose against him the anger of His fury*, that is, vengeance without mercy. And he shows the measure of his anger, adding *and rain down His war over him*. And in this expression, *rain down*, he designates the abundance of evils. In the expression *over him*, that is, over the strength of the sinner, he designates powerlessness to resist. In the expression *His war*, however, he shows that evils are not being inflicted upon him for his correction by means of the discipline with which a father chastises a son but by means of the extermination with which enemies are destroyed. Hence, he adds *He will flee weapons of iron*, that is, the present punishments, by sustaining impatiently the punishments which strike from close quarters in the manner of an iron sword, *and he will rush upon the bronze bow*, that is, upon the punishments of the future life, which strike from afar, as it were, in the manner of a bronze bow, which is unbreakable, in order to designate the interminability of future punishments. Now next he explains the process of this bow, saying *drawn, and coming out of its bow-case*, supply 'will be that bow.' For as long as the bow is in its bow-case it does not strike. Similarly, as long as the vengeance of future damnation is in God's foreknowledge as if in a kind of bow-case, it does no damage, but by malice which provokes God it is drawn from this bow-case and then it comes out through divine disposition. And he shows its effect, adding *and flashing for his bitterness*, for just as the lightning-bolt comes from above suddenly, with violence and with brightness, so that vengeance will be inflicted upon the sinner by God unexpectedly, with such great violence that it will not be able to be resisted and with such great brightness of justice that there will be no room for excuse, and as a result of this fact the sinner will be filled with bitterness.

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Next Zophar explains the punishments of vengeance part by part—first with respect to the fact that the sinner will be handed over to the power of demons, and with respect to this fact he adds *Horrible demons will advance and come over him*, that is, demons will receive unrestrained power over him. Next he posits the punishment of loss when he adds *All darkness has been hidden in his secrets* since, namely, he will suffer perfect darkness inside and out, separated far from the brightness of God. And he says that this darkness is in secret, of course, since, just as the brightness of the saints is hidden from us in this life, so, too, is the darkness of impious men. Next he posits the punishment of sense when he says *There will devour him*, not, of course, by consuming him but by swallowing him in its affliction, *the fire*, namely, of hell, *which is not enkindled*, namely, by human endeavor but by divine power, according to Isaiah 30:33: ". . . the breath of the Lord enkindling it like a torrent of sulphur." Now in these punishments no help will be at hand for him; hence, he adds *abandoned in his tent he will be afflicted*, that is, because he will be abandoned without help in a place of punishments allotted to him.

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After the penalties which the sinner will suffer on his own have been posited, then, he adds punishments which pertain to him insofar as he remains in this life after death: first, with respect to the fact that he remains in the memories of men, saying *The heavens will reveal his iniquity*, that is, by the power of heaven it will happen that his iniquity, which lay hidden in life, will be revealed after death, *and the earth will rise up against him* since, when his iniquity has been manifested, men on earth, who perhaps revered him when he was alive, will be stirred up even against a dead man. Next he posits his punishment with respect to the fact that he remains in his children when he says *The offspring of his house will be open*, that is, his children will be exposed to trials. *And this offspring will be dragged away*, namely, from this life

is, his children will be exposed to trials. And his offspring will be dragged away, namely, from this life, on the day of the Lord's fury, that is, on the day of divine vengeance, although this verse can also refer to the final judgment, in which the saints will reveal the iniquity of the sinner, and the whole world "will fight against the foolish people." †2 Their offspring, that is, the works of sin, will be manifested, and finally the impious one will be dragged away into hell.

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Next, in summing up he adds *This is the portion of the impious man from God*, that is, which he acquired for himself by his impious works, *and the inheritance of his words from the Lord*, namely, which he acquired for himself by his wicked words. And one should consider that among the premised remarks he has mixed future punishments with present punishments.

Chapter Twenty-one

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(1) Now Job said in response: (2) Listen, please, to my speeches and do penance; (3) bear with me so that I too may speak, and after my words, if it seems right, laugh. (4) Is my debate against a man, so that I should not be deservedly saddened? (5) Pay attention to me and be awed and put a finger over your mouth. (6) Even I, when I have thought it over, am stricken with awe, and trembling pierces my flesh. (7) Why, then, do impious men live; why have they been lifted up and comforted with riches? (8) Their seed remains before their eyes, a crowd of relatives and grandchildren in their sight. (9) Their houses are secure and peaceful, and God's rod is not over them. (10) Their ox has conceived and has not aborted; the heifer has given birth and has not been deprived of her offspring. (11) They go out, their young like flocks, and their infants dance at play. (12) They hold the drum and the cithara and they rejoice at the sound of the organ. (13) They spend their days in goods and in an instant they descend to the underworld. (14) And they have said to God: Withdraw from us; we do not wish a knowledge of Your ways; (15) who is the Almighty that we should serve Him, and what does it profit us if we adore Him? (16) But yet, since their own goods are not in their hand, let their counsel be far from me. (17) As often as the lamp of impious men is extinguished and there comes over them an inundation and He divides the pains of His fury, (18) they will be like chaff before the face of the wind and like ash which the whirlwind scatters. (19) God will save the father's pain for his sons, and when He renders, then he will know it; (20) his eyes will see their killing and he will drink of the fury of the Almighty. (21) For what difference does it make what happens to his house after him, or if the number of his months will be cut in half?

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Since Zophar in his premised words had already consented in some respect to Job's opinion so that he posited that sins are punished after death, although he still retained his own opinion in this regard, namely, that those sins are punished temporally in life also, Job was encouraged in the hope of converting them totally to the true opinion; therefore, first he humbly induces them to pay attention when he says *Listen, please, to my speeches*. And since up to this point they had listened to his words with a kind of mockery, he adds *and do penance*, namely, for the fact that you have mocked my words or because you have contradicted the truth. And since you have all spoken twice already, †1 *bear with me so that I too may speak*, namely, by responding to that which was proposed last. And lest they render a judgment of condemnation before they hear him he adds *and after my words if it seems right laugh* as if to say: If

you judge this opinion of mine laughable, nevertheless hear my response first, and if it does not satisfy you, you will be able to mock more justly afterward. And lest it seem that his words will necessarily be contemned, he shows that he is about to speak of great matters, namely, about divine, not human, judgments. Hence, he adds *Is my debate against a man, so that I should not be deservedly saddened?*, as if to say: If the intention of my debate aimed at an inquiry into whether some man has justly or unjustly afflicted me, however this had happened I would deservedly lack sadness. But my debate aims to inquire how this has happened by the just judgment of God. And since that debate concerns a great matter it should be listened to attentively. Hence, he says *Pay attention to me*. It also should be listened to not frivolously, with mockery, but rather gravely, with awe; hence, he adds *and be awed*. It should also be listened to in silence, without muttering; hence, he adds *and put a finger over your mouth*. And lest he seem to say this boastfully, as if to bring honor to his authority he shows that he, too, is awed at the loftiness of this question. Hence, he adds *Even I, when I have thought it over, am stricken with awe*, lest, namely, in so great a question I may fall short of the truth in any respect or speak irreverently of divine judgments. Now that fear does not stop in the mind but reaches even to the flesh; hence, he adds *and trembling pierces my flesh*, for the flesh is also affected by a strong passion of the spirit.

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These premises being sufficient to get their attention, he proceeds to the question, and since Zophar had said that the prosperity of evil men, if it exists at all, soon comes to an end and turns into evil for them, ^{†2} Job therefore immediately rejects these opinions, saying *Why, then, do impious men live*, namely, a long time? It is as if he should say: If the impious man passes so quickly, like a bird flying away and like a vision in the night, ^{†3} why is it that many impious men are long-lived? Likewise, if "the joy of a hypocrite is about like a pin-point" [20:5] and his ascent is quickly cast down, why *have they been lifted up*, that is, promoted to offices? Likewise, if "the riches which he has devoured he vomits forth" [20:15], why are they *comforted with riches*, that is, why are their riches confirmed for them? In contradiction, too, to what Zophar had said, that "his sons will be ruined by want" [20:10], he says *Their seed remains before their eyes*, that is, their sons persevere and they see them. And he adds the same thing concerning other related persons, saying *a crowd of relatives and grandchildren in their sight*. By this remark he designates a twofold prosperity since neither are their relatives taken away by death, a meaning which he signifies in the expression *remains*, nor are they far separated by exile or any such thing, a meaning which he designates by the expressions *before their eyes* and *in their sight*.

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Next Job pursues part by part the premised prosperity of impious men, first with respect to the impious men themselves, premising their immunity from evil when he says *Their houses*, that is, their families along with their necessary property, *are secure*, namely, from the assault of enemies, *and peaceful*, that is, lacking internal dissension. Moreover, they are also immune from the divine scourge, and with respect to this fact he adds *and God's rod is not over them*, namely, since they are not corrected for their sins in this life. He also adds a remark about the multiplication of goods, namely, since their goods are not sterile, nor are they deprived of their fruit. And he manifests this fact in the species of oxen, which, among the ancients, were most welcome because of agriculture. Hence, he says *Their ox*, that is, heifer, *has conceived*, by which sterility is ruled out. Now conception is first in the fertilization of animals; second is the formation of the fetus conceived in the womb and the gestation to term, which is impeded by abortion. With respect to the latter he says *and has not aborted*. Now third is birth, and with respect to it he says *the heifer has given birth*, signifying the same thing by the name of ox and of heifer, and he uses both names, either for the sake of ornamenting the speech or because of metric necessity. Fourth is the upbringing of the young, and with respect to this function he adds *and has not been deprived of her offspring*, namely, by death seizing it beforehand.

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Now next Job adds a treatment of prosperity with respect to sons, concerning which he posits first the multitude of offspring when he says *They go out*, namely, walking in the streets, not prevented by death, *their young like flocks*, namely, in a multitude and in mutual concord. Second, he posits their security when he adds *and their infants dance at play*, as if they do not groan with infirmities. Third, he posits their learning, as a part of which among the ancients free men were instructed in music. Hence, he says *They hold the drum and the cithara and they rejoice at the sound of the organ*, as if instructed both to practice music fittingly themselves and to judge others competently by listening.

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But lest anyone say that this prosperity of theirs lasts but a short time, "about like a pin-point" [20:5], he adds to the contrary *They spend their days in goods*, as if to say: They spend all the days of their life in prosperity. Now it is necessary as a result of the common condition that they finally experience death, but they nonetheless suffer this death without distress beforehand. Hence, he adds *and in an instant they descend to the underworld*, that is, into death. For all the ancients before the coming of the Redeemer, about which he had spoken above, ^{†4} descended into the underworld, ^{†5} but some, pressed by adversities in life, descended into the underworld not suddenly but through many bitter things, as Jacob said in Genesis 37:35: "Grieving will I descend to my son in the underworld." But those who thrive in prosperity until death descend to the underworld as if in an instant.

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Now it could be responded that impious men, among the many evils which they commit, have merited earthly prosperity from God either by loving Him or by acknowledging Him or by serving Him by any works at all, or at least by seeking temporal goods from Him. But Job excludes this possibility, adding *And they have said to God*, namely, sinning with a determined heart as if from a confirmed malice, *Withdraw from us*, an injunction which pertains to a defect of love; *we do not wish a knowledge of Your ways*, a statement which pertains to a defect of knowledge through affected ignorance—now God's precepts and judgments by which we are disposed by Him are called His ways—*Who is the Almighty that we should serve Him?*, a question which pertains to a lack of good works which comes from a contempt for God; *and what does it profit us if we adore Him?*, a question which pertains to a contempt for prayer because of a lack of hope.

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In this way, then, he very evidently refuted their opinion by showing that temporal prosperity is not always the reward for virtue, nor is temporal adversity the punishment for sin, since the impious frequently prosper in this life although they merit nothing good from God, and along with this prosperity they suffer no grave adversities. Now someone could make the following objection: If prosperity falls to the lot of the impious, and they are without adversities, then there is no reason to turn aside from malice; hence, Ecclesiastes 9:3 says, "The same fortunes befall everybody; hence, also, the hearts of the sons of men are full of malice." But Job responds to this objection, saying *But yet, since their own goods are not in their hand, let their counsel be far from me*. And concerning this point one should know that in the hand of man, that is, in his power, are certain goods, namely, voluntary works of virtue of which he is master through free will aided by the grace of God. Therefore, virtuous men can always retain such goods as long as they wish, and on this account the plan to pursue such goods must be adopted. But the goods of temporal prosperity are not in the power of those who have them so that they can acquire or retain them when they wish; therefore, their plan by which they despise God and justice so that they may live prosperously must be rejected, since by this means they cannot achieve what they intend but are sometimes pressed by adversities.

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Now one should consider further that the adversity of an impious man is graver than that of a just man, since when a just man suffers temporal adversity there remains to him the support of virtue and consolation

since when a just man suffers temporal adversity there remains to him the support of virtue and consolation in God; hence, he is not totally dissipated. But to evil men, once the temporal goods which alone they sought for themselves have been lost, no support remains. Hence is added *As often as the lamp*, that is, the prosperity, *of impious men is extinguished*, that is, comes to an end, *and there comes over them*, namely, by divine judgment, *an inundation*, that is, a grave tempest of adversity, *and as often as God divides*, that is, distributes in a fixed measure, *the pains*, that is, some afflictions *of His fury*, that is, coming forth from His fury, *they*, namely, impious men, *will be like chaff before the face of the wind*, which, namely, because of its lightness, cannot resist the wind, *and like ash*, namely, which remains after wood has been burned, *which the whirlwind scatters*, since, namely, it does not have moisture to hold itself together. So, too, the impious cannot resist when adversity comes since they lack the support of divine hope, and they are scattered by different reflections because they lack the moisture of virtue.

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And after this he adds an observation about adversity with respect to sons when he says *God will save the father's pain for his sons* since, namely, the father's punishment extends to the sons as imitators of their father's malice. And this punishment will not be deferred until after the death of the father, but it will exist while the father is alive and knowing it. Hence, he adds *and when He renders*, namely, when God renders the punishment on the sons, *then he*, namely, the father, *will know it*. Hence, he adds *his eyes will see their killing*, that is, of his sons, or whatever adversity, and in this very fact *he will drink of the fury of the Almighty*, since this very fact, that the sons are punished while he is alive, belongs to the father's punishment. It would not, however, if they were punished after his death. Hence, he adds *For what difference does it make what happens to his house after him?*, that is, he would not be afflicted by the future misfortunes of his descendants, especially since a sinner after death would not know this, as was said above at 14:21: "Whether his children will be noble or ignoble, he will not understand." Or also, what difference does it make to him *if the number of his months will be cut in half*. He cannot be pained over this in life since he did not know it would happen.

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(22) *Will anyone teach knowledge to God Who judges eminent men?* (23) *One man dies mighty and healthy, rich and fortunate.* (24) *His entrails are full of fat, and his bones are nourished by marrow.* (25) *But another man dies in the bitterness of his soul, without any resources.* (26) *And yet they will sleep together in the dust, and the worms will cover them.* (27) *Certainly I know your reflections and your opinions which are inequitable toward me.* (28) *For you say: Where is the house of the prince? And where are the tents of impious men?* (29) *Ask any of the travelers and you will know that he understands these same things,* (30) *that the evil man is saved for the day of perdition and he is led to the day of fury.* (31) *Who will criticize his way in his presence? And who will render to him for what he has done?* (32) *He himself will be led to the tomb and in the gathering of the dead he will keep vigil.* (33) *Sweet was he to the gravel of Cocytus, and it drags every man after it and countless men before it.* (34) *How, then, do you console me in vain, since your response has been shown to be repugnant to the truth?*

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Since Job had proposed above that to the impious in this life comes sometimes prosperity, sometimes adversity, a situation which causes doubt among men, [16](#) addressing himself therefore to the removal of this doubt he premises that this circumstance does not arise from a defect of divine knowledge, as if the malice of those for whom life turns out prosperously escapes God's notice. Therefore, he says *Will anyone teach knowledge to God?*, as if to say: He does not need to be instructed by anyone about man's merits to know to whom He should render prosperity and to whom adversity. Now what he adds, *Who judges the eminent*, can be applied in two ways—in one way so that the sense may be that God does not need anyone's instruction to be able to judge the eminent, that is, those who prosper in this world, as in human affairs judges need to be instructed by witnesses on the merits of those to be judged. In another way it can be understood that a test of precedent, as it were, is being introduced. For that God knows all things and

that He does not need to be instructed by others is clear from the fact that He himself passes judgment over men however eminent they may be. Now no one judges things which he does not know. Hence, it is impossible that the knowledge of anyone, however eminent, may escape His notice.

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Having premised the sufficiency of divine knowledge, then, Job adds material for the doubt which can arise concerning the different disposition of human affairs, in which some men prosper until death whereas others die in misery. Now temporal prosperity consists first of all in power, and with respect to this fact he says *One man dies mighty*. Second, it consists in the health of the body, and with respect to this fact he adds *and healthy*; third, in the opulence of external things, with respect to which he adds *rich*; fourth, in the prosperous success of one's plans and works, and with respect to this fact he adds *and fortunate*. For among some men he is called fortunate for whom all things succeed according to his prayer. ^{†7} Now to signify not only sufficient but even superabundant riches, he adds His *entrails are full of fat*. For fat is generated because of a superabundance of nourishment. And to show again that his power was supported by many aids, he adds *and his bones are nourished by marrow*, for strength is designated by bones, whose might is sustained by the nourishment of the marrow. Now he adds an observation about the adversity of others, saying *But another man dies in the bitterness of his soul*, a remark which pertains, of course, to the internal pains which men conceive either from bodily harms or from unfortunate events. Now he adds *without any resources* to designate a lack of external things. But yet, although men with equal merits are differentiated this way in life, it cannot be said that their lot is changed after death, at least in these things which are different with reference to the body, for their bodies are disposed equally after death. Hence, he adds *And yet, they will sleep together in the dust*, that is, they will be buried in the earth equally, *and the worms will cover them*, that is, their bodies will rot equally. Hence, it is clear that no reason for the difference which exists among men in prosperity and adversity, in these things which are of equal merit or demerit, can be assigned on the basis of a different disposition of their bodies after death.

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Now it was the opinion of Job's friends that the reason for the difference just mentioned was based on the difference in merits, which is contrary to the evidence of experience, from the fact that some of the impious prosper and some suffer adversities. Hence, he mentions their opinion disparagingly as if already disproved when he adds *Certainly I know your reflections*, in which, namely, they were rashly condemning Job, *and your opinions*, namely, those uttered outwardly, *which are inequitable toward me* since, namely, you charge me with inequitable impiety because of the adversities which I suffer. Hence, he adds *For you say: Where is the house of the prince? And where are the tents of impious men?*, as if they were saying: You, along with your family, have fallen from the height of such great preeminence just as the tents of impious men usually fail.

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So, then, having shown by the things which he had said above the iniquity of their opinion, he addresses himself to determining the truth. And he premises that what he is about to say is not new but common knowledge with many people, for he adds *Ask any of the travelers*, as if to say: I do not have to seek testimony with great effort, since it can be had from anyone passing on the road. Or he calls travelers those who use this life not as a terminus but as a road. *And you will know that he understands these same things*, namely, which I am about to say to you. Hence, you who withdraw from a truth which all men hold in common are inexcusable. And indeed he explains this truth, adding *that the evil man is saved for the day of perdition*, as if to say: The reason that he is not punished in this life but prospers, then, is that his punishment is reserved for another time when he will be punished more gravely; hence, he adds *and he is led to the day of fury*. For since fury is anger aroused, the sharper vengeance is signified by the noun fury. ^{†8} Now he shows why he is being kept for the day of perdition and fury, adding *Who will criticize his way in his presence? And who will render to him for what he has done?* And here he seems to assign two reasons the first of which is that he is of such slight wisdom that not even by punishments would he be

reasons, the first of which is that he is of such slight reason that not even by punishments would he be taught to recognize his own guilt, but in the midst of his scourges he would murmur as if he were being punished unjustly. This is the point of saying *Who will criticize his way in his presence*, that is, so that he himself may recognize *his way*, namely, his iniquitous way. The other reason is that the punishments of this life are not sufficient for the punishing of such great guilt since if they are severe they quickly destroy the sinner, and this is the point of saying *And who will render to him for what he has done*, namely, in this life? And therefore he concludes, as it were, that the day of perdition and fury previously mentioned is not in this life but after death, for he adds *He himself will be led to the tomb*, namely, after he has died, and yet he will live in the spirit. This is the point of adding *and in the gathering of the dead he will keep vigil* since, namely, although he may seem to sleep through the death of the body, he will nevertheless keep vigil through the life of the soul. And lest he seem to pass over to joy after death, he adds *Sweet was he to the gravel of Cocytus*. For since he has invoked the testimony even of travelers he proposes the truth about the punishments of evil men after death under the guise of a story which was commonly told, namely, that in the underworld there was among others a certain river named Cocytus, which is interpreted as grief, to which the souls of evil men are led, and just as other rivers drag along gravel, so that river in a certain way rolled along the souls of the impious. Therefore, the impious man is said *to have been sweet to the gravel of Cocytus* since his company was welcome to evil men; therefore, he will have a place among evil men who are in grief. Now he adds the effect of this river with respect to men: *and it drags every man after it* since, namely, all men die with some grief. For whatever there is after death is, as it were, the hindmost part of this river, whose anterior is what is done in this life; therefore, he adds *and countless men before it* since, namely, grief seizes upon most men even in this life.

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So, then, Job has explained his opinion in his own order, first showing above at 19:25 that the hope of just men aims at the remuneration of a future life, whereas here he expresses the opinion that punishment is reserved for evil men after death. Therefore, having refuted the opinion of his adversaries on both sides of the question, he adds *How, then, do you console me in vain*, namely, by promising temporal prosperity, *since your response has been shown to be repugnant to the truth* in that you say that rewards and punishments are assigned to men in this life, a proposition which has been disproved many times above.

Chapter Twenty-two

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(1) Now Eliphaz the Themanite said in response: (2) Can a man be compared to God, even when he is of perfect knowledge? (3) What good does it do God if you will be just? Or what will you confer upon Him if your life will be spotless? (4) In fear will He charge you, and will He come with you to judgment? (5) And not because of your own very great malice and your infinite iniquities? (6) For you have taken your brothers' pledge of security without cause and you have stripped the naked of their garments. (7) You did not give water to the weary man, and you took bread from the hungry man. (8) In the strength of your arm you possessed the land and being very powerful you kept possession of it. (9) You sent away widows empty-handed and you weakened the arms of orphans. (10) Therefore, you are surrounded by snares and sudden fear disturbs you. (11) And you thought that you would not see the darkness and that the force of flooding waters would not oppress you. (12) Or do you think that God is loftier than heaven and that He is exalted over the top of the stars? (13) And you say: For what does the Lord know? And He judges

as if through a mist. (14) The clouds are His hiding-place, and He does not consider ours, and around the hinges of heaven he walks.

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When the speeches of blessed Job were finished, Eliphaz did not take his words in the intention in which they were spoken, for first Eliphaz took what Job had said to show the loftiness of the matter—"Is my debate against a man?" [21:4]—to have been said in such a way as if he intended to debate contentiously with God. Hence, he charges him with presumption on the basis of three considerations: for first, someone is challenged to debate or contend with another person when he sees that he is comparable to himself in the knowledge of the truth, so that from the mutual confrontation something hidden may be brought to light. Now it is very presumptuous that a man should dare to compare his knowledge to divine knowledge. Hence, he says *Can a man be compared to God, even when he is of perfect knowledge?*, as if to say: 'No,' because God's knowledge is infinite. Second, someone is challenged to debate or to argue with another person because of some things which he has received from him, so that a comparison of things given and received may be made. Now it is presumptuous that a man should think that the good things which he does are useful to God; hence, also, the Psalmist says in Psalm 15:2: "I said to the Lord: You are my God, since You do not need my goods." †² Hence, he adds *What good does it do God if you will be just*, namely, by doing upright works? *Or what will you confer upon Him if your life will be spotless*, namely, by abstaining from sin? Third, someone is challenged to contend in a judgment with another because of the fear of a superior power calling him into judgment, and it is sinful to think this of God. Hence, he adds *In fear*, namely, of some judge, *will He charge you*, namely, with an accusation, *and will He come with you to judgment* as if cited as an equal?

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Next, since Job had said that their opinions according to which they were saying that his house had perished like "the tents of the impious" [21:28] were iniquitous, he intends his own opinion to be correct when he adds *And not because of your own very great malice and your infinite iniquities?*, as if to say: God charges you by inflicting punishments, not because of fear but because of the love of justice, to punish your sins. Hence, malice can refer to the sins by which he has injured others, whereas iniquity can refer to the sins by which he has omitted works of justice. Hence, he says that the malice is *very great* but the iniquities are *infinite*, since a man sins in more cases by omission than he does by commission. Hence, he adds first an observation about injuries inflicted on neighbors, which are sometimes inflicted by means of calumny under the pretext of justice. Hence, he adds *For you have taken your brothers' pledge of security without cause*, namely, without necessary cause, since you could trust your brothers without a pledge of security. Now sometimes injuries are inflicted without any appearance of justice, and with respect to this situation he adds *and you have stripped the naked of their garments*, a remark which can be understood in two ways: in one way, that in stripping them you have left them naked, reserving nothing for them; in the other way, that although they were naked, that is, not sufficiently clothed, you took from them the little which they had. Now he adds a remark about the omission of good works, saying *You did not give water to the weary man*, who, namely, needed it because of thirst arising from the labor of the road, as if to say: You did not bring help and solace to the laboring and the afflicted, *and you took bread from the hungry man*, as if to say: You did not come to the aid of the needy man. And these things, of course, were said with respect to sins which he committed as a private person.

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Now he adds remarks about the sins belonging to his rule, among which he posits first that he obtained his rule not through justice but through violence. Hence, he says *In the strength of your arm you possessed the land*, that is, through your power you acquired ownership of the land. Second, he posits that he governed his subjects not through justice but through power, according to Wisdom 2:11: "Let our strength be the law of injustice." Hence, he adds *and being very powerful you kept possession of it*, as if to say: Through the preeminence of power you used your subjects at your nod. Third he posits that his judgments

through the preeminence of power you use your subjects at your hour; and he posits that his judgments were unjust, since, namely, he was not rendering justice to weak persons. Hence, he adds *You sent away widows empty-handed*, namely, when you did not do them justice with respect to their adversaries, according to Isaiah 1:23: "The widow's cause does not go in to them." And again, what is more, he oppressed weak persons; hence, he adds *and you weakened the arms of orphans*, as if to say: If there was any strength in them, you nullified it, contrary to what is said in Psalm 9:39: "Judge in favor of the orphan and the humble man." †3

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And he adds that punishments have arisen for him in return for these faults; hence, he adds *Therefore you are surrounded by snares*, that is, by adversities oppressing you on all sides so that no place of escape lies open to you after you have fallen into them. And you had not been able to escape even before, since they overcame you suddenly. Hence, he adds *and sudden fear disturbs you*, namely, since the evils overcame him suddenly, as a result of which he could fear others also. Now he shows the reason why they have come upon him suddenly, adding *And you thought that you would not see the darkness*, that is, that you would not arrive at these doubts in which you do not know what to do, a situation which is related to snares. Next, with respect to disturbing fear he adds *and that the force of flooding waters would not oppress you*, as if to say: You thought that you would never come to such a pass that you would be oppressed by violence and by the multitude of adversities coming from above, according to I Thessalonians 5:3: "Since they have said: Peace and security, then sudden destruction will overcome them."

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Now the fact that someone does not think that he will suffer punishments for his sins is related to his disbelief that God has providence about human affairs. Perhaps Eliphaz wished to twist back to this principle what Job had said— "Will anyone teach knowledge to God" [21:22]—a remark which he wrongly interpreted as referring to a defect of divine knowledge. Therefore, it seems right to him to imply next that Job denies the providence of God. Now one should consider that some men †4 deny that God has knowledge and providence of human affairs because of the loftiness of His substance, to which they say His knowledge is proportioned so that He knows nothing except Himself, thinking that His knowledge would be cheapened if it extended to inferior things. Hence, Eliphaz adds *Or do you think that God is loftier than heaven*, that is, than the whole universe of creatures, *and that He is exalted over the top of the stars*, that is, over the highest of the creatures? And he adds the conclusion of this reflection: *And you say: For what does the Lord know*, namely, about those inferior things? Yet, such men do not totally take away from God the knowledge of things, but they say that He knows them in the universal—for example, by knowing the nature of being †5 or the universal causes. †6 Hence, he adds *And He judges as if through a mist*. For to know something only in the universal is to know it imperfectly; therefore, he calls such knowledge misty, as if it depends on that which is seen remotely as if in a mist, since one perceives that there is a man but not who the man is. And he uses a metaphor taken from things which happen among men, among whom one who lies hidden in some place does not see those who are outside the place, just as he is not seen by them: *The clouds are His hiding-place and He does not consider ours*, as if to say: Just as He is hidden from us as if He were concealed by clouds, inasmuch as we cannot know fully the things which are above the clouds, so, conversely, He Himself does not see the things which pertain to us as if they existed under the clouds, as is said in Ezekiel 9:9 in the character of certain persons: "The Lord has abandoned the earth; the Lord does not see it." For they posited that since the things which are on earth are subject to many defects and disorders, they are not ruled by divine providence. Only celestial things, whose order perseveres unchanging, are so ruled. †7 Hence follows *and around the hinges of heaven He walks*. Now that upon which a door swings is called a hinge; hence, by this expression he designates that heaven moves through the providence of God, and from its motion as from some door divine providence descends to these inferior things. For just as they say that God knows human affairs but only in the universal, so they say that He governs human affairs but through universal causes which He governs by Himself. Perhaps, too, he wished to refer to what Job had said above: "Who judges eminent men" [21:22]

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(15) Do you wish to keep to the path of the world which iniquitous men have trod? (16) Those who have been taken away before their time, the river has also overturned their foundation. (17) They were saying to God: Withdraw from us. And as if the Almighty can do nothing they esteemed Him (18) although He had filled their houses with goods. Let their opinion be far from me. (19) The just men will see and they will be happy and the innocent man will mock them. (20) Has not their insolence been cut down? And fire has devoured their remains. (21) Go along with Him, then, and have peace, and by this means you will have the best results. (22) Take from His mouth the law, and put His speeches in your heart. (23) If you will return to the Almighty you will be built up and you will put iniquity far from your tent. (24) He will give instead of earth flint, and instead of flint golden torrents. (25) And the Almighty will be against your enemies and silver will be heaped up in a mass for you. (26) Then beyond the Almighty you will abound with delights and you will lift up your face to God. (27) You will petition Him and He will hear you, and you will fulfill your vows. (28) You will decide a matter and it will come out for you and on your ways will shine the light. (29) For he who will have been humiliated will be in glory and he who will have turned away his eyes will himself be saved. (30) The innocent man will be saved, but he will be saved by the cleanness of his hands.

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Since Eliphaz in the premised words seems to have imposed upon Job the charge that he did not believe that God had providence concerning human affairs, now he seems to impose upon him next the effect of this lack of faith. For those who do not believe that God takes care of human affairs usually follow their own will in all things, disdain the fear of God. Hence, he adds *Do you wish to keep to the path of the world?*, that is, to the process of those who believe nothing except those temporal things which they see and who proceed from this state to works of injustice. Hence, he adds *which iniquitous men have trod*. Now they are said to tread some road who frequently, without any hesitation, purposefully wear away the road. Thus, those who do not believe in divine providence frequently, securely, and purposefully do works of injustice. This does not happen to those who believe in divine providence, although sometimes they turn away toward injustice out of weakness. And so that they may not seem to have done this with impunity, he adds *Those who have been taken away before their time*, that is, those who have died when the natural span of life was not yet complete, and he assigns the cause, adding *the river has also overturned their foundation*. Now each man's foundation is that upon which his hope principally rests. Such men, however, do not put their hope in God but only in temporal things, which are corrupted in the very course of the mutability of things, which he calls a river.

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Now he explains what the pathway just mentioned is, adding *They were saying to God: Withdraw from us*, namely, disdain Him and His spiritual goods with respect to the will. But with respect to understanding he describes their lack of faith, adding *And as if the Almighty can do nothing they esteemed Him* since, namely, if the care of human affairs does not belong to Him, He can do man neither good nor ill, a situation which is contrary to the idea of an omnipotent being. And to exaggerate the guilt he adds an observation about their ingratitude, saying *although He had filled their houses with goods*, namely, the temporal goods which are given by God to men. And to disprove their assertion he adds *let their opinion be far from me*.

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And lest it seem that the just also, along with the impious, might be overturned, Eliphaz excludes this possibility, adding *The just men will see and they will be happy*. By this verse one is given to understand that they will not be overturned but will be in a state of happiness. And lest it seem that they have fallen short of justice for the very reason that they were rejoicing over the undermining of others, he adds *and the*

innocent man will mock them, as if to say: With their innocence safe they will be able to mock them because they are overturned against their own opinion. For in this action the just rejoice with divine justice. And this action seems to respond properly to what Job had said: "After my words, if it seems right, laugh" [21:3], as if complaining that he was being mocked by them.

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Also, lest anyone doubt that the foundation of impious men has been overturned by the river, he proposes this point as manifest in the form of a question, saying *Has not their insolence been cut down?* For through their earthly prosperity or even through their own pride they seemed to rise up into the air like a tree. But just as the rising of a tree is suddenly impeded through cutting, so, too, the elevation of impious men ceases suddenly through the removal of these things. Now sometimes it happens that a cut tree cannot increase in height, of course, but yet its length still remains. Yet, if fire should be applied to it, no trace of its past height remains. So, too, if after a sinful man has died or been cast out his sons should also perish through the fire of adversity and his riches should be taken away, no residue will be seen to remain of his past eminence. Hence follows *And fire*, that is, the heat of trial, *has devoured their remains*, according to James 1:11: "The sun rose with its heat and dried the hay." Now either a man's sons or any other property of his remaining after him is called his remains.

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Therefore, since Eliphaz had said that such an overturning befell the impious because they strove against God, †8 in order that Job might be able to avoid a similar overturning he adds *Go along with Him, then, and have peace*, as if to say: On this account you have been disturbed, because you wished to contend against Him, *and by this means*, namely, through the peace by which you will be reconciled to Him, *you will have the best results*, as if to say: Whatever can be best you will achieve as the result of this peace. Now he shows how he ought to go along with Him, adding *Take from His mouth the law*, as if to say: Do not think that human affairs are not ruled by divine providence. On the contrary, dispose your life according to the law of His rule. And since some men profess the law of divine rule but yet do not follow it in their work, therefore, he adds *and put His speeches in your heart*, namely, so that you may meditate upon His commandments and dispose to keep them. Now he shows how he may have "the best results" (v. 21) by this course of action, adding *If you will return to the Almighty*, namely, in order to believe in His omnipotence and subject yourself to it, *you will be built up*, as if to say: The house of your prosperity, which has been destroyed, will be repaired. Now he shows how he ought to return perfectly to God, adding *and you will put iniquity far from your tent*, and 'if' must be understood in addition so that the verse may be read literally: If you should put iniquity far from your tent, *He*, namely, God, *will give instead of earth, flint, and instead of flint, golden torrents*, so that what he says here, *you will put iniquity far from your tent*, may help to explain what he had said: "If you will return to the Almighty" (v. 23). And he does not say: If you will put iniquity far from you but *from your tent*, wishing to imply that adversity had befallen him not only for the sin of his own person but also for the sin of his family. To be sure, the clause *he will give instead of earth, flint* refers to what he has said: "You will be built up" (v. 22), namely, so that it may be given to be understood that there will be a restoration, but to something greater, so that, namely, He may return greater things for what had been lost. For flint is more precious than a clod of earth, and gold is more precious than flint.

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Now next he lists what those goods are which he promises are going to be restored to him, positing first the security resulting from God's protection when he adds *And the Almighty will be against your enemies*, namely, so that they may not be able to plunder again what will be restored to you by God. Second, he posits an abundance of riches when he says *and silver will be heaped up in a mass for you*. For all riches are signified by the name of silver, because money is usually made of silver. And lest he seem to promise corporeal goods alone he adds a promise about spiritual goods, among which he puts first that man may love God and be delighted in Him. Hence follows *Then because the Almighty, you will abound with*

love God and be delighted in Him. Hence follows *Then beyond the Almighty you will abound with delights*, that is, when you will have peace with Him you will delight in Him. And since each person looks with pleasure upon that in which he delights, he adds *and you will lift up your face*, that is, your mind, *to God* in order to contemplate Him frequently. And from this contemplation you will get the confidence to run back to Him; hence, he adds *You will petition Him*, and not without result, for there follows *and He will hear you*. Now those who have been heard by God usually fulfill vows which they have made in petitioning. Hence, he adds *and you will fulfill your vows* as a sign of having been heard. Next he promises the prosperous success of his purpose when he adds *You will decide a matter*, that is, you will ordain through your providence how something will be *and it will come out for you*, that is, your disposition will not be frustrated. And lest you doubt what must be decided, this, too, will be manifested to you. Hence, he adds *and on your ways will shine the light*, that is, it will appear clearly to you by what ways you ought to proceed.

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Now he shows the reason for these promises, adding *For he who will have been humiliated*, namely, by subjecting himself to God through his will, *will be in glory*, namely, which he will get from God, *and he who will have turned away his eyes lest*, namely, through understanding he may have any proud and foolish feeling against God, *will himself be saved*, namely, freed from evils and established in goods. Now not only is internal humility of the will and of the understanding required for salvation but also external purity of works. Hence, he adds *The innocent man will be saved*, and he shows the merit by which he is saved, adding *but he will be saved by the cleanness of his hands*, that is, by the innocence of his works. And one should consider that here Eliphaz not only promises Job, if he should be converted, the temporal goods which can be common to both good and evil men, as he had done above, [19](#) but he also promises him the spiritual goods which are the proper attributes of good people—but still, only in this life.

Chapter Twenty-three

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(1) Now Job said in response: (2) Now, too, my speech is in bitterness and the hand of my blow has been made heavier upon my lamentation. (3) Who would grant me that I may know Him and find Him and come to His throne? (4) I will put the judgment before Him and I will fill my mouth with reproaches (5) so that I may know the words which He may respond to me and understand what He may say to me. (6) I do not wish Him to contend with me with great strength nor to press me with the mass of His great size. (7) Let Him propose equity against me and my judgment will attain the victory. (8) If I go to the east, He does not appear; if to the west, I will not understand Him; (9) if to the left, what will I do? I will not apprehend Him; if I turn to the right, I will not see Him. (10) Nevertheless, He knows my way, and He will prove me like gold which passes through fire. (11) His tracks are followed by my foot; I have kept to His way and I have not turned away from it. (12) I have not departed from the commandments of His lips, and in my breast I have hidden the words of His mouth. (13) For He Himself is alone, and no one can observe His reflections, and His soul has done whatever it wished (14) since He has fulfilled His will in me, and many other similar things are in His power; (15) therefore, I am disturbed, and considering Him I am worried by fear. (16) God has softened my heart and the Almighty has thrown me into confusion. (17) For I have not perished because of imminent darkness, nor has the dark covered my face.

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In the premised words Eliphaz seems to have proposed two charges against Job: first, that he has been punished because of his very great malice, and second, that he has doubted the providence of God or even denied it. †1 Now men are usually saddened when any charges are imposed on them falsely. Hence, since Job did not recognize these sins in himself, he says *Now, too, my speech is in bitterness*, as if to say: Just as you saddened me with your criticisms above, so do you even now, too, so that I am compelled to speak with bitterness. Now when affliction is added anew to someone already afflicted, prior afflictions are recalled to memory, as a result of which the present lamentation is aggravated. Hence, he adds *and the hand*, that is, the power, *of my blow*, that is, of the adversity which I once suffered, *has been made heavier upon my lamentation*, that is, it makes my present lamentation more grave.

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Now first he begins to respond to the fact that Eliphaz had said that he had been punished because of his own malice. Now Job recognized that he had been punished by divine judgment; hence, he had said above at 16:12, "God has shut me up with the iniquitous one." Hence, to inquire into the reason why he has been punished is to inquire into the reasoning of divine judgment, which, of course, no one can know but God Himself. From this circumstance it is clear that Eliphaz had claimed presumptuously that Job had been punished because of his malice. Hence, he does not wish to contend with Eliphaz over this point but turns his debate toward God, Who alone knows the reason for His judgment. Now Job could reckon that he had been burdened by divine judgment if he had been punished because of very great malice. Now those who have been burdened by some judge usually approach the judge first, which they cannot do unless they find his place, and they cannot even do this if they do not know him beforehand. For no one can seek and find that which he does not know at all. Hence, he says *Who would grant me that I may know Him and find Him and come to His throne?* For he knew that God exceeded his knowledge; therefore, he could not find the way perfectly on his own to reach His throne, that is, the full knowledge of His judgment. Now when someone who has been burdened by a judge reaches him, he usually demonstrates the justice of his case. Hence, he adds *I will put the judgment before Him*, as if to say: I will propose to Him what ought to be the just judgment of my case *and I will fill my mouth with reproaches*, that is, with complaints, not, of course, that I believe that the divine judgment is unjust but in the manner of one questioning, just as debaters usually object to the statements of others in order to understand the truth more fully. Hence, he adds *so that I may know the words which He may respond to me*, a clause which pertains to recognizing the truth of the response, *and understand what He may say to me*, a clause which pertains to gaining an understanding of the words. For a man cannot know whether what is said to him is true unless he understands what is said to him.

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Now above, as if to sustain divine judgment, Job's friends had frequently proposed divine strength and greatness, as Zophar had said above at 11:8: "He is higher than heaven, and what will you do?" and other statements which follow in that place. Therefore, excluding this response, Job adds *I do not wish Him to contend with me with great strength nor to press me with the mass of His great size*, as if to say: That response does not satisfy me, that God's power and greatness be adduced against me alone, since just as He is the strongest and the greatest, so, too, is He the most just and a lover of equity. Hence, he adds *Let Him propose equity against me*, that is, let a rationale based on equity be assigned, and thus it will appear that I have not been punished because of malice. Hence, he adds *and my judgment*, namely, on the basis of which I contend against you, claiming that I have not been punished for sins, *will attain the victory*.

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And lest anyone believe from what he has said—"Who would grant me that I may know Him and find Him and come to His throne?" (v. 3)—that he believed that God was shut up in a corporeal place or could be known sufficiently through creatures, he adds *If I go to the east He does not appear*. And here one

should consider that, according to Aristotle, ¶2 in heaven are distinguished six differences of position, namely, up and down, right and left, and anterior and posterior. For the beginning of the motion of the whole firmament manifestly appears in the east. In any animal, however, the beginning of motion is on the right. Therefore, if we imagine the motion of the firmament as the motion of an animal, we will have to put the right side of heaven in the east, the left in the west, up in the south, down in the north, the anterior in the upper hemisphere, and the posterior in the lower hemisphere, as if to say: If we were to imagine a man who with his right hand would move heaven from the east toward the upper hemisphere, it would follow that he held his head toward the south and his feet toward the north, and the anterior side of the man would be toward the upper hemisphere, whereas the posterior side, that is, the back, would be toward the lower hemisphere. ¶3 Yet, some men, ¶4 not regarding the disposition of the human body but rather the order of the motion of heaven, have posited that the upper part of heaven is the eastern part because motion begins there, but they have put the right side of heaven in the south, the direction toward which, with respect to us, the motions of the planets proceed. Hence, conversely, the west is understood to be the lower hemisphere of heaven, whereas the northern side is understood to be the left side of heaven. And in this manner, too, Job's words seem to proceed here, for he divides the right and left opposite to the east and west. It can be understood simply, then, that in no part of heaven is God shut up locally, so that the sense is: *If I go to the east He does not appear* as being nearer there, as if He were there locally; *if to the west I will not understand Him*, as if He were nearer and shut up there; *If to the left*, that is, to the north, *what will I do? I will not apprehend Him*, namely, since He is not corporeally situated there; *if I turn to the right*, that is, toward the south, *I will not see Him* being there, as it were.

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Or these words can be introduced not to exclude from God a local situation but to show that He cannot be found out sufficiently through inferior effects. Now among all the effects apparent in corporeal things, the most universal and the greatest is the movement of the firmament, and although the beginning of this movement appears manifestly in the east, yet the beginning of this movement does not demonstrate sufficiently the infinity of divine power. Hence, he says *If I go to the east*, namely, in the progress of my consideration, as if considering the beginning of the movement of the firmament, *He does not appear*, namely, He does not appear sufficiently through this consideration. Now the second effect of divine power in corporeal things is the movement of the planets, which is opposite to the movement of the firmament. ¶5 Hence, the beginning is in the west, and divine power cannot be sufficiently considered on the basis of this movement either; hence, he adds *if to the west*, namely, if I will go to the west, considering the beginning of the movement of the planets, *I will not understand Him*. And he speaks very expressly, for this movement is understood from the difference of the situation of the planets more than it is apparent to the eyes. From the north, however, there seems to us to be no beginning except of darkness since the sun never approaches that side. Now darkness impedes action, according to John 9:4: "Night is coming when no one can work." Hence, he adds *If to the left*, namely, I go ahead with my consideration, *what will I do?*, that is, I find nothing there but a lack of action, from which no trace will be given to know Him. Hence, he adds *I will not apprehend Him* even in any way whatsoever. From the south, however, is the beginning of light for us because of the heavenly bodies appearing to us from that direction. Hence, he adds *if I turn*, namely, in my consideration, *to the right*, that is, to the southern side of the sky, *I will not see Him*, as if to say: I will find there corporeal light, by which He Himself still cannot be seen. And although He eludes me in this way, yet the things which happen with respect to me do not elude Him. Hence, he adds *Nevertheless, He knows my way*, that is, the whole process of my life. And Job seems to be saying this against what Eliphaz had introduced above in the character of impious men, as if attributing their position to Job: "The clouds are His hiding-place and He does not consider ours" [22:14].

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And since someone could say, 'If He knows your way, then, He has punished you because of your sins,' he responds *and He will prove me like gold which passes through fire*. And here for the first time he manifestly explains the reason for his adversity, which was brought upon him so that he might appear to

men to have been proved as a result of it, just as gold which can withstand the fire is proved. And just as gold does not become true gold but its genuineness is manifested to men as a result of the fire, so Job has been proved through adversity not so that his virtue might appear before God but so that it might be manifested to men. Now he says *He will prove* about the future, as if presenting himself through patience even for future examination. Now Job proves by the straightforwardness of his life that he has not been punished for a preceding sin. And here one should consider that every thing is shown to be correct by the fact that it conforms to its own rule. Now the rule of human life is twofold. First, of course, is the natural law impressed on men's minds by God, by which man naturally understands what is good from its likeness to divine goodness. In this first case one should pay attention to the fact that in proportion to his own power man imitates in his affections and works the operation of divine goodness, according to Matthew 5:48: "Be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect," and Ephesians 5:1: "Be imitators of God just as His dearest sons." Hence, he says *His tracks*, that is, some likeness, although in small part, of divine good in operation, *are followed*, namely, in imitation, *by my foot*, that is, by my will, ¶6 according to which we proceed to operate. ¶7 Second, it is required that one take care with his whole mind to imitate God; hence, he adds *I have kept to His way*, careful, as it were, not to depart from it. Third, it is required that a man persevere in it and remain in it totally, not partially; hence, he adds *and I have not turned away from it*, that is, in no part have I departed from it. Now the second rule of human life is external law divinely handed down, against which man sins in two ways: in one way, of course, through contempt, and against this sin he says *I have not departed from the commandments of His lips*. For some precepts had been divinely given to Noah and perhaps to some other holy men on whose lips God spoke; second, one sins against the law of God through ignorance or forgetfulness, and against this sin he adds *and in my breast*, that is, in the concealment of my heart, *I have hidden the words of His mouth*, according to Psalm 118:11: "In my heart have I hidden your speech so that I may not sin against you."

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And lest anyone should say that this proof which he has introduced on the basis of the straightforwardness of his life is not fitting, he shows next that concerning divine judgments the most certain and demonstrative proof cannot be introduced because of the incomprehensibility of the divine will. Hence, he adds *For He himself is alone*, as if to say: He has no other creature similar or equal to Him to comprehend Him, and consequently not His will either. Hence, he adds *and no one can observe*, that is, know with certainty, *His reflections*, that is, the dispositions of His judgments. And just as His disposition cannot be comprehended, so neither can it be resisted by any creature; hence follows *and His soul*, that is, His will, *has done whatever it wished*, as if no one is able to resist. Now sometimes it happens, especially in the case of some wise man who moderates his will according to his virtue, that he cannot do more, but he excludes this possibility from God when he adds *since He has fulfilled His will in me, and many other similar things are in His power*, as if to say: The reason that He does not bring in adversity against me more is not that He cannot do more but that He does not wish to do more. *And therefore*, namely, since I consider that He can do more and I cannot tell whether He wishes to do more, *I am disturbed*, namely, by the disturbance of fear. Hence, he adds *and considering Him*, that is, His power, *I am worried by fear*, namely, that He is going to prove me by still graver adversity.

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Now he assigns the reason for this fearful worry to the fact that he has experienced the divine blow against himself. Hence, he adds *God has softened my heart*, melting it, as it were, having taken away the firmness of security, *and the Almighty has thrown me into confusion*, that is, through His omnipotence He has induced the disturbance of sadness over my present evils and of fear over future ones. Now he shows why he fears for the future although he is not conscious of guilt on his part, adding *For I have not perished*, that is, I have endured the adversity, *because of imminent darkness*, that is, errors or sins, which, of course, are said to threaten when they are confirmed in a man's mind—for example, when someone sins out of malice. Now sometimes it happens that malice is not firm in a man but he is impelled to sin as a result of some sudden passion, for example, of concupiscence or of anger, and Job excludes this situation from himself,

adding *nor has the dark covered my face*. For the eye of reason is misty, as it were, when its judgment in a particular work is deceived because of passion.

Chapter Twenty-four

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(1) The times have not been concealed from the Almighty. Those who know Him, however, do not know His days. (2) Some men have shifted boundary-stones. They have plundered herds and they have pastured them. (3) They have driven off the orphans' ass and they have taken away the widow's ox as security. (4) They have overturned the way of the poor and they have oppressed equally the gentle people of the land. (5) Others, like wild asses in the desert, go out to their work, and keeping their eyes open for plunder they provide bread for children. (6) They reap not their own field, and they gather the vintage of the man whom they have oppressed by force. (7) They send men away naked, taking away their garments, and they have no covering in the cold, (8) and the mountain rains wet them, and having no clothing they embrace stones. (9) They have done violence in plundering orphans and they have despoiled the poor multitude. (10) From the naked and from those who walk along without clothing and from the hungry they have taken their ears of wheat. (11) Among their heaps they have taken a siesta and they are thirsty even though their presses have been trodden. (12) They have made the men of the cities groan, and the souls of those who have been beaten will cry out, and God does not allow this situation to go unpunished. (13) They were rebels against the light. They did not know its ways nor did they return along its paths. (14) First thing in the morning, the murderer gets up and kills the needy man and the pauper, but by night he will be a thief, as it were. (15) The eye of the adulterer watches for the dark, saying: No eye will see me, and he will cover his countenance. (16) They dig through houses in the darkness just as they have arranged during the day, and they have not known the light. (17) If suddenly the dawn appears, they think it is the shade of death. And so in the darkness as if in the light they walk. (18) He is light upon the face of the water. Cursed be his portion on earth and let him not walk along the road of vineyards. (19) Let him cross over to the excessive heat from the waters of the snows, and to hell his sin. (20) Let mercy forget him. Let his sweetness become a worm. Let him not be in remembrance, but let him be destroyed like an unfruitful tree. (21) For he has supported a barren woman who produces no offspring, and he has done the widow no good. (22) He has dragged down strong men in his strength, and when he stands he will not be confident of his life. (23) God has given him the opportunity for penitence, and he abuses it to the point of pride. For eyes are on his ways. (24) They have been lifted up for a little while and they will not remain. And they will be humbled like all things and they will be taken away, and just like the tips of the ears of wheat they will be ground up. (25) But if it is not so, who can accuse me of having lied and of putting my words before God?

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In the preceding chapter Job showed that he had not been punished because of malice as Eliphaz had claimed. †1 Now, however, he wishes to make clear that he does not think that God does not care for human affairs as Eliphaz was imputing to Him. †2 Now one should consider that some men posited that God has no knowledge of nor care for human affairs because of His distance from us. †3 For they believed that just as we cannot know Him because of such distance, so He cannot know us either. But he excludes this premise first, saying *The times have not been concealed from the Almighty*, as if to say: Although the

Almighty may be outside the mutability of the times, He nevertheless knows the course of the times. Those who are in time, however, know Him in such a way that they are still unable to comprehend the manner of His eternity. Hence, he adds *those who know Him, however*, that is, men in time who have any knowledge of Him whatsoever, either by natural knowledge or through faith or by some greater representation of wisdom, *do not know His days*, that is, they cannot comprehend the manner of His eternity.

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And since he has said that the course of temporal things was not unknown to God, he shows next how He judges temporal matters, premising the different guilts of men, some of whom fraudulently inflict harm on others. Hence, he says *Some*, namely, among men, *have shifted boundary-stones*, namely, furtively changing the common boundaries of estates, and they have done similar things in the case of animals which pasture in herds. Hence, he adds *they have plundered*, namely, furtively, *herds*, namely, those belonging to others, *and they have pastured them* so that in this way they may seem to be their own. And he aggravates their guilt on the basis of the condition of the persons on whom they inflict the harm. For men usually pity orphans because of the weakness of their age and the lack of support of parents, and he says to the contrary *They have driven off the orphans' ass*, that is, they have caused it to stray in order to steal it, not pitying the orphan. Similarly, too, men usually pity widows because of the frailty of the sex and because they are destitute of the solace of husbands, but to the contrary he adds *and they have taken away the widow's ox as security*, burdening her as if on some pretext of justice. Men also usually pity the poor, who lack the support of riches, and to the contrary he adds *They have overturned the way of the poor*, that is, they have taken from them the faculty of procuring the necessities for themselves by harassing them in many ways. Men are also accustomed to desist from harming those who usually do no harm to others but who associate agreeably with others, and to the contrary he adds *and they have oppressed equally the gentle people of the land*, namely, those who were familiar neither with challenging others nor with being challenged.

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Now there are certain men who harm others not fraudulently like those just mentioned but through manifest violence, who burst forth to do evil as if they are contained by no discipline of law. Concerning these men Job adds *Others, like wild asses in the desert*, that is, asses which roam the forests and are not domesticated to the service of men, *go out to their work*, namely, to highway robbery, on which they are carefully intent as if on their own work. Hence, he adds *and keeping their eyes open for plunder*, namely, to snatch it, *they provide bread for children*, namely, for their own children, from the snatched plunder. Then he determines the type of plunder, adding *They reap not their own field*, namely, collecting other men's harvests by violence, *and they gather the vintage of the man whom they have oppressed by force*, namely, since they oppress someone beforehand in order to seize his goods more freely. And they take away through violence not only their external goods but also those which have already been assumed for the purpose of warming the body. Hence, he adds *They send men away naked*, that is, they leave them nothing, *taking away their garments*. And to aggravate further the guilt of this robbery he adds the afflictions which they suffer as a result of their nakedness; hence, he says *and they have no covering in the cold*. For it would be tolerable somehow if they were able to relieve their nakedness from elsewhere. Garments are necessary not only to warm against the cold but also as a protection against the rain; hence, those who have been stripped by bandits must not only be afflicted by the cold but also be drenched by the rain. And this is the point of adding *and the mountain rains wet them*. For men usually flee to mountainous places as more fortified, for fear of bandits or enemies, and there, because of the frigidity of the air, rains are more frequent and more grave, especially for naked men. Now it is a remedy of sorts for nakedness if he who has not the covering of vestments at least does not lack the covering of a house, but on the contrary he adds *and having no clothing*, namely, of a vestment or of a house, *they embrace stones*, that is, they hide in the caverns of stones which are found in mountainous places.

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Now he further aggravates their guilt on the basis of the condition of the miserable persons whom they burden. Hence, he adds *They have done violence in plundering orphans*, who, namely, ought rather to have been supported, *and they have despoiled the poor multitude*, who, namely, ought rather to have been aided. Now it would be somehow tolerable if they wished to take away the sufficiency from those who at least had it. Therefore, for the greater exaggeration of their iniquities he adds *From the naked*, that is, from those not having vestments, *and from those who walk along without clothing*, that is, from those who out of excessive need go out naked without clothes even in public, and this addition pertains to a great lack of clothing. And to show that they suffer poverty in respect to food also he adds *and from the hungry*. Now from these men they can take away nothing of great value, but they are not ashamed to take from them the little which they do have. Hence, he adds *they have taken their ears of wheat*, as if to say: They have not taken from them the harvest which they do not have but some few ears of wheat which they had gathered for themselves. And if perchance they should seem to abound in anything, they take that away, not taking into account what deep poverty they suffer in regard to other things. Hence, he adds *Among their heaps*, namely, of fruits, *they have taken a siesta*, that is, they have rested at midday, as if they were insolent over their goods, *and they are thirsty even though their presses have been trodden*, that is, of those who immediately after the vintage have little wine. And they not only rob men in external things but also injure them in their persons; hence, he adds *They have made the men of the cities groan* since, namely, when certain men have been injured, many of the citizens are disturbed. And the very ones who have been injured complain. Hence, he adds *and the souls of those who have been beaten will cry out, and God*, from Whom, namely, the things which are done in time are not hidden, *does not allow this situation to go unpunished*, and this, namely, would not be so if God did not have providence concerning human affairs.

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Now Job shows the reason why God does not allow this behavior to go unpunished: because they sin not through ignorance but through malice, and because of their malice they hate the wisdom censuring their sins. Hence, he adds *They were rebels against the light*, namely, purposefully acting against what the light of reason dictates to them. Now just as "wisdom takes hold of those who eagerly desire it," [†4](#) so it escapes those who struggle against it. Hence, he adds *they did not know its ways*, that is, having their sense perverted through malice they were unable to recognize the processes of wisdom; or, *they did not know*, that is, they did not approve and did not wish to try the mandates of wisdom. And he demonstrates their impenitence, adding *nor did they return along its paths*. Indeed, they return along the path of wisdom who, although they have been rebels against wisdom by sinning, yet return to wisdom through penitence.

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Now as a sign that they fight against the spiritual light of wisdom he adduces the fact that, loving the darkness, they detest even the external light, according to what is said in John 3:20: "Everyone who does evil hates the light." Hence, here also is added *First thing in the morning*, namely, when it is still dark, *the murderer gets up and kills the needy man and the pauper* since, namely, at that hour men are not yet commonly walking along the road, but some poor men, led by necessity, take that time of work, and bandits waylay them on the road. Now for the purpose of stealing something furtively from houses, they need deeper darkness; hence, he adds *but by night he will be a thief, as it were*, namely, robbing houses, an activity which would not be safe for him first thing in the morning since at that time men are beginning to wake up. Now he shows the same thing in the case of the adulterer, adding *The eye of the adulterer*, who, namely, plots against someone else's bed, *watches for the dark*, namely, so that he cannot be caught. Hence, he adds *saying: No eye will see me*, that is, he watches for the dark with the purpose that he should not be seen by anyone's eye. And as if the concealment of night would not be sufficient for him he assumes still other stratagems of concealment; hence, he adds *and he will cover his countenance*, namely, with some kind of change of dress. And just as he watches for the dark to begin his work, so, too, he also executes his work in the darkness. Hence, he adds *They dig through houses in the darkness*, namely, removing obstacles by any kind of fraud or violence at all, *just as they*, namely, the adulterer and the adulteress *have arranged during the day and they have not known the light* that is they have cast it away

...and they have not done in the night, that is, they have done it all day, in the whole execution of their nefarious work. *If suddenly*, as if not previously taken into account since time seems brief to them while they are devoting themselves to carnal delight, *the dawn appears*, which is the beginning of daylight, *they think it is the shade of death*, that is, they think that it is hateful like the shade of death when they see that they cannot draw out their wantonness further. Now men are usually impeded from their works in two ways: in one way when they do not foresee the outcome of a situation; in the other way when they have a weak link in their proposal. But adulterers, on the contrary, who are led on by eager desire, first commit themselves to danger thoughtlessly, even though they do not know what may follow, and to signify this fact he says *And so in the darkness*, that is, in doubtful and dark circumstances *as if in the light*, that is, in manifest circumstances, *they walk*, that is, proceed; second, they take great confidence from a small, frail thing; hence, he adds *He*, namely, the adulterer, *is light upon the face of the water*, as if to say: He moves so lightly that it seems to him that he can pass over some yielding things, such as water, to pursue his purpose. Or the statement *And so in the darkness as if in the light they walk* can refer literally to the fact that both, namely, the adulterer and the adulteress, like to do their works in the dark, whereas the addition *He is light upon the face of the water* refers specifically to the adulterer, to whom because of the impetuosity of eager desire it seems that he can pass lightly even over water, that is, over any difficulty or adversity whatsoever, to arrive at the fruition of the thing desired.

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Having explained in detail the different kinds of sins, then, he adds a treatment of the punishment, and first, of course, with respect to the punishment of the present life when he adds *Cursed be his portion on earth*. That which each one desires as his principal good seems to him to be his portion. Now the sinner settles his ultimate end on earthly things as if on his portion, according to Wisdom 2:9: "This is our portion and this is our lot," which has been cursed, indeed, since the goods of this world, which he uses badly, turn to evil for him. And he manifests this fact, adding *and let him not walk along the road of vineyards*. For vineyard roads are usually shady and consequently temperate. Vineyards also require a temperate place, for in excessively cold places they are destroyed by ice and in excessively hot places they are burnt by the heat. †5 The impious man, then, does not walk along the vineyard road since he does not use the things of this world moderately but inclines sometimes to one extreme, sometimes to the other. And with respect to this fact he adds *Let him cross over to the excessive heat from the waters of the snows*, as if he should cross from one vice to the opposite one since he does not remain in the virtuous mean. †6 And that punishment catches up to all evil men since "a disorderly spirit is a punishment unto itself," as Augustine says in *Confessions* I. †7

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Next he posits the punishment which will be after death when he adds *And to hell his sin*, as if to say: Not only on earth is his portion cursed when he uses the things of the world in a disorderly fashion. He will also suffer punishments for this sin in hell. To these punishments, too, can refer what he had said—"from the waters of the snows" and so on (v. 19)—since in hell there will be no moderate temperature. And lest anyone believe that those punishments will be brought to an end through God's mercy he adds *let . . . forget him*, namely, the damned sinner in hell, *mercy*, namely, God's, so that he may never be freed from there. Now he shows what kind of punishment it is, adding *let his sweetness become a worm*, that is, the delight of sin will be turned into a worm for him, that is, into the remorse of conscience, concerning which it is said in Isaiah 66:24 that "Their worm will not die." †8 Hence also, concerning the endlessness of this punishment he adds *let him not be in remembrance*, that is, let him be so totally abandoned by God, without the remedy of liberation, as if He had forgotten him. And he posits a simile when he adds *but let him be destroyed like an unfruitful tree*, "for the tree which does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire," as is said in Matthew 3:10, whereas the fruitful tree is clipped so that it may be pruned, according to John 15:2: "Every vine-sprout which bears fruit he will prune so that it may bear more fruit." Impious men, then, are punished for their extermination but just men for their improvement.

Now why he is being compared to an unfruitful tree Job manifests on two counts: first, of course, because he has spent his goods for useless things. Hence, he says *For he has supported a barren woman who produces no offspring, and he has done the widow no good*, and he speaks of one who has spent his goods on useless things in the metaphor of one who uselessly supports a barren wife. Second, he is so compared because he does not go to the aid of the needy, an act which could be fruitful for him. Hence, he adds *and he has done the widow no good*, signifying by widow all needy people. And not only has he been unfruitful but he has even been harmful, like a tree which brings forth poisonous fruit. Hence, he adds *He has dragged down strong men in his strength*, that is, he has used his power not to go to the aid of the oppressed but rather to oppress the strong. And the fact that he harms others also redounds to his own harm since, namely, he cannot lead a life secure in himself while he fears being injured by those whom he has injured. Hence, he adds *and when he stands*, that is, when he suffers no adversity, *he will not be confident of his life*, that is, he will not be free from care concerning his life, according to what Eliphaz had said above: "The sound of terror is always in his ears, and although there is peace, he always suspects treachery" [15:21].

Now he assigns the reason why the sinner will be punished without mercy on the basis that he did not wish to experience God's mercy when he could. Hence, he adds *God has given him the opportunity for penitence*, namely, by deferring the punishment, and this is the reason why he has been permitted to live in prosperity for some time. But what God has offered to him for good he has perverted into evil. Hence, he adds *and he abuses it to the point of pride*, not attributing to divine mercy the fact that he is not punished immediately after sinning but taking from this remission the boldness of sinning to the point of contempt for God. And although the sinner seeks darkness for his sinning, yet he cannot prevent his being seen. Hence, he adds *For eyes*, namely, God's, *are on his ways*, that is, they consider his processes even though he walks in darkness. And then there is the observation that *they have been lifted up for a little while*, that is, to some transitory earthly eminence, with God giving them the opportunity for penitence, *and they will not remain*, namely, to the very end, since they abuse God's mercy to the point of pride. And he uses a metaphor for this situation. For all things which are generated in time grow up in a determinate time and afterwards begin to decline and finally are totally destroyed, and so it happens with respect to impious men. Hence, he adds *And they will be humbled just like all things*, namely, which grow up in time, *and they will be taken away*, namely, totally, when they have reached a peak. He also uses a simile, adding *and just like the tips of the ears of wheat they will be ground up*. For grains are not ground up as long as they are on the stalk and growing but when they finally reach perfect maturity. Similarly, impious men are not punished by God immediately but when they reach a peak according to a measure foreseen by God. Now Job has introduced this consideration to show that the fact that impious men are not punished temporally but lead a prosperous life does not happen from a lack of divine providence but from the fact that God defers the punishment to an appropriate time. And so it is clear that what Eliphaz had calumniously imputed to Job about the denial of divine providence is false. Hence, he adds *But if it is not so* as I said earlier about the punishment of evil men, as you suppose who believe that a man is always punished in this life for his sins, *who can accuse me of having lied*, namely, as if I should be denying divine providence, *and of putting my words before God*, that is, of turning my words into an accusation before God, as if they have been said against his providence?

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(1) Now Bildad the Shuhite said in response: (2) Power and terror are in the hands of Him Who makes harmony in His sublime creatures. (3) Is there a count of His soldiers? And over whom does His light not rise? (4) Can a man be justified compared with God? Or does one born of woman appear clean? (5) Look! Even the moon does not shine and the stars are not clean in His sight. (6) How much more is man rottenness and the son of man a worm.

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In his response Job has already repelled two calumnies which Eliphaz had cast upon him in his preceding response, showing that neither had he been punished for his sins nor was he a denier of divine providence. ¶1 Now he had shown very expressly that it was not inconsistent with divine providence if impious men prosper in this world, since their punishment is reserved for another time; therefore, the friends could not insist further against this point. But the other point, namely, that he has not been punished for sins, he had not shown so evidently that he did not rather signify the weakness of his demonstration when he said, "No one can observe His reflections" [23:13]; therefore, Bildad strives to resist this point further, arguing against Job because he was claiming that he had not been punished for his sins.

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And as if unmindful of Job's words in which he had said that it did not satisfy him if he should be contended against on the basis of God's strength, ¶2 Bildad takes the starting-point of his debate from divine power, and he proposes the greatness of divine power in two ways: first, of course, with respect to the fact that He exercises His power on the higher creatures, preserving them in supreme peace. Hence, he says *Power and terror*, that is, by reason of which He ought to be feared, *are in the hands of Him*, namely, of God, *Who makes harmony in His sublime creatures*. For among the lower creatures one finds much discord, as much in the case of rational creatures—as appears from the opposing movements of human wills—as in the case of corporeal creatures—as appears from their contrariety, through which they are subject to generation and corruption. But in the higher bodies no contrariety is found. Hence, they are incorruptible. ¶3 Similarly, too, the higher intellectual substances also live in supreme harmony. Hence, they are without misery. Now this supreme harmony of the higher creatures proceeds from divine power, which has established the higher creatures in a more perfect participation in its unity as if they are closer to it; therefore, he expressly says *in his more sublime creatures*, that is, more like Himself.

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Second, he commends divine power on the basis of the things which it works in the case of the lower creatures, on which it works through the assistance of the higher creatures, the multitude of which is unknown to man; ¶4 hence, he adds *Is there a count of his soldiers?* Indeed, he calls soldiers of God all the heavenly powers which follow the divine will as soldiers obey a general's order. The number of these heavenly powers is unknown to man, however. What is contained in Isaiah 40:26 is similar: "And he leads out their militia in a number." And lest anyone believe that the heavenly powers did not consider themselves as soldiers obeying another's command but as leaders and chieftains doing all things according to their own will, as the worshippers of many gods have thought, ¶5 he adds *And over whom does his light not rise?*, as if to say: All the heavenly powers are directed by divine illumination, just as men are directed by the fact that the light of the sun rises over them.

p 314

Having proposed divine power, then, he addresses himself to his purpose, saying *Can a man be justified compared with God?*, as if to say: Since God is so great and surpassing in justice that He makes harmony even among the sublime creatures, which is the effect of justice according to Isaiah 32:17—"The work of

justice is peace" — all of man's justice is deemed as nothing compared to divine justice. Not only is man unable to seem just compared to God, but, what is more, compared to Him he appears unjust, just as things which have too little beauty seem unclean in comparison to very beautiful things. Hence, he adds *Or does one born of woman appear clean?*, and he says this expressly, since by the very fact that man is born of woman through the eager desire of the flesh he contracts a stain. †6

p 314

Now next he confirms through a metaphor what he had said when he adds *Look! Even the moon does not shine and the stars are not clean in His sight.* And here one should consider that he makes no mention of the sun, since it does not appear to the senses that in the presence of a brighter light its light might be overshadowed, but the moon and the stars are darkened even in the presence of the corporeal sun. Hence, much more is their brightness like a kind of darkness compared to the immensity of divine light. And on this note he concludes what he had proposed, adding *how much more is man rottenness and the son of man a worm*; namely, he cannot be deemed as shining with the splendor of justice if he should be compared to divine justice, nor clean through innocence if he should be compared to divine purity. Now he expressly compares man to rottenness as consisting of material close to rottenness and the son of man to a worm since a worm is generated from rottenness. †7 Now he introduces this idea to show that when it is a question of divine judgment, man cannot propose his own justice and innocence, deemed as nothing in comparison to God, however great it may be.

Chapter Twenty-six

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(1) Now Job said in response: (2) Whose helper are you? A weakling's? And are you supporting the arm of one who is not strong? (3) To whom have you given counsel? Perhaps to him who has not wisdom? And have you shown your very great prudence? (4) Whom did you wish to teach? Was it not He Who has made [man's] breath? (5) Look! Giants groan under the waters and those who dwell with them. (6) Hell is naked before Him and there is no cover for perdition. (7) And He extends the north wind over the empty air and He suspends the earth over nothingness. (8) And He binds the waters in His clouds so that they do not burst out downward all at once. (9) And He withholds the countenance of His throne and He spreads over it His cloud. (10) He has surrounded the waters with a limit so that light and darkness may be bounded. (11) The pillars of heaven tremble and quake with fear at His nod. (12) In His strength the seas have suddenly been gathered together and His prudence has stricken the proud one. (13) His spirit has decorated the heavens and with His hand assisting at the birth has been drawn out the coiled serpent. (14) Look! These things have been said about a part of His ways, and since we have scarcely heard a small drop of His speeches who will be able to look upon the thunder of His greatness?

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In the premised words Bildad wished to convince Job on the strength of a consideration of divine power fearful to all, in respect of which no man can pretend to justice and to innocence so that he may claim that he has been punished without sin. Hence, Job adds a three-part response, the first of which is specifically against Bildad, who had tried to frighten Job with a consideration of divine power. †1 Now men who do not use reason against some condemned man but who adduce the power and wisdom of the judge usually

do this in favor of the judge. Now favor is afforded to some person on two counts: in one way on account of a defect of the power of the one who is favored; in another way on account of a defect of wisdom. With respect to the first way, then, he says *Whose helper are you? A weakling's?*, as if to say: These things which you have spoken, not following the way of reason but in God's favor, as it were—did you say them to bring help to God as to a weak person? Now he who defends someone's operation seems to help him. Hence, he adds *And are you supporting the arm of one who is not strong?*, as if to say: Do you wish by these words to defend God's operation by which I have been punished by Him, as if He were not strong enough to defend Himself?

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Next, with respect to the favor which is afforded to someone because of a defect of wisdom, one should consider that this favor is of two kinds: one kind, of course, on this basis, that counsel is given to someone concerning things to be done, and with respect to this kind he says *To whom have you given counsel?* Someone seems to give counsel to another when he defends his cause without a reason, but God, Who is perfect in wisdom, does not need counsel. Hence, he adds *Perhaps to him who has not wisdom?*, as if to say: Do you doubt that God has wisdom so that you speak so foolishly in His behalf? Now one who gives counsel to a wise person seems to do it to show his own wisdom. Hence, Job adds *And have you shown your very great prudence?*, as if to say: Did you wish by this means to show the abundance of your prudence?

p 318

Now the other way of favoring against the defect of wisdom is that someone should instruct the ignorant person about knowable things, and with respect to this way Job adds *Whom did you wish to teach?* For you seemed to teach God when you adduced His power against me, but He Who is the cause of all human knowledge does not need to be taught. Hence, Job adds *Was it not He Who has made [man's] breath*, that is, Who created the human soul through which man both understands and breathes? For it is one and the same soul which perceives knowledge through understanding and which, through its other forces, gives life to the body.

p 318

Next, lest Job should seem in any respect to disparage God's power, he commends it much more extensively than Bildad had, enumerating many effects of divine power, and he begins with the things which He did powerfully in respect to the human race about the time of the flood. For one reads in Genesis 6:4 that "giants were upon the earth in those days," and afterwards is added: "And when God had seen that the land was corrupt—all flesh, indeed, had corrupted its way upon the land—he said to Noah: The end of all flesh has come before me" [Gen. 6:12], and afterwards he adds: "Look! I will lead the waters of the flood upon the land and I will kill all flesh" [Gen. 6:17]. He shows this effect of divine power, then, adding *Look! Giants*, namely, ancient ones, *groan*, namely, in the punishments of hell, *under the waters*, that is, those who have been submerged in the waters of the flood. And since not only they themselves but many others have perished with them, both then and afterwards, he adds *and those who dwell with them* groan likewise, namely, on the strength of His power.

p 318

And lest anyone believe that divine providence extends only to judging men in this life but not after death, as Job's friends seemed to feel, [f2](#) to exclude this belief he adds *Hell is naked before Him*, as if to say: The things which are done in hell are visible to His eyes and are done according to His judgment. Hence, for the explanation of this point he adds *and there is no cover for perdition*, that is, for those who have perished in hell, so that they may be able to be hidden from God's eyes as they are from us.

p 319

Next he enumerates the effects of divine providence in natural things, and he begins with extremes, namely, with heaven and earth, in each of which appears something instituted as a result of divine power, which exceeds human strength. Now according to that which appears to the senses, heaven seems to be extended over the earth like some kind of tent, but the earth seems to be under heaven like the floor of a tent. Now anyone who puts up a tent, however, puts something under it by which the tent may be sustained, but this support is not apparent in the case of heaven. For there does not seem to be anything sustaining heaven except divine power. Hence, he says *And he extends the north wind over the empty air*. By north wind he understands the upper hemisphere with respect to us, for from our point of view the north pole is elevated above the horizon whereas the south pole is depressed below the horizon. †3 Hence, he says that the north wind is extended *over the empty air* since under the upper hemisphere nothing of heaven appears to us except space full of air, which common men deem to be empty. †4 For he speaks according to the estimation of common men, as is customary in Sacred Scripture. Similarly, too, he who lays a floor makes it fast on something. Now the earth, which is, as it were, the foundation of heaven, does not appear to have been made fast upon anything which can support it but is sustained by God's power alone. Hence, he adds *and He suspends the earth over nothingness*. Now these things are not said as if heaven is heavy and needs support to keep it from falling or as if the earth can descend except toward its center, but he does signify that the very natural powers by which bodies are contained naturally in their places proceeded from divine power. For just as violent movement is in man's power, so natural inclination is the result of the divine power which is the principle of nature.

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Next he enumerates the effects of the divine power in the middle space between heaven and earth—first, in the air, in which it seems remarkable that water lifted up as vapor is suspended in the air and does not fall all at once but drop by drop, as appears in rains. Hence, he says *And He binds the waters in His clouds*, that is, in clouds caused by His power, *so that they*, namely, the waters of the rains, *do not burst out downward all at once* but drop by drop as is useful for the tempering of the earth, as if that which remains in the clouds had been bound up by divine power so that it would not fall in the beginning. For by divine power it happens that the vapors do not condense at the same time so that it would be necessary that, having been changed into water at the same time, they fall together. Now when the rains fall down from the clouds there remain some remnants of the vapors from which may be generated the clouds, †5 by which heaven is covered from our point of view, which is, as it were, the throne of God, according to Isaiah 66:1: "Heaven is my seat." With respect to this fact, Job adds *And He withholds the countenance of His throne*, that is, He holds back as if in concealment the face of heaven, which is His throne, and He does this through the clouds, by which we are prohibited to see heaven. Hence, he adds *and He spreads over it His cloud*, that is, a cloud produced by His power.

p 320

Next Job shows the effect of the divine power on the waters when he adds *He has surrounded the waters with a limit*. For according to the natural order of the elements the waters would have to cover the land on all sides, but that some part of the land remains uncovered by the waters has come about by divine power, which has made the waters cover the land to a certain limit. †6 And this situation seems especially to pertain to the ocean, which surrounds the land on all sides, and on this account he adds *so that light and darkness may be bounded*. For the light of day and the dark of night are bounded for us by the sun going to or departing from the upper hemisphere, which is set above our habitat, which is shut up on all sides, as it were, by the ocean. Or it can be understood that the limit of the waters will remain unchangeable as long as this state of the world remains in which there is a succession of light and darkness.

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So, then, having enumerated the effects of the divine power on corporeal creatures, he shows its effect on the spiritual creatures, whom he calls the columns of heaven, since, namely, by their attention to duty the movement of the heavens is administered. †7 Hence he says *The pillars of heaven*, namely the angels

the reverence of the heavens is administered. †8 Hence, he says the powers of heaven, namely, the angels, tremble and quake with fear at His nod, that is, they obey Him at His nod. And he speaks in the metaphor of a servant obeying his master at his nod because of fear and trembling at him, so that fear may refer to the soul and trembling to the body. Now one should not think that in holy angels there is fear of punishment, but their reverence toward God here is called fear, and so fear refers to the will whereas trembling refers to the external effect. †8

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And since there are among the angels some who have departed from the reverence owed to God, concerning whom it was said above at 4:18, "In His angels He has found wickedness," for that reason he adds next a remark concerning the distinction of good and bad angels. Now it is believed that along with the distinction of corporeal creation there was also a distinction of spiritual creation. Therefore, to suggest the distinction of spiritual creation he premises a remark about corporeal creation, saying *In His strength, the seas have suddenly been gathered together*, according to Genesis 1:9: "Let the waters which are upon the land be gathered together into one place and let dry land appear." And just as corporeal creatures have been distinguished by divine power, so, too, have spiritual creatures. Hence, he adds *and His prudence has stricken the proud one*, that is, through the power of His providence the proud devil has been deprived of his glory. And at the same time as he was stricken, the spiritual gifts were increased for the good angels. Hence, he adds *His spirit has decorated the heavens*, that is, the heavenly spirits, with the ornaments, namely, of the spiritual gifts. Now it was not fitting that one stricken by the privation of his glory should remain endowed with his gifts through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, he adds *and with His hand assisting at the birth has been drawn out*, namely, from the society of good angels, *the coiled serpent*, that is, the devil, who is compared to a serpent because of the venom of malignity and is called coiled because of his cunning. †9 Now he says expressly that he has been drawn out by the hand of God assisting at the birth, for just as the midwife sometimes draws out in this way an infant who has died so that the mother should not be injured, so God has drawn out the devil from the midst of the angels so that the society of the good angels might not suffer harm in anything.

p 321

And lest anyone believe that these effects, great though they may be, are equal to divine power, he adds *Look! These things have been said about a part of His ways*, that is, of His works, by which we ascend to a knowledge of God and God communicates Himself to us in a way. †10 And lest these things seem, even if not to equal the whole divine power, nevertheless to approach an equality with it in large part, he adds *and since we have scarcely heard a small drop of His speeches, who will be able to look upon the thunder of His greatness?*, as if to say: The proportion of all the things which have now been said about the effects of divine power to divine power is smaller than the proportion of one small speech, dripping silently, as it were, to the loudest sound of thunder.

Chapter Twenty-seven

p 323

(1) Job also added to this, using his parable, and he said: (2) God lives Who has taken away my judgment, and the Almighty Who has led my soul to bitterness. (3) Since as long as there is breath left in me and God's spirit in my nostrils, (4) my lips will not speak iniquity and my tongue will not practice

lying. (5) Far be it from me to judge you just. Until I fail I will not withdraw from my innocence. (6) My justification, which I held in the beginning, I will not desert, for my heart has not reproached me in my whole life. (7) Just as the impious man is my enemy, my adversary is iniquitous, as it were. (8) For what is the hope of the hypocrite if he should seize things greedily and God should not free his soul? (9) Will God hear his outcry when distress comes over him? (10) Or will he be able to take delight in the Almighty and invoke God in every situation? (11) I will teach you by the hand of God what the Almighty has and I will not conceal it. (12) Look! You all know, and why do you speak foolishness without cause? (13) This is the portion of an impious man before God and the inheritance of violent men which they will receive from the Almighty. (14) If his children are multiplied they will be on the sword and his grandchildren will not have their fill of bread; (15) those who remain of him will be buried in ruin and his widows will not be mourned. (16) If he accumulates silver as if it were earth and procures clothing like clay, (17) he has indeed procured these things, but the just man will dress himself in them and the innocent man will divide his silver. (18) He has built his house like a moth and like a groundskeeper he has made a bower. (19) When the rich man goes to sleep nothing will he take with him; he will open his eyes and he will find nothing. (20) It will catch him just like water, unexpected. At night the storm will oppress him. (21) A burning wind will take him off and will bear him away and like a whirlwind it will snatch him from his place. (22) He will dispatch upon him and he will not spare him. From his hand fleeing he will take flight. (23) He will wring his hands over him and he will hiss over him, considering his place.

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In the premised words Job had refuted the things said by Bildad, who had adduced divine power against him as if Job did not know its greatness. Now after Job has finished his response to Bildad, it is understood that he waited for the third of his friends, namely, Zophar, to respond in order, according to his usual custom, but since he was silent, as if convinced, Job takes up the speech again and shows by another reason that it is not contrary to divine providence if bad men prosper in this world and good men suffer adversities. Hence, the text says *Job also added to this*, namely, after no one responded to him, *using his parable*, namely, since he was speaking through figures of speech in the manner of those who introduce parables.

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Now before he shows his purpose he proclaims that he will never cross over to his friends' opinion, and to strengthen this claim he premises an oath. Hence is added, *and he said: God lives, Who has taken away my judgment*, namely, if your opinion were supposed according to which you claim that it pertains to the justice of divine judgment that it bring the present adversities only upon sinners. Therefore, to explain the sense in which he has said that his judgment has been taken away, he adds *and the Almighty, Who has led my soul to bitterness*, that is, Who has brought upon me without preceding guilt external adversities as a result of which I suffer bitterness in my soul. Nevertheless, I do not depart from reverence and love for Him, as is clear from the fact that I swear by Him.

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Now he introduces the oath just mentioned at this addition, *Since as long as there is breath left in me*, that is, as long as I have life, which is preserved by respiration. ^{†1} And to show that he recognizes that the benefit of life is from God, he adds *and God's spirit in my nostrils*. For respiration is done chiefly through the nostrils, for respiration which is done through the mouth is not so suitable, as Aristotle says in his *History of Animals*. ^{†2} Therefore, respiration in man, which has been placed principally in the nostrils, here is called *God's spirit* since man has from God that he can live by respiring. And for this benefit he does not wish to be ungrateful by sinning. Hence, he adds *my lips will not speak iniquity*, namely, so that I would say that all who suffer adversities are iniquitous, *and my tongue will not practice lying*, namely, so that I would say that it pertains to divine justice to remunerate the merits of the just with present prosperity and to condemn the sins of the iniquitous with temporal adversity. And since Job's friends were claiming these things he adds *Far be it from me to judge you just*. Perhaps he could not indeed judge just unless he

those things, he adds *far be it from me to judge you just*. For he could not judge them just unless he approved their unjust opinion, and by doing this he would withdraw from his own justice. Hence, he adds *Until I fail*, namely, by death, *I will not withdraw*, that is, I propose not to withdraw, *from my innocence*, from which, namely, I would withdraw if, with you, I judged the holy men suffering adversity in this world to be impious. And just as I do not propose to pass from innocence to doing harm, so neither do I propose to desert the way of justice. Hence, he adds *My justification*, namely, because it pertains to the execution of justice, *which I held in the beginning*, namely, by neither approving a man for the prosperity which he has nor by condemning him for the adversity which he suffers in this life, *I will not desert*, that is to say, by inclining to your opinion. Now those who have sinned once are usually more prone to sin again, whereas those who are inexperienced in sin slip into sin with greater difficulty. Hence, he adds *for my heart has not reproached me in my whole life*, as if to say: Therefore, I trust that I will not withdraw from innocence nor desert justice since I have learned this through experience. For I do not have a remorseful conscience for any grave sin which I have committed in my whole life. Or the sense can be connected otherwise. For since he had said that he would not withdraw from his innocence nor desert the justification which he had held in the beginning, someone could say that before this he had had neither innocence nor justice, but he excludes this possibility himself, adding *for my heart has not reproached me*, and so on. Now I would be turning away from innocence and deserting justice if I were to favor you who support injustice and impiety. Hence, he adds *Just as the impious man is my enemy*, inasmuch, namely, as he speaks against the truth of divine judgment, *my adversary is iniquitous, as it were*, inasmuch, namely, as he offers an iniquitous opinion in arguing against me when he says that I am impious because I have been gravely afflicted.

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Having premised these remarks pertaining to the refutation of his friends and to the strengthening of his own opinion, then, he addresses himself to his principal purpose—namely, to show that it is not contrary to divine providence if bad men prosper temporally in this world and just men are afflicted temporally. And, indeed, he had manifested this position above on the basis of the future rewards and scourges which are reserved for good and bad men after this life, [†3](#) whereas now he shows it from the weakness of the temporal goods which bad men possess in this life and from the greatness of spiritual goods which are granted to good men. First, then, he claims that it is useless to sinners if they acquire temporal goods in this life without the goods of the soul. Hence, he says *For what is the hope of the hypocrite if he should seize things greedily*, that is, if he should gather riches unjustly, *and God should not free his soul*, namely, from sin through the gifts of grace; that is, what good can he achieve from this? And he speaks of the hypocrite, that is, the pretender, in the place of all sinners since "pretended equity . . . is . . . double iniquity," [†4](#) and hypocrites, as forgers of virtue, seem to be especially abominable in God's eyes, as is said below at 36:13: "Pretenders and cunning men provoke the wrath of God."

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Now he shows next that they are deprived of two hopes, one of which is that which just men have of God, that in time of necessity He may hear their prayer. But Job excludes this hope from impious men, saying *Will God hear his outcry when distress comes over him?*, as if to say: "No." And the reason for this exclusion is assigned in Proverbs 1:24 from the mouth of Wisdom saying, "I called and you rejected me," and after a few verses there is added, "Then," namely, when distress will come upon them, "they will invoke Me and I will not heed them" [at Prov. 1:28]. And in Proverbs 28:9 is said, "Whoever turns away his ear lest he hear the law, his prayer will become worthy of curses." Now the second hope of just men is that when temporal consolation fails them in the time of trial they may enjoy divine delight and be delighted in His praise, but he excludes this hope from impious men, adding *Or will he be able to take delight in the Almighty*, Whom, of course, he is proved by his works not to love, *and invoke God in every situation?* For it results from the great love of God that the praise of God is always in the mouth of some men.

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And since he has shown that the temporal goods which impious men possess are of little value without the hope of just men which the holy have, he shows next that the temporal goods which impious men sometimes possess are fragile. And to the assertion of the things which he is about to say he premises two remarks—first, of course, that the things which he is about to say are consistent with divine wisdom. Hence, he says *I will teach you by the hand of God*, that is, by His power, *what the Almighty has*, namely, fixed in His wisdom, as it were, *and I will not conceal it*, namely, what I have learned with God instructing me. Second, he shows that what he is about to say is so manifest that even they cannot be ignorant of it. Hence, he adds *Look! You all know*, namely, that what I am about to say is true; therefore, it is strange that you speak so irrationally against manifest truth. This is the point of his adding *and why do you speak foolishness without cause?*, that is, things which do not have the support of reason. For dull men, although they may know the premises, usually do not perceive what follows from them.

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Now one should consider that since God is the Creator and Governor of all things, all men receive from Him something like their inheritance from their father. Now bad men receive as their portion and their inheritance from God the temporal goods of this world. Hence, in their role is said, "This is our portion and this is our lot," †5 whereas good men, on the contrary, perceive spiritual goods as their portion and inheritance, according to Psalm 15:6: "The ropes have fallen for me on outstanding lands, and indeed my inheritance is outstanding." Describing, then, how fragile and precarious is the portion of impious men which they receive in temporal goods, he says *This is the portion of an impious man before God*, that is, such is that which comes to them as their lot when spiritual goods are distributed to good men and temporal goods to them; *and the inheritance of violent men*, that is, of those unjustly acquiring temporal goods, *which they will receive from the Almighty*, namely, with Him permitting it and offering the opportunity, as was said above at 22:18: "although He had filled their houses with goods." Now he shows that this portion or inheritance is precarious, first with respect to what generally happens concerning the progeny of impious men, which, nevertheless, is deemed most important among temporal goods. Now sometimes it happens that the children of impious men who have prospered in this world are killed. Hence, he says *If his children are multiplied*, a situation which, namely, was accounted to great prosperity, *they will be on the sword*, that is, they will be killed. And although it rarely happens that the children of rich men come down to great poverty, it frequently happens with grandsons and descendants. Hence, he adds *and his grandchildren will not have their fill of bread*, namely, because of want. Now with respect to other members of his family he adds *those who remain of him*, namely, members of the household and friends, *will be buried in ruin*, that is, as if slain without religious rite. Hence, with respect to his wives also he adds *and his widows will not be mourned*, namely, as usually happens in burials performed in accord with religious rite.

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Just as their happiness is fragile and precarious with respect to their children and friends, then, so it is also with respect to the riches possessed. Among these are certain artificial riches, namely, money, which was invented as the measure of the exchange of things, as the Philosopher says. †6 And with respect to this fact Job adds *If he accumulates silver as if it were earth*, that is, if he should acquire as great a supply of money as he has of earth. Truly, other riches which serve the natural necessity of men, such as bread and wine, clothing, and other such things, are natural. †7 With respect to this fact he adds *and procures clothing like clay*, namely, so that he may have as great a supply of clothing as of clay, *he has indeed procured these things*, that is, he has had the worry and the work in procuring them. Nevertheless, another will have the enjoyment, and sometimes a good man who does not worry himself about it. Hence, he adds *but the just man will dress himself in them*, namely, the clothes, for his own need, *and the innocent man will divide his silver*; that is, he will distribute it and give it to the poor. He will not keep it heaped up in reserve, which would be contrary to his innocence.

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The spaciousness of houses also pertains to earthly prosperity, but this, too, he shows to be precarious on two counts: first, of course, because sometimes one builds himself a house through violence in another's place, from which he is driven out. Hence, he adds *He has built his house like a moth*, namely, which procures a place for itself by gnawing away another's garment, by whom it is thrown out when the garment is shaken out. He shows it in another way because even if he should build his house on his own soil, yet it is not given to him to have the care and ownership of that possession for a long time but for a short time. Hence, he adds *and just like a groundskeeper*, namely, of a vineyard, *he has built a bower*, which, namely, is torn down when his watch is finished. Now he shows how he loses his acquired goods, adding *When the rich man goes to sleep*, that is, when he dies, *nothing* of these things which he possesses *will he take with him*, namely, into another life; *he will open his eyes*, namely, in resurrection, *and he will find nothing*, namely, since he will not return to possess temporal goods. Sometimes, too, in this life he loses them suddenly in the way in which rain suddenly overcomes a man. Hence, he adds *It will catch him just like water*, namely, rain water, *unexpected*; that is, it will overcome him suddenly. And although rain in the daytime can be foreseen in some fashion, in the nighttime it catches a man entirely unexpectedly. Hence, he adds *at night the storm*, namely, of adversity, *will oppress him*, that is, altogether unexpectedly.

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Now finally he shows the fragility of worldly prosperity with respect to the very person of the man, which sometimes perishes through some fever or through some persecution, and with respect to this situation he adds *A burning wind will take him off*; that is, a fever will kill him, *and will bear him away*, namely, from the society of the living, and this will happen suddenly and unexpectedly. Hence follows the remark *and like a whirlwind it will snatch him from his place*, that is, violently and without delay. Sometimes, however, he is killed not by an internal weakness but by an external persecutor. Hence, he adds *He*, namely, God, *will dispatch* some persecutor *upon him*, that is, someone who may be more powerful than he, whom he cannot resist, *and he*, namely, the persecutor himself, *will not spare him*. Hence, the impious man *himself, fleeing from his hand, that is, from his power, will take flight* even through death, since "after he has died he has nothing further to do." ¶8 Now after he has died astonishment and grief remain for his friends. Hence, he adds *He will wring his hands over him* as if in astonishment, *and he will hiss over him* as if having compassion for him, *considering his place*, that is, considering his former dignity.

Chapter Twenty-eight

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(1) *Silver has sources of its veins and there is a place for gold where it is fused. (2) Iron is taken from the earth, and stone released by the heat turns into bronze. (3) He has set a time for darkness and He Himself considers the end of every thing. The stone of dark, also, and the shade of death (4) the torrent divides from foreign folk, both those whom the foot of the needy man has forgotten and the trackless. (5) The land from which bread arose in its own place has been overturned by fire. (6) The stones of it are the place of the sapphire and its clods are gold. (7) That path the bird has not known, nor has the eye of the vulture looked upon it. (8) The sons of pedlars have not trodden it, nor will the lioness pass through it. (9) To the granite He extends His hand. He overturns mountains from their foothills. (10) In the rocks He has cut out channels and His eye has seen every precious thing. (11) He has also searched into the depths of rivers and He leads forth hidden things into the light.*

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Job had shown above how fragile and precarious is the portion of impious men which they receive from God, †1 but now he intends to show on the contrary the dignity of the spiritual good which just men receive from God even in this world, and indeed, he comprises this spiritual good under wisdom. Therefore, he intends to put wisdom before all corporeal things both with respect to its origin and with respect to its preciousness. †2 And first he begins to show that all the things which seem precious among corporeal things have their origin in certain places, and he begins with the metals which are held precious among men. Now one should consider that metals are generated from damp vapors released from the earth by the power of the sun and the other stars and retained in the earth; hence, metals are both ductile and able to be liquefied, just as stones on the contrary and other such things which are neither hammered nor cast are generated from a dry exhalation retained beneath the earth. †3 Now the species of metals are differentiated according to the greater or lesser purity of the vapor released and according to the difference of the heat of fusion. †4 Among them gold seems to be the purest, after this silver, and under this bronze, but the lowest is iron. And according to this greater or lesser purity metals have as many different origins as possible. Since gold is the purest, then, it is found for the most part generated in its own purity among the sands of rivers because of the constant evaporation and the heat of the sand. Now silver is found for the most part in certain veins, either of the earth or even of stones. Now bronze is found incorporated in stones, but iron is found in earth abundant in sediment, as it were, having not yet completed its digestion so that it has arrived at the generation of stone. Enumerating the different locations of metals, then, he says *Silver has sources of its veins*, namely, in some determined places from which such vapors are released as are suited to the generation of silver. And so, when the vapors just mentioned are mixed with earth or stone, silver-veins are produced there. Now with respect to gold he adds *and there is a place for gold where it is fused* since, namely, from many sands are collected some grains of gold which are melted into one mass, and this, of course, does not happen in every place but in some determined place in which the due proportion of active power †5 comes together with the material proportioned to such a species. Next, with respect to iron he adds *Iron is taken from the earth*, namely, since it is found in the earth undigested, as it were. Then, with respect to bronze he says *and stone*, to which, namely, vapor proportionate to its nature is mixed, *released by the heat*, namely, of a powerful fire, *turns into bronze* when, namely, what is there of the nature of bronze is made to flow by the heat of the fire.

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Next he proceeds concerning other things which have a determined time and place as a result of divine disposition. Hence, the majority of things which are hidden from men are subject to divine knowledge. Now the sun and many other things are hidden from us by the darkness of night, but this happens by divine disposition. Hence, he says *He has set a time for darkness*. Also, certain things are hidden from us by their corruption when they are resolved into their sources, which are known to God but hidden from us. Hence, he adds *and He Himself considers the end of every thing*, that is, the limit of the resolution of things. Certain things are also found to be hidden from men because of the trackless place; for example, sometimes there are certain inaccessible mountains on which there are certain things unseen by men. With respect to this situation he adds *The stone of dark also*, that is, some cliff of some lofty mountain which is always covered, as it were, by the dark of the clouds, *and the shade of death*, that is, some shady place among the enclosed valleys of the mountains to which the life-giving heat of the sun never reaches, *the torrent divides from the wandering people*. For impassable torrents usually flow down in the foothills of certain mountains in such a way that on one side of the torrent is the road along which strangers pass; on the other side, access to the bank does not lie open. Now sometimes it happens that in such inaccessible places some men dwell here and there whom even poor people, who go around everywhere, do not presume to approach because of the difficulty of access. Hence, he adds *and the torrent divides from the foreign folk those men whom*, dwelling in inaccessible places, *the foot of the needy man has forgotten*, namely, so that he does not approach them, *and the trackless*, that is, because a road to them does not lie open.

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There are also certain places which are inaccessible not because of the site but because of some accidents—for example, because they have been overturned through some alteration, as is read in Gen. 19:24 about Sodom and Gomorrah. Hence, he adds *The land from which bread arose in its own place*, that is, as if in its own fitting place, *has been overturned by fire*, namely, the cause of its overturning proceeds from a superabundance of heat. Now when heat is superabundant it follows that resolutions, both dry and moist, reach a great degree of digestion, so that some precious things—for example, stones or metals—are generated from them. †6 Hence, with respect to precious stones, which are generated from dry evaporation, is added *The stones of it*, namely, of the earth overturned by fire, *are the place of the sapphire*. Now with respect to precious metals, which are generated from moist evaporation, he adds *and its clods are gold*. Now not only men but brute animals also avoid such places, overturned in this way because of the pollution of the air from the abundance of sulphur. Hence, first with respect to birds, concerning which there is less reflection, he says *That path*, namely, of that land, *the bird has not known* since, namely, it does not dare to fly over it or even to approach it because of the pollution of the air. Hence, he adds *nor has . . . looked upon*, namely, it, *the eye of the vulture*, which, nevertheless, usually sees ably from far away. Or the verse can be explained another way: That land *has not known*, that is, has not experienced, *the path of the bird* since, namely, neither does the bird pass through it *nor has he*, namely, anyone in that land, *looked upon the eyes of a vulture*. Then he says with respect to men, *The sons of pedlars*, that is, of merchants, who nevertheless usually go to difficult places to make a profit, *have not trodden it*. Next, with respect to four-footed animals he adds *nor will the lioness*, namely, which dwells in wooded places, *pass through it*.

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Now although these things may be hidden from men, they still do not escape the notice of God, Who exercises His power †7 both in the mountains and in the rivers. Hence, he adds *To the granite*, that is, to the stony mountains *He extends His hand*, that is, His power. And he manifests this fact in two effects: first, through the effect that mountains are sometimes leveled utterly to the ground, and this is the point of adding *He overturns mountains from their foothills*. Now second is the effect that "through the middle of mountains pass waters," †8 as if through divine power a way had been cut out in the rocks for them by God. Hence, he adds *in the rocks He has cut out channels*, that is, passages for the channels. And just as His power extends to do all magnificent things, so His wisdom extends itself to know all precious things. Hence, he adds *And His eye has seen every precious thing*. For if He can overturn mountains, if He can cut out rocks and exercise similar power on the whole earth, it follows that He sees the precious things which lie hidden there although the eye of man cannot see them. And not only does His eye see the things which lie hidden in the lands but *He has also searched into the depths of rivers*, that is, He knows those things which lie hidden in the depths of rivers as perfectly as if He were searching into them, and the sign of this fact is that *He leads forth hidden things into the light*, that is, into the manifestation of men.

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(12) *But where is wisdom found and what is the place of understanding?* (13) *Man does not know its price. Nor is it found in the land of those who live pleasantly.* (14) *The abyss says: It is not in me, and the sea speaks: It is not with me.* (15) *Solid gold will not be given for it, nor will silver be paid in exchange for it.* (16) *It will not be compared with the tinted colors of India, nor with the very precious sardonyx stone and the sapphire.* (17) *Gold will not be equated to it, or glass. Vessels of gold will not be exchanged for it,* (18) *lofty and eminent, nor will they be mentioned in comparison with it. Now wisdom is drawn from hidden things.* (19) *The topaz from Ethiopia will not be equated with it, nor the purest dyeings be set next to it.* (20) *Whence, then, does wisdom come, and what is the place of understanding?* (21) *It is hidden from the eyes of all living men. It lies hidden from the birds of heaven also.* (22) *Destruction and death have said: We have heard its reputation with our ears.* (23) *God understands its way and He knows its*

place. (24) For He looks upon the ends of the world and He looks at everything which is under heaven. (25) He has given weight to the winds, and the waters He suspended in measure (26) when He was setting down the law for the rains and the way for the storms resounding. (27) Then He saw it and He explained in detail and He prepared and He investigated and said to man: Look! The fear of the Lord itself is wisdom, and to withdraw from evil, understanding.

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Since he has shown that all the precious things which are found in corporeal existence are contained in determined places which, if they are unknown to men, are nevertheless known to God, to show the eminence of wisdom he first introduces the fact that it is not contained in a determined place. Hence, he says *But where is wisdom found?*, as if to say: It is shut up in no corporeal place since it is not anything corporeal. But not only the things which are precious in corporeal existence themselves but their sources too are shut up in corporeal places, but this cannot be said of wisdom. Hence, he adds *and what is the place of understanding?* For understanding is the source of knowledge and wisdom. But just as wisdom is not shut up in a place, so, too, neither is understanding, which is its source. Second, he shows the dignity of wisdom by the observation that it cannot be rated at a price. Hence, he adds *Man does not know its price*, that is, nothing which man knows of is a sufficient price for wisdom.

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Now he manifests each of the premises by its consequence: first, the proposition that wisdom is not found in a determined place. Now the things which are deemed precious among men are found partly, of course, among refined men who strive to gather precious stones and metals. Hence, he adds *Nor is it found in the land of those who live pleasantly*, that is, of refined men, since they are especially impeded from the perception of wisdom because they have their hearts occupied with delights. Now such precious kinds of corporeal things are found partly in some dark depths, but this is not true of wisdom. Hence, he adds *The abyss says: It is not in me*, namely, as if the things which lie hidden in the hidden places of the depths are especially hidden from human wisdom. Partly, however, they are found in the sea, both because they are generated there, such as pearls in sea shells, [†9](#) or because they are lost there in ships sunk there—but this is not true of wisdom—and also because such precious things are usually carried from place to place by sea. Hence, he adds *and the sea speaks: It is not with me*. As a matter of fact, the things which are in the sea especially lie hidden from human wisdom.

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Next he manifests what he had said about the fact that wisdom cannot be rated at a price, and he enumerates the things which are most precious among men, saying *Solid*, that is, the purest, *gold will not be given for it* since the price of wisdom cannot be rated at any amount of gold. Now after gold silver is deemed most precious among the other metals, concerning which he adds *nor will silver be paid in exchange for it*. Besides metals there are also certain very precious stones of different colors which are especially produced in India, concerning which is added *It will not be compared*, that is, wisdom will not be compared, *with the tinted colors of India*, that is, with precious stones of different colors naturally tinted in India. And he adds a remark about certain precious stones which are also found in other lands. Hence, he adds *nor with the very precious sardonyx stone*, which, namely, "is composed of two stones," namely, from the carnelian, which is of a red color "kindling the spirit to joy and sharpening the mental power," and the onyx, which is surrounded by it as if having certain harmful powers, namely, "of exciting sadness and fears," the harm of which is held in check by the carnelian. [†10](#) Hence, it is said to have the property that "it drives away prodigality, rendering a man chaste and modest." [†11](#) Hence also it is called very precious. Now he adds *and the sapphire*, which is of a sky-blue color and is also precious because of the many powers which it has. And it makes no difference that some other stones are more precious since the prices of stones are not the same either in all places or in all times. Now he adds a remark about those things which have preciousness by reason of their beauty, saying *Gold will not be equated to it*, which has beauty by reason of its splendor, *or glass*, which has beauty by reason of its clearness, though it may not be

distinguished by the rating of its price. Now he adds a remark about things which have beauty by reason of craftsmanship when he says *Vessels of gold, lofty*, namely, in size, *and eminent*, namely, in composition, *will not be exchanged for it*. And just as they cannot be exchanged for wisdom, so, too, all the things just mentioned are deemed as nothing in comparison to wisdom. Hence, he adds *nor will they be mentioned in comparison with it*, that is, it is not worthy that even a recollection of these things be had when mention is made of the excellence of wisdom.

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And since he had said that certain corporeal things are hidden and are deemed precious on this account, he shows next that wisdom does not lack even this preciousness when *Now wisdom is drawn from hidden things* is added. For the origin of human wisdom is hidden in two ways: in one way on the side of the intellectual light which is turned upon us by the most hidden Cause of all, namely, by God; in another way on the side of things known, into the hidden properties and essences of which wisdom inquires, and ascends from them to a knowledge of divine matters which is especially appropriate to wisdom. †12 Hence, he concludes that nothing can be compared to wisdom either on the account of preciousness or on the account of concealment, not even in the case of precious stones. Hence, he adds *The topaz from Ethiopia will not be equated with it*, which, namely, "is so called from the place of its first discovery, or because in color it pretends a likeness to gold." †13 Now with respect to precious garments he adds *nor the purest dyeings*, that is, of any silk or woolen cloth, *be set next to it*, that is, be compared to wisdom.

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Since he had said that wisdom is so incomparable, then, and has a hidden origin, he inquires whence may be its source when he adds *Whence, then, does wisdom come*, that is, whence is it derived, *and what is the place of understanding*, that is, from what source do men participate in the light of understanding? Now he shows that this source exceeds all human knowledge. Hence, he adds *It is hidden from the eyes of all living persons* since "The font of wisdom is the word of God on high," as is said in Ecclesiasticus 1:5. Now there have been some followers of auguries who believed that certain augural birds participated in a certain effect of wisdom over men, inasmuch, namely, as they believed that the knowledge of future events came to men from them, †14 but he shows that wisdom exceeds this divination, adding *it also lies hidden from the birds of heaven*, by which it can be understood that the origin of wisdom exceeds the celestial bodies by which such birds are moved. There are also some men who seek out a knowledge of future events from the dead, but not even this practice touches upon the origin of wisdom. †15 Hence, he adds *Destruction and death have said: We have heard its reputation with our ears*. And rightly does he attribute the reputation of wisdom to death and destruction, since destruction and death involve retreat and withdrawal from the good things which achieve wisdom. Nevertheless, the three things just mentioned can pertain metaphorically to the three types of rational creature so that the statement *It is hidden from the eyes of all living men* refers to men, whereas the addition *it lies hidden from the birds of heaven* refers to the angels, but the addition *Destruction and death have said: We have heard its reputation* refers to demons who, kept apart from God by damnation, have their knowledge from remote sources as from the reputation alone of divine wisdom.

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To show the root of wisdom, then, he adds *God understands its way*, that is, the whole process of wisdom, since He Himself is both the origin of wisdom and "the place of understanding" (v. 20). And since He knows Himself perfectly, therefore Job adds *and He knows its place*, that is, He knows Himself, in Whom wisdom is found fully as in its first origin. Now wisdom is distributed from Him into all the creatures which are made through God's wisdom just as art derives from the mind of the artisan in his work. Hence, it is said in Ecclesiasticus 1:10 that "God pours out wisdom over all His works." Hence, too, the whole number of creatures itself is, as it were, a kind of secondary place of wisdom. Therefore, to show that God knows the place of wisdom he adds that He knows the whole number of creatures. He shows this first, of course, with respect to the outermost creatures under whom the others are contained

shows this first, of course, with respect to the outermost creatures under whom the others are contained. Hence, he adds *For He Himself looks upon the ends of the world*, that is, the most excellent creatures in which the order of creatures terminates in ascending from the lower creatures, such as the celestial bodies and the celestial spirits; then he shows it with respect to the other creatures contained under them, such as the elements. Hence, he adds *and He sees everything under heaven*.

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And lest anyone believe that He has a knowledge of things which is received from things, as we have, he shows next that He knows things as the cause of all things. Hence, he adds with respect to certain hidden creatures, namely, winds and rains, *He has given weight to the winds*, that is, He has given them the inclination of motion, so that, namely, they move sometimes in this direction, sometimes in that. Next he speaks of the rains, and first, of course, with reference to the fact that they are lifted up in clouds as vapor. Hence, he adds *and the waters*, namely, those subject to evaporation, *He suspended*, that is, He holds them suspended in the air, and He does this *in measure*, so that, namely, they might not submerge everything if they were to overflow or dry out everything if they were diminished more than was due. Second, he speaks with respect to the very generation of the rains when he says *when He was setting down the law for the rains*, namely, that they come down at certain times and places. Third, he speaks with respect to their effect, especially on the sea, which is especially disturbed by atmospheric change. Hence, he adds *and He was setting the way*, namely, *for the storms*, namely, at sea, *resounding* as a result of the great disturbance since even such storms arise at certain times and in a certain size.

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But since God does not acquire wisdom from creatures themselves, as we do, but rather has produced creatures according to His own wisdom, therefore he adds *Then*, namely, when He was making creatures, *He saw it*, namely, wisdom, in Himself, inasmuch as through the actual consideration of His own wisdom He led things forth into being. Now from Him, of course, was wisdom first distributed to the angels, who became participants of divine wisdom, [†16](#) and with respect to this fact he says *and He explained in detail* His wisdom, namely, manifesting it to them. Second, it was distributed to the whole number of creatures by disposing it through His wisdom, and to this fact pertains the addition *and He prepared*, namely, in His wisdom, the world. Third, it was distributed to men, who do not perceive the wisdom of truth through simple apprehension as do the angels, to whom it is explained in detail, but who arrive at it by inquiry of reason. Hence, he adds *and He investigated*, that is, He made men investigate it, and this is the point of adding *and said to man*, namely, by illuminating Himself and by communicating wisdom through internal inspiration: *Look! The fear of the Lord*, namely, which I give to you now in person, *itself is wisdom* since through fear of the Lord man clings to God, in Whom is the true wisdom of man as in the highest Cause of all things; *and to withdraw from evil*, that is, from sin, by which man loses God, is *understanding*, namely, since understanding is especially necessary so that through understanding man may discern evil from good and having avoided evils through the execution of good works may arrive at a participation in divine wisdom. So, then, since *The fear of the Lord itself is wisdom and to withdraw from evil, understanding*, it follows that just men who fear God and withdraw from evil have wisdom and understanding, which are preferred to all the earthly goods which evil men possess. And so it is manifest that the rationale of divine providence is upheld in the fact that spiritual goods are given to the just as the better goods, whereas temporal goods are given to the evil as precarious goods.

Chapter Twenty-nine

(1) Now Job, taking up his parable, said in addition: (2) Who would grant that I be as I was in previous months? Like the days in which God watched over me, (3) when His lamp shone over my head and by His light I walked in the darkness, (4) just as I was in the days of my young manhood when God was in my tent solitarily, (5) when the Almighty was with me and my boys in my circle, (6) when I washed my feet with butter and the rock poured out streams of oil for me, (7) when I proceeded to the city gate and in the street they put a chair for me. (8) The youths saw me and hid themselves, and the old men, rising in my presence, stood. (9) The chief men stopped speaking and put a finger over their mouths. (10) The generals checked their voices and their tongues stuck to their throat. (11) The ear hearing blessed me, and the eye seeing gave testimony for me (12) because I had freed the poor man crying out and the orphan who had no helper. (13) The blessing of the man about to perish came upon me and I consoled the heart of the widow. (14) I have been clothed in justice and I have vested myself as if with a garment and with my judgment as a crown. (15) I have been an eye to the blind man and a foot to the lame man; (16) I was the father of the poor and I investigated very diligently the case which I did not know. (17) I broke the jaws of the iniquitous man and from his teeth I took the prey. (18) And I used to say: I will die in my own little nest and like a palm-tree I will multiply my days. (19) My root is open beside the waters and the dew will remain on my harvest. (20) My glory will always be renewed and my bow in my hand will be restored. (21) Those who heard me awaited the opinion and they kept silent, intent upon my counsel. (22) They dared to add nothing to my words; upon them dripped my eloquence. They awaited me like rainfall and their mouths they opened as if to an evening shower. (24) If ever I laughed at them, they did not believe, and the light of my countenance did not fall upon the ground. (25) If I had wished to go to them, I sat first, and when I was sitting like a king with the army standing round about I was nevertheless the consoler of the mourners.

Since Job in the premised words has shown in universal terms the reasoning by which it appears evidently not to be contrary to divine justice that evil men prosper and good men—to whom greater, namely, spiritual, goods are conceded—sometimes lack temporal prosperity in this world, he manifests this reasoning in his own case, as if for an example, intending to refute their opinion also with respect to their claim that he had suffered adversities for sin. He mentions first his past prosperity, which he used virtuously; next, the magnitude of the adversity into which he had fallen; [†1](#) and finally, he demonstrates in many ways his innocence. [†2](#)

Now it is given to be understood that just as he had proceeded to show his own purpose after he had satisfied Bildad's words, so, too, after manifesting his purpose, since Zophar was keeping quiet, [†3](#) he waited in case any of the others would speak. Now when all of them were silent he resumed the speech again. Hence is said *Now Job, taking up his parable*, namely, since he was about to speak metaphorically, *said in addition: Who would grant that I*, a question which is posed to designate a desire more than to form a petition, *be as I was in previous months*, that is, that I live in prosperity as I once did. And since he attributed this prosperity neither to fortune nor to his own strength but to divine help, he adds *Like the days in which God watched over me*, namely, by protecting me from adversities, and also directed me toward goods—in certain respects, of course, by leading me to good effects even beyond my intention. This is the point of his saying *when His lamp*, that is, His providence, *shone over my head*, that is, my mind, directing it toward many goods to which my mind did not attain. In certain respects, however, he was directed by God as if instructed by Him concerning things which had to be done. Hence, he adds *and by His light*, that is, by His instruction, *I walked*, that is, I proceeded, *in the darkness*, that is, in doubtful situations. And that this not be attributed to the merit of his preceding justice, he adds *just as I was in the days of my young manhood*, when, namely, I had not yet been able to merit such great prosperity. Next he explains one by

nummorum, which, namely, I had not yet been able to merit such great prosperity. Next he explains one by one the good points of his past state, and he begins at the beginning, as it were, with the divine familiarity which he perceived in his prayer and contemplation. Hence, he says *when God was in my tent, solitarily*; that is, I felt the presence of God when I prayed and meditated solitarily in my tent, which pertains to contemplation. With respect to action, however, he adds *when the Almighty was with me*, namely, cooperating with me, as it were, to do well. Next he describes his prosperity in terms of his offspring when he adds *and my boys in my circle*, for the sons of a father who is a young man have to be little boys. Now he proceeds further to the affluence of things which pertain to the enjoyment of life when he adds *when I washed my feet with butter*. For among the ancients riches consisted especially of cattle, from which on this account money is named, according to Augustine. ¶14 Now among the products of cattle butter, which is the fat of the milk, seems to be most precious, the affluence of which he designates figuratively through the washing of the feet—for example, if someone were to say that he had so great an abundance of some precious liquid to the point of washing his feet with it. And just as butter seems to be most precious among the products of animals, so, too, does oil among the products of lands. Now the olive trees which have the best oil are usually in rocky and sandy places. Hence, he adds *and the rock poured out streams of oil for me*, by which expression he designates the abundance and the goodness of the product.

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Next he explains the greatness of his earlier glory when he adds *when I proceeded to the city gate*, by which expression he gives one to understand that he had the authority of judging, since among the ancients judgments were handed down at the gates. ¶15 And in order to show that he had not been one of the petty judges, as it were, he adds *and in the street they put a chair for me*. By this statement he is shown to have been a man of singular dignity. Now next he shows the authority of his judgment—first, of course, through a sign received from the quarter of the youths when he says *The youths*, who, namely, are usually inclined to sin, *saw me and hid themselves*, namely, as if fearing my judgment. Second, he shows the authority of his judgment with respect to the old men when he adds *and the old men, rising in my presence, stood*, namely, as if subject to my judgment. For he had authority to judge not only the youths but also the old men. Third, he shows the authority of his judgment with respect to the rulers of the cities, who exhibited reverence for his judgment—first, of course, with respect to the fact that they broke off words already begun when he wished to speak—hence, he adds *The chief men stopped speaking*; and second, since they did not dare to interrupt him when he was speaking. Hence, he adds *and put a finger over their mouths*. Fourth, he shows the authority of his judgment with respect to the generals of wars, who are usually bolder and more prompt to speak, who nevertheless did not dare to speak presumptuously and boisterously in his presence. Hence, he adds *The generals checked their voices*, namely, by speaking plainly and humbly, and sometimes they were so dumfounded that they dared not speak at all. Hence, he adds *and their tongues stuck to their throat*, as if they were unable to speak.

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And since men of such rigid authority are usually rather feared than loved by the people, he shows that he was lovable to the people, since it is the mark of the magnanimous man that he keeps his authority among the great men and yet condescends to lesser men. ¶16 Hence, he adds *The ear hearing*, namely, from others, my glory or my judgments being recited neither hated nor envied me but *blessed me*, that is, deemed me blessed and wished blessing upon me, and this remark pertains to those who were absent. With respect to those present, however, he adds *and the eye seeing*, namely, my glory and judgments, *gave testimony*, namely, of my virtue *for me*, namely, among others, and did so because of the works of mercy which I practiced. And he shows this claim first with respect to the poor. Hence, he adds *because I had freed*, namely, from the hand of the oppressor, *the poor man crying out*, that is, complaining. He shows it second with respect to orphans; hence, he adds *and the orphan who had no helper*, namely, having lost his father. Third, he shows it with respect to men living in perils; hence, he adds *The blessing of the man about to perish came upon me*, that is, the man who had been aided by me in his perils blessed me; and fourth, with respect to widows; hence, he adds *and I consoled the heart of the widow*, since, namely, she had lost the

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Now one should not show pity to anyone in his judgment in such a way that justice is abandoned; hence, he adds *I have been clothed in justice*, that is, justice has appeared on all sides in my judicial actions. For a man is surrounded on all sides by a garment. And to show that he has not been forced but has done justice voluntarily he adds *and I have vested myself*, of my own accord, as it were, [putting on] justice *as a garment*, namely, protecting and decorating myself on all sides. Now just as in the strife of wars a crown is given to victors, so, too, a judge also merits a crown when, through his judgment, he grants the victory to justice. Hence, he adds *with my judgment as a crown*, as if to say: I am clothed with my judgment as with a crown. And to show how he has been able to preserve mercy along with justice he adds *I have been an eye for the blind man*, that is, I have instructed simple men how they might proceed in their business and not suffer loss through ignorance. And since he gave not only counsel to the ignorant but also help to the powerless, he adds *and a foot to the lame man*, that is, I have given help to him who was unable to proceed in his business so that he could proceed. He also watched over those who lacked protection. Hence, he adds *I was the father of the poor*, namely, by protecting them and fostering them. Now sometimes it happens that some men calumniously injure the simple, the powerless, and the poor through fraud, but against this practice he employed diligent care to exclude the calumnious processes of evil men. Hence, he adds *And I investigated very diligently the case which I did not know*, namely, so that no fraud might lie hidden there. Certain men, however, oppress the poor through violence, swallowing them up, in a manner of speaking, through robbery, and Job destroyed their violence with his own power. Hence, he adds *I broke the jaws of the iniquitous man*, that is, I destroyed the rapacity of violence so that, namely, he could not rob further, *and from his teeth I took the prey*, namely, since he forced them to restore what they had already received through robbery.

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Now on the strength of the premised good works he was confident that his prosperity would last, and he describes its continuation first with respect to his own person. Hence, he adds *And I used to say: I will die in my own little nest*, that is, I hoped that because of the preceding merits I would die in the quiet of my own house, not an exile from my house nor even with my house disturbed. Nor yet did he believe that he was being anticipated by an untimely death. Hence, he adds *and like a palm-tree*, namely, which lives a very long time, *I will multiply my days*, namely, through the longevity of life. Second, he describes the continuity of prosperity with respect to his riches, the increase of which he describes, adding *My root is open beside the waters*, for trees which have their roots near waters usually abound in fruit. Hence, by this expression he designates the multiplication of temporal fruits. Now sometimes it happens that the fruits of some man are multiplied, but because of some impediments preventing him, he cannot harvest them. Hence, to exclude this possibility he adds *and the dew will remain on my harvest*. For it happens in hot lands that because of the vehemence of the heat, the harvesters cannot stay in the field to harvest, but a cloud of dew affords them a coolness so that they are not impeded from harvesting, according to the text of Isaiah 18:4: "Just like a cloud of dew on the days of harvest." Third, he describes the continuity of the process with respect to glory when he adds *My glory will always be renewed*, namely, through the good works which he proposed to multiply. Fourth, with respect to the continuation of power he adds *and my bow in my hand will be restored*, for by the bow is designated power, for Orientals especially use such arms for wars.

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So, then, in the premised passages he has described both the severity and the mercy which he exhibited in judging, [¶7](#) but now in the third he shows how he also used wisdom—first, of course, in judgments, and with respect to this point he says *Those who heard me*, as subject to my judgment, *awaited the opinion*, namely, mine, believing that they were hearing something very wise. With respect to his counsels, however, he adds *and they kept silent, intent upon my counsel*, namely, waiting upon him and listening

avidly. And after I had given my counsel they were content with it. Hence, he adds *They dared to add nothing to my words*, namely, because of the great wisdom which they esteemed in me. And they not only held my counsel firm but were also consoled in it, perceiving it to be effective to achieve their purpose. Hence, he adds *upon them dripped my eloquence*, that is, it cooled them in the manner of raindrops.

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Since he has already said what sort of man he was in judgments and counsels, then, ^{†8} next he shows what sort of man he was in the common association of men. First, he shows that he was gracious since his presence was missed when he was absent. Hence, he says *They awaited me like rainfall*, namely, by which men are cooled. When he was present, however, they were consoled by the sight of him and by his speeches. Hence, he adds *and their mouths*, that is, their spirits, *they opened*, namely, toward me, to receive consolation, and this is the point of adding *as if to an evening shower*, which, namely, affords coolness after the heat of the day. Second, he shows that he was moderate in association, for he was not dissolved in joy. Hence, he says *If ever I laughed at them*, namely, showing some signs of happiness, *they did not believe*, namely, that I had surrendered myself to laughter. Similarly, too, he was not depressed by sadness. Hence, he adds *and the light of my countenance did not fall upon the ground*. For men depressed by mourning usually have their eyes lowered to the ground. Third, he shows that he was not immoderate concerning honors since, namely, he did not even desire them. Hence, he adds *If I had wished to go to them*, which, nevertheless, I did not do easily, *I sat first*, namely, being in honor among them. And yet he was not proud in his honors. Hence, he adds *and when I was sitting like a king with the army standing round about*, namely, with everyone admiring me here and there, *I was nevertheless the consoler of the mourners*, as one not looking down upon them.

Chapter Thirty

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(1) Now, however, men younger in age deride me, whose fathers I did not deign to put with the dogs of my flock, (2) the power of whose hands was worthless to me, and they were thought unworthy of life itself, (3) in want and in hunger, sterile, who gnawed in solitude, squalid with calamity and with misery, (4) and they ate grass and the barks of trees, and the root of juniper-trees was their food, (5) and taking those things from the enclosed valleys, when they had found each of them they ran to them with a shout. (6) They dwelt in the desert places of the torrents and in the caverns of the earth or on the gravel, (7) and they were happy in the midst of such places, and to be under brambles they reckoned a delight, (8) the sons of men who are foolish and ignoble and thoroughly inconspicuous on earth. (9) Now I have been turned into their lampoon and I have become a proverb to them. (10) They abominate me and they flee far from me and they are not afraid to spit in my face. (11) For He has opened His quiver and afflicted me and He has put a bit in my mouth. (12) To the right of the east my calamities arose immediately. They have undermined my feet and they have oppressed them with their paths as if with waves. (13) They have scattered my routes; they have laid ambushes for me and they have prevailed, and there was no one to bring help. (14) As if my wall had been breeched and my door opened they rushed upon me and to my miseries they hastened down. (15) I have been reduced to nothing. The wind, as it were, has taken away my desire, and like a cloud my health has passed. (16) Now, however, in me languishes my soul and days of affliction possess me. (17) At night my bone is pierced through by pains and those who devour me do not sleep. (18) In their multitude my counsel is consumed, and they have surrounded me to the goal of my ruin.

(18) *In their multitude my garment is consumed, and they have surrounded me to the collar of my tunic, as it were. (19) I have been made equal to mud and I have been made similar to ashes and cinders. (20) I will cry out to You and You will not heed me. I stand and You do not notice me. (21) You have changed into someone cruel to me and in the hardness of Your hand you oppose me. (22) You have lifted me up, and putting me upon the wind, as it were, You have dashed me down hard. (23) I know that You will hand me over to death, where a house has been set up for every living man. (24) But yet, not for their consumption do You send forth Your hand, and if they collapse You Yourself will save them. (25) I used to weep over him who had been afflicted and my soul had compassion on the poor man. (26) I expected goods and evils came to me; I expected the light and shadows burst in. (27) My internal organs have boiled up without any rest; the days of affliction have anticipated me. (28) I walked along grieving; rising up without fury I cried out in the crowd. (29) I was the brother of snakes and a companion of sparrows. (30) My skin has turned black upon me and my bones have dried out from the heat. (31) My cithara has turned to mourning and my tongue to the voice of those who weep.*

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After he has enumerated many things pertaining to the prosperity which he had had in the preceding time, he enumerates here the adversities which he was suffering then. First, of course, in contrast to the glory and former reverence he shows that he is held in present contempt. Now one bears another's contempt the more gravely as the despiser's character has been more abject. Hence, he shows that those by whom he was being despised were abject in many ways: first, of course, in respect to time. Hence, he says *Now, however, men younger in age deride me*, contrary to what he had said above: "The youths saw me and hid themselves and the old men, rising in my presence, stood" [29:8]. Second, he shows that they were abject in respect to their low birth when he adds *whose fathers I did not deign to put with the dogs of my flock*; that is, I did not deem them worthy of taking them into the services, however menial, of my house—for example, the guardianship of the dogs, a remark which corresponds through the opposite sense to what he had said above: "The chief men stopped speaking" [29:9]. Third, he shows that they were abject with respect to the meanness of their power. Hence, he adds *the power of whose hands*, namely, of those who were deriding him or even of their fathers, *was worthless to me*; that is, I regarded all their power as worth nothing, and this remark corresponds through the opposite sense to what he had said above: "The generals checked their voices" [29:10]. Fourth, he shows that they were abject with respect to their lack of honor. Hence, he adds *and they were thought unworthy of life itself*, namely, because of the multitude of grave sins, and this remark corresponds through the opposite sense to what he had said above: "The ear hearing blessed me" [29:11], and so on. Fifth, he shows that they were abject with respect to their poverty; hence, he adds *in want*, namely, with respect to the lack of things; *and in hunger* with respect to the affliction following upon want; *sterile*, that is, unable to produce fruits, contrary to what he had said of himself above: "The rock poured out streams of oil for me" [29:6]. Sixth, he shows that they were abject with respect to the grave life which they were leading. Hence, he adds *who gnawed in solitude*, that is, who used rough foods which they sought in deserts—for example, acorns and other such things—since because of want they did not have the fruits of the fields. And he shows the effects of this fare, adding *squalid*, that is, disfigured, *with calamity* with respect to the affliction of their own body, *and with misery* with respect to external adversities. Now he explains next what they were gnawing when he adds *and they ate grass*, namely, wild and uncooked, *and the barks of trees, and the root of juniper-trees was their food*, and in these remarks he demonstrates the coarseness and the cheapness of their food. Now he shows next that they did not abound even in such cheap foods of this kind, showing that they acquired such foods both laboriously, as he signifies when he says *and taking those things from the enclosed valleys*, that is, getting them with great difficulty because of the climb down and the climb up; and in small quantity, as he signifies when he says *when they had found each of them*; and with a kind of contention, as he signifies when he says *they ran to them with a shout*, namely, so that one might arrive before the other. And all these things correspond through the opposite sense to what he had said above: "I washed my feet with butter" [29:6]. Seventh, he shows their abjection in respect to their habitation since, namely, they did not have houses to stay in, as he signifies, adding *they dwelt in the desert places of the torrents*, that is, in the dried up stream beds of the torrents in which they protected themselves from the heat *and in the caverns*

upstream-beds of the torrents in which they protected themselves from the heat, *and in the caverns of the earth*, namely, because of the shade, *or on the gravel*, namely, because of the coolness of the nearby water or because of the softness of the sand. And it even seemed pleasant to them when they could find such places to stay. Hence, he adds *and they were happy in the midst of such places*, as if they did not have an abundance even of such places. And if ever it happened that they found more agreeable places, they deemed it delightful. Hence, he adds *and to be under brambles*, that is, under the shade of small trees, *they reckoned a delight*, namely, since such a place was more agreeable to stay than those already mentioned. Now this remark seems to correspond through the opposite sense to what he had said above: "I will die in my own little nest" [29:18]. Now having enumerated their miseries one by one, as if in summary he gathers together what has been said, adding *the sons of men who are foolish*, namely, in mind, *and ignoble*, namely, in birth, *and thoroughly inconspicuous on earth*, that is, conspicuous for no dignity or glory.

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Next he explains what he was suffering at their hands: first, of course, he shows that he was being mocked by them by mouth, both in jest, as he signifies when he says *Now I have been turned into their lampoon*, namely, since they were composing mocking lampoons about him, and in all seriousness, and with respect to this point he adds *and I have become a proverb to them*, namely, since they were commonly using as proverbs Job's misfortunes, bringing him in as an example of guilt and misery. Second, he shows how they despised him in their heart when he adds *They abominate me*, namely, as a vile and unclean person. Third, he shows how they despised him in deed, first, of course, inasmuch as they shunned his presence. Hence, he adds *and they flee far from me*, contrary to what he had said above: "They awaited me like rainfall" [29:23]; but second, inasmuch as they inflicted injuries upon him, *and they are not afraid to spit in my face*, namely, as a sign of contumely and scorn. And lest it be thought that he had come into scorn because of some fault committed, he shows the reason for the contempt just mentioned on the basis of a divine stroke, showing first, of course, that he has been divinely afflicted when he says *For He has opened His quiver and afflicted me*. From a quiver are taken the arrows which some use for striking. Now by arrows are understood divine scourges, according to what he had said above at 6:4: "The Lord's arrows are in me, the hurt of which has drunk my spirit." God's quiver, then, is the divine disposition out of which adversities come forth for men, which he says has been opened because of the abundance of adversities by which he says he has been afflicted inside and out. Second, he claims that he has been impeded by God from being able to repel his injuries even by a word. Hence, he adds *and He has put a bit in my mouth*, namely, since by the divine scourges was taken from him the confidence of responding when the others took their arguments against him from those very scourges.

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Now next he shows that such adversities have been sent upon him by God from the fact that they have arrived outside the usual manner of human adversities, and he shows this first, of course, on the basis of the place from which the adversities arrived. For usually, especially in those lands, raids arise from the north, in which dwelt barbarous peoples and more fierce and warlike men, according to Jeremiah 1:14: "From the north spreads every evil." But blessed Job's raiders came from the south, where less fierce and warlike men usually live. ¶1 For it was said above that his adversity began with the Sabaeans, who took his oxen and asses and killed his herdsmen. ¶2 Hence, he says *To the right of the east*, that is, from the south, which is the right-hand side with respect to the east—for if anyone should face east, the south will be on his right—*my calamities arose immediately*, that is, immediately in the beginning when the Sabaeans were rushing in.

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Second, he shows that his adversities are beyond the common measure with respect to the multiplicity of the raid. For he was raided even with respect to the loss of the goods by means of which a man has the faculty of working, which is signified by the feet. ¶3 Hence, he adds *They have undermined my feet*, that is,

they have destroyed all my faculties, and they have done it easily and totally. Hence, he adds *and they have oppressed*, namely, my feet just mentioned, *with their paths*, as in their passing through without any difficulty. And he adds an example when he says *as if with waves*. For the waves of the sea both cover the land or a ship suddenly and swallow it up totally. Now with his feet, that is, his faculties, undermined, it follows consequently that his processes will be impeded. Hence follows *They have scattered my routes*, that is, all the processes of my works. Furthermore, they have also persecuted me in person, both deceitfully, which he signifies when he adds *they have laid ambushes for me*, and powerfully, in the addition *and they have prevailed*, and without contradiction, since there was no one to impede them in the deed itself. Hence, he adds *and there was no one to bring help*, namely, to me when I was being oppressed by them, not even anyone to impede them from approaching me. Hence, he adds *As if my wall had been breeched and my door opened they rushed upon me*, that is, as if there had been no obstacle, neither from any substance itself of difficulty, which is signified by a wall, nor from human care, which is signified by a door. Entering so freely to me, however, they showed no mercy. Hence, he adds *and to my miseries they hastened down*, that is, they were totally intent upon making me miserable.

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Third, he shows from their effect that such adversities were sent by God since, namely, through them he had been left totally destitute. Hence, he adds *I have been reduced to nothing*. He says this since nothing had remained to him from his previous prosperity, which, of course, existed in two ways: in one way in the external things which he had lost through violence. Hence, he adds *The wind, as it were, has taken away*, namely, by violence, *my desire*, that is, every desirable thing which I had in external things. In the other way his prosperity existed in the health of his own person, and with respect to this way he adds *and like a cloud*, that is, suddenly and totally, *my health*, namely, the health of my person, *has passed*. Now since his desirable goods had been taken away, his soul remained in sadness. Hence, he adds *Now, however, in me languishes*, namely, through sadness, *my soul*, for he could not help being sad after his children and property had been lost. Now when the health of his body departed it followed that he would also feel the pain of the body which did not even give him rest in the daytime. Hence, he adds *and days of affliction*, that is, of the pain of the body, which was even aggravated in the night, *possess me*. Hence, he adds *At night my bone is pierced through by pains*, as if to say: My pains increase in the night in such a way that it seems to me that they reach to the piercing of my bones. Now he shows that the cause of his pain was from the putrefied wounds. Hence, he adds *and those who devour me*, namely, the worms generated from the rottenness of the wounds, *do not sleep*, since, namely, they were giving him no rest. And to show their multitude he adds *In their multitude my garment is consumed*, as if to say: So large is the multitude of worms that they not only devour his flesh but also gnaw his clothing. And to show that they are not on one part of the body only but are spread, as it were, throughout the whole body up to the head he adds *and they have surrounded me to the cowl of my tunic, as it were*, as if to say: Because of their multitude they are not contained under the covering of the band and of the garment, but they break out into the open and surround the neck. Now he shows that he has become abominable to men as a result of such a penalty. Hence, he adds *I have been made equal to mud*, namely, so that because of the multitude of worms and of rottenness no one wishes to approach me just as no one wishes to approach mud, *and I have been made similar to ashes and cinders*, that is, entirely cast down and held in contempt.

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Now those who are despised by men usually have help from God, but he was abandoned by God in temporal adversity. Hence, he adds *I will cry out to You*, namely, continually seeking to be freed from this adversity, *and You will not heed me*, namely, so quickly. *I stand*, that is, I persevere in praying, *and You do not notice me*, namely, by freeing me from adversity. And so, if I were to consider the temporal state only I would deem You a cruel and harsh enemy. Hence, he adds *You have changed into someone cruel to me*, namely, as it seems from the external scourges, when You spare not even one who prays for relief, *and in the hardness of Your hand You oppose me*, namely, by afflicting me gravely. And according to external appearances it seems that You conceded my earlier prosperity to me to my own hurt. Hence, he

adds *You have lifted me up*, namely, in the time of prosperity, *and putting me upon the wind, as it were*, that is, in the highest state, yet unstable in the manner of the wind, *You have dashed me down hard*, that is, You have injured me gravely as if casting me down onto the earth from high up. And so that he might not seem to have said this out of desperation he adds *I know that You will hand me over to death*, as if to say: I do not suffer these things as if they were unreflected upon, for I know that I will be reduced to still further defect, namely, to death. Now he says that he knows this because of the condition of mortal life. Hence, he adds *where a house has been set up for every living man* since, namely, all men tend toward death just as a man tends toward his house. And yet, a man is not totally consumed by death since the immortal soul remains. Hence, he adds *But yet, not for their consumption*, namely, of living men, *do You send forth Your hand*, namely, so that through Your power You may reduce them to nothingness, *and if they collapse*, namely, through death, *You Yourself will save them*, namely, by blessing their souls, and I expect this from Your kindness, however cruel and harsh You may seem to me in my temporal adversities.

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Having premised these remarks, then, about his earlier prosperity and subsequent adversity, †5 he gathers together the things premised in a kind of summary, saying *I used to weep*, namely, in the time of prosperity, *over him who had been afflicted*, according to the Letter of the Apostle to the Romans, 12:15: "Weep with those who weep"; I also took compassion on those who were suffering a loss, as he shows, adding *and my soul had compassion on the poor man*, namely, not only in affect but also in effect, as he said above. †6 And in return for these works of mercy *I expected goods*, namely, the prosperity of this world according to the opinion of his friends, *and evils*, that is, adversities, *came to me*, through which it is clear that their opinion is false. *I expected the light*, that is, consolation or counsel by which I might be rescued from evils, *and shadows*, namely, of bitterness and doubt, *burst in*.

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Now next he explains the evils overcoming him, and he begins with the internal evils when he says *My internal organs have boiled up without any rest*, a statement which can refer to an infirmity of the internal organs coming from inordinate heat or even to an affliction of the heart coming from the heat of pain. And to show that such unrest is too early he adds *the days of affliction have anticipated me*. For all men at the time of old age are afflicted because of ill health, but he had been anticipated in his youth by afflictions. Next, with respect to external evils he adds *I walked along grieving*, that is, when I walked among men after misery I maintained my sadness. But although sadness may be a cause of anger, †7 there was nevertheless no anger in me. Hence, he adds *rising up without fury I cried out in the crowd*, namely, explaining my miseries which, namely, were partly due to the defection of his friends, concerning whom he adds *I was the brother of snakes*, that is, those who ought to have loved me as a brother bit me like snakes, *and a companion of sparrows*, who, namely, usually forget even their own nestlings. †8 Just so did they forget me so that they did not come to my aid. Now his adversity was partly the result of the infirmity of the body. Hence, he says first with respect to external infirmities *My skin has turned black upon me*, namely, because of the internal corruption of his fluids. Next, with respect to internal infirmities he adds *and my bones have dried out from the heat*, that is, so great an amount of inordinate heat has rushed into me that the marrow of my bones has dried up, as it were. Partly, however, his adversity consisted in the external signs of sadness. Hence, he adds things into which the signs of joy had been changed. These signs of joy, of course, are either musical instruments, and with respect to this alternative he says *My cithara has turned to mourning*, as if to say: For me, mourning has taken the place of the cithara which I used to use for pleasure; or they are the songs of the human voice. Hence, he adds *and my tongue*, which, of course, I used for joy, has turned *into the voice of those who weep*.

Chapter Thirty-one

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(1) I have made a covenant with my eyes that I not even reflect upon a maiden. (2) For what part would God above have in me and [what] inheritance the Almighty from on high? (3) Is there not perdition for the iniquitous man and the loss of property for those who work iniquity? (4) Does not He Himself consider my ways and count all my steps? (5) If I have walked in vanity and my foot has hastened in deceit, (6) let Him weigh me in a just scale and let God know my simplicity. (7) If my step has turned aside from the way, if my eye has followed my heart and the stain clings to my hands, (8) let me sow and let another man eat and let my progeny be rooted out. (9) If my heart has been deceived over a woman and if I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door, (10) let my wife be another man's whore and let other men know her. (11) For this is criminal and the greatest iniquity. (12) It is a fire devouring to the point of consumption and rooting out all seed. (13) If I have scorned to undergo judgment with my servant and maidservant when they brought a grievance against me, (14) truly what will I do when the Lord God rises up to judge me, and when He questions me what will I respond to Him? (15) Did He not make me in the womb Who also made him, and did not one God form me in the womb? (16) If I have denied the poor what they wished and have made the eyes of the widow wait, (17) if I have eaten my morsel alone and the orphan has not eaten from it, (18) since from my infancy compassion has grown up with me and from my mother's womb it came out with me; (19) if I have scorned a passer-by because he did not have clothing, and a poor man without covering; (20) if his flanks have not blessed me and by the fleeces of my sheep he has not been warmed; (21) if I have lifted my hand over an orphan, even when they saw me in the gateway, superior, (22) let my shoulder fall from its joint and my arm be crushed with its bones. (23) For I have always feared God like waves swelling over me and His weight I could not bear.

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After Job has narrated his earlier prosperity and subsequent adversity, †1 next he shows his innocence here, lest it be believed that he had fallen into adversities because of sins. Now he begins to show his innocence through his immunity from the sin of wantonness, which involves rather many men. And this sin, of course, is posited in a slippery state so that unless one avoids the first steps he can scarcely retract his foot from the later ones. Now the first step in this sin is the sight of the eyes, with which a beautiful woman is looked upon, especially a maiden; the second is reflection; the third, delight; the fourth, consent; and the fifth, the act. Job wished, therefore, to exclude the beginnings of this sin in order not to be involved in it. Hence, he says *I have made a covenant*, that is, in my heart I have confirmed just as pacts are confirmed, *with my eyes*, from whose sight, namely, comes the eager desire for women, to abstain in such a way from looking upon women *that I not even reflect upon a maiden*, that is, so that I not touch upon even the first internal step, namely, reflection. For he saw that it would be difficult if he were to fall into the first step, namely, into reflection, not to slip into the others, namely, into delight and consent.

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Next he shows why he has avoided this sin so carefully. First, of course, he assigns the reason on the grounds that through the sin of wantonness a man especially seems to depart from God. For a man approaches God through spiritual acts, which are especially impeded through venereal delight. †2 Hence, he adds *For what part would God above have in me?*, as if to say: God has a part in me insofar as my mind is drawn toward higher things, but if through wantonness my mind should be cast out to carnal delight, God above will have no part in me. Now sometimes it happens that even wanton men reflect spiritually about God for a while, but soon, through the eager desire for delight, they are recalled to the

lowest matters. Hence, God's part in them cannot be firm like an inheritance. Hence, he adds *and inheritance*, that is, firm possession, namely, in me after I have slipped down to lower things, *the Almighty from on high*, that is, He Who lives on high, will not be able to have. Hence, it is necessary that His inheritance be in those who seek the sublime, namely, spiritual, things but not in those who descend to carnal interests. Second, he shows the reason why he has avoided the sin of wantonness from the damage which it brings upon man, which is of two kinds—one bodily, of course, namely, when a man incurs danger to his person and property because of the sin of wantonness. Hence, he adds *Is there not perdition for the iniquitous man?*, as if to say: The iniquitous man who is involved in this sin rushes into perdition. Another damage, however, is the impediment to good works. Hence, he adds *and the loss of property for those who work iniquity?*, for since vehement delight draws the spirit more to itself, thence it is that men devoted to wantonness depart from good works and even from good speech. Third, he assigns a reason which he considers on the part of divine providence, which looks attentively at all the deeds of men, and thus no one can be immune from punishment. Hence, he adds *Does not He Himself consider my ways*, that is, to remunerate the process of my works? He knows not only the total process but each part of that process. Hence, he adds *and count all my steps?*, that is, He examines with His judgment everything, even small things, which seem reprehensible in my acts, and so I could not pass unpunished for them.

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Second, Job cleanses himself of the vice of deceit, using in this and in all subsequent discussions a kind of oath which is made through execration, when, namely, a man obligates himself to a penalty if what is said is not true. Hence, he says *If I have walked*, that is, if I have proceeded, *in vanity*, that is, in some falsehood. For those things which have no solidity are called vain, †3 but the greatest solidity is through truth. Now he shows how one walks in vanity, adding *and my foot has hastened in deceit*, that is, my emotion †4 and whatever other power of the soul is the beginning of movement. †5 Now he expressly says *has hastened in deceit*, namely, since a man intends to obtain swiftly by some deceitful ways what might be obtained with great difficulty by way of the truth. Now that someone walks without deceit can be considered on the basis of an inspection of the straightforwardness of justice from which the deceitful man turns aside. Hence, he adds *let Him*, namely, God, *weigh me in a just scale* so that it may be discerned on the basis of His justice whether I have proceeded in deceit. Now since deceit consists especially in the intention of the heart, only He to Whom the intention of the heart lies open, namely, God, can judge concerning deceit. Hence, he adds *and let God know my simplicity*, which, namely, is opposed to the duplicity of deceit. Now he says *let God know* not as if He is about to know it anew but as if He is about to make others know it anew, especially since in the reckoning of His justice He knows it from eternity.

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And since Job had altogether excluded deceit from himself, he comes down to certain special sins by which someone deceitfully plots against another's interests, which happens, of course, both in theft and in adultery. For in the case of theft someone deceitfully plots against property possessed by his neighbor, and he excludes this crime from himself, saying *If my step has turned aside from the way*, namely, of justice, by scorning it. From this remark it follows that a man sees with a treacherous eye the property of his neighbor to seize it. Hence, he adds *if my eye has followed my heart*, that is, my desire, as if to say: If my eye intends to have this thing which my heart has desired. Now third, it happens that a man, having scorned justice and directed his intention to acquiring what his heart eagerly desires, applies his hand to seizing other men's property. Hence follows *and the stain clings to my hands*, namely, from taking away another's property. Now it is just that if anyone seizes another man's goods his goods also be snatched away by others. Hence, he adds *let me sow and let another man eat*, as if to say: If I have seized another man's goods, let my goods be seized by others, and this is an oath of execration. Now men usually seize other men's goods in order to gather riches for their sons, according to Nahum 2:12: "The lion captured enough for his cubs." Therefore, it is just not only that from a man who seizes the goods of others his own goods be snatched away but also that his sons should die. Hence, he adds *and let my progeny be rooted out*, for whom, namely, the booty seemed to have been preserved.

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In the case of adultery, however, a man plots deceitfully against his neighbor's wife, and in this plotting a kind of deception of the heart goes first, namely, when reason is darkened by eager desire. Hence, he adds *If my heart has been deceived over a woman*, namely, over desiring another man's wife. Now since the heart is conquered by the eager desire for a woman, it follows that it tries to have by any deceit whatever the desired woman. Hence, he adds *and if I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door*, namely, to abuse his wife. Now one who pollutes another's wife by adultery seems to be justly punished in that his wife, too, is polluted by others. Hence, he adds *let my wife be another man's whore*, namely, so that she may offer herself for sale to others, from which it follows that others may abuse her. Hence, he adds *and let other men know her*, namely, by committing adultery. Now he shows why he has avoided this sin, adding *For this is criminal* since, namely, it is contrary to the statute of God, who joined man and woman in matrimony, ¶6 *and*, if human justice were considered, it is *the greatest iniquity*, namely, since the greater the good which is stolen away the greater is the injustice. For if someone were to steal a cow it would be a greater iniquity than if he were to steal a sheep. Hence, it is punished by a greater penalty, as it is held in Exodus 22:1. Now he who commits adultery takes away something very great from a man, namely, his wife, who is one flesh with him, ¶7 *and* sure offspring, and consequently the whole succession of patrimony, which sometimes goes to an outsider because of adultery. Hence is added *it*, namely, adultery, *is a fire devouring to the point of consumption* since, namely, it defrauds a man in his whole patrimony, as was just said, *and rooting out all offspring* when, namely, it makes the succession of sons uncertain. Hence is said in Ecclesiasticus 23:32: "Every woman leaving her husband will sin, establishing an inheritance from another's marriage."

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So, then, after he has purged himself of injustice with respect to the fact that he has done no injury to others either in stealing away their property or in abusing the person joined to them, he excuses himself next of a charge that he has incurred injustice through a defect of justice. Hence, he adds *If I have scorned to undergo judgment with my servant and maidservant when they brought a grievance against me*, as if to say: If I have scorned to render justice to my inferiors, let these and those grave consequences befall me. Now he shows why he has not scorned to undergo judgment with his servants, adding *when the Lord God rises up to judge me*, that is, when He Himself appears to judge Whose judgment has just now been scorned, I would have no one in whose help or counsel I could take refuge. Nor could I even respond reasonably to God in the judgment. Hence, he adds *and when He questions me*, that is, when He examines my deeds, *what will I respond to Him*, that is, what reason will I be able to render why I did not wish to undergo judgment with my servants?, as if to say, 'None.' And he shows this next by the observation that the condition of all men is naturally the same when he adds *Did He not make me in the womb Who also made him?*, as if to say: With my servants I have the same soul created by God. My body, too, has been formed by the same divine power. Hence, he adds *and did not one God*, namely, the God Who also formed him, *form me in the womb?*; therefore, it is manifest that God has a care for how I treat him.

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After he has shown that he has not been wanton nor unjust (vv. 1 and 5), then, he shows next that he has not been without mercy, and he shows this first, of course, from the fact that he has not taken away his benefits from the poor. Now to a poor man seeking alms certain men usually deny what is being sought right from the beginning, and he excludes this practice from himself, saying *If I have denied the poor what they wished*. Certain men, however, do not deny but they defer giving the gift, and he excludes this practice from himself, saying *and have made the eyes of the widow wait*. Still others neither deny nor defer giving the alms which are sought, but they would give nothing on their own initiative, and he excludes this practice from himself, showing that he has not wished to use even the least of his possessions alone without sharing with others. Hence, he adds *if I have eaten my morsel alone and the orphan has not eaten from it* it is also implied: *Let these or those grave consequences befall me*. Now one should consider that

from it, it is also implied that those or those great consequences befall me. One should consider that he is speaking very expressly, for the poor are accustomed not only to beg but even to be insistent. Hence, the benefit of mercy is not taken away from them except by every kind of denial. Now widows do indeed beg, but they are afraid to be insistent; therefore, unless aid is given to them quickly they are deprived of the benefit of mercy. Orphans, however, do not even dare to beg. Hence, it is necessary that mercy be extended to them even when they do not beg. Now he shows why he has been so merciful on two counts: first, of course, from long-standing habit which he commenced from boyhood. Hence, he adds *since from my infancy compassion has grown up with me*. For the more it increased year by year the more it was exercised in works of mercy; second, since he had a natural inclination toward mercy just as different men usually have certain natural inclinations toward different virtues. Hence is added *and from my mother's womb it came out with me*, namely, since from my first begettings I have been so disposed that I was prompt to show mercy.

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Now there are usually two impediments to mercy. The first of these is a scorn for the poor man whom one does not deem worthy of mercy. Now men who wear cheap clothing are usually scorned, and those who use precious clothes are usually honored. Hence, it is said in the text of Ecclesiasticus 19:27 that "the dress of the body speaks out about the man." But Job excludes this impediment to mercy from himself, adding *if I have scorned a passer-by*, that is, some stranger passing along the way, *and a poor man*, namely, an acquaintance, because he was *without covering*, supply: Let these or those consequences befall me. Not only have I not despised anyone lacking clothing but I have even provided some clothing. Hence, he adds *if his flanks have not blessed me*, which, namely, I covered when they were uncovered, and so they were an occasion for him to bless me. And he explains the reason for this blessing, adding *and by the fleeces of my sheep he has not been warmed*, namely, by the clothing offered to him, and the same conclusion should be supplied as above (v. 21). Now another impediment to mercy is confidence in one's own power, from which it seems to a man that he can burden other men, especially weaker persons, with impunity, and he excludes this impediment from himself, saying *if I have lifted my hand over an orphan*, namely, to oppress him, *even when they saw me in the gateway*, that is, in the place of judgment, *superior*, that is, more powerful. Now it is just that a man be deprived of the limbs which he uses for injustice; therefore, he adds as a penalty the loss not only of the hand but of the arm on which the hand is rooted and of the shoulder to which the arm is connected. Hence, he adds *let my shoulder fall from its joint and my arm be crushed with its bones*, namely, if I have used my hand for the oppression of the poor. Now next he shows why, although he was superior, he did not lift his hand over orphans, namely, since although he did not forego this behavior on man's account, he did nevertheless forego it on God's, Whose judgments he feared. Hence, he adds *For I have always feared God like waves swelling over me*, and he speaks in a simile of those sailing on the sea who, when the waves swell over the height of the ship, fear being submerged by them. Similarly, he feared divine threats like swelling waves, and he also yielded to divine authority by which the oppression of orphans is prohibited. Hence, he adds *and His weight*, that is, the authority of God protecting orphans, *I could not bear*, namely, without bowing to it.

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(24) *If I have thought that gold was my might and if to finest gold I have said: My security;* (25) *if I have rejoiced over my many riches and because my hand has found a great many things;* (26) *if I have seen the sun when it was shining and the moon moving along brightly* (27) *and my heart has rejoiced in secret and I have kissed my hand with my lips,* (28) *which is the greatest iniquity and a denial against the most high God;* (29) *if I have been glad at the ruin of one who hated me and if I have exalted because evil had come upon him—*(30) *for I have not given my throat to sin in order to wait, cursing his soul—*(31) *if the men of my tent have not said: Who would give of his meats so that we may be satisfied?* (32) *The pilgrim has not remained outside. My door has been open to the traveler.* (33) *If I have hidden, like a man, my sin and have concealed in my breast my iniquity;* (34) *if I have dreaded the excessive multitude and the scorn of my kinsmen has frightened me, and [if] I have not rather kept silent and [if] I have not gone out of my door—* (35) *who would grant me a helper so that the Almighty may hear my desire and write the book*

door — (35) who would grant me a helper so that the Almighty may hear my desire and write the book Who Himself is Judge? (36) On my shoulder let me carry it and put it around me like a crown. (37) With each step of mine will I proclaim it and I will offer it as if to the prince. (38) If my land cries out against me and its furrows weep with it; (39) if I have eaten its fruits without money and have afflicted the soul of its farmers, (40) instead of grain let thorns rise up for me and instead of barley, the thorn. Job's words are finished.

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After Job has excused himself of injustice and lack of mercy (vv. 5 and 16), he next excuses himself of an inordinate attachment to riches, which, of course, happens in two ways: in one way through the fact that man trusts excessively in riches, and he excludes this charge, saying *If I have thought that gold was my might so that I deemed that my power was principally in riches, and if to finest gold*, that is, if to purest gold, *I have said: My security*, namely, you are my security, contrary to what the Apostle Paul says in I Timothy 6:17: "Tell the rich of this world not to hope in the uncertainty of riches." Second, man's attachment to riches is disordered by the fact that he rejoices excessively over riches. Therefore, with respect to riches already held he adds *if I have rejoiced*, namely, inordinately, *over my many riches*, which I had possessed as my own. Now with respect to the acquisition of riches he says *and because my hand has found a great many things*. For men usually rejoice more over the things which they acquire anew.

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Next Job excuses himself of the sin of superstition, which is against God. Now in ancient times idolaters used to worship the stars of heaven, especially those which give light because of their very great brightness. †8 He excludes this sin from himself, saying *if I have seen the sun when it was shining and the moon moving along brightly*, because of which, namely, they are worshipped by idolaters, *and my heart has rejoiced in secret*, as if being devoted to them by an internal worship. And with respect to external worship he adds *and I have kissed my hand with my lips*, as if in reverence for them. And he shows why he avoided this sin, adding *which is the greatest iniquity*. For if it is iniquitous that what is owed to one man be offered to another, it seems to be especially iniquitous that the worship owed to God be offered to a creature. And since it is impossible that a man offer worship to God and to a creature at the same time, therefore he adds *and a denial against the most high God*. For although the name of God is attributed to certain creatures by participation, yet the worship of veneration is due the most high God alone, Who is denied as the most high if such worship is offered to others also.

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Having premised these things which pertain to common justice, then, Job adds certain things which pertain to the perfection of virtue. Among them he excludes first the hatred of enemies, which is especially manifested when someone rejoices either over his enemy's total ruin, and he excludes this possibility, saying *if I have been glad at the ruin of one who hated me*, or over some evil overcoming him, which he excludes, adding *and if I have exalted because evil had come upon him*, that is, had overcome him unexpectedly. And he shows why he has avoided this sin, adding *for I have not given my throat to sin in order to wait, cursing his soul*. For a man naturally desires those things over which he rejoices and he expresses his internal desire in words. It follows, then, if anyone should rejoice over another's ills, that he would desire them, and consequently that he would invoke evil on him by cursing.

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Next Job shows the perfection of his own virtue with respect to the superabundance of goods which he has offered to others. First, of course, with respect to the members of his own household he says *if the men of my tent have not said: Who would give of his meats so that we may be satisfied?* For when some animal is delectable for eating, men desire to be sated with its meats. By this question, then, he gives one to understand that his association was so pleasing to his household that they desired to be sated with his fleshly presence. Now with respect to foreigners he adds *The pilgrim has not remained outside*, namely,

so that he was not received in my house; *My door has been open to the traveler*, namely, so that entry was not difficult for him.

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Job proceeds further to show the perfection of his virtue with respect to the exclusion of undue fear. Now usually, because of the fear of embarrassment, men sometimes conceal their own crime against justice, either by denying it, which he excludes from himself, saying *If I have hidden, like a man*, that is, as men usually do, *my sin*, namely, by unduly denying it, or by excusing it, or even by covering it with some subtleties. ¶9 Hence, he adds *and have concealed in my breast*, that is, by some hidden pretense, *my iniquity*, namely, when I was bound to confess it. Now next he excludes from himself the inordinate fear of bodily dangers, which, of course, is especially likely to proceed from the multitude rising against a man, according to Ecclesiasticus 26:5: "My heart has feared for three reasons: the fanaticism of the city and a gathering of the populace" and so on. Hence, he says *if I have dreaded the excessive multitude*. Now this fear is aggravated if a man should be despised by his kinsmen by whom he ought to have been aided. Hence, he adds *and the scorn of my kinsmen has frightened me*. Now men usually go fearless against opposition through presumption, and sometimes, of course, at least in words, they speak up against stronger opponents. He excludes from himself this practice also, saying *and [if] I have not rather kept silent*. Now sometimes they proceed further to attack presumptuously a multitude of adversaries, but he excludes this practice, saying *and [if] I have not gone out of my door*.

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And since Job had said many great things about himself he invokes divine testimony about them. Hence, he adds *who would grant me a helper*, namely, who will appeal to God with me? And he shows at what he wishes to be helped, adding *so that the Almighty may hear my desire*. He also explains what his desire is, adding *and write the book*, namely, either of accusation or of commendation of me over the premised claims, *Who Himself is judge* of all human actions, namely, both internal and external. And if, of course, by the testimony of this book, that is, by the certain manifestation of the truth, I should appear guilty, I wish to bear the penalty. Hence, he adds *On my shoulder let me carry it*. If, however, after the truth has been manifested I should appear commendable, then let me receive the crown of victory. Hence, he adds *and put it around me like a crown*, by which expression he gives one to understand that his desire is that he who was unjustly condemned by his friends be saved by the just judgment of God. Now he promises that he will not contradict the aforementioned book of divine testimony. Hence, he adds *With each step of mine*, that is, with the processes of my works, *will I proclaim it*, that is, I will confess the truth of divine testimony, and I will not refuse to undergo the sentence according to divine testimony. Hence, he adds *and I will offer it as if to the prince*, namely, bearing with joy that he was being dealt with according to divine testimony.

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Next Job excludes from himself the vice of excessive cupidity, even in acquiring things from his own possessions, and this vice is manifested, of course, in two ways: in one way through the fact that a man, by excessive cultivation, strives to extract superfluous fruits from his possessions. To exclude this vice he adds metaphorically *If my land cries out against me*, as if I have not permitted it to rest but have cultivated it excessively. Hence, he adds *and its furrows weep with it*, and he speaks through the metaphor of a man who is excessively distressed. In another way excessive cupidity is manifested through the vice that a man denies his workers the price of their labor. Hence, he adds *if I have eaten its fruits without money*, namely, without money paid to the workers, *and have afflicted the soul of its farmers*, namely, either by forcing them excessively to work or by taking away their pay. Now it is due consequence that he who desires superfluous and unaccustomed profit lose even what is due and customary. Hence, he adds *instead of grain*, namely, which is sown to support men, *let thorns rise up for me*, namely, which are not only useless but prickly, *and instead of barley*, namely, which is sown for cattle-feed, *the thorn*, namely, which

even wounds cause by pricking them. After these premises imprecations is added an epilog when it is said *that Job's words are finished*, since, namely, he proposed nothing after this for the assertion of his opinion.

Chapter Thirty-two

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(1) Now those three men neglected to respond to Job because he seemed just to them. (2) And angry and indignant was Elihu, son of Barachiel the Buzite, of the line of Ram. He was angry toward Job because he was saying that he was just in the eyes of God. (3) Further, he was indignant toward his three friends because they had not found a reasonable response but had merely condemned Job. (4) Therefore, Elihu waited upon Job while he was speaking because those who were speaking were older. (5) Now when he had seen that the three had not been able to respond, he was powerfully angry, (6) and Elihu, son of Barachiel the Buzite, in response said: I am younger in age but you are more venerable; therefore, with head bowed, I was reluctant to indicate to you my opinion. (7) For I was hoping that the more advanced age would speak and the multitude of years would teach wisdom. (8) But as I see, the spirit is in men and the inspiration of the Almighty gives understanding. (9) Those who are long-lived are not wise, nor do old men understand judgment; (10) therefore, I will say: Listen to me and I will show you, even I, my knowledge. (11) For I have waited out your speeches. I have listened to your prudence as long as you were debating in your speeches, (12) and as long as I thought you were saying something, I waited. But as I see it there is no one who can charge Job and respond of you to his speeches. (13) Lest perhaps you should say: We have found wisdom. God has cast him forth and not man. (14) He has spoken nothing to me and I will not respond to him according to your speeches. (15) They have been terrified and have not responded further, and they have taken eloquence from themselves. (16) Since I have waited, then, and they have not spoken, have stopped, and have not responded further, (17) I will both respond my own part and I will show my knowledge. (18) For I am full of speeches and the spirit of my womb confines me. (19) Look at my womb as new wine without an air hole, which bursts the new flasks. (20) I will speak and I will breathe a little. I will open my lips and respond. (21) I will not respect the person of the man and I will not equate God with a man. (22) For I do not know how long I will last and if my Maker will take me after a short time.

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After the debate of Job and his three friends has been finished, Elihu's debate against Job is added and he, of course, uses sharper arguments against Job than the prior speakers and approaches closer to the truth. Hence, Job does not respond to him, although he still deviates from the truth somewhat and interprets Job's words wrongly, as will be clear below. [f1](#)

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Now is premised the cause by which he was moved to speak, namely, indignation against Job and against his friends. The text premises beforehand, then, the silence of the friends when it says *Now those three men*, namely, of whom mention was made above, *neglected to respond to Job*, and here it should be noted that the text would not be naming those men if the event had not taken place but a parable had been made up. [f2](#) Now the text shows the cause of their silence, adding *because he seemed just to them*. For Job had said many things which pertained to showing his justice which the three men previously mentioned could

said many things which pertained to showing his justice which the three men previously mentioned could not contradict. And as a result of both of these things, namely, the silence of the friends and the fact that Job seemed just to them, Elihu, who was standing by, was moved to anger. Therefore, there is added *And angry*, namely, in his heart, *and indignant*, showing the signs of anger externally, *was Elihu*, in which he is described by name, *son of Barachiel*, in which he is described by origin, *the Buzite*, in which he is described by native land, *of the line of Ram*, in which he is described by race. And this whole description is valuable so that he may be shown to belong to a historical event.

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Now next the text explains the cause of his anger, first, of course, toward Job when it says *He was angry toward Job because he was saying that he was just in the eyes of God*, that is, according to divine testimony, an impression which especially can be gotten from what Job had said above at 23:10: "He himself knows my way," and afterwards he adds, "His tracks are followed by my foot" [23:11]. Now with respect to the friends the text adds *Further, he was indignant toward his three friends because they had not found a reasonable response*, namely, with which to respond to his words in which he claimed that he was just, *but had merely condemned Job*, namely, saying that he was iniquitous.

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Now next the text shows the reason why Elihu had not responded to Job in any way before when it adds *Therefore, Elihu waited upon Job while he was speaking*, namely, not contradicting his speeches in any way, *because those who were speaking were older*. He was, namely, deferring to them as wiser, as their old age required. †3 But since it did not seem to him that he ought to offer reverence to anyone to the prejudice of the truth, in his anger he began to respond against the three older men though he himself was younger. Hence is said *Now when he had seen that the three had not been able to respond*, namely, with reasons to Job, *he was powerfully angry*, as if estimating that through their laxity the truth would perish. Therefore, he wished to defend the truth in their place, as he believed, and this is the point of adding *and Elihu, son of Barachiel the Buzite, in response*, namely, to the speeches and arguments of Job.

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Now in this response of his he first excuses his earlier silence, both on the basis of his own age, from which follows *[Elihu] said: I am younger in age*, and also on the basis of their advanced age, from which he adds *but you are more venerable*. Now young men ought to show reverence to their elders. Hence follows *therefore, with head bowed*, namely, in a sign of reverence and humility, *I was reluctant to indicate to you my opinion*, namely, lest I seem presumptuous impeding the words of wiser men with my speeches. Now it seems probable that old men speak more wisely for two reasons: first, of course, since young men, from the heat of the spirit, frequently and inordinately make many proposals, whereas old men, because of the gravity of age, speak more maturely. Hence, he adds *For I was hoping that the more advanced age would speak*, namely, more gravely and more effectively. Second, old men speak more wisely because old men have been able to find out many things through the experience of a long life-time, and consequently are able to speak more wisely. †4 Hence follows *and the multitude of years*, because of which, namely, experience can be received, *would teach wisdom*, namely, received from experience.

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Next he excuses himself for beginning to speak now, namely, since he has found out by experience that not age but rather divine inspiration is the sufficient cause of wisdom. Hence, he adds *But as I see*, that is, consider by the effect, *the spirit*, namely, God's, *is in men*, inasmuch, namely, as He works in them. This is the point of adding *and the inspiration of the Almighty*, by which, namely, He breathes into men the Holy Spirit, Who is "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding," †5 *gives understanding*, namely, of the truth, which is the beginning of wisdom for those into whom it is breathed. Now he shows that this inspiration is the special cause of wisdom on the basis of the fact that age does not cause wisdom perfectly. Hence, he adds *Those who are long-lived are not wise*, namely, with respect to the knowledge of divine truth, *nor do*

old men understand judgment, namely, with respect to the ordering of human actions. And since even though he was not an old man he was nevertheless confident that he was inspired by God, he therefore dared to speak. Hence, he adds *therefore, I will say*.

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Now in this speech of his he first induces them to listen on the authority of God, by Whose inspiration he was speaking. Hence, he says *Listen to me*, namely, so that they would not interrupt his speech. Now he promises them, if they listen, dogmas based on knowledge. Hence, he adds *and I will show you, even I*, namely, although I am young, *my knowledge*, on the basis of which, namely, I will respond to Job's arguments. Now it was just that they listen to him since he had also listened to them. Hence, he adds *For I have waited out*, namely, a long time, *your speeches*, namely, which you uttered against Job. And since he deemed that he was able to discern what had and what had not been well said by them, he adds, *I have listened to your prudence*, as if to say: By listening I have distinguished what in your words pertained to prudence. Now he had waited not a little but a long while. Now he determines the limit of his waiting on two grounds: first, of course, in accordance with their wish. Hence, he adds *as long as you were debating in your speeches*, that is, as long as it pleased you to debate against Job. Second, he determines the limit on the basis of the hope which he had in their wise doctrine. Hence, he adds *and as long as I thought you were saying something, I waited*. Now there is no need to listen more fully to a person on a subject about which there is no hope that he is going to say something useful. He saw, moreover, that their words which they were using against Job were not effective, first, of course, because they could not convince him with arguments. Hence, he adds *But as I see it, there is no one who can charge Job*, namely, by convincing him with arguments. Second, they were not effective since they could not meet his arguments. Hence, he adds *and respond*, namely, sufficiently, *of you*, that is, of your sense—or, there is no one *of you*, that is, of your number, who can respond—to *his speeches*, which, namely, he is using against you. Now their principal arguments against Job were founded on the fact that they attributed Job's adversities to a divine judgment which cannot err, and next, indeed, he shows that this response is insufficient, saying *Lest perhaps you should say: We have found wisdom*, that is, it is sufficient for a wise response, *God*, Who cannot err, *has cast him forth*, namely, into adversities, *and not man*, who can deceive and be deceived. Now he himself intended to respond more effectively. Hence, he adds *He has spoken nothing to me*, and from this remark, namely, Elihu wishes to show that he is not speaking as someone challenged, *and I will not respond to him according to your speeches*, that is, I will not follow your ways in responding, but I will find other more effective ways to respond.

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Now Elihu intends to excuse himself for the future response not only in their eyes but also in the eyes of others; therefore, he turns his speech toward others, saying *They have been terrified* to speak further, namely, lest they be more manifestly convinced, *and have not responded further*, namely, with arguments, to Job. And to show that this silence has been due to their laxity, not to the efficacy of Job's arguments, he adds *and they have taken eloquence from themselves*, namely, by negligently keeping silent. Now when a man is convinced by effective argument he does not take eloquence away from himself but rather it is taken from him by another. Since they had failed, then, he says that he wishes to supply their defect. Hence, he adds *Since I have waited, then*, namely, a long time, in order that I might defer to them *and they have not spoken*, namely, in response to Job's speeches, *I will both respond my own part*, namely, since the defense of truth pertains to all men and each one ought to devote to it what he can as if for his part.

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Now Elihu was moved not only by a zeal to defend the truth but also by vainglory. Hence, he adds *and I will show my knowledge*. For in his desire for vainglory he seeks, if there is any excellent quality in him, to manifest it; therefore, next he shows that there is present in him a very great faculty to respond when he adds *For I am full of speeches*, as if to say: Abundant responses occur to me. And since the faculty is not

sufficient for acting unless a man is incited by something, he adds *and the spirit of my womb conjoins me*. The womb is the place of conception. Hence, by womb here is signified metaphorically an understanding which conceives different intelligible things. ¶6 The spirit of the womb, then, is the will, impelling a man to manifest the conceptions of his heart in speech. Now it is bothersome to a man when he does not fulfill what he desires. Therefore, he explains through a metaphor the anxiety which he was suffering by keeping silent, adding *Look at my womb*, that is, my mind, *as new wine*, namely, which foams, *without an air hole, which bursts the new flasks*. For unless the vapor of the foaming new wine evaporates in some part, the vapor inside multiplies sometimes to the point of breaking the vessel. So, too, he compares himself to new wine because of his youth; therefore, from his great desire to speak he estimates that a danger threatens him unless he speaks. Hence, he adds *I will speak and I will breathe a little*, as if to say: Through words, namely, I will evaporate the internal foam so that I may rest from the anxiety of desire.

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Now he shows what he wishes to speak, adding *I will open my lips and respond*, namely, to the words of Job. Moreover, he shows what measure he ought to observe in responding, adding *I will not respect the person of the man*. For one who abandons the truth to defer to the man in responding respects the person of the man. Now he shows why he does not wish to do this, adding *and I will not equate God with a man*. For the present debate seemed to him to be such that if he should defer to a man he would not observe the reverence due to divine excellence. And, of course, he shows why he is afraid to do this, adding *For I do not know how long I will last*, namely, in this mortal life, so that I may be able to promise myself long periods of time for repenting, *and if my Maker will take me after a short time*, namely, take him to His judgment through death. From this remark it is clear that Elihu agreed on this point with Job that retribution for sins was after death, for otherwise he would seem to have been needlessly afraid to offend God because of the proximity of death.

Chapter Thirty-three

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(1) Hear, then, Job, my eloquence, and listen to all my speeches. Look! I have opened my mouth. Let my tongue speak in my mouth. (3) From my simple heart my speeches [are], and my lips will speak a pure opinion. (4) The spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty has given me life. (5) If you can, respond to me and take a stand before my face. (6) Look! God made me just as He also made you and from the same clay I have also been formed. (7) Nevertheless, let my miracle not frighten you and let my eloquence not be grave for you. (8) You said, then, in my hearing and I heard the sound of your words: (9) I am clean and without offense, unspotted, and there is no iniquity in me. (10) Since He has found complaints in me He has therefore thought me an enemy to Him. (11) He has put my feet in the stocks; He has guarded all my paths. (12) This it is, then, in which you are not justified.

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It was said above that Elihu was indignant toward Job and his friends [32:2-3]. After he has spoken against the laxity of Job's friends, he now begins to speak against Job himself; therefore, first he calls him to attention, saying *Hear, then, Job, my eloquence*, namely, since I intend to respond now. And to signify that he is going to say each word weightily, he adds *and listen to all my speeches*, as if he is going to say nothing in vain. And lest Job should ask why he has not spoken earlier, he adds *Look! I have opened my*

nothing in vain. And lest Job should ask why he has not spoken earlier, he adds *Look! I have opened my mouth*, as if to say: When I was silent before, I had closed my mouth because of reverence for my elders. Now, since they are deficient, necessity forces me to speak. Hence, he adds *let my tongue speak in my mouth*, as if to say: I will not follow the words of the others but speak out my own conceptions. And since Job in his preceding speeches had said against his friends that they were afflicting and confounding him with their words [19:2], Elihu therefore excludes this charge from himself, adding *From my simple heart my speeches are*, namely, as if to say: I am not speaking to calumniate or to laugh but to manifest the truth with a simple spirit. And since Job had laid upon the three men mentioned before the charge that they were "fabricators of a lie and worshippers of perverse dogmas" [13:4], he excludes this charge from himself, saying *and my lips will speak a pure opinion*, that is, without the admixture of any falsehood or error. Now he shows whence he has received such confidence in manifesting the truth, adding *The spirit of God has made me*; therefore, it is no wonder if it moves and perfects its product. This is the point of adding *and the breath of the Almighty has given me life*, namely, it has moved and perfected me for the works of life, among which the understanding of truth is special. And lest he seem to have introduced this element as a precedent, intending to discourage Job from responding against one speaking divinely, he adds *If you can, respond to me*, namely, with respect to the things which I will say against you, *and take a stand before my face*, namely, so that you may object against me, too, if I say anything which displeases you. And so that Job would not disdain to debate with him because of his famous wisdom and his youth, to exclude this possibility Elihu adds *Look! God made me just as He also made you*, and so, as far as the Maker is concerned, each of us can have the same hope of inquiring into the truth. As far as the material is concerned, however, the same impediment confronts both. Hence, he adds *and from the same clay*, by the coarseness of which, namely, the light of understanding is darkened, *I have also been formed*. Now Elihu saw that one could respond to him that it was miraculous if such great wisdom and ability were granted to a youth that he was up to debating against a very wise old man. Therefore, as if implying that he had achieved this state miraculously, he adds *Nevertheless, let my miracle not frighten you*, namely, so that you do not dare to respond to one who has achieved knowledge miraculously, *and let my eloquence not be grave for you*, namely, so that you may be struck with amazement as a result of it.

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Having premised these remarks as if by way of introduction, then, Elihu adds these things in which he intends to reproach Job. Hence, he adds *You said, then, in my hearing*, as if to say: You cannot excuse yourself from having said it, *and I heard the sound of your words*, namely, through the care of attention. Now first he had noted in the words of Job that he had said that he was free of sin [e.g., 13:6 and 16:18]. Hence, he says *I am clean*, namely, from the uncleanness of the flesh, *and without offense*, namely, from the sin of omission, *unspotted*, namely, by grave sins which are against God—for example, idolatry or anything of the kind—*and there is no iniquity in me*, namely, so that I have unjustly injured my neighbors. Second, he notes in Job's words that he has laid a charge of unfairness of judgment against God. Now unfairness of judgment usually proceeds from the hatred of the one judging, and with respect to this point he mentions that Job had said *Since He has found complaints in me He has therefore thought me an enemy to Him*. Above, of course, at 13:24, Job had said in the form of a question, "Why do You hide Your face and think me Your enemy?", but he is not found to have said what is said here: *He has found complaints in me*. Hence, this is an addition of Elihu,

wrongly interpreting Job's words. For the hatred of the judge seems to be just if, having been made certain of someone's malice, he holds him in hatred to punish him. But if a judge should be provoked to the hatred of someone as a result of trivial complaints, it would be an unjust hatred. And in just such a way he was interpreting the fact that Job had said that he had been deemed an enemy by God. Second, it seems to pertain to the unfairness of a judge if he should take from someone the ability of a just defense. With respect to this point he adds *He has put my feet in the stocks*, that is, He has tethered me as if to impede me from my works. Third, it pertains to the unfairness of a judgment that the judge gather together any trivial thing at all for someone's condemnation, and with respect to this point he adds *He has guarded all my paths*, as if He were observing him in each and every work. Now Job had not said these things to show the unfairness of divine judgment but speaking figuratively as it were, as was explained above at 13:27.

Hence, the remark is also premised there, "Perceive the riddles with your ears" [13:17]. And since this second text excludes the first he adds *This it is, then, in which you are not justified*, as if to say: You cannot say that you are just since the very fact that you lay a charge of injustice upon God pertains to your injustice.

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I will respond to you that God is greater than man. (13) You contend against Him because He has not responded to all your words. (14) God speaks once, and He does not repeat the same thing a second time, (15) through a dream in a vision in the night. When sleep rushes upon men and they sleep in bed, (16) then He opens the ears of men and, instructing them. He instills learning (17) in order to turn a man away from the things which he has done and to free him from pride, (18) bringing forth his soul from corruption, and his life, so that he may not pass onto the sword. (19) He also censures through pain in his bed and He makes all his bones grow weak. (20) There becomes abominable to him in his life bread and the food which to his soul was desirable before. (21) His flesh will waste away and the bones which had been covered will be laid bare. (22) His soul will come close to corruption and his life to mortal dangers. (23) If there is for him an angel speaking, one of thousands, to enunciate the equity of a man, (24) He will have mercy on him and He will say: Free him so that he may not descend into corruption; I have found something in which to be propitiated to him. (25) His flesh has been consumed by punishments. Let him return to the days of his youth. (26) He will pray earnestly to God and He will be easily appeased by him, and he will see His face in a shout of joy, and He will render to man His justice. (27) He will notice men and he will say: I have sinned and truly I have done wrong and I have not received punishment as I was worthy. (28) For he has freed his soul so that it might not go straight into destruction but living might see the light. (29) Look! All these things God works in three turns through each person (30) to recall their souls from corruption and to illuminate them in the light of the living. (31) Pay attention, Job, and hear me and keep silent while I speak. (32) Now if you have something to speak, respond to me. Speak! For I wish you to appear just. (33) But if you have not, hear me! Keep silent, and I will teach you wisdom.

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Elihu had proposed above those things concerning which he intended to debate against Job (vv. 9-11). But since Job, before he said the premised words, had premised above at 13:3, "I desire to debate with God"—but it seems unsuitable to recall one who is eager to debate with a superior to debate with an inferior—before Elihu begins the debate with Job over the premised statements, [¶1](#) he convicts him of this very charge, that he desired to debate with God: first, of course, since the very fact that someone challenges to a debate another greater than himself seems to be the mark of great presumption. Hence, he says *I will respond to you*, that is, to your desire, according to which you wish to debate with God, *that God is greater than man*. Hence, it is presumptuous that a man should desire to debate with God. And on this point, of course, he would be accusing Job justly if Job had wished to debate with God to contradict Him as if He were an equal. Now Job wished to debate with God to learn, as it were, like a student with a teacher. Hence, he said above at 23:4: "I will fill my mouth with reproaches so that I may know the words which He may respond to me." Nevertheless, Elihu interpreted this remark as if Job said it contentiously against God, complaining that He was not responding to him. Hence, he adds *You contend against Him because He has not responded to all your words*, a conclusion which he wished to gather, of course, from Job's previously cited words and also from what he had said above at 19:7: "Look! Suffering force I will cry out and no one will heed me. I will raise an outcry and there is no one to pass judgement." These words, of course, and any similar words which were said above, were said not by way of contention but since he desired to know the reasoning of divine wisdom.

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Now to reject the previously cited words of Job, which Elihu was interpreting as having been said

contentiously, Elihu shows next that it is not necessary that God should respond to each word of a man, but He speaks to each one sufficiently for his instruction. Hence, he adds *God speaks once*, namely, to a man sufficiently for his instruction. Hence, it is not necessary that He respond to each of a man's questions in turn. Hence, he adds *and He does not repeat the same thing a second time* since to repeat what has been done sufficiently would be superfluous. Now he shows how God speaks to a man, adding *through a dream in a vision in the night*. Now there can be another sense also, so that by the statement *God speaks once*, namely, to a man, reference may be made to the instruction of the mind, which is through the light of natural reason, according to Psalm 4:6-7: "Many men say: Who shows us good things?", and, as if in response it adds, "The light of your countenance is observed upon us, oh Lord," and by this light, namely, we can distinguish good from evil. And since natural reason remains immobile in a man so that it is not necessary to repeat it, he therefore adds *and He does not repeat the same thing a second time*. Next he shows another way by which God speaks to a man—through an imaginary vision in the apparitions of dreams. Hence, he adds *through a dream in a vision in the night*. This phrase, of course, can refer to prophetic revelation, according to Numbers 12:6: "If anyone will be a prophet of the Lord among you, through a dream or in a vision I will speak to him," or it can even refer to common dreams, which Elihu believed were divinely procured.

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Now next he explains the manner and the order of dreams, first, of course, touching the natural cause when he says *When sleep rushes upon men*, which happens, of course, when the external senses have been immobilized by vapors mounting to the source of sensation. †2 Second, he posits a disposition on the part of the human will when he adds *and they sleep in bed*, namely, since men see especially ordered and significant dreams when they sleep quietly. Hence, distorted dreams appear to the sick because of their restlessness, †3 and so it is said expressly in Daniel 2:28 that "Your dream and the visions of your head in your bed are of this kind: You began to reflect, oh king, in your bed," and so on. Third, he posits a divine operation with respect to the one sleeping, which, of course, is marked first with respect to the fact that, after the external senses have been immobilized by deep sleep and the man is resting in his bed, a kind of faculty for perceiving divine instruction because his soul is not occupied with external things is divinely given to the man. Hence, he adds *then He opens the ears of men*, and very fittingly does he call the force which is perceptive of divine instruction in dreams ears, since he speaks of such instruction as of a kind of speech because it does not happen through an inspection of things themselves but through certain signs, as does speech. Now once the faculty of hearing has been given, it is fitting that He should teach. Hence, he adds *and, instructing them, He instills learning*, and here learning is taken for the instruction of those things which occur to man as necessary to be done or avoided, not for the knowledge of speculative sciences, which are not usually revealed in a dream. Hence, he adds *in order to turn a man away from the things which he has done*. For frequently a man is chided in dreams for sins committed. And since the source of sins is pride, because of which God's commandments are scorned, †4 Elihu adds *and to free him from pride*. Now by the fact that a man is freed from guilt it is fitting that he escape punishment, and he shows this next, of course, with respect to two punishments. First, he shows it with respect to the spiritual punishment of the soul; hence, he adds *bringing forth his soul from corruption*, which, namely, is due to the disorder of the powers of the soul. Second, he shows it with respect to bodily punishment; hence, he adds *and his life*, namely, his bodily life, *so that he may not pass onto the sword*, namely, to be punished for his sin. Or both can refer to bodily death, which sometimes happens through internal corruption as when someone dies from an illness which God sends upon him for sin but sometimes happens from the violence of the sword.

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Next he adds another manner of divine speech, namely, that He corrects a man through bodily illness, in which Elihu first notes sensible pain. Hence, he says *He also censures*, namely, a man, concerning his past sins, *through pain*, namely, bodily pain coming from illness. Hence, he adds *in his bed*, according to Psalm 11:4: "On the bed of his pain." Second, he touches upon the weakness of the sick when he says *and*

He makes all his bones grow weak, that is, He annihilates his strength, which consists in his bones. Third, he posits the loss of appetite when he adds *There becomes abominable to him in his life*, that is, while he still lives, namely, because of his illness, *bread*, namely, that which is the common food, *and the food which was desirable to his soul before*, an expression which refers to other foods which are desired in different ways by different people. Fourth, he posits leanness when he adds *His flesh will waste away*, that is, will fail, *and so, consequently, the bones which had been covered*, namely, with flesh, *will be laid bare*, that is, they will be manifested, covered only by skin. Fifth, he posits the peril and the fear of death. Hence, he adds *His soul will come close to corruption*, that is, his life which is lived through the soul. Hence, he adds *and his life to mortal dangers*, that is, to causes inducing death.

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Now one should note that he has proposed these things to respond to Job's complaint that God does not respond to him on each point. For he wished to prove through what has just been said that God did speak to him in three ways. First, of course, He speaks through natural reason just as He speaks to all men; second, He speaks by accusing him through dreams, for he had said above [7:14]: "You will frighten me through dreams, and through visions You will strike me with horror"; and third, He speaks through illness, for he had said above at 30:16: "Now, however, in me languishes my soul" and so on. Likewise, one should consider that Elihu, just as the other three also, believed that infirmities came to a man for sin, yet not principally to punish the man, as the words of those three implied, but rather to convince him.

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And since Job seemed to have complained not only that God did not speak to him but also that he himself could not approach God to speak with Him and to put his judgment before Him, as is clear above at 23:3, Elihu therefore satisfies this question since, although access to God manifestly does not lie open to man, yet there are angels as mediators between God and men who propose a man's justice to God, not as if they were instructing Him but as if they were helping men in their desires. ¹⁵ So, a man does not lose anything because he himself cannot approach God's throne on his own to propose to Him the justice of his cause. Hence, to show this point he adds *If there is for him*, that is, for the afflicted man, *an angel speaking*, that is, interceding. And lest it be feared that one angel might not suffice to importune for everyone, he adds *one of thousands*, according to what was said above at 25:3: "Is there a count of His soldiers?", *to enunciate the equity of a man*, that is, to propose before God whatever is just on the side of a man; *He*, namely, God, *will have mercy on him*, namely, the afflicted man, *and He will say*, that is, He will command the angel, *Free him*, namely, so that just as he is the supporter of the man's justice before God, so, too, is he the executor of divine mercy before men. And he adds that from which he should be freed—*so that he may not descend into corruption*, that is, into death. And to show that this liberation is pleasing to God he adds a saying in the person of God: *I have found something in which to be propitiated to him*, that is, some bit of equity appears in man on the basis of which I can have mercy on him, as I was seeking. And since Job had said above at 7:5, "My flesh has been clothed in rotteness," as if it could not be repaired, to exclude this alternative he adds *His flesh has been consumed by punishments*, as if to say: This situation does not prejudice My power. Hence, he adds *let him return to the days of his youth*, that is, let him recover his vigor just as in his youth.

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So, then, having posited the words of a liberating God, Elihu, using his own words, describes the manner of human liberation, saying *He will pray earnestly to God*, as if to say: It is not sufficient that an angel speak for him, but so that he may be freed it is necessary that he also pray for himself. Or this argument can be continued in another way. For since he had shown above that a man cannot complain that he is not able to put his judgment before God since an angel proposes it effectively for him (v. 23), he now shows that he himself can also propose it for himself by praying. To show that this method is also effective just as the first one he adds *and He will be easily appeased by him*, namely, God will be easily appeased by man, according to Joel 2:13: "He is kind and merciful and able to be appeased over malice." And from this

According to Job 21:17: "He is kind and merciful and able to be appeased over himself." And from this situation there follows in man a confidence in reflecting about God with a certain spiritual joy. Hence, he adds *and he*, namely, man, *will see His face*, that is, he will consider His goodness, imperfectly in the present life, of course, but perfectly in the future one, *in a shout of joy*, that is, in a kind of inexplicable joy, *and so He*, namely, God, *will render to man His justice*, that is, He will remunerate him for his merits, having removed the impediment of sin. But this cannot be unless man humbly recognizes and confesses his sin. Hence, he adds *He will notice men* as if offering Himself freely for the confession of sin. Hence, he adds *and he will say: I have sinned*. And so that it may not be believed that he was saying this out of humility, he adds, *and truly I have done wrong*, a remark which he brings in against Job since he had said above at 17:2: "I have not sinned and my eye lingers on bitter things." And in his confession he will not murmur about the gravity of the punishment. Hence, he adds *and I have not received punishment as I was worthy*, as if to say: I merited a graver punishment, and he seems to say this against what Job had said above at 6:2: "I wish that my sins by which I have merited anger were being weighed," and so on. And he shows the fruit of humility, adding *For he has freed his soul*, namely, by confessing his sin, *so that it might not go straight into destruction*, that is, into death, namely, bodily or spiritual, and so that it might further achieve good things. Hence, he adds *but living, might see the light*, namely, either the bodily or the spiritual light of wisdom.

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And since God does not finally condemn a man immediately but warns him many times, therefore Elihu adds *Look! All these things*, namely, which pertain to instruction through dreams, censuring through pains, and healing, *God works in three turns*, that is, many times, as often as He sees it is expedient, but Elihu uses the number three to be consistent with the practice of human beings according to which men are usually warned or summoned three times. And He does this not for one man only but for all who need it. Hence, he adds *through each person* whom, namely, He has seen in need of instruction or censure. And he assigns a purpose for this practice, adding *to recall their souls from corruption*, a remark which pertains to their liberation from evil, *and to illuminate them in the light of the living*, a remark which pertains to the attainment of goods. And each purpose can be explained in bodily and spiritual terms. Now what is said here about the "three turns" must refer to the second two manners of speaking. For it has been said about the first that "He does not repeat the same thing a second time." Now he introduces this observation as if to show the reason why sinners are sometimes sustained in prosperity and not condemned immediately.

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And since it seemed to Elihu that he had spoken effectively, he induces Job to listen in silence to the things which remain. Hence, he adds *Pay attention, Job*, that is to say, with the heart, *and hear me*, namely, with the ears, *and keep silent while I speak*, namely, so as not to impede me. And lest he seem to take from him the opportunity of responding he adds *Now if you have something to speak, respond to me*. And as if desiring his response, he adds *Speak!*, and adding the reason for his desire he says *For I wish you to appear just*. He says this to show that he was not intending his embarrassment. And since he did not believe that he was just, he adds *But if you have not*, namely, anything to say for your justice, *hear me! Keep silent, and I will teach you wisdom*, which, of course, you do not know.

Chapter Thirty-four

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(1) Pronouncing these things, Elihu also said: (2) Hear my words, wise men, and you who have been educated, listen to me. (3) For the ear tests words and the throat passes judgment on foods by taste. (4) Let us select a judgment for ourselves and let us see among us what is better. (5) Since you have said, Job: I am just and God is subverting my judgment. (6) For in judging me is the lie, and violent is my arrow without sin. (7) What man is like Job? Who drinks derision as if it were water, (8) who steps with those who work iniquity and walks with impious men. (9) For he has said: A man will not please God even if he has run with Him. (10) Therefore, prudent men, hear me. Far be impiety from God and iniquity from the Almighty. (11) For He will render a man's work to him and according to the ways of each one He will give back to them. (12) Truly, God will not condemn in vain, nor does the Almighty subvert judgment. (13) Whom else has He established over the land? Or whom has He set over the world which He has fashioned? (14) If He directs against him His heart, his spirit and breath He will draw to Himself. (15) All flesh will fail at the same time and man will return to ashes. (16) If you have understanding, then, hear what is being said and listen to the voice of my eloquence. (17) Can he who does not love judgment be healed? And how do you condemn Him Who is just to such a degree? (18) Who says to the king: Apostate! Who calls generals impious, (19) Who does not respect the persons of princes and did not know the tyrant when he disputed against the poor man. For all men are the work of His hands. (20) They will die suddenly and in the middle of the night the peoples will swerve, and they will cross over and they will take away the violent man without a band. (21) For His eye is upon the ways of men and all their steps He considers. (22) There is not such darkness and there is not such a shade of death that those who work iniquity may be hidden there. (23) For no more is it in a man's power to come to God in judgment.

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After Elihu has reproached Job about the fact that he desired to debate with God, he addresses himself to a debate against the two points which he had premised above. ¶ First, he debates against the fact that, as it seemed to him, Job had said that the divine judgment was unjust. And since this matter is very difficult and sublime he is not content in this debate to direct his words at Job alone, especially since he was thinking that in this matter Job was in error, but he invokes wise men to pass judgment on this matter. Now certain men consider wisdom on their own and with respect to this fact Elihu says *Hear my words, wise men*, whereas certain others are instructed about the things which pertain to wisdom and with respect to this fact he adds *and you who have been educated*, namely, by others, *listen to me*. Now he shows why he is inviting others to the hearing, adding *For the ear tests words*, as if to say: I invite you to this hearing so that hearing my words you may pass judgment on them. And he introduces a metaphor when he adds *and the throat passes judgment on foods by taste*, as if to say: Just as taste has the power to judge concerning foods, so does hearing concerning words. Now he explains to what these remarks pertain, adding *Let us select a judgment for ourselves*, as if to say: From common consensus let us judge what is truer. This is the point of adding *and let us see among us what is better*, namely, what Job has said or what I am about to say against him.

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Hence, next he sets forth Job's word, adding *Since you have said, Job: I am just*. He had said this same thing above at 27:6: "My justification, which I held in the beginning, I will not desert," and further, he had manifested his justice with respect to many things above in chapter thirty-one. Now he adds *and God is subverting my judgment*, and he takes this same meaning from what Job had said above at 27:2: "God lives Who has taken away my judgment." And what he had said above at 19:6, "God has afflicted me with an inequitable judgment," seems to pertain to the same thing. Elihu has, of course, interpreted these words for the worse. For Job had said that his judgment had been taken away since he estimated that penalties had been imposed upon him not according to the judgment of one punishing guilt but according to the providence of one proving His justice. Hence, he had said above at 23:10: "He will prove me like gold which passes through fire." Now it is not the one who does not use judgment who subverts judgment but

...which passes through me. For it is not the one who does not use judgment who subverts judgment but only the one who profers an unjust judgment. So, then, he interpreted what Job had said—"God has taken away my judgment" [27:2]—as if he had said: God has subverted my judgment by judging unjustly. Hence, he adds *For in judging me is the lie*, that is, the falsity of the judgment. Job had never said this, of course, but Elihu believed that this was his intention in the premised words, to say that he had been punished unjustly. Now Elihu had conceived this opinion, then, since he did not see how anyone without sin could be afflicted except unjustly. And since Job was saying that he was without sin he estimated that Job felt that he had been stricken with violence by God against justice. Hence, he adds *and my arrow is violent without sin*, as if to say that Job had said: Since I am without sin, the arrow with which God has wounded me, that is, the adversity sent against me, has been violent, not just, and he seems to allude to Job's words in which he had said above [6:4]: "The Lord's arrows are in me."

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After Elihu has imposed this perversity upon Job himself, then, he begins to vituperate him for it, saying *What man is like Job?*, as if to say: No one who seems to be a man is so perverse as he, for it seems the greatest perversity that anyone should mock God by disparaging His judgments. Hence, he adds *Who drinks derision*, that is, mockery and disapproval of divine judgments, *as if it were water*, which, namely, is drunk both easily and with cooling effect, as if he were imposing upon him the charge that that which was bursting forth as an affront to God was for him a cooling of his trial, and he was doing this without the opposition of a contradicting conscience. Now it is usually the mark of those who wish to persevere in their sins that they scorn divine judgments. Hence, he adds *who steps*, that is, consents, *with those who work iniquity*, namely, who despise divine judgments. Now men who act against the piety of divine religion not only despise divine judgments but also deny them or claim that they are unjust, and Elihu believed that Job was a partisan of these men. Hence, he adds *and walks with impious men*, namely, with those who cast aside the piety of divine religion. Now he shows why he says that Job consents with them, adding *For he has said: A man will not please God even if he has run with Him*, that is, even if he follows Him along the way of justice. Now Job had not said this, but Elihu, abusing his words, imposes it upon him as a charge. For Job had said above at 23:11: "His tracks are followed by my foot," and later he had said above at 30:21: "You have changed into someone cruel to me, and in the hardness of Your hand You oppose me." From these words he believed that Job felt that he was displeasing to God even though he had followed Him, but Job had referred the words just cited to external persecution, not to internal reproach.

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Therefore, since Elihu, abusing Job's words, was striving to impose upon him what he himself did not feel and had not understood in his own words, it is manifest that the whole debate which follows was not against Job. Nevertheless, since Elihu estimated that Job was so perverse that he deemed God's judgment unjust, he disdains to challenge him to a debate on this point but calls upon other wise men to judge. Hence, he adds *Therefore, prudent, that is, intelligent, men, hear me*. For just as the heart is the source of bodily life, [f2](#) so understanding is the source of the whole intellectual life. Hence, above also at 12:3 he had posited the heart in place of understanding, saying "I have a heart, too, just as you do."

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Now in his debate Elihu first proposes what he intends to prove, namely, that in divine judgment there cannot be injustice. For He Himself is God to Whom is owed pious worship, and through His omnipotence He dominates all things, setting up the laws of justice for man. It would be contrary to His divinity, then, if He were to favor impiety, and therefore Elihu says *Far be impiety from God*. It would also be contrary to the lordship of His omnipotence if He were to lean toward injustice, and so Elihu adds *and far be, namely, iniquity from the Almighty*. Now when divine injustice has been ruled out he shows the manner of divine justice, adding *For He will requite a man's work to him*, that is, He will repay him good or evil for his works. And since certain ones of those who do good works do better than others, and certain ones of those who do bad works sin more than others, he therefore adds *and according to the ways*

of each one He will give back to them, namely, better to better and worse to worse.

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Now he proves that there is no injustice in God, first, of course, from the fact that if God Himself were unjust, justice would be found nowhere, since to Him belongs the universal judgment of all men. Hence, he adds *Whom else has He established over the land?*, as if to say: Is it to be believed that someone has been appointed by God to judge the whole earth justly if there should be iniquity with Him? Now he says, then, that it is not to be believed that another judges the earth since the same one is both the Maker and the Governor of the world. Hence, just as He did not commit to anyone else the making of the world, so He has not put anyone else in charge of the governance of the world, and this is the point of adding *Or whom has He set over the world which He has fashioned*, that is, as governor of the whole world? As if to say: 'No one,' since just as He Himself fashioned the world by Himself, so, too, He governs and judges the world by Himself. He has, of course, executors—ministers, as it were—of His governance, but He Himself is the one Who orders everything. Now in no way is it possible that the governance of the whole world be unjust.

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Second, Elihu shows by experience that there is no violence and iniquity with God. For so great is His power by which He keeps things in being that, if He were to wish to use violence contrary to justice, He could suddenly wipe out all mankind. Hence, he adds *If He*, namely, God, *directs against him*, namely, to crush him, *His heart*, that is, His will, *his spirit*, that is, his soul, *and breath*, that is, the bodily life ensuing from the soul, *He will draw to Himself*, namely, separating it from the body by His power, according to Ecclesiastes 12:7: "And let the spirit return to God Who gave it." Now when the spirit divinely bestowed on a man has been taken away, it follows that the fleshly life fails. Hence, he adds *All flesh will fail at the same time*, that is, the species of flesh will cease, and further, will be dissolved into its components. Hence, Elihu adds *and man will return to ashes*, according to Psalm 103:29: "You will take away their spirit and they will fail and they will return to their dust." Now he calls the dust into which the flesh is dissolved ashes, either since among the ancients the bodies of the dead, having been burned with fire, were dissolved into ashes, [f3](#) or since the components into which the dead body is dissolved are certain remains of the natural heat which was active in the human body. Since it is so easy for God, then, if He should wish, to reduce the whole human race to ashes, it is clear from the very preservation of men that He does not use unjust violence against them.

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Since Elihu thought that the reasons just cited were sufficient, then, he invites Job to a consideration of them when he adds *If you have the understanding, then*, namely, so that you can perceive the force of my reasons, *hear what is being said*, namely, with external ears, *and*, with internal attention, *listen to the voice of my eloquence*, namely, so that you may recognize the justice of divine judgment. He also induces him to do this on the strength of his own peril or advantage when he adds *Can he who does not love judgment be healed?*, as if to say: You who need to be healed, as persons oppressed by many infirmities, cannot achieve this healing unless you love divine judgment. Now next he disapproves Job's opinion, which he thought was about the injustice of divine judgment, with many evident indications of divine justice. Hence, he adds *And how do you condemn Him*, namely, God, *Who is just*, namely, as He appears through many indications, *to such a degree*, namely, that you call Him a subverter of judgment? Now for the commendation of divine justice he first assumes that God does not respect the persons of the powerful but charges them and punishes them for their sins. Now among human powers royal dignity excels, and with respect to this fact he says first *Who*, namely, God, *says to the king: Apostate!*, that is, He is not afraid to charge a king with apostasy of His own profession by which He professes that He will preserve justice. Now leaders of armies hold the second place, concerning whom he adds *Who calls generals impious*, as if to say: He is not afraid to charge them with cruelty. In the third place he puts rulers of cities when he adds *Who does not respect the persons of princes*, namely, so that He does not charge them and judge them for

their sins. Now in the fourth place he touches upon those who have not legitimate but usurped power, namely, tyrants, and with respect to this class he adds *and did not know*, that is, approve, *the tyrant*, namely, by deferring to him, *when he*, namely, the tyrant, *disputed against the poor man*, as if to say: He does not favor the powerful against the powerless, a quality which pertains to His justice. And he adds as the reason why He does not defer to them *For all men*, namely, the great as well as the small, *are the work of His hands*; therefore, He does not despise the little people but loves them as His own works, nor does He fear the powerful since they are subject to His power.

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And lest anyone believe that God only charges the powerful but does not punish them further, an observation is added concerning their double penalty, first, of course, concerning death overcoming them unexpectedly. Hence is added *They will die suddenly*, according to Isaiah 30:13: "His grief will come suddenly when it is not expected." For if an expected death were to overcome them in the usual manner, this would not be imputed to divine judgment but to inferior causes. Second, he posits the punishment of the rebellion of subjects, by which they lose their power. Hence, he adds *and in the middle of the night the peoples will swerve*, that is, the peoples subject to kings and princes suddenly swerve as a result of some hidden machination to desert their princes. Hence, he adds *and they will cross over*, namely, changing lordship, *and they will take away*, that is, they will depose from lordship or even kill *the violent man*, that is, the one who, spurning justice, inflicted violence on his subjects, *without a band*, namely, of armed men. For when some prince is taken away by foreigners it is required that he have an armed band against him, but when the subjects, in whom was his whole power, suddenly desert him, he seems to be taken away without an armed band, although even this interpretation can refer to the punishment of the peoples. But the first interpretation is better, since now it is a matter of the justice which God exercises toward great men, whereas the justice which He exercises toward peoples will be spoken of hereafter (v. 24). Now in order that such punishments may be believed to come from divine judgment he adds *For His eye*, that is, the foresight of divine providence, *is upon the ways of men*, that is, upon their works. And in order to express the idea that God knows all the particulars of human works one by one he adds *and all their steps*, that is, all the processes of human operations, *He considers*, namely, distinctly, not merely in general.

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Now someone could believe, since God is light whereas the impious are in darkness, that they are hidden from God, but he excludes this interpretation, adding *There is not such darkness*, namely, of ignorance, *and there is not such a shade of death*, that is, such an obscurity of guilt leading to death, *that those who work iniquity may be hidden there*, as if to say, namely: Just as they do not wish to know God, so God does not know them. Yet it is said as a reproof that they do not know. †4 And since Elihu had said that princes die suddenly and are taken away for their sins (v. 20), which seems to be an irremediable punishment, he shows next the reason for this state of affairs from the fact that after God judges that a man is to be condemned finally for his sins, the opportunity is not given to the man to contest the matter further with God as in a judgment. This is the point of adding *For no more*, namely, after God judges that he is to be condemned, *is it in a man's power to come to God in judgment*, namely, as if God is going to retract His judgment on his account. And he especially seemed to be saying this against Job, who, after he had been condemned to the punishment, had said above at 23:3: "I will come to His throne; I will put the judgment before Him."

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(24) *He will crush many, even countless, men, and He will make others stand in their places. (25) For He knows their works; therefore, He will bring on the night and they will be crushed. (26) As impious people He has stricken them in the place of those who see, (27) who have departed from Him industriously, as it were, and all His ways they did not wish to know (28) so that they made the outcry of the needy man come to Him, and He heard the voice of the poor. (29) For if He Himself concedes peace, who is there who will*

condemn Him: After He hides His face, who is there to contemplate Him: Both over the nation and over all men, (30) who makes the hypocrite reign because of the sins of the populace. (31) Since I have spoken to God, then, I will not prohibit you also. (32) If I have erred, you teach me. If I have spoken iniquity, I will not add more. (33) Surely God does not demand it of you since it has displeased you? For you began to speak and not I. But if you know anything better, speak. (34) Let understanding men speak to me and let a wise man hear me. (35) Now Job has spoken foolishly and his words do not ring of learning. My Father, let Job be tested to the very end lest You desist from testing a man of iniquity, (37) who on top of his sins adds blasphemy; among us, meanwhile, let him be constrained, and then at the judgment let him challenge God with his speeches.

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There are two reasons on account of which men are especially likely to deviate from justice, of which the first is that they defer to the magnates. The second is that they defer to the multitude contrary to justice. Now he had shown above the perfection of divine justice from the fact that it does not defer to magnates (vv. 18-23). Hence, now, as a commendation of divine justice, he shows next that it does not defer to the multitude of sinners, either. Hence, he says *He will crush many*, namely, sinners, by killing them or punishing them in other ways. And lest it be believed that divine justice goes out to some fixed quantity of the multitude and not beyond, he adds *even countless, men*, as if to say: Those whom God's justice crushes because of sins cannot be comprehended by a fixed number. But lest it be believed that the state of the human race is destroyed as a result of this process he adds *and He will make others stand in their places* since, namely, when certain ones die others succeed to them, and when certain ones fall from prosperity others are lifted up, so that in this way there may appear to be some degree of uniformity in the human race. Now it usually happens that when many men must be punished, judges cannot examine the cases of each one diligently, but lest this be believed of God he adds *For He knows their works*, namely, what each one merits; therefore, He repays each one according to his works. Hence, he adds *therefore, He will bring on the night*, that is, sudden and unexpected adversity, *and they will be crushed*, namely, unexpectedly.

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Now he shows why they are oppressed in the night from the fact that although they were able to see what was expedient for them, they scorned it; therefore, it is just that an opportunity not be given them of foreseeing the evils overcoming them to take precautions. This is the point of adding *As impious people*, that is, rejecting the knowledge of piety, *He has stricken them*, namely, those being *in the place of those who see*, that is, in a state in which they were able to see both through natural reason and through sacred doctrine what had to be done and what had to be avoided. But they rejected this knowledge. Hence, he adds *who have departed from Him*, namely, from God, *industriously, as it were*, sinning from fixed malice. Hence, next he posits an affected ignorance in them when he adds *and all His ways*, that is, God's commandments, *they did not wish to know*, [†5](#) and so it is clear that they are not excused because of ignorance but rendered more damnable. Now he shows the effect of such affected malice, adding *so that they made the outcry of the needy man come to Him*, as if to say: They show themselves so ignorant of God's ways that they oppress the poor whom God heeds. Hence, just as they do not shrink from the oppression of the poor, so they do not fear the indignation of God. Hence, he adds *and He heard the voice of the poor*, as if to say: They make little of the fact that God applies His will to heeding the poor.

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And since Elihu had attributed the grief of the multitude to divine judgment, someone could believe that it does not come about as a result of divine judgment that one multitude is crushed and another prospers, but through either the governance or the attack of some powerful prince. Therefore, to exclude this possibility he adds *For if He Himself concedes peace, who is there who will condemn Him?*, as if to say: Therefore I say that it is He Himself who "crushes many, even countless, men" (v. 24) since if He wished to concede to them the peace of time and of prosperity, no one could condemn the multitude, and on the contrary, if He intends to condemn it there is no one who can offer peace. Hence, he adds *After He hides His face*, namely,

by taking away the presence of his consolation, *who is there to contemplate Him*, that is, who can find consolation in Him, as if by seeing His beauty?

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Now there is also another punishment of the multitude besides grief, namely, that in which it is afflicted by the lordship of tyrants, and with respect to this punishment he adds *Both over the nation and over all men*, as if to say: Not only in the case of one nation does He exercise His judgments through grief or through the oppression of tyrants, but also toward all men. And concerning the oppression of tyrants he adds *Who makes the hypocrite reign because of the sins of the populace*, which, namely, is afflicted by his rule. In this remark he seems to respond also to the question which Job had proposed above at 21:7: "Why do the impious live; why have they been lifted up and comforted with riches?" For Elihu claims that this condition obtains not because of their merits, as Job had proved in the same place, but because of the lack of merit of others who are punished as a result of their prosperity.

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So, then, having shown that there cannot be injustice in God and that His justice is especially manifest from the judgments which He exercises toward princes and the multitude, Elihu gives Job the opportunity to respond. Hence, he adds *Since I have spoken to God, then*, that is, to those things which concern the honor of God, *I will not prohibit you also*, namely, giving you the opportunity to respond. And he shows at what his response ought to aim, adding *If I have erred*, namely, as you have imposed the charge on your other friends, namely, that they were "worshippers of perverse dogmas" [13:4], *you teach me*, namely, the truth, so that I can be freed from error. Now someone can fail in speaking not only by erring against the truth of doctrine but also in a particular judgment by failing against the truth of justice. Hence, he adds *If I have spoken iniquity, I will not add more*, showing, namely, that he is prepared for correction. And since he estimated that Job was gravely disturbed against him he shows next that his disturbance is unjustified, adding *Surely God does not demand it of you?*, as if to say: Even granted that I have spoken iniquity, you are not held responsible to God for it, and so you ought not to be gravely disturbed because of it. Hence, he adds *since it has displeased you?*, namely, through an inordinate disturbance of the spirit. Now second, Elihu shows that Job ought not to be gravely disturbed by it since Job himself had begun his words by saying "Perish the day" [3:3] and so on, from which the whole debate had its beginning. Hence, he adds *For you began to speak and not I*. Third, he shows that he ought not to be gravely disturbed since he also has the opportunity of saying whatever pleases him. Hence, he adds *But if you know anything better*, namely, than I have said, *speak*, namely, showing my error or iniquity.

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And lest Elihu seem to have said this as if in doubt about his own justice and the truth of his words, he intends to claim next that Job fails both in wisdom and in understanding. And on this account he deemed that Job was not worthy of a debate with him, one part of which belongs to the opponent, in whom sharpness of understanding is especially required to discover reasonable ways to make his point. Hence, he adds *Let understanding men speak to me*, namely, objecting to me. The other part of the debate, however, belongs to the respondent, in whom wisdom is especially required so that he may judge well about what he has heard. Hence, he adds *and let a wise man*, who is prepared to respond, *hear me*, namely, as an opponent. Now he had gathered the deficiency of these qualities in Job from his words. Hence, he adds *Now Job has spoken foolishly*, that is, contrary to wisdom, namely, with respect to the fact that he deemed that Job had said something against the straightforwardness of divine judgment, *and his words do not ring of learning*, namely, which belongs to the ordered intelligence, and this remark seems to have referred to the fact that Job claimed that he was just.

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And since Job did not recognize those defects in himself, Elihu turns his words to God, requesting that Job

be tested to recognize his defects. Hence, he adds *My Father*, that is, oh God, Whom I deem my Father because of the reverence which I have for You, defending Your justice in all things, *let Job be tested*, that is, let his defect be shown to him through scourges *to the very end*, that is, to the point that he recognizes that he is unjust, or *to the very end*, to the death. And he shows the justice of this petition, adding *lest You desist from testing a man of iniquity*, as if to say: His iniquity merits that the scourges not cease. Also, for greater aggravation he adds *Who on top of his sins*, namely, the past sins for which he has been scourged, *adds blasphemy*, namely, in that he claims that he is just but God is unjust. First, of course, he wishes upon him punishment in the present for this blasphemy; hence, he adds *among us, meanwhile, let him be constrained*, namely, with adversities. Second, however, he implies a future punishment; hence, he adds *and then*, namely, after he has already been afflicted temporally, *at the judgment*, namely, of future vengeance, *let him challenge God with his speeches*, namely those by which he blasphemates against Him.

Chapter Thirty-five

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(1) Therefore Elihu spoke again as follows: (2) Does your reflection seem just to you so that you would say: I am more just than God? (3) For you said: What is good does not please You, or what does it profit You if I sin? (4) Therefore, I will respond to your speeches and to your friends with you. (5) Look up at heaven and look upon and contemplate the upper air, that it is higher than you. (6) If you sin, what harm will you do Him? And if your iniquities are multiplied, what will you do against Him? Further, if you act justly, what will you give to Him? Or what will He receive from your hand? (8) Your impiety will harm a man who is like yourself and your justice will help the son of the man. (9) Because of the multitude of calumniators they will cry out, and they will wail because of the force of the arm of tyrants. (10) And he did not say: Where is God Who made me? Who has given incantations in the night. (11) Who teaches us over the flocks of the earth, instructs us over the birds of heaven. (12) They will cry out and He will not heed them because of the pride of the evil. (13) For not in vain will God heed and the Almighty will look upon the cases of each petitioner. (14) Even though you have said: He does not consider; be judged before Him and wait upon Him. (15) For now He does not inflict His fury nor does He avenge crime exceedingly. (16) Job opens his mouth in vain, then, and multiplies words without knowledge.

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After Elihu has found fault with Job's words with respect to the fact that, as he estimated, Job had imposed a charge of iniquity on divine judgment, [†1](#) here he intends to find fault with Job's words with respect to the fact that he had said that he was just. Hence is said *Therefore Elihu spoke again as follows*, namely, having interrupted his speech, waiting to see if Job would respond. When Job did not respond, Elihu took up the speech again, saying *Does your reflection seem just to you so that you would say: I am more just than God?* Job had never said this, of course, nor does Elihu impose on him the charge that he had uttered these words but that the words which he did utter came from this reflection. Hence, he expressly made mention of the reflection. Now Elihu shows the words from which Job had this reflection, adding *For you said: What is good*—in another reading *what is right* [†2](#) —does not please You, or what does it profit You if I sin? These two expressions are never found in the premised words of Job, but the first of them, namely, that what is good does not please God, Elihu seems to get from what Job had said above at 10:15: "If I will be impious, woe is me! And if just I will not lift up my head." Job had said this to signify that the just and the unjust are equally afflicted by temporal punishments but Elihu interpreted it to have been said

just and the unjust are equally punished by temporal punishments, but Elihu interpreted it to have been said as if the justice of man were not pleasing to God, whereas nowhere is it read that Job said what Elihu proposes second—*what does it profit You if I sin?* Elihu wished to get this meaning from what Job had said in the same place: "If I have sinned and You have spared me until now, why do You not allow me to be clean of my iniquity" [10:14]? Job had said this to show that temporal prosperity does not always accompany innocence, but he himself had been innocent at the time of prosperity, his sins having been renounced by him, and there was no reason why, after the remission of sins, he should again be cleansed of his sins by God. But Elihu twisted these words to this meaning, as if Job thought that God had induced his sin or the punishment of sin for His own use. Now from these two contentions, namely, that what is good did not please God and that He deemed sin useful to Him, it would seem to follow that Job was more just than God since he said of himself above that evil things displeased him and good things pleased him. †3

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Now because of their absurdity Elihu concludes from the premised words that he is compelled to respond. Hence, he says *Therefore, I will respond to your speeches and to your friends with you*, namely, those who were not able to convince you when you were saying such things. And he begins with what was said last, showing that God cannot be helped nor hurt by our works, good or evil, and he says this because of His sublimity which he proposes first, saying *Look up at*, that is, look into, *heaven*, which, namely, is the seat of God, †4 *and look upon*, namely, with the sight, *and contemplate*, namely, with the mind, *the upper air*, that is, the whole upper body, †5 on the basis not only of the height but also of the magnitude, the motion, and the order of which you can guess this, namely, *that it is higher than you*, so much so, namely, that your works can neither profit nor harm it. Hence, he adds *If you sin*, namely, against yourself or against God, *what harm will you do Him?*, as if to say: In no way will He suffer damage from this action. Now with respect to sins which are committed against a neighbor he adds *And if your sins*, namely, by which you unjustly hurt your neighbors, *are multiplied, what will you do against Him?*, as if to say: In no way will He be injured as a result of this action. Now with respect to good deeds which are done to one's neighbor he adds *Further, if you act justly*, namely, rendering your neighbors their right, *what will you give to Him?*, as if to say: What will He profit from this action? Now with respect to works of divine worship he adds *Or what will He receive from your hand*, namely, in sacrifices and offerings? As if to say, 'Nothing,' according to Psalm 49:9: "I will not take the calves from your house."

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And since someone could believe that it made no difference to God whether a man acted justly or unjustly, to exclude this belief he adds *Your impiety will harm a man who is like yourself*, namely, who is susceptible to harm, *and your justice will help the son of the man*, namely, who needs the aid of justice. On this account, then, impiety is prohibited by God and justice is demanded, since God has a care for men who are either helped or injured by this arrangement. And on the basis of this trust it happens that oppressed men cry out to God against their oppressors, certain ones of whom oppress them deceitfully through calumny. Hence, with respect to these men he adds *Because of the multitude of calumniators they will cry out*, namely, those who have been oppressed by them will cry out to God. Certain men, however, oppress them manifestly through violence, and with respect to these men he adds *and they will wail because of the force of the arm of tyrants*, that is, they will weep to God because of the violent power of tyrants. From this passage it is given to be understood that not only does it not profit God that someone sins but it displeases Him, and He does punish; otherwise the oppressed would cry out in vain.

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Next, Elihu turns to finding fault with another expression which he had premised, "What is right does not please you" (v. 3), †6 which would be repugnant to divine wisdom, which appears first, of course, in the creation of things. Hence, he says *And he*, namely, Job, being of the opinion that good things were not pleasing to God, *did not say: Where is God Who made me?* For God did not make things except because

of the good. Hence, it is said in Genesis 1:25 that "God saw that it was good" and so on. Hence, it is manifest that the good does please God. Second, he introduces the benefit of human instruction by which some men are instructed to good by divine revelation. Hence, he adds *Who has given*, namely, through revelation, *incantations*, that is, the dogmas of human instruction, which very often were comprehended by the ancients in incantations, *in the night*, that is, literally, in a nocturnal dream or in the quiet of contemplation or in the obscurity of a vision. Now He would not instruct men familiarly to the good if the good were not pleasing to Him. Third, he introduces the infusion of natural light by which we distinguish good from evil through reason, in which we surpass the brute beasts. Hence, he adds *Who teaches us over the flocks of the earth*, namely, which lack reason. And since the ancients observed the chattering and the movements of birds as if they were divinely instructed, as if they had reason, *to exclude this explanation*, then, he adds *He instructs us over the birds of heaven*, which also do not have reason.

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And since God hates evil, and the good is pleasing to Him, He therefore hears the oppressed crying out. He does not hear the oppressors; hence, he adds *They*, namely, the calumniators and the tyrants, *will cry out* as if seeking from God the fulfillment of their desires, *and He*, namely, God, *will not heed them*, and this will be *because of the pride of the evil*, namely, men, according to Psalm 101:18: "He has paid attention to the prayer of humble men." And lest anyone should believe that God heeds all prayers indifferently he adds *For not in vain*, that is, without reason, *will God heed*, namely, since with most just reason He heeds some and not others. Hence, he adds *and the Almighty will look upon the cases of each petitioner*, namely, so that He may listen to the worthy but not to the unworthy petitioners. Now it especially seems that God does not see the cases of each petitioner because sometimes the impious prosper, but to exclude this apparent contradiction he adds *Even though you have said*, that is, you have reflected in your heart: *He*, namely, God, *does not consider* the deeds of men; *be judged before Him*, that is, prepare yourself to undergo His judgment, *and wait upon Him*, namely, judging in the future even if He should not punish here. For He delays in order to condemn more gravely in the future. Hence, Elihu adds *For now*, that is, in the present life, *He does not inflict His fury*, that is, the magnitude of the punishment, *nor does He avenge crime exceedingly*, that is, He does not punish in the present as the gravity of the guilt exacts since the punishments of the present life are for correction; therefore, He reserves for future damnation those whom He judges unworthy of correction, and this is another reason why impious men prosper in this world, and on this point he agrees with Job's opinion. But since Elihu had understood Job's words wrongly he therefore reproaches them, concluding with the words *Job opens his mouth in vain, then*, that is, without reason, as if reproaching the great length of speech in his case, *and multiplies words without knowledge*. In this remark he charges the ignorance and useless wordiness in Job.

Chapter Thirty-six

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(1) Elihu, also adding, spoke these things: (2) Bear with me a little while and I will indicate to you, for I still have something to say for God. (3) I will repeat my knowledge from the beginning and my Maker I will prove just. (4) For truly my speeches are without falsehood and my perfect knowledge will be proved to you. (5) God does not cast away powerful men since He Himself is powerful, (6) but He does not save impious men and He grants the judgment to the poor. (7) He does not take from the just man His eyes. And He places kings on the throne forever and they are raised up. (8) And if they should be in chains and

should be bound by the ropes of poverty, (9) He will indicate to them their works and their crimes, since they have been violent. (10) He will also uncover their ear to rebuke, and He speaks so that they may turn back from iniquity. (11) If they hear and observe they will fill out their days in good and their years in glory; (12) now if they do not listen they will pass by the sword and be consumed in folly. (13) Pretenders and clever men provoke the anger of God, and they will not cry out when they have been bound. (14) Their soul will die in the storm and their life among effeminate men. (15) He will rescue the poor man from his distress and He will uncover his ear in his trial. (16) Therefore, He will save you most amply from the narrow mouth, and one not having a foundation under it. Now the rest of your table will be filled with fat. (17) Your cause has been judged as the cause of an impious man; you will receive cause and judgment. (18) Let anger not overcome you, then, so that you oppress someone, and do not let a multitude of gifts influence you. (19) Put down your greatness without trial and all those who are robust with strength. (20) Do not draw out the night so that peoples may go up instead of them. (21) Beware that you do not incline toward iniquity, for this you began to pursue after your misery.

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Elihu had premised above two statements in Job's words against which he intended to debate, namely, that Job said that he was just and that he had, as Elihu had interpreted Job's words, imputed to God unfairness of judgment [33:9-10]. Elihu had already debated against these two premises in his earlier words [34:1ff. and 35:1ff.]. Now he intends to debate against the same premises again in another way. Hence is said *Elihu, also adding*, namely, subsequent reasons to those premised, *spoke these things*, namely, which follow. Among them he first stirs Job to attention, saying *Bear with me a little while*, namely, since he intends to debate briefly against two premises under one response. Hence, he adds *and I will indicate to you*, namely, the truth of the matter at issue. And lest he seem overzealous, namely, since above [34:1ff. and 35:1ff.] he seemed to have shown already what he wished, he adds for *I still have something to say for God*, as if to say: There are still available to me other reasons by which to defend the equity of divine judgment. And since he intends to introduce again arguments against each of the premises, he adds *I will repeat my knowledge from the beginning*, as if to say: Against everything which has been said from the beginning I will again adduce arguments according to my opinion. And because he is under an obligation to do this thing, he adds *and my Maker*, that is, God Who made me, *I will prove just*, namely, excluding from His judgment the iniquity which you, Job, seem to impute to Him so that you may claim that you are just. And lest anyone say that what he was about to say proceeded not from true knowledge but from false opinion, Elihu adds *For truly my speeches are without falsehood*, as if to say: I will speak nothing but the truth which is consistent with right knowledge. Hence, he adds *and my perfect knowledge will be proved to you*, that is, the following proofs will conclude for you from these things which seem to belong to perfect knowledge.

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Having premised these remarks as if by way of introduction, then, he begins to debate over the premised words which Job had imputed, first against the fact that Job had said that he was just. †1 To exclude this claim he proceeds in the following manner: In the time of his prosperity Job was a man of great power. Now sometimes it happens that some men persecute powerful men, either because of envy or because of a fear as a result of which they are afraid of being oppressed by them through their power, and this persecution is properly the mark of powerless men who both envy powerful men and fear their oppressions. But this cannot be said of God, Who excels in power. Hence, he adds *God does not cast away powerful men since He Himself is powerful*, from which remark one is given to understand that God does not hate anything in man in which man is similar to Him because, since God is the very essence of goodness, †2 it is impossible that anything be similar to Him except in being good. From this observation it is clear that God does not persecute any men because they are powerful but because iniquity is sometimes found in them, and for this iniquity they are punished by God. Hence, Elihu adds *but He does not save impious men*, that is, He damns them. And he shows the reason for their damnation, adding *and He grants the iudgment to the poor* that is He passes a iudgment on iniquitous powerful men in favor of the poor

the judgment to the poor, that is, He passes a judgment on iniquitous powerful men in favor of the poor who have been oppressed by them. Now He does not desist from helping the just because of power. Hence, he adds *He does not take from the just man*, namely, even a powerful man, *His eyes*, that is, the prospect of His kindness and mercy, according to Psalm 33:16: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the just."

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And by the benefits which He confers upon powerful men, first, of course, by establishing their power, He manifests that He does not take away His mercy from powerful men if they are just. Hence, Elihu adds *And He places kings on the throne forever*, namely, if they have been just. Second, He manifests it since He promotes them to greater estate. Hence, he adds *and they*, namely, those set upon the throne, *are raised up*, that is, they are exalted to greater heights, namely, when God increases both power and riches for them. Third, He manifests it because, even if they are punished because of their sins, He has mercy on them if they wish to repent. Hence, he adds *And if they*, namely, the kings, *should be in chains*, that is, put in prison, *and should be bound*, that is, if they should be tied *by the ropes of poverty*, that is, if after having been put in prison they should suffer poverty, which is a kind of bond by which men are tied so that they cannot fulfill their works and are fettered by many miseries besides; and yet, on those who have thus been constituted in misery God first confers this benefit, that He makes them recognize the former sins for which they have been punished. Hence, he adds *He will indicate to them their works*, that is, He will see to it that they recognize that the things which they have done are unjust. Hence, Elihu adds *and their crimes*, as if to say: He will make them recognize that the works which they have done were criminal. And he shows in what respect they have sinned, adding *since they have been violent*. For this is the sin proper to powerful men, that they inflict violence on their subjects, using their power as if it were the law of justice. Not only does He make them recognize their past sins but He also shows them that they are being punished for their sins. Hence, he adds *He will also uncover their ear*, that is, He will make them understand that God speaks to them by punishing them, namely, that they are being punished because of their sins. Hence, he adds *to rebuke*, as if to say: He will make them recognize the fact that God has punished them as a rebuke. And further, He will persuade them to repent. Hence, he adds *and He speaks*, namely, internally or through an external admonisher, *so that they may turn back from iniquity*, namely, by repenting of their former sins. And Elihu shows the fruit of this penitence, adding *If they hear*, namely, proposing it in their heart, *and observe*, namely, implementing it with their work, they will be led back to their former state, and so *they will fill out their days in good*, namely, of virtue or earthly prosperity, *and their years in glory*, namely, earthly glory; *now if they do not listen*, that is, if they do not obey the internal inspiration that they repent, *they will pass by the sword*, that is, they will be led from the prison to slaughter by the sword, *and be consumed*, that is, destroyed, *in folly*, that is, because of their folly. Here one should consider that Elihu seems to agree with Job's friends in this, that he posits that present adversities are the punishments of sins and that through penitence one returns to his former prosperity. ^{†3} But even if this does happen sometimes, nevertheless it does not happen always, according to Job's opinion.

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But since it sometimes happens that some men whose sins are not apparent suffer adversities, in order that his previously cited opinion should not be shattered on this account he interprets that they are pretenders in that they pretend to justice which they do not have, and clever, inasmuch, namely, as they use certain subtleties for the purpose of doing injustice under the pretext of justice, ^{†4} and by this very fact they sin more gravely. Hence, he adds *Pretenders and clever men provoke the anger of God*, namely, since God detests this kind of sin the most. Such men also do not repent easily even during scourges, since they think that they are just inasmuch as they are praised by others. Hence, he adds *and they will not cry out*, namely, to God, seeking mercy *when they have been bound*, namely, by the chains and ropes of poverty. In this remark he gives one to understand that he thought that Job had been a pretender and a clever man; therefore, in the midst of the punishments he should recognize his sin. And since such men do not repent in the midst of punishments they are not therefore freed from adversity. Hence, he adds *Their soul*, which, namely, will suffer different distresses to the point of death, *will die in the storm, and their life*, namely, will fail among effeminate men, namely, those who have not the power to free themselves from the power

will fall among effeminate men, namely, those who have not the power to free themselves from the power of oppressors. Now he rightly compares pretenders to effeminate men since it happens that men are pretenders from smallness of spirit. For it is characteristic of a magnanimous man to be open, as is said in *Ethics IV*. ¶5 And since Elihu had said that God comes to the aid of powerful men caught up in trial, so that he may not seem to say that God is a respecter of persons, he shows that He confers the same benefit on poor people also. Hence, he adds *He will rescue the poor man from his distress*, namely, by freeing him from adversity. And he shows the order of the liberation, adding *and He will uncover his ear in his trial*, that is, He will make him understand that he is being punished for his sins and He is leading him to repentance, just as he also said above about powerful men (vv. 5-12).

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Now Elihu applies to the person of Job what he had said in general above. First, of course, since he had said that God brings safety in trial both to the poor and to the powerful (vv. 8 and 15), he concludes that Job also can hope for such safety from God when he adds *Therefore, He will save you most amply from the narrow mouth*, that is, from the trial which is, as it were, a kind of narrow opening through which a man enters into a kind of latitude of different miseries. For one evil becomes for a man the reason for different evils, and such a multiplication of evils can proceed to the infinite so that it never arrives at a state of rest. This is the point of adding *and one not having a foundation*, namely, on which a man can rest, *under it*, that is, when he has descended into the abyss of evils, an expression which especially seems to pertain to the punishments which exist after death, which last forever without rest. Now Elihu promises him not only freedom from evils but also an abundance of goods if he will be willing to acknowledge his sin and repent. Hence, he adds *Now the rest of your table will be filled with fat*, as if to say: With security and peace you will be able to eat abundantly of the good things which will be divinely restored to you.

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And since Elihu had shown that "God does not cast away powerful men" (v. 5) but the iniquitous, whereas Job seemed to have been cast away by God through many adversities, he adds *Your cause has been judged as the cause of an impious man*, as if to say: You have not been punished because you were powerful but as an impious man. On the contrary, he promises him recompense if he will repent when he adds *you will receive cause and judgment*, that is, cause and judgment will be restored to you so that you can investigate the causes of others and pass judgment on them. And as if this had already happened he advises him how he ought to conduct himself in that state. Now sometimes it happens that judges deviate from justice because of anger, and with respect to this fact he says *Let anger not overcome you, then, so that you oppress someone* unjustly, namely, when "you will receive cause and judgment" (v. 17). Sometimes, however, judges deviate from justice because of a greed for gifts, and with respect to this fact he adds *and do not let a multitude of gifts influence you*, namely, in that state of future authority. It also happens sometimes that from pride alone someone scorns doing justice to others, and with respect to this fact he says *Put down your greatness*, that is, the pride of your spirit, *without trial*, that is, before trial is sent upon you by God for your humiliation. Sometimes, however, it happens that judges deviate from justice by deferring to certain powerful men through fear, and with respect to this fact he adds *and put down all those who are robust with strength*, namely, with your own strength; or, do not hesitate to put down men through justice, however robust they may be in their strength. Now sometimes it happens that some judges fall short of justice by refraining for the sake of their own rest. Hence, he adds *Do not draw out the night*, that is, do not wish to sleep too much so that as a result you do not attend to expediting justice; or, *Do not draw out the night*, that is, do not permit the justice of the cause to be concealed a long time, but hurry, so that the truth may be manifested. And he shows the cause, adding *so that peoples may go up instead of them*, namely, the robust, as if to say: Do not draw out the judgment in such a way until the whole populace is stirred up as a result of the violent actions of robust men and comes to disquiet you because of their wrongs; or, in another sense, *Do not draw out the night so that peoples go up instead of them*, as if to say: Do not put off exercising a judgment against robust men lest, perhaps, through their power they find many sponsors to rise up for their defense so that your judgment is impeded. Now all

those interpretations tend toward this conclusion, that he should avoid injustice in the state of future prosperity. Hence, he adds *Beware that you do not incline toward iniquity*, namely, in any of the ways just cited or in any others. Now Job could say that this admonition was superfluous since he was accustomed to carry out justice diligently as he had said above at 29:14; therefore, Elihu adds *for this*, namely, iniquity, *you began to pursue after your misery*, namely, in that you deem yourself more just than God. Therefore, you must be careful not to deviate toward injustice if you should happen to return to the state of prosperity.

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(22) Look! God is preeminent in His strength and no one is like Him among the lawmakers. (23) Who will be able to search out His ways? Or who dares to say to Him: You have worked iniquity? (24) Remember that you do not know His work about which men have sung. (25) All men see Him; each one looks upon Him from afar. (26) Look! God is great, conquering our knowledge; the number of His years is inestimable. (27) Who takes away the drops of rain and pours out showers like floods, (28) which flow down from the clouds, which cover from above all. (29) If He will have wished to stretch out the clouds as His tent (30) and to flash with His light from above, He will also cover the surfaces of the sea. (31) Through these rains He judges peoples and gives food to many mortals.

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After Elihu has found fault with Job's words with respect to his saying that he was just (v. 5), here he tries to find fault with his words with respect to his belief that Job had spoken against the justice of divine judgment. Hence, first he proposes the sublimity of divine power when he says *Look! God is preeminent in His strength*, that is, He has power more sublime than others have. Now it is not consistent with reason that a greater power be condemned for injustice by a lesser power. Second, Elihu proposes His authority when he adds *and no one is like Him among the lawmakers*, namely, since "the founders of the laws," through His wisdom, "decree what is just," as is said in Proverbs 8:15. Hence, He cannot be condemned for injustice by anyone's laws. Rather, His own wisdom is the rule and measure of all laws. Third, Elihu proposes the incomprehensibility of God's works when he adds *Who will be able to search out His ways*, that is, to find out sufficiently the reasons for His works? [¶6](#) And on the basis of this incomprehensibility he concludes, as it were, that He cannot be condemned for injustice. Hence, he adds *Or who dares to say to Him: You have worked iniquity?* For in order that someone be condemned for iniquity it is required that he be subject to a higher power and be bound by another's laws and that his works be known, conditions which have no place in God's case, as has been said (vv. 22-23).

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Next, Elihu begins to manifest that a man cannot search out God's ways, that is, His works, saying *Remember that you do not know His work about which men have sung*, that is, wise men, whom Elihu calls men because of the manliness of the spirit. Now he says *have sung* because of the ancient custom of wise men who wrote down divine and philosophical works in meter. [¶7](#) Now no matter how wise some men may be, they cannot attain to knowing and describing His essence, and all of a man's knowledge and speech about God is through His works, which, nevertheless, neither Job nor any other man can know perfectly. Therefore, he adds *All men see Him*, namely, through His works. For no one is so deficient in wisdom that he does not perceive some of the divine works. And again, no one is so wise that his knowledge is not far overcome by the excellence of divine splendor. Hence, he adds *each one looks upon Him from afar*, that is, man's knowledge is a long way from a perfect comprehension of the divine essence, both because man is not able to know Him except through His works, which are an infinite distance from the excellence of His essence, and because man does not know even His works perfectly. [¶8](#) And from this fact Elihu concludes that God, by His excellence, exceeds man's knowledge. Hence, he adds *Look! God is great, conquering our knowledge*. For the fact that God cannot be known perfectly by us does not come about because of His defect, as it does in the case of motion and time, [¶9](#) but because of His excellence. Now someone could say that although we cannot know with respect to God what He is, we can nevertheless know with respect to God whether He is, a question which pertains to His duration. But Elihu

shows that this, too, exceeds man's knowledge, adding *the number of His years is inestimable*, namely, since the eternity of His duration cannot be comprehended by human understanding. †10

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Now next Elihu shows the magnitude of God's works—which exceed human reason—by enumerating the different changes of the air, which sometimes is disposed to dryness, and with respect to this fact he says *Who takes away the drops of rain*, namely, by preventing it from raining. Sometimes, however, rains abound in the air, and he describes their magnitude, saying *and pours out showers like floods*, namely, which flow on the earth. And such an abundance of rain appears marvelous if the origin of rains should be considered, namely, that so much water should burst forth from clouds which have no solidity. With respect to this fact Elihu adds *which floods*, namely, *flow down from the clouds*, yet not in such a way that so much rain exists in the clouds in act but since the very vapors of the clouds successively condense into rains. Now there is also another marvelous feature in the rains, that they spread over a large extent of land. Hence, he adds *which cover from above all*, namely, places in the region in which it rains, so that no part of that land remains which has not been rained upon. Next he speaks of the clouds themselves, saying *If He will have wished to stretch out the clouds as His tent*, namely, since the sky, which is God's seat, is hidden by clouds just as the seat of some man is hidden by a tent. †11 Now from the clouds proceed lightning flashes because of the clashing of the wind. †12 Hence, he adds *and to flash with His light from above*. Now clouds sometimes cover heaven to the horizon of some region, beneath which the farthest reaches of the sea seem to be closed: *He will also cover the surfaces of the sea*, namely, with a tent of clouds. Now he says *If He will have wished* in order to show that the divine will is the source of natural works. Now it is a property of the will that it works for the sake of an end; therefore, he shows the end of these works, adding *Through these rains He judges peoples*, namely, with respect to those who are punished by them, *and gives food to many mortals*, namely, with respect to the fact that rains are useful for the fertilization of the earth, through which foods are produced for men.

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(32) In His hands He hides the light and He commands it to come again. (33) He makes an announcement of it to His friend, that it is his possession and that to it he can ascend. †13

Chapter Thirty-seven

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(1) Over this my heart trembled and was moved from its place. (2) He will hear a lesson in the terror of His voice and the sound proceeding from His mouth. (3) Over all the heavens He considers, and His light over the limits of the earth. (4) Behind Him the sound will rumble; He will thunder the voice of His magnitude and His voice will not be investigated when it has been heard. (5) God will thunder in His voice marvelously, Who does things great and inscrutable, (6) Who orders the snow to descend upon the earth and the rains of winter and the showers of His own strength, (7) Who in the hand of all men gives signs so that each one may know His works. (8) The beast will enter its lair and will linger in its cave. (9) The storm will go out from the interiors and the cold from Arcturus. (10) When God blows, the icy chill increases, and again very extensive waters flow. (11) The clouds desire the grain and the clouds spread their light. (12) And they traverse all in their circuit, wherever the will of the One Who governs leads them,

to every purpose which He has commanded them over the face of the earth, (13) either on one tribe or on their own land or in whatever place of His mercy He orders them to be found.

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Elihu has treated at length above [36:27-30] the change of the air which happens as a result of dryness and rain and as a result of bringing in clouds above, out of which God flashes with His lightning. Now, however, he treats more extensively the light itself, which sometimes is hidden and sometimes disclosed by the clouds, and the thunder which arises from the clouds. He begins with the light, saying *In His hands He hides the light*, that is, through the works of His power He brings it about that sometimes the light of the sun and of the stars is hidden by the clouds. But since this concealing is not permanent but temporary, he adds *and He commands it to come again*, namely, when the clouds scatter. Or these words can refer to the darkening and the lightening of the atmosphere through the setting and rising of the sun. Now one should consider that sensible things are kinds of signs of intelligible things. Hence, through sensible effects we come to a knowledge of intelligible things. Now among all the sensible effects light is the most spiritual. †1 Hence, it is more effective to lead to a knowledge of intelligible things, namely, inasmuch as vision, whose knowledge is perfected through light, helps intellectual knowledge the most. †2 Since, then, that sensible light is hidden from and communicated to men through God's power, one is given to understand from this fact that with Him there is a certain more excellent light, namely, a spiritual light, which God reserves for men as a reward for virtue. Hence, he adds *He makes an announcement of it*, namely, of spiritual light signified through corporeal light, *to His friend*, namely, the virtuous man, whom God loves, *that it is his possession*, that is, that that spiritual light is a treasure which God reserves for His friends as a reward, *and that to it he can ascend*, namely, by meriting it through works of virtue and by preparing himself to possess it, although this clause could also be explained about corporeal light. For the Platonists have posited that the souls of men were derived from the souls of stars. †3 Hence, when human souls preserve their dignity by living according to reason, they return to the splendor of the stars whence they have descended. Hence, one reads in the *Dream of Scipio* that "rulers and preservers" of cities "who have set out from here," namely, from heaven, "return here." †4 In this work, too, the author gives one to understand that he was not placing the ultimate remuneration for virtue in temporal goods but in spiritual goods after this life. Now this is the most wonderful thing of all, that earthly and corruptible man may be promoted to the possession of spiritual and heavenly things. Therefore, he adds *Over this*, namely, that man can ascend to possess the light, *my heart trembled*, namely, with the fear of wonder and astonishment, *and was moved from its place*, namely, so that it not only desires and craves what seems to be connatural to it in the sensible life but also crosses over to spiritual and heavenly things.

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Now after vision, which is knowledgeable of corporeal light, the sense of hearing especially serves understanding, inasmuch as it is perceptive of the voices by which intellectual conceptions are expressed. †5 Now just as through the sight of corporeal light man is brought to the knowledge and expectation of some higher light, so, too, through the hearing of corporeal sounds formed by divine power man is conducted to hear God's spiritual teaching. Hence, he adds *He*, namely, man, *will hear from God a lesson*, namely, of spiritual teaching, *in the terror of His voice*, that is, in the sign of thunder, which is, as it were, a kind of terrible voice of God. Now he explains the lesson just mentioned, adding *and the sound proceeding from His mouth*. For the sound of corporeal thunder is formed as if by His hand, that is, by His power, but the sound proceeding from His mouth is the teaching of His wisdom according to the text of Ecclesiasticus 24:5: "I have come forth from the mouth of the Most High."

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And lest anyone believe that God does not have another light superior to the corporeal light of heaven, Elihu excludes this belief, adding *Over all the heavens He considers*, as if to say: His vision is not beneath heaven but above it. Now nothing is seen except in some light since "everything which is manifest is light" as is said in Ephesians 5:13. Hence, it is necessary that God's light be more excellent than that

light, as is said in Ephesians 5:13. Hence, it is necessary that God's light be more excellent than that corporeal light which is found first in the heavens. Hence, he adds *and His light*, namely, His intelligible light, is *over the limits of the earth*, that is, over every corporeal creature. And just as the corporeal light of heaven is beneath Him, so, too, the sound of corporeal thunder is inferior to Him. Hence, Elihu adds *Behind Him*, that is, under Him, *the sound*, namely, of corporeal thunder, *will rumble*. Now He has another spiritual voice, namely, the teaching of wisdom, which is incomprehensible to man, concerning which he adds *He will thunder the voice of His magnitude*, that is, which teaches His magnitude. Not everyone hears this voice as they hear corporeal thunder, and those who do hear it in some fashion cannot understand it. Hence, he adds *and His voice*, that is, the teaching of wisdom, *will not be investigated*, namely, perfectly, *when it has been heard*, that is, perceived spiritually by some man.

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Now such a voice is ordered not only toward the teaching of the men who hear it but also toward the perfection of the natural works which are performed according to the precept of divine wisdom. Hence, second, Elihu repeats: *God will thunder in His voice*, that is, in the authority of His wisdom, *marvelously*, that is, by producing marvelous effects, and this is the point of adding *Who does things great*, namely, according to their nature, *and inscrutable*, namely, to human reason. Beginning his enumeration he adds *Who orders the snow*, namely, by the voice of His wisdom, *to descend upon the earth*, namely, since snows are generated on His command, and also rains and showers. Hence, he adds *and the rains of winter*, namely, which abound in the winter, *and the showers of His own strength*, namely, which are generated from some more violent cause and with the impulse of the wind. And since everything which happens among lower things is ordered somehow or other towards man, †6 therefore he adds *Who in the hand of all men gives signs so that each one may know His works*. For the different dispositions of the air are suited to different works of men, for the work of the night is one thing, the work of the day another, and again, man carries out one work in the season of fair weather and another in the rainy season. Now man decides what work suits a given season according to reason divinely given to him, and this is the sign which God has put in his hand, that is, in the power of all men to do work so that they may know how to distribute their works fittingly to the different seasons. And that providence is extended to the brute animals, which by a kind of natural instinct perform different works at different seasons. Hence, he adds *The beast will enter its lair*, namely, in the rainy season, *and will linger in its cave*, namely, in the fitting season.

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Next Elihu shows the effects of the different winds. Concerning this subject one should consider that winds from the south produce rains and storms whereas winds from the north cause a chill in the air. †7 Now the winds from the south arise for us from the direction of the antarctic pole, which is hidden from us since it is depressed under our horizon to the same degree that the arctic pole is elevated above it. †8 Therefore, he says *The storm will go out from the interiors*, as if to say: A storm, with us, is caused by a wind proceeding from the part of heaven which is always depressed under our horizon, which, of course, is called the south wind. And with respect to the north wind he adds *and the cold from Arcturus*, for in Greek the north is called Arctos, from which the constellation of the Bear, which is always elevated above the horizon, is called Arcturus, †9 and from that direction proceeds the north wind, which causes cold because of the remoteness of the sun from that region of heaven. And so that this situation may be attributed to divine wisdom, he adds *When God blows, the icy chill increases*, as if to say: The north wind, which causes an icy chill, arises when God blows, that is, causes the blast itself; *and again*, namely, when God is blowing, that is, producing a south wind, *very extensive*, that is, very abundant, *waters flow*, namely, the waters of the rains which are caused by the south wind.

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And to show that such effects also refer to the advantage of men he adds *The clouds desire the grain*, as if to say: The clouds are ordered toward grain as toward some end for which they are advantageous. Now

anything whatsoever desires its end, and accordingly he says that clouds desire grain, since, namely, out of the clouds comes advantage for the grain, either by reason of the rain descending from the cloud, which, by irrigating the earth, fertilizes it for the production of grain, or even with respect to the fact that it is advantageous for the grain that it sometimes be shaded by clouds so that it may not be dried out by the constant heat of the sun. He adds another advantage of clouds when he says *and the clouds spread their light*, which can refer either to the light of lightning flashes, according to what he had said above in the preceding chapter: "If He will have wished to stretch out the clouds and to flash with His light" [36:29]; or rather, it can refer to the light which is resplendent in the air from the rays of the sun reflected against the clouds and in a certain way filtered through them. Hence, the splendor of the sun appears in the air before sunrise and also after sunset because of the reflection of the rays of the sun against the clouds, which are in a higher place, which the sun's rays reach earlier and leave later.

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Now having posited the advantage of the clouds he describes their motion, saying *And they traverse all in their circuit*. For clouds do not settle over only the one part of the earth from which vapors have risen but they are transferred to different parts by the impulse of the winds. Now usually the winds make as much as possible a kind of circle, following the motion of the sun. †10 Hence, in the morning the easterly winds blow; later, the southerlies; and finally, toward evening, the westerlies. Hence, as a consequence the clouds also move in a kind of circle. And to show that this phenomenon proceeds from divine providence he adds *wherever the will of the One Who governs*, namely, of God, *leads them*, namely, since the clouds do not always reach to all parts of the earth but sometimes to this part and sometimes to that, according to the disposition of God. Now different effects proceed from the clouds—for example, rains, snows, hail, thunder, and similar things; and just as it depends on divine disposition to what part of the earth the clouds reach, so, too, it depends on divine disposition what effects follow from the clouds. Hence, he adds *to every purpose which He has commanded them over the face of the earth*, as if to say: It depends on divine command what effect upon the earth follows from the clouds. And since Elihu had said, "wherever the will of the One Who governs leads them" (v. 12), he explains this remark, adding *either on one tribe*, namely, since it sometimes happens that the clouds appear in one territory and do not appear in another, according to Amos 4:7: "I have rained upon one city and upon another I have not." This distribution of rain happens in two ways, since sometimes clouds appear in the same region from which the vapors are generated, which happens when the vapors are not transferred to remote places by the impulse of the wind. With respect to this situation he says *or on their own*, namely, the clouds' *land*, from which they have arisen. Sometimes, however, they are transferred to another region, and with respect to this situation he adds *or in whatever place of His mercy He orders them to be found*. For it proceeds from the great mercy of God that He provides clouds and rains to some region at opportune seasons, especially in hot lands where rains are rarer.

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(14) For listen, Job! Stand and consider the marvels of God. (15) Do you know when God commanded the rains that they show the light of His clouds? (16) Do you know the paths of the clouds—great and perfect knowledge? (17) Are your garments not warm when the south wind has blown over the earth? (18) Perhaps you fashioned the heavens with Him, which are very solid, as if poured in bronze? (19) Show us what to say to Him. We, of course, are wrapped in darkness. (20) Who will recount to Him what I am saying? Even if he speaks, a man will be devoured. (21) But now they do not see the light. Suddenly the air will be condensed into clouds and the passing wind will scatter them. (22) From the north wind will come gold and from God a fearful praise. (23) We cannot find Him out worthily. He is great in strength and in judgment and in justice and He cannot be recounted. (24) Men will fear Him, then, and they will not dare to contemplate Him, all those who seem to themselves to be wise.

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After Elihu has recounted many marvels of divine works, at this point he inveighs against Job, who

seemed to charge God with injustice even though he was nevertheless unable to comprehend His works; therefore, Elihu says *For listen, Job!*, namely, to what I am saying about the magnitude of divine works; *Stand*, namely, through straightforwardness of mind, *and consider*, namely, by yourself, *the marvels of God*, namely, which are manifested in His works. Among these marvels he begins with rains, which men perceive with the senses, of course, but yet science cannot comprehend their first origin as they were instituted by God. Hence, he adds *Do you know when God commanded the rains*, namely, which fall upon the earth according to divine ordinance. And after their fall the air, which earlier was dark from the density of the clouds, is rendered bright by their rarefaction. Hence, he adds *that they*, namely, the falling rains, *show the light of His clouds*, that is, the light of the sun shining through the rarefied clouds, which was hidden by the condensed clouds. And concerning their motion he adds *Do you know the paths of the clouds*, namely, how and by what cause they are driven in different directions by the blast of the winds. Now a knowledge of the clouds is the first step in knowing all the changes of the air—for example, winds, rains, snows, hail, thunder, and other such things; therefore, Elihu adds *great and perfect knowledge?*—great, of course, because such impressions are made on the more sublime body, but perfect since the knowledge of clouds comprehends all knowledge of the impressions previously cited and of the effects which follow from them in these lower bodies. And since clouds are driven by the winds, next he adds an observation about the effect of the wind, saying *Are your garments not warm when the south wind has blown over the earth?* For the south wind, since it proceeds from the warm regions, warms the air, †11 by the heat of which a man's garments can warm him more. And he expressly makes mention of the effect of the south wind since, coming, as it were, from the lowest latitude, by gathering the vapors it condenses them into clouds and moves them, whereas the north wind, coming, as it were, from the high latitude, disperses them more. †12

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And since the power of the heavenly bodies works toward all such effects, therefore he proceeds further to the heavenly bodies. Hence, he adds *Perhaps you fashioned the heavens with Him?*, in which he expresses metaphorically the causality of God over the heavenly bodies. For just as the artisan is the cause of the artifact, so God is the cause of heavenly bodies, yet differently in two ways. For the artisan constructs the artifact from the matter at hand, whereas heavenly bodies could not be made from preexisting matter, but in their production the matter was produced at the same time as the form. †13 And to distinguish the upper heavens from the heavens which are called airy †14 he adds *which are very solid, as if poured in bronze*. Now one should know that among us there are certain bodies such as air and water and things of this kind which yield to the touch and can be divided by things passing through them, whereas certain things do not yield to the touch and cannot be passed through, such as the bodies of stones and metals. †15 Therefore, to show that the upper heavens are not divisible or permeable in the manner of air and water he compares them especially to bronze among the other metals since men used it as much as possible for such works.

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And lest perchance Job should say presumptuously that he knew God's works perfectly, Elihu continues derisively, saying *Show us what to say to Him*, as if to say: If you are so wise that you know all God's works and can even debate with Him about them, teach us so that we can respond to Him. And he shows the necessity, adding *we, of course, are wrapped in darkness*, as if to say: We are very much in need that you show us what you said before since we are utterly ignorant of it. And since Elihu himself had spoken at length about divine effects, lest this be imputed to him as presumption as if he himself thought that he did know perfectly what had been said before, to exclude this imputation he adds *Who will recount to Him what I am saying?*, as if to say: No one can recount sufficiently as suits Him, namely, according to the excellence of His power, that which I have spoken about His effects. And if anyone were to rise up to such presumption that he thought that he spoke sufficiently about God, danger would threaten him for this very reason. Hence, he adds *Even if he speaks*, namely, as if wishing to comprehend divine effects, *a man will be devoured* as if swallowed up by the magnitude of the matter about which he is speaking, according to Proverbs 25:27: "Whoever is an examiner of His majesty will be oppressed by His glory." Or it can be

REVELATION 20:27. WHOEVER IS AN ENEMY OF HIS MAJESTY WILL BE OPPRESSED BY HIS GLORY. OR IT CAN BE understood in another way so that the sense may be: Not only can a man not suitably recount the divine effects but *Even if God Himself speaks* them, namely, revealing them to a man, *a man will be devoured*, unable, as it were, to grasp so great a thing. Hence, it is said in John 16:12 that "I have many things to tell you which you cannot bear now," and in Deuteronomy 5:26 is said, "What is all flesh that it may hear the voice of the living God?"

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But lest anyone believe that the knowledge of divine truth had to be taken from man forever, to exclude this belief he adds *But now*, that is, at the present time, *they*, namely, men, *do not see the light*, that is, the splendor of divine knowledge. Nevertheless, to the friend of God it is announced that "to it" sometimes "he can ascend," as was said above [36:33]. He introduces a metaphor for this notion, saying *Suddenly the air will be condensed into clouds* because of the gathering of vapors from the south, and as a result of this condensation the air is rendered dark. But such darkness passes after a little while when the clouds have been scattered. Hence, he adds *and the passing wind*, namely, the north wind, *will scatter them*, as if to say: In this manner, although he is now wrapped in darkness, yet by the coming of death, which is, as it were, a kind of passage of the wind, the darkness just mentioned will be scattered.

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Now sometimes it happens that in some dark place something glittering is found, just as the northern clime is called dark because of its distance from the sun, †16 and yet in the northern regions is found much gold, which is the shiniest among the metals. This is so since, when the heat runs to the inner bowels of the earth because of the chill of the ambient air, it works more effectively there to generate gold, †17 and this is the point of adding *From the north wind will come gold*, as if to say: In the region of the north wind gold is more abundant. And just as the gleam of gold is found in the darkness of the north, so, too, within the darkness of the ignorance of this life is found some gleam, albeit obscure, of divine knowledge. Hence, he adds *and from God a fearful praise*. For if nothing of the divine light were to shine in us we could by no means praise Him. Again, if divine truth were to shine manifestly for us as at noon, we would praise Him carelessly, but since in our knowledge something of the divine light shines for us with a kind of obscurity, we praise Him with fear, just as a man does with fear that which he knows he cannot do perfectly. Hence, he adds *We cannot find Him out worthily*, namely, so that through our finding Him out we may come to know Him as He is. This happens, of course, as a result of His excellence. Hence, Elihu adds *He is great in strength*, namely, because His power infinitely exceeds all His effects; hence, He cannot be worthily found out through them. And lest He be believed because of the magnitude of His power to use only violence in the governance of men, he adds *and in judgment*, namely, He is great, since, namely, "His judgments are incomprehensible." †18 And this condition is not due to a defect of justice but to excellent justice. Hence, he adds *and in justice*, namely, He is great. And because of His magnitude we can neither reflect with our mind nor speak with our mouth sufficiently about Him. Hence, he adds *and He cannot be recounted*, namely, worthily, by a man. And this is the reason why praise of Him is fearful. Hence, he adds *Men*, namely, men however strong, *will fear Him, then*, because of the magnitude of His strength, *and they will not dare to contemplate Him* as if presuming to know Him fully, *all those who seem to themselves to be wise*. And he says this expressly since man's wisdom, however great it may seem to them or to others, is as nothing compared to divine wisdom.

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Now one should consider from the premised words of Elihu that he agreed partly with Job, partly with his friends. For he agreed with Job in that he believed that the remuneration of good men and the punishment of bad men would be after this life, †19 whereas he agreed with Job's friends in that he believed that all the adversities of the present life come about in return for sins, and if one should repent of them he would return to prosperity. †20 He also agreed with Job's friends with respect to the person of Job himself since he thought that he had been punished for his sin and that the justice which seemed to be in him at first was

pretended. †21 He also took Job's words wrongly, just as the others had done. †22 Concerning the prosperity of evil men in this world he alone touches upon this cause, that they prosper because of the sins of others. †23 Similarly, too, he alone seems to touch manifestly on the angels being intermediaries between God and men. †24

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Now Job does not respond to his words, first, of course, since he agreed with him on the principal dogmas in which his friends, whom he had called above at 13:4 "worshippers of perverse dogmas," were in error. Now what Elihu felt about his person was not so great a care to Job that he wished to argue with Elihu because of it, especially since he could not prove the purity of his conscience otherwise than above, namely, by divine testimony. †25 Second, [Job does not respond] since Elihu was imputing to Job from a kind of juvenile presumption in the manner of contentious people words which he had not said or which he had said otherwise than Elihu himself was taking them. Therefore, to separate himself from contentions he decided that he ought rather to keep silent and commit the question to divine judgment.

Chapter Thirty-eight

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(1) Now the Lord, responding to Job from a whirlwind, said: (2) Who is that man wrapping his opinions in ignorant speeches? (3) Gird up your loins like a man. I will question you and you respond to Me. (4) Where were you when I was setting the foundations of the earth? Indicate to Me, if you have understanding, (5) who set its measurements, if you know, or who stretched the line over it, (6) upon what its bases were founded, or who laid its cornerstone (7) when each of the morning stars was praising Me and all the sons of God were jubilant. (8) Who shut up the sea with doors when it burst out as if proceeding from the womb, (9) when it put on a cloud as its garment and I wrapped it in a mist as if in the swaddling clothes of infancy? (10) I surrounded it with my limits and I placed a bar and doors (11) and I said: This far will you come and you will not proceed further, and here you will break your swelling waves. (12) After your birth, did you command the day when to break and did you show the dawn its place?

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After the debate of Job and his friends about divine providence had been premised, †1 Elihu had assumed to himself the office of determining the debate, criticizing Job on certain points but his friends on others. But since human wisdom is not sufficient to comprehend the truth of divine providence, it was necessary that the debate just mentioned be determined by divine authority. But since Job had the right opinion about divine providence but had been so immoderate in his manner of speaking that scandal was produced from it in the hearts of the others when they thought that he was not showing due reverence to God, the Lord, therefore, just like the determiner of a debate, criticized Job's friends because they did not have the right opinion, †2 Job himself because of his inordinate manner of speaking (v. 3ff.), and Elihu for his unsuitable decision (v. 2). Hence is said *Now the Lord, responding to Job*, namely, since that response was being made on his account even though he himself had not spoken immediately before. Now he shows the manner of responding, adding *from a whirlwind*, which can be understood literally, of course, so that it may be said that God's voice was formed miraculously in the air with a kind of disturbance of the air, just

as one reads in Exodus 20:18 that it happened on Mount Sinai, or just as a voice was made to Christ when certain people said that "a thundering had occurred," as one reads in John 12:29. Or it can be understood that it was said metaphorically so that this response of the Lord is an internal inspiration divinely made to Job himself. So the Lord is said to have responded to him from *a whirlwind*, both because of the disturbance which he was still suffering and also because of the obscurity of the whirlwind, namely, since we cannot perceive divine inspiration in this life clearly but with a kind of dark impression of sensible likenesses, as Dionysius says in Chapter 1 of *On the Celestial Hierarchy*. †3 And the Lord also signified this meaning if He made His voice heard sensibly from a corporeal whirlwind.

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Now after a debate has been determined as if by the opinion of a judgment, nothing remains to be said further unless the opinion of the determination is rejected. Therefore, the Lord first finds fault with the determination of the debate which Elihu had made. Now He finds fault with it because Elihu had wrapped in many false and frivolous words the true opinions which he had proposed. Hence follows [*He*] said: *Who is that man wrapping his opinions in ignorant speeches?* Elihu had, of course, expressed his opinions by charging Job with having said that he wanted to debate with God and with having said that he was just so vigorously that he seems to take away, as it were, from the justice of the divine judgment. †4 But Elihu had wrapped those opinions in many presumptuous and even false speeches, as is clear from the things said above, †5 which are called ignorant speeches here, since every disorder seems to proceed from a defect of the reason.

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So, then, having excluded Elihu's determination, the Lord Himself begins to determine the debate. First, He rouses Job to attention when He says *Gird up your loins like a man*, which is said metaphorically, for men usually gird up their loins so that they may be ready for a trip or for some action. Hence, the Lord wished him to be ready to consider the things which were being said to him with all impediments removed. Hence, He expressly makes mention of girding up the loins since by loins is understood carnal pleasure, which especially impedes spiritual attention †6 according to Isaiah 28:9: "Whom will He teach knowledge and whom will He make understand what has been heard? Those who have been weaned from milk, those taken away from the breasts."

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Now in His decision He begins first by charging Job with seeming to have spoken presumptuously when he challenged God to a debate. And since above at 13:22 he seems to have given God the option of two courses of action when he said, "You call me and I will respond to You, or certainly, let me speak and You respond to me," [and] since Job had already spoken enough the Lord chooses the second part, as it were, when He adds *I will question you and you respond to Me*. This questioning of God, of course, is not for the purpose of learning but to convince the man of his ignorance. Now He questions Job about His effects which are available to the human senses, and when the man is shown not to know them he is much more convinced of having no knowledge of more sublime matters. Now among the other sensible effects, He begins to question him about the principle parts of the world, among which the earth is best known to us inasmuch as it is nearest, and beginning to ask about it He says *Where were you when I was setting the foundations of the earth?* He rightly compares the earth to the foundation since just as the foundation is the lowest part of a building, so, too, earth is the lowest of the bodies, which underlies all of them. And since earth is especially the material of the human body, but the material precedes in time that which is made of it, and much more does the plan of the artisan who puts together the material, He therefore says expressly *Where were you when I was setting the foundations of the earth?*, as if to say: You cannot know the plan of the foundation of the earth since when the earth was founded you were not yet in the nature of things.

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Now one should consider that certain of the ancients did not attribute the arrangement of the earth and of

Now one should consider that certain of the ancients did not attribute the arrangement of the earth and of the other elements to any ordering reason but to the necessity of the material, according to which heavy things sink down under light ones. †7 Now so that this opinion may be excluded the Lord next compares the foundation of the earth to the foundation of a building, which is made according the plans of the builder. And similarly, the foundation of the earth was made according to divine providence, which human understanding is not able to comprehend, and He signifies this point when He adds *Indicate to Me, if you have understanding*, as if to say: You cannot, then, indicate the plan of these things since your understanding is not sufficient to grasp them. Now one should consider that an artisan disposes of four things in the foundation of a building: first, of course, how large the foundation ought to be, and similarly it has been disposed by divine plan that the size of the earth ought to be so great and no larger or smaller. With respect to this point He adds *who set its measurements*, namely, in all its dimensions. And He expressly says *set*, for the shape of the earth does not necessarily require such a size. This size has been imposed on the earth in accordance with divine reason alone, which a man cannot know; therefore, He adds *if you know*, namely, since a man can neither know nor indicate this size. Second, the artisan disposes according to his plan the determined site of the foundation, which he comprehends by stretching the measuring-line. Hence, he adds *or who stretched the line over it*, by which, namely, is signified the plan of the divine disposition designating the site determined for the earth among the parts of the universe. Third, having figured out the size of the foundation and where it is to be placed, the artisan disposes on what the foundation can be firmly laid, and with respect to this laying He adds *upon what its bases*, namely, of the earth, *were founded*, since it was founded upon the center of the world. †8 Now fourth, having figured out the three things previously mentioned, the artisan now begins to lay the stones on the foundation—first the cornerstone, to which the different walls are joined. With respect to this stage He adds *or who laid*, that is, set down, *its cornerstone*, by which, namely, is signified the very center of the earth, to which the different parts of the earth are connected.

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Now a man usually lays the foundation of a building because of the need for a dwelling, but so that it may be shown that God did not lay the foundation of the earth out of need He adds *when each of the morning stars was praising Me*, as if to say: Although the dwelling of heaven, whose stars praise Me, was at hand for Me, yet I founded the earth not out of a need for the servants who might dwell in it but out of will alone. Now this is not said as if heaven were made before earth, especially since in Genesis 1:1 one reads "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," whereas one reads that the stars, about which mention is made here, were made on the fourth day, †9 but this is said to show that in the order of nature heaven and the stars are prior to the earth, just as the incorruptible is prior to the corruptible and the mover to the moved. Now He says *morning stars*, that is, stars put together anew, †10 just as among us stars which usually appear in the beginning of the day are called morning stars. Now that the morning stars are said to praise God can be understood in one way materially, inasmuch, namely, as because of their brightness and nobility they were the matter of divine praise, †11 if not to men, who did not yet exist, at least to angels, who did already exist; †12 in another way, according to those who say that heavenly bodies have souls, †13 the stars in the beginning of their being established praised God not with vocal but with mental praise. This, too, can refer to angels, with whose assistance the heavenly bodies move, †14 so that what is added, *and all the sons of God were jubilant*, may refer to the angels of the supreme hierarchy, whom Dionysius says were located in the vestibules of the deity. †15 Therefore, he expressly attributes praise to the former stars as to inferiors but he attributes jubilation to the latter as to superiors, which implies a kind of excellence of praise.

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Having premised, then, a treatment of the foundation of the earth, next he adds a treatment of the waters which lie immediately upon the earth. Now the natural order of the elements seems to require that water should surround the earth on every side, just as the air surrounds the earth and the water on every side. †16 but by divine disposition it has been effected that for the generation of men, animals, and plants some part of the earth might remain uncovered by waters, with God holding back by His power the waters of the sea

of the earth might remain uncovered by waters, with God holding back by His power the waters of the sea within fixed limits. Hence, he adds *Who shut up the sea with doors*, that is, with fixed limits? Now there have been some men who thought that some part of the earth had been dried up by the action of the sun, †17 but the Lord shows that it has been disposed from the beginning that the sea should not cover the earth everywhere. Now He describes the production of the sea under the simile of the birth of a living thing, namely, of a child, since water is especially formable into living things; †18 hence, the seed of all animals is moist. †19 Now first, of course, a child goes out from the womb of its mother, and He signifies this fact when He says *When it burst out as if proceeding from the womb*. Now in the production of the sea He uses the words *burst out* since, namely, it is the property of water to be continuously in motion, as it were. Now the sea is said to proceed *as if from the womb* not because it has had its origin from other corporeal material but because it proceeded from the hidden source of divine providence as if from a kind of womb. Now second, a child once born is clothed, and with respect to this fact He adds *when it put on a cloud as its garment*. For since clouds are generated from vapors released from water, †20 it follows that in maritime places such clouds are multiplied more. Now third, the child once born is wrapped in a kind of binding, and with respect to this fact He adds *and I wrapped it in a mist as if in the swaddling clothes of infancy*. And by mist can be designated vapors not raised up nor condensed into clouds but darkening the air on the surface of the sea, and perhaps He alludes to what is said in Genesis 1:2, that "darkness was on the face of the deep."

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Having posited these things which pertain to the original production of the sea, then, He explains His conclusion as if to say: When the sea was newly made, then *I surrounded it with my My limits*. And He seems to posit three things pertaining to the shutting up of the sea, the first of which is signified when He says *with My limits*, that is, with limits set by Me; the second is signified when He says *and I placed a bar*; and the third when He says *and doors*. Now these three things pertain to the rule of divine power. Hence, as if explaining what had been said earlier He adds *and I said: This far will you come*, which pertains to the notion of limits, for a limit is the farthest extent of motion, †21 *and you will not proceed further*, which, namely, pertains to the bar by which someone's progress is impeded, *and here you will break your swelling waves*, which pertains to doors which are placed so that someone may not go out or in indiscriminately but according to a fixed rule. So, too, the sea does transgress the shore indiscriminately but according to a kind of measure of the swelling of the waves.

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Now after the earth and the water He proceeds further to the air, which, as it appears, is joined to heaven. Now the first disposition common to the whole body which lies upon the water and the earth is the variation of night and day, which happens according to the motion of the day, which is the first of motions. †22 Therefore, next He says *After your birth did you command the day when to break?*, as if to say: Do night and day alternate upon the earth according to your command? For daybreak is a kind of boundary of day and night. And He expressly says *After your birth*, just as He had also said above when He was speaking of the earth, "Where were you?" (v. 4), since just as earth is chiefly the material principle of man, †23 so, too, the highest heaven, which varies night and day by its motion, is the principal source of the human body among the corporeal causes. †24 Now one should consider that the splendor of daybreak or of dawn is differentiated according to the different degrees of the elevation of the zodiacal signs which the sun passes through, since when it is in a sign of swift ascent, namely, in which it rises quickly, dawn lasts a short while. When, however, the sun is in a sign of slow ascent, it lasts longer. Also, the degree of latitude of the place out of which the splendor of daybreak begins to appear when the sun is rising there is determined, and this is the point of adding *and did you show the dawn its place?*, as if to say: Did you distribute the places in heaven from which dawn begins to shine?—as if to say 'No.' And from all these questions it is given to be understood that your reason falls short of the comprehension of divine works. Hence, it is clear that you are not suited to debate with God.

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(13) *Have you held the extremes of the earth, shaking them, and have you shaken impious men out of it?* (14) *It will be restored as a clay sign and it will stand like a garment.* (15) *Their light will be taken away from impious men and the upraised arm will be broken.* (16) *Have you entered the depth of the sea and have you walked about on the bottom of the deep?* (17) *Have the gates of death opened for you and have you seen the dark doors?* (18) *Have you considered the breadth of the earth? Indicate to Me, if you know everything,* (19) *on what way the light dwells and what is the place of darkness* (20) *so that you may lead each one to his limits and understand the paths of his house.* (21) *Did you know then that you were going to be born, and did you know the number of your days?* (22) *Have you entered the storehouses of snow or have you looked at the storehouses of hail?* (23) *I have prepared these things for the time of the enemy, for the day of the battle and of war.* (24) *Along what way is the light sprinkled, the heat divided over the earth?* (25) *Who has given its course to the very violent rainstorm and the way of the sounding thunder?* (26) *So that it might rain upon the earth without a man in the desert, where no mortal man abides,* (27) *so that it might rain upon the trackless and desolate earth and produce green grass.* (28) *Who is the father of the rain, or who has begotten the dewdrops?* (29) *From whose womb has come forth the ice and who has begotten the chill from heaven?* (30) *The waters are hardened into the likeness of stone and the surface of the deep is solidified.* (31) *Will you be able to join together those twinkling stars, the Pleiades, or will you be able to scatter the circle of Arcturus?* (32) *Will you lead forth Lucifer in his time, and Vesper do you make rise over the sons of the earth?* (33) *Do you know the order of heaven and will you put their plan on earth?* (34) *Will you raise your voice in a cloud and will the rush of the waters cover you?* (35) *Will you send lightning bolts, and will they go, and returning will they say to you: Here we are?*

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After the Lord has counted off the principal parts of corporeal creation, namely, the earth, the sea, and the heavens, here He begins to pursue the marvels of divine works which appear in the disposition of the three parts of the world just mentioned. And He begins with the earth, in which what happens with respect to an earthquake appears especially marvelous, about which He speaks metaphorically in the figure of a man who, holding some body, shakes it. Hence He says *Have you held*, that is, have you comprehended by your power, *the extremes of the earth, shaking them?*, which is not to be understood as if the whole earth should be shaken at once in an earthquake but that some extremities of the earth are being shaken. Everything, in fact, which happens in corporeal creation redounds to the advantage of men. ^{†25} Now earthquakes and other such terrible occurrences are useful for this purpose, that frightened men may desist from their sins. Hence, He adds *and have you shaken impious men out of it?*, and He speaks in the figure of a man who shakes his garment to shake the dust or the moth out of it. So, too, God seems to shake the earth to shake the sinners out of it, sometimes, of course, by death, but sometimes through the emendation of life.

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Now it usually happens in an earthquake that some things are openly uncovered, such as walls or some such thing, and with respect to this fact He adds *It will be restored as a clay sign*. For clay, when it is divided, is easily restored to the same condition. So, too, a sign, for example, on a wall or in any other such place which seemed to be altered by the opening of the wall sometimes is restored by divine power to its former state. It also happens sometimes that towers and trees and other such things are shaken by an earthquake and do not fall, and with respect to this fact He adds *and it will stand like a garment*, namely, which does not lose its former integrity if it should be shaken. Now sometimes on the contrary it happens that men die, either swallowed by the earth or even crushed by walls falling because of the earthquake, and with respect to this fact He adds *Their light will be taken away from impious men*, namely, by death. It also happens sometimes that the strongest fortifications and towers are cast down by earthquake, and with respect to this fact He adds *and the upraised arm*, that is, some very strong fortification or some powerful friend in whom a man trusts just as in his own arm, *will be broken*.

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Having premised these remarks about earthquake and its effects, then, He proceeds to the disposition of the middle element, namely, the sea, in which things seem to men hidden and marvelous—first, of course, those which are in the depth of the sea, for example, the dispositions of the fish living in the sea, and with respect to this element He says *Have you entered the depth of the sea*, namely, in order to know the animals which lie hidden in it? Now another thing which seems hidden and wondrous in the sea is the disposition of the earth existing under the waters of the sea, and with respect to this question He adds *and have you walked about on the bottom of the deep*, that is, in the lowest parts of it?

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Now after the disposition of the earth and of the sea He proceeds to the disposition of the heavens, under which the air is also contained, and He lingers upon this question more broadly because of the many marvels which appear in the heavens. First He begins with the disposition of light and of darkness, which concerns the whole upper body in common. †26 Now one should consider that heavenly bodies, through their light, act upon the lower bodies, because light is the active quality, as it were, of heavenly bodies just as heat and cold are the active qualities of the elements. †27 Therefore, He connects the effects of heavenly bodies on those lower ones with a consideration of light and darkness. Now among the other effects of heavenly bodies on the lower bodies the most common is generation and corruption, †28 and He begins with this effect, saying *Have the gates of death opened for you?* For death is the corruption of the living body, and so properly pertains to the man to whom the present speech is directed. Now the gates of death are the causes of corruption with respect to the powers of heavenly bodies, through which one first proceeds to such an effect. Now it is very difficult to know what is the period of life and of the permanence of any thing. Therefore, the gates of death are not open to us since in the case of heavenly bodies we cannot know the proper cause of the corruption of each thing. Now darkness corresponds to death, both because by death man, whose knowledge is through light, is deprived of corporeal sight, and also because after death man goes into oblivion as if into a kind of darkness. Therefore, He adds *and have you seen the dark doors?* so that He may be understood to be calling the same thing the *dark doors*, because of the property of death, which before He had called the gates of death. Or the expression *dark doors* can refer to another effect of the heavenly bodies, which is the darkness of the air, so that in this way what He said about the gates of death may refer to living bodies alone, whereas what He said about dark doors may refer to evident bodies.

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Now He goes on about the difference of heat and cold around the earth, saying *Have you considered the breadth of the earth?*, and here one should consider that according to astronomers the length of the earth extends along the progression from east to west whereas its breadth extends from south to north because in any thing the greater dimension is called the length whereas the lesser dimension is called the breadth. †29 Now it has been proved by experience that the dimension of the earth inhabited by us is greater from east to west than from south to north. †30 Hence, the breadth of the earth is taken along the progression from south to north, and in this progression, of course, there is a difference of heat and cold, since the closer one approaches the south in our inhabited place the hotter it is because of the nearness of the sun. Hence, what is said about the breadth of the earth can refer to the difference of hot and cold places.

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Having premised these remarks which pertain to the effect of heavenly light in these lower bodies, then, He makes mention of the light itself when He adds *Indicate to Me, if you know everything*, namely, so that you may be suited to debate with God, Who knows everything, *on what way the light dwells*, and here one should consider that light is found in the heavenly bodies of the world, which on this account are called luminaries since they are vessels of light. But since a way refers to motion, the question about the way on which light dwells refers to the motion of the heavenly bodies. Now it exceeds human knowledge how

heavenly bodies move, which is shown by the different opinions of men about their motions, since certain men claim that they move through eccentrics and epicycles †31 whereas others claim that they move through the motions of different spheres. †32 And just as light is caused by the motion of heavenly bodies inasmuch as they move in the upper hemisphere, so, too, darkness proceeds from their motion inasmuch as they move in the lower hemisphere, which also has the same difficulty. Hence, He adds *and what is the place of darkness*. Now one cannot measure the motion of any body perfectly unless the way along which it moves be known since the magnitude is measured by the motion and the motion by the magnitude, as the Philosopher says in *Physics* IV. †33 Therefore, since the way of the motion of heavenly bodies cannot be known with certainty by man, it follows that the measure of their motions cannot be perfectly known either. Hence, He adds *so that you may lead each one*, namely, light and darkness, *to his limits*, namely, by showing the reason for the appearance and disappearance of each of the heavenly bodies with respect to beginning and end and also with respect to the mean. To this notion pertains the addition *and understand the paths of his*, namely, light's, *house*. For when it moves in the south around the summit of heaven, then it walks, as it were, the paths of its house; its limits, however, are at the rising and the setting.

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Now according to the motions of the heavenly bodies are measured the durations of the lower bodies and the seasons of generation and corruption, as Dionysius says in chapter 4 of *On the Divine Names*. †34 Therefore, since those causes are unknown it follows that these effects are unknown; therefore, he adds *Did you know then that you were going to be born*, as if to say: Could you have foreknown through a consideration of the motions of heaven the time of your birth? You could not have foreknown this, of course, since before you were born you did not exist, but neither could another man have foreknown this because of the weakness of human knowledge, for God speaks to Job in the character of all men. And just as you were not able to know beforehand the time of your birth, so you cannot know beforehand the limit of your life. Hence, He adds *and did you know the number of your days?*, as if to say: You cannot know this from a computation of heavenly motions whose certain measurement you do not know.

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Now having proposed these points which pertain to the changes of light and darkness, He proceeds to the different changes of the air, in that the air varies through storm and calm, and He begins with snow and hail, saying *Have you entered the storehouses of snow or have you looked at the storehouses of hail?* He calls the vapors which have been lifted up, from which snows and hail are generated, storehouses of snow and hail, †35 but since hail is of a coarser substance and is generated in a place closer to us when the cold is driven to the interior of the cloud by the surrounding heat, †36 for this reason, when He speaks of hail He makes mention of sight, since hail can be more subject to sight. When He speaks of snows, however, He makes mention of entry, since because of their fineness they are more able to be penetrated. Now God sometimes uses such things for the correction of men, as was maintained above at 36:21: "Through these things He judges peoples." Hence, He adds *I have prepared these things for the time of the enemy*, that is, for the occasion on which vengeance must be taken on enemies, against whom God uses these things like the arms of war. Hence, He adds for *the day of the battle*, that is, of actual conflict, and of war, that is, of a war in which preparation is made for battle.

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Now after the storm of snow and hail is finished there follows a calm in which the splendor and heat of the air is prepared. Hence, He continues *Along what way is the light sprinkled*, which pertains to splendor, *the heat divided over the earth?*, which pertains to the heat. And here one should consider that above, when He spoke of the light with respect to the very heavenly bodies in which it dwells, †37 He made mention only of its way, namely, since light completes its way through the motion of the heavenly bodies whether there is a storm or a calm, but the splendor and heat from it reach us only after the storm ceases. Now the range of splendor is not different to the senses in different lands when the air has been calm, whereas the range of heat is different to the senses. Therefore. He said that the light was spread as if scattered

indifferently, whereas the heat is divided as if distributed in different ways as befits the difference of places.

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Now next He proceeds to certain effects of the winds on the air by which the rainstorm is caused when the rain is driven on. Hence, he says *Who has given its course to the very violent rain-storm?* For the violence of the course of a rainstorm is the result of a strong impulse of the winds which divine power produces. Now similarly, when clouds are impelled by the winds, the sound of thunder is caused, on which account such a sound is not heard in one place, namely, as if it were the sound of some passing body. †38 Hence, He adds *and the way of the sounding thunder?* Now He adds the reason why rains and clouds are impelled by the winds when He says *So that it might rain upon the earth without a man in the desert*, namely, which is uninhabitable because of the aridity of the earth. Now rainbearing vapors rise up especially from the wet places. Hence, if clouds and showers were not impelled by the winds, it would follow that it would never rain in dry places. Now sometimes it happens that some places are irrigated by human industry, that is, when the rains cease, but this cannot happen there. Hence, He adds *where no mortal man abides*, and so water cannot be provided to that land through human industry. And on this account God has ordained that clouds and rains be impelled by the winds, so that it might rain even in desert places. Hence, He adds *so that it might rain*, namely, with rains, *upon the trackless*, that is, earth through which a man cannot even pass, *and desolate earth*, that is, earth destitute of human management, and so, by divine management alone, produce green grass, namely, for the adornment of the earth and for the pasturage of wild animals, which are also managed by divine providence.

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Now next He makes mention of rains without wind when He says *Who is the father*, that is, the efficient cause, †39 *of the rain?*, not according to necessity but according to the order of providence, which corresponds to the father. For the sun and the other heavenly bodies which are the proximate efficient cause of the generation of rains are moved by God. Now dew is generated by the same cause as the rain, and it does not differ except in the abundance and scarcity of material. †40 Hence He adds *or who has begotten the dewdrops?* He expressly calls them drops to designate the small size of the drops. Now one should consider that just as congealed rains are snows, so congealed dew is frost. †41 Hence He adds *From whose womb has come forth the ice?* And here one should note that the cause of ice is cold, which is a feminine quality, whereas the cause of rains and of dew is heat, †42 loosening and not permitting the vapor to be congealed. †43 Now heat is a masculine quality; therefore, He expressly used the term 'father' (v. 28) in speaking of the generation of rain and of dew, whereas in speaking of the generation of ice He used the term womb, which pertains to the mother. Now from cold two kinds of ice are caused: one, of course, in the air, which pertains to frost falling from the sky. Hence, He adds *and who has begotten chill from heaven?*, an act which He still attributes to a father since the power of cold does not appear so great in frost as in more substantial ice. The other kind, however, is ice, which is generated in the lower waters, in which the force of the cold appears greater. Hence, He adds *The waters are hardened into the likeness of stone*, namely, condensed into ice by the powerful cold, and this process sometimes proceeds so far that in the coldest lands even the seas are congealed. †44 This is the point of adding *and the surface of the deep*, namely, the water which is condensed by the cold on its surface, *is solidified*. The cold of the air, however, cannot break in all the way to the bottom of the sea.

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Having recounted these observations on the various changes of the air, then, He proceeds further to the immutable changes of the heavenly bodies, concerning which the immobility of the figure in the fixed stars is considered first †45 since each of them keeps its position in such a way that one does not approach the other more or less. This phenomenon especially appears in neighboring stars which are never joined. Hence, He adds *Will you be able to join together those twinkling stars, the Pleiades?* Certain stars which

shine in the head of Taurus, six of which appear very close whereas the seventh is more obscure, are called the Pleiades. †46 Second is considered the uniformity of the first motion in heavenly bodies, †47 according to which the whole heaven and all the stars in it revolve once in a day and a night over the poles of the world. Now this motion is more perceived by the senses in the stars near the north pole, which are perpetually apparent to us because of the elevation of the pole over our horizon, †48 and among these stars is noted especially the constellation Arcturus, that is, the Great Bear, whose stars manifestly appear to move uniformly in a circle around the pole of the world. †49 With respect to this fact He adds *or will you be able to scatter the circle of Arcturus*, namely, so that it does not circle the pole. Third, the motion of the planets among the heavenly bodies appears marvelous, in which, although it is entirely uniform, a kind of irregularity appears to the sense. This irregularity can be detected especially in the star Venus, which sometimes rises before the sun and then is called Lucifer, but sometimes sets after the sun and then is called Vesper. Now it is manifest that stars, which are always of slower motion than the sun, begin to appear first in the morning before sunrise because the sun by its own motion, by which it moves from sunset to sunrise, leaves them behind, as appears in the case of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars. Now the moon, which has a swifter motion than the sun, always begins to appear in the evening as if leaving the sun behind and preceding it toward the east. Venus and Mercury, however, begin to appear sometimes in the morning, sometimes in the evening, but with respect to Mercury, since it is rarely seen and is of small size, the irregularity is not so manifest. In the case of Venus, however, it appears to everyone. †50 Hence, it is manifest that it has sometimes a swifter, sometimes a slower motion than the sun. †51 From this illustration the irregularity in the motion of the planets manifestly appears, and to designate this fact He adds *Will you lead forth Lucifer*, that is, Venus appearing in the morning, *in his time*, that is, at the determined time, since this difference always happens at a fixed time, *and Vesper*, that is, the same Venus appearing in the evening, *do you make rise over the sons of the earth?* And one should note that by the expressions *Will you lead forth* and *do you make rise* is designated a new appearance of the star. Now fourth, in heavenly bodies their order, position, and motion seem marvelous. Hence, He adds *Do you know the order of heaven*, namely, which cannot be comprehended by man? Now fifth, the disposition of the lower bodies in relation to the higher is marvelous, and with respect to this fact He adds *and will you put their plan on earth?*, namely, so that you may know the proper effects of the individual heavenly causes?

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Now the effects of the divine power just mentioned are very great, of course; yet, the greatness of divine power is not apprehended by the mass of common people in them so much as it is in thunder and lightning. Therefore, He posits those effects last. Hence, with respect to thunder He says *Will you raise your voice in a cloud?* For thunder, the sound of which seems like the voice of God, is generated in a cloud. Now after thunder great rains very often follow because of the condensation of the clouds from the commotion of the winds, by which the thunder is caused. †52 Hence, He adds *and will the rush of the waters cover you?* For a large amount of rain seems to cover God, as it were, inasmuch as heaven, which is called the seat of God, †53 is concealed from us. Next, He adds a question about lightning, saying *Will you send lightning bolts*, that is, will their motion be through your power? *And will they go*, namely, as if they should obey your command? Now the motions of lightning-bolts usually rebound from one place to another, and He designates this fact, adding *and returning will they say to you: Here we are*, as if by their return they indicate that they are ready to obey the divine command again, to be sent to another place? Now all of these questions are introduced to show that man is not able to attain either divine wisdom or divine power.

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(36) Who has placed wisdom in the bowels of man, or who has given understanding to the cock? (37) Who has recounted the plan of the heavens, and who will make the harmony of heaven sleep? (38) When was dust poured on the earth and the clods compacted? (39) Will you take the prey of the lioness and will you fill the soul of her cubs (40) when they lie in caves and lie in ambush in hollows? (41) Who procures his food for the crow when his young chicks cry out to God, stretching out, because they have no food?

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After the Lord has mentioned the marvels of his effects with respect to the principal parts of the world, which are earth, sea, and heaven, and with respect to their dispositions, He now addresses Himself to recounting the marvels of His works, specifically with respect to the different properties of animals. Among these properties knowledge is very remarkable, which, of course, is found more perfectly developed in man than in other animals. Therefore, beginning with man He says *Who has placed wisdom in the bowels of man?* By the bowels of man is understood the inmost strength of the soul itself, namely, understanding and reason, to which God has imparted wisdom inasmuch as He has given man the light of reason. For He has naturally imparted certain seedbeds of wisdom and knowledge to his reason in the knowledge of first principles. †54 Now in other animals there appear many indications of a kind of natural prudence, but especially is this manifested in the cock as an animal well known and domestic. Hence, He says *or who has given understanding to the cock?* Understanding here is taken for a kind of natural reckoning ability, according to which he works in the manner of an intelligent being since his very natural reckoning ability is given to him by the divine understanding. Now in this sense the cock seems to have a kind of facsimile of understanding, because at determined hours he bursts forth in song as if he knew the proportions of heavenly motions. Hence He adds *Who has recounted, namely, to the cock, the plan of the heavens,* that is, the proportion of heavenly motions so that from this he may be able to discern the determined hours for crowing. Now watchmen usually declare with some song or with the sound of some instrument the approach of day and of the fixed hours of the night. Now it cannot be said that some sound of heaven is heard at determined times and is silent at other times so that by this means the cock may decide to crow. Hence, He adds *and who will make the harmony of heaven sleep?*, as if to say: The harmony of heaven is not silent like that of a sleeping watchman so that by its being heard or by its silence the cock can be instructed to crow. Now one should consider here that the Pythagoreans posited that a harmonized sound comes from the motion of the heavens because of a very harmonious proportion of heavenly motions, and since they posited that heavenly bodies had souls, such a consonance of sounds could be called the harmony of heaven. †55 But Aristotle proves in *On the Heavens* II that no sound proceeds from the motion of heavenly bodies; therefore, here we can take harmony as posited metaphorically solely for the symmetry of heavenly motions, which never rest. †56 Now such was the inspiration of wisdom or understanding or even of the harmony of heaven from the beginning of the foundation of the earth. Hence, He adds *When was dust poured on the earth,* a clause which refers to the situation of earth, which is set on the lowest part as on a foundation, †57 *and the clods compacted,* which refers to the moisture holding the parts of the earth into one, namely, lest the earth, because of its dryness, be dissolved into dust.

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Next He addresses Himself to another property of animals which is noticed regarding the acquisition of food, in speaking of which something marvelous appears in the case of the lioness. For when a lion needs much food it seems marvelous how in any region he can take so much from the prey of animals that it is sufficient for himself and his young. Hence, He adds *Will you take the prey of the lioness,* that is, will you procure so great an abundance of prey for her that she may have sufficient for herself and for her young? Hence, He adds *and will you fill the soul of her cubs?* Now this does not seem very difficult when they range through different places, but [it does] when they remain in the same place, either because of the necessity of nurturing the young, to which pertains the expression *when they lie in caves,* or since they lie in wait for other animals: *and lie in ambush in hollows,* namely, to capture animals.

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Something marvelous also appears in birds with respect to the crow, for it is said that "the crow does not feed the chicks hatched from the eggs until she has seen them turn black, apprehending from their feathers that they are hers." †58 Hence, for seven days she does not administer food to them. Instead, they are sustained by God by a natural power imparted to them. Hence, He adds *Who procures his food for the crow when his young chicks cry out to God, stretching out,* that is, looking out this way and that *because they have no food.* as if abandoned by their parents? Now this question is not to be understood as if crows'

chicks know God but is said because any natural thing at all, by its desire, in the very fact that it seeks some good, intends, as it were, to acquire something from God, Who is the author of good things.

Chapter Thirty-nine

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(1) Do you know the time of the birth of the chamois in the rocks, or have you observed does giving birth? (2) Have you counted the months of their gestation and did you know the time of their parturition? (3) They bend themselves to bring forth young and they give birth and they emit groans. (4) Their young separate and they go forth to pasture; they go out and they do not return to them. (5) Who set the onager free and who loosened his restraints? (6) I have given him in the wilderness a home and his tents in the land of the desert. (7) He scorns the multitude of the city; he does not hear the shout of the mule-driver. (8) He looks around the mountains for his pasturage, and he searches eagerly for any herbage. (9) Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve you or will he linger at your manger? (10) Will you hitch up with your tackle the rhinoceros for plowing, or will he break up the clods of the valleys after you? (11) Will you have confidence in his great strength and will you abandon to him your labors? (12) Will you trust him to return your sowing to you and to heap up your threshing-floor? (13) The feather of the ostrich is like the feathers of the herodius and of the sparrowhawk. (14) She leaves her eggs in the earth; you, perhaps, will warm them in the dust? (15) She forgets that a foot may crush them or a beast of the field may tread on them. (16) She is hardened toward her young as if they are not hers; she has labored in vain under no compulsion of fear. (17) For God has deprived her of wisdom and has not given her understanding. (18) When the time comes she raises her wings on high; she mocks the horseman and rider of him. (19) Will you offer strength to the horse, or will you put a whinny around his neck? (20) Will you set him in motion like locusts? The glory of his nostrils is terror; (21) he digs the earth with his hoof, he exults, he goes ahead boldly into contact with armed men. (22) He scorns fear and he does not yield to the sword. (23) The quiver will rattle over him; the lance will shake, and the shield; (24) raging and snorting he swallows up the ground and does not regard the blast of the trumpet sounding. (25) When he hears the war-trumpet he says Aha! He smells the war from a distance, the exhortation of the generals and the battle cries of the army. (26) Does the sparrow-hawk grow feathers through your wisdom, spreading his wings to the south wind? (27) Will the eagle soar at your command? And he will put his nest in places difficult to reach; (28) he stays in the rocks, and he abides on the steep crags and on cliffs inaccessible. (29) From there he surveys his food and his eyes look out a long way. (30) His chicks lick blood, and wherever there is a carcass he is there immediately. (31) The Lord fastened his eyes and spoke to Job: (32) Does one who contends with God give up so easily? At any rate, he who criticizes God ought also to respond to Him. (33) Now Job said in response to the Lord: (34) What can I respond who have spoken lightly? I will put my hand over my mouth; (35) I have spoken one thing which I wish I had not said and a second to which I will not add further.

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The Lord had mentioned in the preceding verses that which pertains to the cognitive force, speaking of the wisdom of man and of the understanding of the cock. †1 He had mentioned also the prey of lions and the food of crows, things which pertain to the nutritive force. †2 Now, however, He mentions certain things pertaining to the generative force and begins to discuss the parturition of chamois and of does, in which

something seems to be concealed. For chamois are animals, small in body, which dwell in rocky places in which they also give birth. †3 Hence, access to such places does not lie open easily to men. On this account He says *Do you know the time of the birth of the chamois in the rocks?*, as if to say: This is unknown to men because of the roughness of the places in which they give birth. Now does, as it is said, choose hidden places where wolves do not usually approach in which to give birth. †4 Therefore, to show the concealment of their parturition He adds *or have you observed does giving birth?*, which is said for the commendation of divine providence. For women when they are giving birth need the service of midwives, but to animals, whose parturition is concealed from men, God in His providence affords the help which is necessary to them for giving birth, inasmuch, namely, as He gives them the natural aptitude to know what must be known in such circumstances. The first of these things is that the period of time be known in which the fetus is perfected in the womb. With respect to this question He says *Have you counted the months of their gestation*, namely, so that you might indicate to them when they ought to prepare themselves for parturition? Hence, He adds *and did you know the time of their parturition*, namely, so that you might indicate to them when they ought to give birth. For in these matters women in childbed are usually instructed by others, but animals, which are also far from human association, know these things through a natural aptitude divinely imparted to them and at a determined time prepare themselves for parturition in the way in which the offspring can be released most easily. Hence, He adds *They bend themselves to bring forth*, namely, to release, *young, and they give birth*, namely, on their own with nature instructing them. And yet the parturition is not delightful but painful for them; hence, He adds *and they emit groans*, namely, because of the pain which they suffer in giving birth. And just as the mothers prepare themselves by natural aptitude for parturition, so, too, the young also by a natural aptitude divinely imparted seek the things necessary for them. Hence, He adds *Their young separate*, which He says to differentiate them from human offspring. For a child just born cannot move to leave the mother, which does happen in the case of the animals previously mentioned. For they move immediately after they are born and their first motion is to seek food. Hence, He adds *and they go forth to pasture*. But they still need to feed on mother's milk in the beginning. Hence, they separate from the mother in such a way that they nevertheless return to her. After a little while, however, when they have matured, they separate totally from their mothers. Hence, He adds *they go out and they do not return to them*, namely, because they do not need to be nursed by them anymore.

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Now having premised these remarks which pertain to certain special properties of animals, namely, pertaining to their knowledge, food, and parturition, He mentions things which pertain to their whole association of life. Concerning this association it appears marvelous, first, that certain animals, when they are domestic, cannot sustain themselves without man's care; yet, some animals belonging to that kind are found which are wild and govern themselves without the providence of men. And this fact appears especially marvelous in the case of the ass, which when he is domestic seems totally destined to the service of men, from which service, nevertheless, wild asses, which are called onagers, appear to be free. †5 Hence, He says *Who set the onager*, that is, the wild ass, *free*, namely, from the service of men. And this, of course, is said according as that which is customary is understood by man as if it were natural. Hence, since men are not accustomed to seeing asses except those subject to service it seems to them that they are naturally servants. †6 Therefore, if sometime they should be found free it seems to them that they have been dismissed from service. Now the reality is totally otherwise, for earlier such animals were not subject to man in the way in which they are now, but afterwards they were tamed by human skill and destined for the service of man. Now the signs of the servitude of asses are the restraints with which they are bound such as the bridle or some such thing, and with respect to this fact He adds *and who loosened his restraints?* For onagers lack such restraints. It also appears in the case of domestic asses that they perish if they should remain without shelters prepared by men, but onagers have a shelter prepared for them by divine providence. Hence, He adds *I have given him in the wilderness*, namely, to which man does not go, *a home*, for example, some cave or cavern, *and his tents*, for example, under the vegetation or trees, *in the land of the desert*, that is, in some land uninhabited because of its dryness and the burning of the sun, by

which its moisture is turned into the taste of salt, as it were. And although such a habitat may seem rather uncultivated and rugged because of the state of wilderness, he nevertheless prefers it as much as possible to the well-known city. Hence, He adds *He scorns the multitude of the city*, namely, in comparison to the habitat of the desert. And He assigns two reasons, the first of which is that there laborious works are not exacted from him. Hence, He adds *he does not hear the shout of the mule-driver*, that is, of a master exacting from him the bearing of burdens or some such thing. The other reason is that there he wanders more freely to seek pasture. Hence, He adds *He looks around the mountains for his pasturage*, namely, since free access to different places for seeking pasturage lies open to him. And he also takes the pastures themselves at his own pleasure. Hence, He adds *and he searches eagerly for any herbage*. Now domestic asses are not given the best pastures but sometimes paltry ones, since the better pastures have been reserved for nobler animals.

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Now just as the ass serves man to bear burdens, in whose place the onager is found in the wilds, so, too, among domestic animals the ox serves man for plowing because of his strength, to which among the wild animals He compares the rhinoceros, that is, the unicorn, which is a very strong and fierce four-footed animal having one horn in the middle of his forehead. †7 Now this animal, because of his ferocity, cannot be easily tamed as the ox is tamed. Hence, He adds *Will the rhinoceros*, that is, the unicorn, *be willing to serve you*, namely, so that having been domesticated he may willingly obey you? Now domesticated animals gladly take food from men, and to exclude this possibility He adds *or will he linger at your manger*, namely, to be prepared to eat what you offer him? Now domesticated oxen are fed so that they may be used for the job of plowing, and to exclude this possibility He adds *Will you hitch up with your tackle the rhinoceros*, that is, the unicorn, *for plowing*, namely, just as one plows in the case of oxen. Men also use oxen for another job, namely, to level the plowed ground by breaking the clods into small pieces by dragging a kind of rake. Hence, He adds *or will he break up the clods of the valleys*, which, namely, are usually cultivated more carefully because of their greater fertility, *after you*, that is, after you have plowed the earth? Or *behind you*, that is, so that with you preceding he may follow, breaking up the clods? Certain strong animals are also sent out to guard the fields against brigands or animals which could devastate the crops just as fields are guarded by certain fierce dogs, but this cannot be done by the unicorn since he is not domesticated. Hence, He adds *Will you have confidence in his great strength and will you abandon to him your labors*, that is, the fruits of the fields, to guard? So, therefore, you cannot use this very strong animal either as an ox for plowing or as a dog for guarding. Similarly, too, you cannot use him as a strong farmer to tend the fruits of the earth. Hence, He adds *Will you trust him to return your sowing to you and to heap up your threshing-floor*, namely, as the day-laborer does who sows the seed received from the master and returns it multiplied, gathering the crops on to the threshing floor and carrying them into the master's barn after the threshing.

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Having posited these examples, then, in which certain wild animals are differentiated from domestic animals, He adds certain properties of certain animals in which certain properties seem different from all other animals. And this difference especially appears in the ostrich, which is a kind of bird approaching the genus of beasts. †8 Hence, although she has feathers like the high-flying animals she is nevertheless unable to lift herself aloft on them. Hence, He says *The feather of the ostrich is like the feathers of the herodius*, that is, of a most noble falcon which is called the girfalcon, *and of the sparrow-hawk*, which is a noted bird, and both are birds of good swift flight. †9 Now there is also another property of the ostrich different from other birds, namely, the fact that she does not warm her own eggs but, digging into the sand, puts them down and covers them with sand. Hence, He adds *She leaves her eggs in the earth*. Now she has this natural aptitude that she watches for the hot season, namely, when the stars which are called the Virgiliae begin to appear, namely, in the month of July, and then she lays her eggs. And so, from the heat of the season and of the place, namely, since the ostrich lingers only in hot places, the eggs are quickened and the chicks are hatched from them. †10 Hence, He adds you, *perhaps, will warm them in the dust?*, as if to say

'No,' but it happens by divine providence, by which even eggs in the dust are preserved unharmed. For the ostrich is a naturally forgetful animal and shows no concern for the preservation of her eggs. †11 Hence, He adds *She forgets that a foot*, namely, of a man passing along the road, *may crush them*, namely, the eggs, *or a beast of the field may tread on them*, either by accident in passing by or because of an appetite for food. And just as she has no care for the preservation of her eggs, so she has no care for the feeding of her chicks. Hence, He adds *She is hardened toward her young as if they are not hers*, namely, since she has no care for their feeding and so, as far as she is concerned, she loses the fruit of generation. Hence, He adds *she has labored in vain*, namely, in conceiving and carrying the fertilized eggs, since she does not feed the young. It also happens sometimes that other animals also desert their young because of fear, but the ostrich does it *under no compulsion of fear*. Now she does this if not because of fear, then at least because of a defect of the natural aptitude which other animals have in this regard. Hence, He adds *For God has deprived her*, namely, the female ostrich, *of wisdom*, namely, to feed and govern her offspring in an orderly fashion, *and has not given her understanding*, through which, namely, she would have solicitude for her chicks. Now He calls wisdom and understanding natural aptitude. And since He has said above that she has feathers like the feathers of the herodius and the sparrow-hawk, †12 next He shows what good such feathers do her, saying *When the time comes*, that is, when some necessity for swiftness of motion threatens her, *she raises her wings on high*, yet not in such a way that her body can be lifted aloft by the wings, but she is helped by them to run swiftly. †13 Hence, He adds *she mocks the horseman*, namely, since she runs more swiftly than a horse carrying a man, *and rider of him*, namely, of the horse, since, namely, she would run more swiftly than a man if he were to go on his own feet.

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Now just as the ostrich has certain properties different from most animals, by which she falls short of the others, so, too, the horse has certain properties pertaining to nobility, by which he differs from other animals. Now first He mentions the strength of the horse when He says *Will you offer strength to the horse*, namely, not only strength of the body according as he is able to bear a burden but also strength of the spirit according as he goes boldly into danger? Now He mentions another property of his, namely, that he is provoked to sexual desire by external decoration. For it is said of horses that they are stirred to intercourse by the beauty of manes, and "when their manes have been shorn, their sexual desire is extinguished," †14 and to signify this fact He adds *or will you put a whinny around his neck?* For horses usually whinny because of sexual desire, according to Jeremiah 5:8: "They became lustful stallions and spies toward the women; each one whinnied after his neighbor's wife." Therefore whinnying is put around the neck of the horse by God when manes are given him by God, from consideration of which he is provoked to sexual desire. Now there is also another property of the horse, that he leaps vigorously, contrary to the practice of many four-footed animals. Hence, He adds *Will you set him in motion*, namely, by lifting him aloft *like locusts*, which move, namely, by leaping.

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Another property of the horse, truly, is his boldness in wars, which He describes more diffusely since it is a noble and admirable property. His boldness is manifested first when, still at some distance, he perceives the war by his sense of smell. Hence follows *The glory of his nostrils is terror*; that is, war, which is a terror for others, is perceived by the horse with his nostrils as glory—that is, as a kind of greatness of spirit—to the horse, and the sign of this greatness of spirit appears in him immediately. Concerning this fact is added *he digs the earth with his hoof* as if preparing himself for the fight. Now because he perceives the war inwardly, he rejoices; hence, He adds *he exults*, namely, when the opportunity to fight is perceived, and He shows this exultation through its effect when He adds *he goes ahead boldly into contact with armed men*. Nor is he dejected by terror when he is in the battle itself. Hence, He adds *He scorns fear*, and what is more, he is not even repelled by the pain of wounds. Hence, He adds *and he does not yield to the sword*. Now most animals are usually frightened by the din alone, but this does not apply to the horse. Hence, He adds *The quiver will rattle over him*, namely, when, full of arrows, it is shaken at the motion of the soldier sitting on the horse. Similarly, too, some noise comes from the soldier's lance and shield.

Hence, He adds *the lance will shake*, that is, the lance emits a sound when it is shaken. Similarly, when the shield is moved and is struck against the arms it makes a noise. Hence, He adds *and the shield makes a noise*, of course. But yet the horse is not startled at this noise. Hence, He adds *raging*, namely, internally through boldness, *and snorting*, namely, with whinnying, which He calls snorting, which is properly the sound of lions, †15 because of the horse's boldness. And He demonstrates the internal fervor of his spirit not only with his voice but also with his external action. Hence, He adds *he swallows up the ground*, that is, he seems to swallow it by digging the ground with his hooves. And not only is the horse not startled by the noise of the quiver, the lance, and the shield; he is not even startled by the sound of the trumpet, which they use in wars. Hence, He adds *and does not regard the blast of the trumpet sounding*, namely, so that he may be startled because of it. As a matter of fact, he is said to rejoice at the sound of the war-trumpet. †16 Hence, He adds *When he hears the war-trumpet he says Aha!*, that is, he emits an expression of exaltation, †17 since aha! is the interjection of a person exalting. And since these things which have been mentioned previously pertain to the boldness of the horse, He adds something about his keen perception, saying *He smells the war from a distance*, that is, when the enemy are still far away he perceives with his sense of smell that war is imminent and seems, as it were, to feel the preparation for war, namely, when the generals give spirit to the soldiers with their exhortations. With respect to this point He adds *the exhortation of the generals*, namely, he perceives, *and the battle cries*, that is, the confused shouting and uproar, *of the army*, namely, preparing itself for war.

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Now having premised these things about the animals which walk on earth, He addresses himself to animals which fly in the air. First He mentions the natural aptitude of the sparrow-hawk, which in the molting season spreads its wings to the south wind, which is the hot wind, so that when the follicles have been opened the old feathers may fall away and the new ones come forth. †18 Hence, He says *Does the sparrow-hawk grow feathers through your wisdom*, namely, when its feathers are being renewed, *spreading his wings to the south wind*, namely, so that he may change his feathers more easily? Finally, however, He speaks of the eagle, "which flies higher than the other birds." †19 Hence, He says *Will the eagle soar at your command*, namely, as he does at Mine? For the eagle does this by natural instinct. Now the whole natural course of things is a kind of motion of the creature at the command of God, according to Psalm 148:8: "Fire, hail, snow, ice, the spirit of storms, which fulfill His word." And just as the eagle has his motion into the high sky, so, too, he also sojourns in high places, a property which pertains to the nobility of his nature; therefore, He says *And he will put his nest in places difficult to reach*, namely, so that his chicks, as soon as they are hatched, may become accustomed to abiding in the high altitudes. Therefore He adds *he stays in the rocks* as if rejoicing in the purity of the air because in rocky places there is not much releasing of vapors; *and he abides on steep crags*, namely, those to which access does not lie open for dangerous beasts, *and on cliffs inaccessible to man*, by which means, namely, his security is provided for. Now the eagle has very keen sight so that he can see the necessary food from a long distance. †20 Hence, He adds *From there*, namely, from high places, *he surveys his food*, namely, not only nearby but also remote food. Hence, He adds *and his eyes look out a long way*. Now the eagle is also powerful against prey, just as the lion is among four-footed animals, and to designate this fact He adds *His chicks lick blood*, namely, of the living animals which the eagle brings back to the nest. Now the eagle feeds not only on live animals, as the falcons and sparrow-hawks do, but also on the carcasses of dead animals. Hence, He adds *and wherever there is a carcass he is there immediately*, and by this statement He also designates the swiftness of his flight.

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Now all of these things have been brought in to show the magnitude of divine wisdom and power, by which such marvelous effects are produced. Hence, it is given to be understood that Job, when he had heard so many marvels of divine effects, was stunned and speechless. But the Lord stirs him to consider that a man is not suited to debate with God. Hence is added *The Lord fastened His eyes*, namely, upon the premised words, *and spoke to Job*, namely, with him keeping quiet. *Does one who contends with God*, that

is, who offers himself to debate with Him, *give up so easily*, namely, as if he has been vanquished just as you who are keeping silent? *At any rate, he who criticizes God*, debating over His judgments, as it were, *ought also to respond to Him*. For it is just that one who challenges another to a debate also be prepared himself to respond.

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And lest Job seem to remain obstinate in his opinion even though proved wrong, he bursts forth in words of humility. Hence follows *Now Job said in response to the Lord: What can I respond who have spoken lightly?* And here one should consider that Job, speaking before God and his own conscience, is not accusing himself of falsity of speech or of haughty intention, since he had spoken from the purity of his spirit, but of levity of speech, namely, since even if he had not spoken from pride of spirit his words nevertheless seemed to smack of arrogance, from which his friends had taken an occasion for scandal. Now one must avoid not only evils but also those things which have the appearance of evil, according to the Apostle, I Thessalonians 5:22: "Abstain from every appearance of evil." Therefore, he adds *I will put my hand over my mouth*, namely, so that I may not burst forth in similar words in other respects, and I repent of these things which I have said. Hence, he adds *I have spoken one thing which I wish I had not said*, namely, that I said I wished to debate with God, †21 *and a second*, namely, that I put my justice first when it was a matter of divine judgments. †22 Now the third charge which Elihu had placed against him, namely, that he was saying that God's judgment was unjust, †23 he does not acknowledge since this charge would not pertain to levity of speech but to blasphemy. Now he is so sorry for the things said lightly that he proposes an emendation. Hence, he adds *to which I will not add further*, namely, so that I utter light words on another occasion.

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Now one should consider that if the previously cited speech of the Lord was not uttered to Job through an external sound but internally inspired, Job is found to have spoken three ways in this book: first, of course, as representing the affection of the capacity for sensation in the first complaint when he said "Perish the day" [3:3]; second, expressing the deliberation of human reason when he was debating against his friends; third, according to divine inspiration when he adduced words in the person of the Lord. And since human reason ought to be directed according to divine inspiration, after the Lord's words he reproves the words which he had said according to human reason.

Chapter Forty

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(1) Now the Lord, responding to Job from the whirlwind, said: (2) Gird up your loins like a man; I will question you and you indicate to Me. (3) Will you make My judgment invalid and will you condemn Me that you may be justified? (4) If you have an arm as God does, and if you thunder with a similar voice, (5) surround yourself with grace and raise yourself on high and be glorious and put on splendid vestments. (6) Disperse proud men in your fury, and regarding every arrogant man, humble him. (7) Regard all proud men and confound them, and grind impious men in their place. (8) You will hide them in the dust together, and their faces submerge in the pit. (9) And I will confess that your own right hand can save you.

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In the preceding words ¶1 the Lord, by mentioning the marvels which appear in His effects, demonstrated His wisdom and power so that from this demonstration it may be manifest that no man can contend with God either in wisdom or in power. Now, however, He proceeds further to criticize Job because he had mentioned his justice, which seemed to some to ring of disparagement of divine judgment. ¶2 The manner of divine speech is also premised when the statement *Now the Lord, responding to Job from the whirlwind, said* is made. The arousal of attention is premised when the injunction *Gird up your loins like a man* is added, and the seeking of a response when the statement *I will question you and you indicate to me* is added. Since these things have been explained above, ¶3 it is not necessary to repeat an explanation of them here.

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Now one should consider that Job, in mentioning his justice, did not intend to impute iniquity to divine judgment, as his three friends and Elihu wrongly understood. Rather, he intended to show that he had not been punished in revenge for sins, as they imputed to him, but for a test, as he had said above at 23:10: "He will prove me like gold which passes through fire." But yet, this very thing seemed reprehensible, that he commended his justice in such a way that it seemed to the others to pass over into disparagement of divine justice. Hence, He adds *Will you make My judgment invalid?*, as if to say: Does it seem right to you that by commending your own justice you bring it about that My judgment is deemed invalid, that is, false, by men? Now the falsity of a judgment is a condemnation of the one judging, who utters an iniquitous judgment either out of ignorance or out of malice. Hence, He adds *and will you condemn Me that you may be justified?*, as if to say: Do you wish so much to show yourself just that I seem blameworthy before others?

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Now one should note that if there were two equals, if it should be necessary that guilt be placed on the one, it would not be reprehensible if the other of them should purge himself of the imputed guilt even though the other should remain guilty in the opinion of others since a man naturally loves himself more than he loves another. But where there is so great a difference as that between God and man, a man ought rather to allow guilt to be unjustly brought upon him than that it be unjustly brought upon God. Therefore, the Lord, to criticize Job, proposes the excellence of God over men, and this excellence, of course, is manifested from His effects. But since now it is a question of a comparison of justice, which is not properly considered with respect to irrational things, to show the divine excellence He takes the effects which God works in rational creatures, and these effects, of course, can be considered in two ways: in one way, according to the operation of His power, and with respect to this way He says *If you have an arm as God does*. For by arm is expressed the potency of divine power, and He uses this arm, of course, to sustain good men, according to Isaiah 40:11: "In His arm He will gather His lambs," and for the punishment of bad men, according to Luke 1:51: "He made power in His arm; He dispersed the proud with His heart's mind." In another way, God operates in rational creatures through the teaching of His wisdom, which He calls thunder because of its excellence, and with respect to this way He adds *and if you thunder with a similar voice*. Now God uses this thunder for the instruction of good men, according to the verse at 26:14 above: "Since we have heard scarcely a small drop of His speeches, who will be able to look upon the thunder of His magnitude?", and for the terrible rebuke of evil men, according to the text of Psalm 76:19: "The voice of Your thunder in the wheel," and afterwards follows, "The earth was moved and it trembled."

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Now from such effects He demonstrates divine excellence with respect to three qualities: first, of course, with respect to grace when He says *surround yourself with grace*, as if to say: If you are as powerful in your effects as God is, attribute to yourself His grace. Hence, He expressly says *surround yourself*. For God does not have grace put around Him as if it were added to His essence, but His very essence is grace,

by which is understood splendor itself, or truth, and purity, or simplicity, and the perfection of His essence. But a man cannot have grace unless it has been put around him as if by receiving a share of it from God as an addition to his own essence. Second, He touches upon the divine eminence when He adds *and raise yourself on high*. Now divine sublimity is considered not with respect to place, since God is not comprehended by place but by perfection and power, since whatever is said about Him fits Him comprehensively. Now such sublimity fits God essentially; hence, He is not raised to it but remains immovably in it. Now according to his nature man is of the lowest condition. Hence, he could only arrive at that divine sublimity by raising himself above himself. Therefore, He expressly says *raise yourself on high*. Third, He touches upon his glory when He adds *and be glorious*. Glory, of course, suggests the knowledge of someone's goodness; hence, Ambrose says that glory is "clear knowledge with praise." †4 Now God's goodness is infinite, but there is no perfect knowledge of it except with God. Therefore, glory is in God alone inasmuch as He knows Himself, and man cannot arrive at this glory except by participating in divine knowledge, according to Jeremiah 9:24: "In this let him who glories glory, that he knows and is acquainted with Me." Therefore, He expressly says *be glorious* since a man does not have this glory essentially.

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Having posited these remarks, then, which pertain to the excellence of the divine power and nature, He proceeds further to mention the divine effects in rational creatures with respect both to good and evil men. But one should know that the effects which God works for raising up just men are attributed more to mercy, whereas those which He works for the punishment of evil men are properly attributed to justice. Therefore, since now it is a question of justice, first He touches briefly the effect of divine operation with respect to good men when He says *and put on splendid vestments*. For all the good, both angels and men, are splendid as a result of their participation in divine wisdom and justice, and just as man is adorned by splendid dress, so every grace of holy angels and men redounds to God's adornment inasmuch as God's goodness is commended by it in the way in which it is said in Isaiah 49:18: "You will dress in all these things as if in an honor." Now one should consider that it pertains to God's mercy that He makes His saints splendid, but the fact that He uses their beauty for His glory pertains to His justice, concerning which He speaks now. Therefore, He does not say 'make splendid vestments' but *put on splendid vestments*.

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Next He shows more extensively the effects of divine justice which He exercises against evil men, and He pursues this demonstration first with respect to men. Now one should know that all the malice of men has its beginning in pride, according to the text of Ecclesiastes 10:15: "Pride is the beginning of every sin." Also, among all the vices God especially detests pride. Hence, it is said in James 4:16 that "God resists the proud." And this is said since proud men rebel against God, as it were, when they do not wish to submit to Him humbly, and for this reason they fall into every sin when they have scorned divine commands—hence, too, earthly princes especially detest rebels—and therefore the Lord specifically mentions the effect of His power which He exercises against proud men. Now there are two kinds of proud men, for certain men vaunt themselves over others on the basis of the goods which they have, like the man who said in Luke 18:11, "I am not like the rest of men." These men are properly called proud, as the word itself suggests. †5 Now the proper punishment of proud men is discord, since when one man strives to lord it over another and refuses to be subject they are unable to agree with each other. Hence is said in Proverbs 13:10, "There are always quarrels among the proud," and to designate this fact He says *Disperse proud men in your fury*, as if to say: Exercise the office of God, which is to disperse proud men so that they cannot come together into one. Now by the fury of God is understood grave punishment. †6 Now another kind of proud men is those who arrogate to themselves that which is above them, and these are properly called arrogant. Hence is said in Jeremiah 48:29, "I know his arrogance and the haughtiness of his heart, says the Lord, and that his power is not up to it." Now of these proud men the proper punishment is dejection. For when they wish to be able to raise themselves up it follows that they dangerously rush

headlong, according to the text of Psalm 72:18: "You cast them down when they were becoming distinguished." Hence, He adds *and regarding every arrogant man, humble him*, that is, cast him down according to the foresight of Your providence.

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Now the first punishment common to both classes of proud men is confusion, since when they are unable to achieve the height to which they pretended they are apparently confounded by their own failure. Hence, He adds *Regard all proud men and confound them*. Hence also it was said above at 20:6, "If his pride ascends all the way into heaven, like a dung-hill he will be thrown out in the end." Now their second punishment is their destruction, which He designates by adding *and grind impious men in their place*. He calls proud men impious since, as is said in Ecclesiasticus 10:14, "the beginning of a man's pride is to desert God," which is inconsistent with the divine worship which pertains to piety. Now it is a fitting punishment of the proud that they be ground down, for that which is ground down is dissolved into the smallest parts by a kind of violence of a stronger body. †7 Now it is just that proud men, who think themselves inordinately great, be reduced to the smallest state by a stronger, namely, a divine, power. He also adds expressly *in their place* so that it may be shown that that in which they trust cannot free them. For each thing is preserved in its place. Hence, a multitude of riches or a status of dignity or any other such thing in which a man trusts can be called his place. †8 These things notwithstanding, the proud man is ground down by God so that he may seem to have been ground down in his place, as it were. The third punishment is that after they have been reduced to the smallest state, the splendor of their fame ceases. For it is just that those who sought the display of glory be deleted from the memories of men, according to the text of Proverbs 10:7: "The name of impious men will rot." Hence follows *You will hide them in the dust*, that is, you will make them obscure because of the state of worthlessness to which they will be reduced. Now the addition *together* can refer to two things, namely, to the fact that all proud men suffer such an end together and to the fact that proud men perish not in succession but are cast down at the same time, that is, suddenly. Now their fourth punishment is that they are not only not known by others but they are also not allowed to lay claim to the goods in which they took pride. Hence, He adds *and their faces*, namely, by which their cognitive powers are signified because man's sight is placed in his face, *submerge in the pit*, that is, in the depth of hell. And He speaks of the damnation of the second death through a metaphor of the first death, through which men, let down into a pit, are reduced to corporeal dust.

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Now the Lord had premised these things as His own proper works. Now it is proper to Him that He does not need another's help, a quality which cannot fit man, just as he cannot perform the works just mentioned, either. Hence, He adds *And I will confess that your own right hand can save you*, as if to say: If you can do the works just mentioned, which are God's alone, you can reasonably attribute to yourself that you do not need divine help for salvation. But just as you cannot do the former, so neither can you do the latter. Hence, you ought not to glory in your justice.

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(10) Look at Behemoth, whom I made along with you. He will eat hay like an ox. (11) His strength is in his loins and his power is in the navel of his belly; (12) he squeezes his tail like a cedar; the tendons of his testicles are tangled. (13) His bones are like pipes of bronze, his cartilage like iron plates. (14) He is the beginning of God's ways. He Who made him will apply His sword. (15) The mountains bring him grass; all the beasts of the field will frolic there. (16) He sleeps in the shade in the concealment of the reed in wet places. (17) The shadows protect his shade; the willow-trees of the torrent surround him. (18) He will swallow a river and not wonder; he has confidence that he can pour the Jordan into his mouth. (19) In his eyes He will catch him as if with a hook and on stakes He will pierce his nostrils.

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Above, the Lord had recounted the effects of His power which He works in evil men, whereas now He

ABOVE, THE LORD HAD RECOUNTED THE EFFECTS OF HIS POWER WHICH HE WORKS IN EVIL MEN, WHEREAS NOW HE ADDRESSES HIMSELF TO DESCRIBING THE MALICE OF THE DEVIL. NOW IT IS MANIFEST FROM THE THINGS PREMISED THAT AMONG JOB AND HIS FRIENDS THE OPINION CONCERNING DEMONS WAS THE SAME AS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH NOW HOLDS, NAMELY, THAT THROUGH SIN THEY FELL FROM THE DIGNITY OF ANGELS. ¶9 Hence, it was said above at 4:18: "Look! Those who serve Him are not stable." And just as through sin man falls from the dignity of reason and acting against reason is compared to irrational creatures, so the devil, too, turning away through sin from the supreme and intelligible goods when he sought primacy over inferior earthly things is compared to brute animals in whose likeness demons frequently appear to men, with God providing that they may be permitted to assume the kinds of shapes of body through which their condition may be designated.

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Now one should consider that just as the angels remaining in their dignity have a kind of excellence above the dignity of men and hence appear to men in a certain more gleaming splendor, so, too, demons have a kind of excellence and primacy in malice over men; therefore, they are described by analogy to certain excellent and monstrous animals, as it were. Now among all the land animals the elephant excels in magnitude and power, whereas among aquatic animals the whale excels. Therefore, the Lord describes the devil by analogy with the elephant and the whale so that the name *Behemoth*, which signifies 'animal,' ¶10 referred to the elephant, who holds a kind of primacy among the rest of the land animals, which are more commonly called animals, because of the magnitude of his body, whereas the name *Leviathan*, which signifies 'their increase,' ¶11 refers to the great whales, which have an accession of magnitude over every kind of animal.

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Now perhaps it could seem to someone that the Lord intended to express literally the properties of the elephant and of the whale because of the magnitude by which they surpass the other animals. But that the properties of these animals are described by analogy with the others is manifest from the fact that when the properties belonging to the analogy are posited, truth is added. For having premised the properties of Behemoth, that is, of the elephant, as if explaining the truth He adds, "He is the beginning of God's ways" (v. 14); whereas, having premised the properties of Leviathan, that is, of the whale, He adds, "He is king over all the sons of pride" [41:25]. And suitably enough Job's debate, which concerns his adversity, terminates in a description of the devil since it is also mentioned above [1:12] that Satan was the beginning of his adversity, and so, while Job's friends were trying hard to refer the cause of his adversity to Job himself, thinking that he had been punished because of his sins, the Lord, after he had rebuked Job for his inordinate speech, as if offering a final decision to the debate, deals with the malice of Satan, which was the beginning of Job's adversity and is the beginning of human damnation, according to Wisdom 2:24: "Because of the envy of the devil death entered into the world."

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First, then, beginning to describe Satan by analogy with Behemoth, he assigns his resemblance to man, saying *Look at Behemoth, whom I made along with you*. And if, of course, this verse should refer to the time of the beginning of each one with respect to the analogy, the truth is apparent. For the land animals were produced on the sixth day at the same time as man. ¶12 If it should refer to the devil, about whom these things are said figuratively or metaphorically, the devil does not seem to have been made at the same time as man. For one reads that man was made on the sixth day whereas Satan is believed to have been made among the angels in the beginning, in which God created heaven and earth. ¶13 But if that enumeration of days does not designate a succession of time but rather the different kinds of things produced, according to Augustine's opinion, ¶14 no inconsistency is found. If, however, according to the explanation of others, the creation of angels preceded the production of man in time, ¶15 this sentence can be understood in two ways—in one way so that the sense may be *whom I made along with you*, that is, whom I made just as I made you, and He says this to exclude the error of those who, considering the devil's malice, thought that he was not a creature of the good God; ¶16 in another way, so that the sense

may be *whom I made along with you*, that is, having a similarity with you with respect to intellectual nature, ¶17 and some vestige of this similarity also appears in the elephant. For Aristotle says in *History of Animals* that "the wild elephant is especially able to be domesticated, for he is trained to and understands many tricks, since they are even taught to bow to kings." ¶18 And this is said not because he has understanding but because of the goodness of his natural judgment.

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Having described Behemoth's resemblance to man, then, He describes his properties, and so that we may refer this description first to the analogy, He seems to describe three things about Behemoth—first, of course, his food when He says *He will eat hay like an ox*. For he is literally an animal that eats not flesh but grasses and other such things in the manner of an ox. And since grasses grow on land this expression says figuratively that Satan feeds on, that is, takes delight in, the dominion of earthly things. Hence, too, he says boastfully of himself at Luke 4:6, "They," namely, the kingdoms of the world, "have been handed over to me and I give them to whom I wish."

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Second, He describes his sexual intercourse. For the chief delights of animals consist in food and in sexual intercourse. Now He describes the intercourse of the elephant first, of course, with respect to the beginning of sexual desire, by which animals are moved to sexual intercourse, when He says *His strength is in his loins*. For from the loins or from the kidneys semen is drawn off to the genital organs. ¶19 Second, He describes the manner of sexual intercourse, for as the Philosopher says in *History of Animals* V.2, "the female elephant undergoes sexual intercourse squatting down, and the male mounts her." ¶20 And He signifies this fact, adding *and his power is in the navel of his belly*, namely, he puts his navel on the back of the female in sexual intercourse. And it is necessary that there be a great power in the navel lest it be ruptured because of the collision of such large bodies. Now animals in which such a form of intercourse is found squeeze the tail between the hind legs when they copulate. Hence, He adds *he squeezes his tail like a cedar*, which is said because of its great size. Third, He describes the organs serving for sexual intercourse when He adds *the tendons of his testicles are tangled*, that is, they have certain twists as the Philosopher describes in *History of Animals* III, concerning the testicles of all animals that walk and generate an animal. ¶21

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Now these verses cannot refer literally to the devil, as if the demons themselves copulate corporeally in the manner of animals, delighted, as it were, by sexual intercourse itself. For even if, as Augustine says in *City of God* XV.23, certain "impious incubi are often said to have appeared to women and to have sought and accomplished intercourse with them," yet they do not do this as if delighted by sexual intercourse themselves, but they are delighted to lead men into such sins, to which they are especially prone. Hence, Augustine says in *City of God* II.25, "Who does not understand how much evil spirits try to furnish authority for crimes by their example?" On this account, as he himself says elsewhere in the same book [II. 4], "such spirits delight in the obscenities of lust," and this delight of theirs, of course, is expressed metaphorically in the premised words. And since because of the eager desire of the flesh they are especially able to overcome men with this vice, He says *His strength is in his loins* so that this statement may refer to men, *and his power is in the navel of his belly* so that it may refer to women; *he squeezes his tail like a cedar*, since finally he holds bound by the sweetness of pleasure those whom he casts down into this sin; *the tendons of his testicles are tangled*, since if anyone cast down into this vice tries to escape he is ensnared again on different occasions.

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Third, He describes the motion of elephants, concerning which it is said that they have inflexible feet, shins, and legs because of the bodyweight to be sustained, and "they have solid bones without joints." ¶22
To designate this belief He says *His legs are like pillars of brass*, since they cannot be bent, just as pillars

to designate this benefit He says *his bones are like pipes of bronze*, since they cannot be bent, just as pipes of bronze cannot be bent. This statement refers to the external organs of motion, which are the shins and legs. Now the internal organs of motion are certain cartilages and tendons, which also do not bend easily in elephants, and with respect to this fact He adds *his cartilage like iron plates*, namely, which cannot be flexed and extended. By this phrase is signified both the obstinacy of the devil, who cannot be drawn back from the purpose of his malice, and his cruelty, through which he does not cease harming men externally.

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Now the Lord explains these things which have been said figuratively, adding *He*, namely, Satan, concerning whom the things just said have been said metaphorically, is *the beginning of God's ways*, that is, of His works, and if, of course, this should refer to the works of creation, it is said for this reason that Satan was fashioned among the first creatures †23 or even that, according to some commentators, †24 he was the most excellent among the other creatures. But it seems more suitable for the purpose that we understand by the ways of God the works of His providence. Now one should consider that, for God, only one work is properly suited to His goodness, namely, to benefit and to show mercy. Now that He punishes and induces adversities happens because of the malice of the rational creature, which was found first in the devil and through his suggestion was passed on to men; therefore, He says expressly *He is the beginning of God's ways*, that is, that God uses different ways, namely, benefitting and punishing. And lest it be believed that he is the beginning of God's ways in such a way that he is able to do harm on his own, He excludes this belief, adding *He Who made him*, namely, God, *will apply His sword*, that is, His harmful operation. Now the will to do harm is the devil's on his own, †25 on account of which he is called His sword, but he has not the effect of harming except from the divine will or permission. And since He had said that "he eats hay like an ox" (v. 10), He shows where he gets the hay to eat. Hence, He adds *The mountains bring him grass*, by which it is understood that the eminent men in this world and the proud bring the devil the material for his delight or refreshment. And He shows how this is, adding *all the beasts of the field will frolic there*. For just as wild animals literally gather in the mountains for peace and security, so do men who rage like beasts rest secure under a kind of protection of eminent men, which is signified in Daniel 4:9 where it is said that "under a tree," by which is signified royal dignity, "dwelt animals and beasts."

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Next He describes his habitat, and here one should consider that, as Aristotle says in *History of Animals* V.2, "elephants stay in the wilderness and especially around rivers." †26 And since there are usually reed thickets, willow-trees, and shady places around rivers, to designate the habitat of the elephant He says *He sleeps in the shade in the concealment of the reed in wet places*. Also, since this animal does not seek just any kind of shade but very dense shade, He adds *The shadows protect his shade*, namely, so that the lower shade is protected from the heat by the upper shade. And He designates the cause making the shade, adding *the willow-trees of the torrent surround him*, for willow-trees make a denser and cooler shade than reeds. Now this animal literally inhabits the shady places since he is a melancholy animal †27 and one of dry constitution, and he dwells in hot lands. Hence, he seeks the coolness of dampness and shade against the heat and the dryness of the climate. By this passage is designated that the devil's sword has effect not only in regard to mountains, that is, in regard to proud men who both bring grass to Behemoth himself and sustain the frolicking beasts of the field, but also in regard to men who both live in leisure as in the shade, which they take care with great interest to prolong for themselves so that in this way shadows may protect shadows, and who nourish themselves in delights as in wet places.

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Now for the same reason for which this animal seeks the wet and shady places he also drinks a large amount of water. Hence, Aristotle says in *History of Animals* VII.9 that "a given elephant at one time drinks fourteen Macedonian measures of water at a draft and eight more later again." †28 Therefore, to describe the great quantity of his drink He adds *He will swallow a river and not wonder*, namely, since he

is used to drinking a great quantity, and again, after he has drunk a large draft he expects another. Hence, He adds *he has confidence that he can pour the Jordan*, which, namely, is a well-known river in that land where these things were being said, *into his mouth*. And, of course, these things are said hyperbolically insofar as they refer to the elephant. Insofar as they refer to the devil, however, in whose figure these things are said, they signify his presumption, by which he is confident of easily incorporating into himself by consent all unstable men even if they should have some knowledge of God. To signify this fact, mention of the Jordan River, which is a river in the land in which true knowledge of God was had, is specifically introduced. For in regard to these three classes of men—namely, the proud, the pleasure-seekers, and the unstable, or those dedicated to the cares of the world who can be designated by the river—the sword of the devil especially has effect.

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Nevertheless, there are some who are not overcome by the devil but rather obtain victory against him, and this accomplishment, of course, belongs principally to Christ, concerning Whom it is said in Apocalypse 5:5: "Look! The lion from the tribe of Judah has conquered." Now consequently it happens to others through the grace of Christ, according to I Corinthians 15:57: "But thanks be to God, Who has given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And, of course, the Lord describes this victory under the simile of an elephant hunt, saying *In his eyes he*, namely, the hunter, by whom Christ and his followers are signified, *will catch him as if with a hook*. One method of hunting elephants is said to be that "a pit is dug in the ground in the way of the elephant, into which he falls in his ignorance, and coming to this pit one hunter strikes and goads him. Now another of the hunters, coming up, strikes the first hunter and moves him away so that he does not strike the elephant and gives him barley to eat. When he has done this three or four times the elephant loves the man freeing him and in time becomes tame, obeying him," †29 and so they are caught with food offered to them as fish are caught with a hook. Now there is also another method of hunting elephants, as Aristotle says in *History of Animals IX.1*, where he says that "hunters ride tame elephants, pursue wild elephants, and goad them with certain instruments," †30 and to this fact can pertain the addition *and on stakes he will pierce his nostrils*, in which, namely, they have more sensitive flesh; therefore, they are goaded there more by hunters. Now by this passage is designated mystically the fact that Christ overcame the devil, showing him a weak nature so that he might be caught by Him as if by a hook, and afterwards He exercised His power against him, according to Colossians 2:15: "Despoiling the principates and powers, He confidently triumphed over them."

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(20) Or will you be able to draw out Leviathan with a hook and will you tie his tongue with a rope? (21) Will you put a ring in his nostrils or will you pierce his jaws with a bracelet? (22) Will he repeat prayers to you or will he speak soft words to you? (23) Will he strike a pact with you and will you take him as a slave forever? (24) Will you trick him like a bird or will you tie him for your maids? (25) Will friends cut him up? Will the tradesmen divide him? (26) Will you fill nets with his hide, and the fish-trap of the fishes with his head? (27) Put your hand upon him. Be mindful of the war and do not add further to your speech. (28) Look! His expectation will frustrate him and he will be hurried along in the sight of all.

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After the Lord has described the properties of the devil in the metaphor of an elephant, which is the largest of the land animals, He describes him in the metaphor of Leviathan, that is, of the whale, which is the largest of the sea animals and, as Pliny says, is "of the magnitude of four acres," †31 and Isidore says that "they have bodies equal to mountains." †32 To this fact refers the name Leviathan, which is interpreted 'their increase.' †33 And as Isidore says, this animal is called *balena* from '*balyn*,' which means to emit, since it emits waters higher than other animals. †34 And it can be said that just as the devil is compared to the elephant which lives in lands because of the manifest effects which he works on corporeal creatures on land, so he is compared to the whale or *balena* living in the waves of the sea because of the effects which he works in the fluctuation of the lower motions

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And since above (v. 19) He had expressed man's victory against the devil under the figure of an elephant hunt, lest it be believed that man can overcome the devil by his own power He begins to exclude this belief under the figure of Leviathan, concerning whom He shows first that he cannot be overcome through the method by which fish are caught. Hence, He says *Or will you be able to draw out*, namely, from the waters, *Leviathan with a hook?* And this, of course, cannot be done for two reasons: first, since he is of such great magnitude that he cannot be lifted up by any power or instrument of man, and to signify this fact He said *Or will you be able to draw out?*; second, since he is of such great strength that he cannot be held by a hook, and to signify this fact He adds *and will you tie his tongue with a rope?* For fish which are caught with the hook are held by the rope to which the hook is attached. And by this verse is signified that no man can either draw the devil away from his malice or even tie him so that he may not proceed in his malice.

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Second, He shows that he cannot be overcome by man by the method by which certain large land animals are overcome. For an ox is restrained by a man by means of an iron ring which is put in his nostrils, by which the man leads him where he wishes, and to exclude this method He adds *Will you put a ring in his nostrils?* Man also subjects to himself the horse or the ass or the camel by putting a bridle or bit in his mouth, and to exclude this method He adds *or will you pierce his jaws with a bracelet?* For the jaws of the animals just mentioned are pierced, as it were, by a bracelet, that is, by iron which is put in their mouths. But just as the ox is led by a ring put in his nostrils, so, too, the course of a horse is guided by a bridle or bit put in the horse's jaws so that he may carry a man suitably. By this passage, then, one is given to understand that no one can lead the devil where he wishes nor direct him so that he serves his will.

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Third, He shows that Leviathan cannot be overcome by the method by which a man is subjected to a man, which happens, of course, in two ways: in one way, by a simple word, for example, when someone is so humbled by another that he prays to him, and He touches upon this situation when He says *Will he repeat prayers to you?*; or also, when he adds words of flattery, and to this method pertains the addition *or will he speak soft words to you*, that is, flattering words to placate you, according to Proverbs 15:1: "A soft answer breaks down anger." In another way it happens by the addition of some obligation, which comes about either through some particular pact, to which pertains the question *Will he strike a pact with you?*, or through perpetual servitude, to which pertains the question *and will you take him as a slave forever?* And those four methods sometimes arrange themselves in an order. For sometimes someone first offers prayers to his conqueror because of fear; second, he flatters him; third, he submits himself to a pact; fourth, through the pact he subjugates himself to perpetual servitude. By all these considerations one is given to understand that the devil does not fear man so that he would offer to him as a higher or stronger being either prayers out of fear or flattery or a pact or service. And if he should pretend any such thing he would do it for the deception of men so that he may subject them to himself rather than be subjected to them.

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Fourth, He shows that he cannot be overcome by the method by which birds are overcome by man, concerning which one should consider that birds are caught first, of course, by means of some deception, with nets or birdlime or some such thing, and excluding this method He adds *Will you trick him like a bird*, namely, so that by deceiving him you may bring him into your power? Second, after they have already been caught they are tied so that they cannot fly away and are exhibited to boys and maids for sport, and this is signified when He adds *or will you tie him for your maids?* By these remarks one is given to understand that man cannot by his own effort overcome the devil by deceiving him nor expose him to others to be despised.

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So, then, once it has been shown that he cannot be subjected by the method by which other animals are subjected He shows next that man cannot use him, even if he were subjected, by the method by which he uses other large animals when they have been reduced to man's power. And first He shows this by using the method by which men use captured land animals—for example, stags, boars, and other such animals, whose flesh is divided in two ways—in one way by distributing it free to their friends, and He excludes this method, adding *Will friends cut him up?* so that this may be read as a question; in the other way by selling it to different people, and with respect to this way He adds *Will the tradesmen divide him?*, as if to say: 'No.' For so great is the magnitude of such an animal that if ever he should be caught he would be sufficient for the whole region. Hence, he is neither divided part by part among friends nor sold in the meat-market in the way other animals are. By this passage it is designated that a man can neither share the demon's help with another free nor even sell it.

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Second, He shows that a man cannot use Leviathan in the way in which he uses fish which have been caught, with the larger specimens of which fishermen fill large nets, and with respect to this point He says *Will you fill nets with his hide?* And perhaps He says expressly *with his hide* to express the method by which the largest whales are caught, which "cling to the rocks by means of very long stalks which they have when they sleep in the grottos," as is said, "and then the fisherman, going up close, loosens as much as he can of the hide from the fat next to the tail." †35 For the animal is very fat so that because of the fat he does not feel such an incision. And so, having put on ropes which he ties to rocks or trees, he arouses the whale with the stones of a sling and the whale, wishing to depart, gives up his hide. Now they fill certain other smaller instruments with smaller fish, and with respect to this fact He adds *and the fish-trap of the fishes with his head?* For a kind of instrument made of willow-wands which fishermen put in a stream to catch fish is called a fish-trap. Now so great is the magnitude of a whale that neither the whole whale nor even one part of him, for example, the head, can be held in a fish-trap, however large it may be. For he is said to have so large a head that forty large jugs of fat flow from it. †36 And this is posited to show figuratively that the devil cannot be shut in by human power, as certain magicians are of the opinion that they are able to shut him in, †37 but this whole opinion comes from his cleverness, which he uses to deceive men. And if one should consider rightly, all the premised words seem to pertain to refuting the presumption of magicians who try to enter into a pact with demons, either to subject them to themselves or to constrain them some way or another.

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Having shown, then, that man cannot in any way by his own power overcome the devil, He concludes, as it were, from all that has been premised, adding *Put your hand upon him*, supply, 'if you can,' as if to say: In no way by your own power can you put your hand upon him to subject him to you. But although he cannot be overcome by man, he is nevertheless overcome by divine power. Hence, He adds *Be mindful of the war*, namely, in which I fight against him, *and do not add further to your speech*, namely, against Me, namely, when you see being overcome by My power one whom you cannot overcome by yours. And concerning the overcoming with which he is overcome by God there is added *Look! His expectation will frustrate him*, a statement which is manifest, of course, if it should refer to the whale. For when the whale pursues fish expecting to catch them he runs onto some beach from which, because of the shallowness of the water, he cannot push himself off, frustrated in his expectation which he had of catching the fish, and so, appearing above the water, he is hurried along to death. †38 This is the point of adding *and he will be hurried along in the sight of all*, since men, seeing him, run up from all sides to kill him. By this passage is signified that the devil's expectation which he has concerning the subversion of the saints will be frustrated, and with the saints looking on, he himself with all his followers will be cast into hell on the day of judgment.

Chapter Forty-one

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(1) I will not arouse him as if I were cruel. For who can resist My countenance? (2) And who has given to Me first so that I should make return to him? All things under heaven are Mine. (3) I will not spare him for powerful words composed to turn Me away by prayer. (4) Who will unveil the face of its covering? And who will enter into the middle of his mouth? (5) Who will open the gates of his countenance? Because of the circle of his teeth there is fear. (6) His body is like cast-metal shields, thick-set with scales pressing each other. (7) One is joined to one and not even a breath goes in through them. (8) One will adhere to the other and holding each other they will by no means be separated.

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After the Lord has recounted the power of Leviathan with respect to his inability to be overcome by man but only by God, now He relates his power with respect to his ability to act against others. And since "there is no power except from God," as is said in Romans 13:1, someone could ascribe to God as cruelty the fact that He has given such great power to so dangerous a creature. Therefore, to exclude this possibility He says *I will not arouse him as if I were cruel*, that is, I will not permit him to be haughty through the power given to him, and this statement seems to correspond to what Job had said above at 30:21: "You have changed into someone cruel to me." Now He shows by three reasons that this ought not to be ascribed to Him as cruelty: first, because of the power of God Himself, when He says *For who can resist My countenance*, that is, My providence? It is as if He should say: However powerful that Leviathan may be, he cannot resist My providence to use his power except as much as will have pleased Me, and My will aims not at the destruction but at the salvation of men. Second, He shows the same thing from the bounty of His goodness, according to which He distributes His goods free to all. Hence, He adds *And who has given to Me first so that I should make return to him?*, as if to say: 'No one.' From this remark it is clear that I love everything which I have made, to which I impart My goods free. Hence, I do not have a spirit of cruelty against the things which I have made, and to the same point pertains the addition *All things under heaven are Mine*, namely, since they have been created, preserved, and governed by Me, and no one opposes his own things. Third, He shows by the fact that He defers to him in nothing that He is not cruel in permitting Satan to exalt in his own power. For it seems to pertain to a kind of cruelty that someone patiently tolerate the afflictions of many when he wishes to favor some tyrant. Now someone favors some powerful man for two reasons: in one way fearing his threats, but the Lord excludes this fault from Himself, saying *I will not spare him*, that is, in nothing will I defer to him so as not to resist him as it may be necessary, *for powerful words*, that is, because of some threatening words which may display his power; in another way someone favors some powerful man as if allured by him with flattery, and to exclude this fault He adds *composed to turn Me away by prayer*, as if to say: Although he might speak powerfully or deprecatingly, yet I defer to him in nothing since there is no suitability "of light to darkness," as is said in II Corinthians 6:14.

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Having premised these remarks to remove the supposition of His cruelty, then, He addresses Himself to describing the power of Leviathan. First He describes his shape, beginning with the head. Now it is said that "over the whale's eyes are certain horny appendages in the shape of a large sickle, and there are two

that over the whale's eyes are certain horny appendages in the shape of a large sieve, and there are two hundred fifty over one eye and the same number over the other, and the whale uses them as a cover for the eye at the time of a great storm." ¶1 To express this fact He says *Who will unveil the face of its covering?*, that is, what man can go so close to the whale that he can strip his face of the coverings just mentioned? By this verse one is given to understand that no man is sufficient to uncover the cleverness of the devil. It is also said that "in the throat he has a kind of skin like a membrane, and this skin, pierced by many passages, does not allow anything large in bulk to enter his stomach," ¶2 namely, since his digestion would be impeded by it, namely, if he were to swallow some large animal whole. To designate this idea there is added *And who will enter into the middle of his mouth*, namely, so that he may examine those tight passages by which small fish go down into his belly? By this verse is designated the fact that no man can know the intention of the demon by which he is moved to swallow men spiritually. It is also said of the whale that he has an opening "of the mouth supplied with very large, long teeth, and two teeth especially are longer than the others in the manner of the teeth of the elephant or of the boar." ¶3 To designate this point, then, that the two teeth farthest out are the largest, He says *Who will open the gates of his countenance?* For those two very large teeth seem like two gates by which the mouth of the whale is opened. By this remark is designated the fact that no man can open the devil's mouth to draw out from his power the sinners whom he swallows as if by two gates, namely, by violence and by cleverness. Now with respect to the other teeth of the whale He adds *Because of the circle of his teeth there is fear*, namely, since he has in the circle of his mouth teeth so large that he can strike terror in those looking at them. By this remark is signified the terror which the demon strikes into men so that through it he may impel them to sin. And it can be said that his teeth are other demons, or else evil men who by means of their power induce others to evil by frightening them.

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Having premised these things about the disposition of Leviathan's head, then, He proceeds to the disposition of his body, which He describes in the manner of fish which have scales. Hence, in keeping with the magnitude of his body he has to have very large scales, like shields. Hence, He says *His body is like cast-metal shields*, which, of course, are without joints, for wooden shields are united by a band. Now the devil is compared to all evil men as the head is compared to the body; ¶4 hence, sinners who fend off others in malice are like shields of the devil's body. Now next He shows that his scales are not only large but also pressed close together in the manner of fish having many scales. This is the point of adding *thick-set with scales pressing each other*, by which is designated a multitude of evil men. And their perverse accord in evil is shown next when *One is joined to one* is added, namely, since just as on the body of some fish not just any scale is joined to any other but one to one in order, so, too, in the multitude of evil men not all accord sociably with all but rather certain men with certain men. Now as long as a fish is alive and strong and his scales are in their vigor, they adhere so tightly to each other and to the skin of the body that not even air can pass between them. When, however, a fish has died or been ill or for some cause his scales dry up, then little by little the connection of the scales just mentioned is loosened in such a way that the scales themselves curl up and even something rather coarse can pass between them. To show the vigor of Leviathan's scales, then, He adds *and not even a breath goes in through them*, that is, through the space between the scales, by which it is designated that for the consensus of malice evil men are not separated by any spiritual persuasion or internal inspiration. And therefore, to show their obstinate consensus in malice he adds *One will adhere to the other* through mutual favor and consensus, *and holding each other they will by no means be separated*, namely, because of their obstinate consensus toward evil, just as Leviathan's scales cannot be separated from each other by human power.

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(9) *His sneeze is the flash of fire and his eyes are like the eyelids of dawn.* (10) *From his mouth come forth flames like the fire of a kindled pine-pitch torch.* (11) *From his nostrils comes forth smoke like pots of boiling water on the fire.* (12) *His breath makes live coals glow and flame comes out of his mouth.* (13) *In his neck will abide strength and want will go before his face,* (14) *the members of his flesh clinging to each other. He will rend them asunder against him, and they will not come to another place.* (15) *His heart will*

owner. He will send innumerable against him, and they will not carry to another place. (15) His heart will be hardened like a stone and it will be compressed like a smith's anvil. (16) When he has been taken away the angels will fear, and, frightened, they will be purged. (17) When the sword has caught him it will not be able to stand up, nor the lance, nor the breastplate. (18) For he will reckon iron as straw and bronze as rotten wood. (19) An archer will not put him to flight; the stones of the sling have turned to stubble for him. (20) He will count the hammer as stubble and he will mock the brandished spear. (21) The rays of the sun will be under him, and he will strew gold beneath himself like mud. (22) He will make the deep sea boil like a pot, and he will make it as when perfumes boil. (23) His path will shine behind him; he will count the deep as growing old. (24) There is no power on earth to be compared with him. He who was made to fear no one (25) sees every height: he is king over all the sons of pride.

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After the Lord has described Leviathan's disposition He describes here the operation of his strength, and just as He had described the disposition of the head before that of the body, so, too, He also begins to recount first the operations pertaining to the head. Now the first and most important part of the head is the brain, by the disturbance of which an animal's sneezing is caused. ¶5 Therefore, describing Leviathan's sneeze He says *His sneeze is the flash of fire*, namely, since as a result of Leviathan's sneeze so great a disturbance of the waters is made that a kind of whiteness of the disturbed waters is caused in the manner of a flash of fire. Or it can also refer to the fact that when the head or the eyes are strongly disturbed a kind of flash of fire seems to us to leap forth. Hence, since the disturbance of Leviathan's head as a result of his sneeze is much greater, much more does such a flash go forth. Now by this verse is signified that through the disturbance of the devil's head, that is, through his temptations, a flash of fire, namely, of anger or of eager desire or even of vainglory, leaps forth. Now chief among the other parts of the head are the eyes. Hence, He adds *and his eyes are like the eyelids of dawn*. For the eye, by reason of its smoothness, is shiny. ¶6 Now the whale has large eyes consistent with the magnitude of his head and of his whole body; therefore, in the inspection of them appears a kind of diffused splendor like the splendor of dawn, by which is designated the temporal prosperity which the devil promises man. Now third He describes the operation or the effect of his mouth when He says *From his mouth come forth flames like the fire of a kindled pine-pitch torch*, and here one should consider that a pine-pitch torch is a kind of wood which when lit releases a sweet fragrance. Now it is said of the whale that "when he is very hungry he emits from his mouth a fragrant vapor like the fragrance of amber, and delighted by it the fish enter his mouth and in this way they are devoured by him." ¶7 The vapors emitted from the whale's mouth, then, are called flames because of the magnitude of the heat which comes from his interior, but they are compared to a lit pine-pitch torch because of their redolence, as was said. Now by this verse is designated that the devil enkindles men to an eager desire for sin through a showing of some good as if through a kind of redolence. Fourth is posited the operation of his nostrils, for this animal has a lung and breathes like a dolphin, ¶8 and to designate this point He adds *From his nostrils*, namely, which are the chief instruments of respiration, *comes forth*, namely, through respiration, *smoke*, that is, air burnt by the great quantity of heat which is necessary for this animal to move so great a bulk. Therefore, He expressly adds *like pots of boiling water on the fire*. For the air which is released in breathing was contained in the lung in which it was warmed by the heat of the heart, which is joined to the lung, just as water in a pot gets hot and boils because fire is applied to it. And since an animal breathes not only through his nostrils but also through his mouth, He adds fifth the operation of the mouth, saying *His breath*, that is, the exhalation proceeding from his mouth, *makes live coals glow*, that is, it is so hot and strong that it would be sufficient to light coals. For He speaks in a metaphor of those who light coals by blowing under them. Hence, He adds *and flame comes out of his mouth*, namely, since the vapor coming from his mouth is so hot and fiery that it can deservedly be compared to flame. Now by all these verses is designated the fact that the devil, by his concealed or manifest suggestion, kindles in man the fire of perverse desire.

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Having premised these remarks which pertain to the power of Leviathan's head, then, God addresses

Himself to treating the things which pertain to the power of his other members. Now one should consider that, as Aristotle says in *History of Animals* II.13, "no fish has a neck" except those which beget animals, such as the dolphins, and whales are also members of their class. †9 Therefore, He begins to describe the strength of Leviathan's neck when He says *In his neck will abide strength*, which is necessary, of course, for so large an animal to carry the weight of his head. And since the head is joined to the body by the neck, by Leviathan's neck can be designated those through whom the devil exercises his malice against others, who are as powerful as possible and whom others revere or even fear. Now it is manifest that this animal, since it is large-bodied, needs much food; therefore, when a whale is in some part of the sea it swallows a multitude of the fish existing there so that the sea in his sight remains empty, as it were, of fish. This is the point of adding *and want will go before his face*, namely, since he attracts the fish to himself, as was said above (v. 10), and the sea remains empty of fish before him. By this remark is signified that the want of virtues in men is caused before the devil's face, that is, by his suggestion. Next He shows his strength with respect to other parts of the body when He says *the members of his flesh clinging to each other*, namely, because of their consistency, by which is designated the consensus of the devil's members toward evil.

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Having premised these remarks concerning Leviathan's strength to act, then, God next treats his strength to resist. Now although he is able to resist human power in action he cannot resist the power of divine action anywhere. Therefore, first God shows what He may do against him when He says *He will send thunderbolts against him*, for it is manifest that thunderbolts, by which even ships are sometimes endangered, frequently fall on the sea. Hence, it is also probable that whales are sometimes struck by lightning, and this work is especially attributed to God because of the magnitude and the frightfulness of this effect. Hence, the Lord said above at 38:35, "Will you send lightning bolts, and will they go," and so on. Now He adds *and they will not carry to another place*, which can refer to two intentions: first, of course, to designate the magnitude of Leviathan's body. For a lightning-bolt striking at some place usually is reflected by a kind of repercussion to other, yet nearby, places, but Leviathan's body is so large that a lightning-bolt striking against him is not reflected outside his body; in another way it can refer to the infallibility of divine operation. Therefore, just as a skilled archer releases his arrows directly so that he strikes only the target, so, when God wishes to release lightning-bolts like some arrows against Leviathan or any other creature, they do not go to any other place but where He releases them, according to Wisdom 5:22: "The emissions of lightning-bolts will go directly." By this verse is designated the divine scourges which God sends against the devil and his members in such a way that they do not carry against others. For if good men are sometimes scourged by God through temporal adversities, this situation nevertheless results in the glorification of the saints and in the greater damnation of the devil and impious men.

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Second, He shows how Leviathan is disposed toward the things which God does against him when He says *His heart will be hardened like a stone*. Now hard signifies a natural power, namely, so that something may not be corrupted easily by an external agent. By this verse, then, is designated the natural power which is in the heart of the whale so that he may not be corrupted easily by an external action inflicting some harm. And to designate this hardness the example of the stone was sufficient with respect to light blows but not with respect to grave ones. Even if a stone is not broken by the hand it is nevertheless broken by an iron hammer. Therefore, to designate the whale's power even against grave harms he adds *and it will be compressed like a smith's anvil*, which, namely, is not broken by the striking of hammers but rather seems to be made more solid. By this verse, then, is signified the obstinacy of the devil and of his members since by no divine striking are they softened from their malice.

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Third is shown the final effect of divine striking, for however much the devil may seem to resist the divine scourges, it is nevertheless necessary that he finally be overcome by them. Hence, He adds *When he has been taken away*, namely, by divine power from his place, *the angels will fear*, amazed at divine power.

And in this amazement many effects of divine power become known to them. Therefore, He adds *and, frightened, they will be purged*, for as Dionysius says in *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* VI.3.6, †10 angels are said to be purged not of uncleanness but of ignorance. But since every corporeal creature is something mean in comparison to the holy angels, this does not seem to have been said principally to signify that heavenly angels are much amazed over the killing of any corporeal whale, unless perhaps by angels we should understand holy men. But it is better that the whale refer principally to the spiritual Leviathan, namely, the devil, who was removed by divine power when he fell from heaven through sin. †11 And then the angels, amazed at divine majesty, were purged by separation from His company. Similarly, too, on the day of judgment, when the devil with all his members will be pushed down into hell, the angels and all the saints will be amazed at divine power and will be purged in other respects by total separation from evil beings. And this fact is signified by Apocalypse 12:10, where, after the devil has been cast forth, a loud voice is heard in heaven saying, "Now is accomplished the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God."

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So, then, after it has been shown how Leviathan is disposed toward God's attack, God shows how he is disposed toward the attack of a creature, and first how he is disposed toward the attack of a man. Now a man attacks from nearby and from a distance—from nearby, of course, armed with a sword and a lance for striking and a breastplate for the defense of himself, and with respect to this attack He says *When the sword*, namely, of a man, *has caught him*, namely, Leviathan, *it*, namely, the sword, *will not be able to stand up* without breaking because of the hardness of his body, *nor will the lance*, namely, be able to stand up, *nor will the breastplate*, namely, by which the chest is protected, be able to stand up against Leviathan. And He assigns the reason for this situation, adding *For he will reckon iron as straw*, namely, since just as a man cannot be injured by straws and easily breaks them, so Leviathan cannot be injured by the iron of a sword or lance but easily breaks such things. And similarly he will reckon *bronze*, namely, of the breastplate, *as rotten wood*, namely, which cannot resist a blow. Now by this verse is signified that no human power is effective for injuring the devil or for resisting him, but all human power is reckoned as nothing by the devil.

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A man also attacks from a distance with arrows and the stones of a sling, but those weapons are not effective against a whale either. Hence, He adds *An archer will not put him to flight*, namely, by releasing arrows, which he does not fear inasmuch as he cannot be injured by them. Now just as arrows discharged from far off injure by wounding internally, so the stones of a sling injure by bruising externally, but just as a whale cannot be pierced by arrows, so he cannot be bruised by stones cast at him. Hence, He adds *the stones of the sling have turned to stubble for him*, namely, since just as stubble because of its lightness cannot bruise anyone, so neither can a whale suffer any harm from the stones of a sling. Now by this verse is signified that just as the devil cannot be injured by human power as by a kind of blow from close quarters, so, too, he cannot be injured by a man's cleverness as if by a kind of blow from far off. Now just as someone is bruised from a distance by the stones of a sling, so, too, something is bruised from nearby by a hammer, but not even in this way can a whale be injured by a man. Hence, He adds *He will count the hammer as stubble*, and this verse can also refer to the same signification as those premised, except that the blow of a hammer is heavier than that of the stones of a sling. Hence, it can be signified that however much a man's strength and effort may be extended, it is scorned by the devil.

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Now men usually overcome some men not only by striking them but also by threatening to strike, but neither the whale nor the devil fears any threat of a man. Hence is added *and he will mock the brandished spear*, for the brandishing of a spear is seen to be a kind of threat of striking. Now just as one man sometimes overcomes another by threatening, so he also wins him over by enticing him with promises.

Now the promise of some gifts is especially likely to entice a man because of their beauty or because of

NOW the promise of some gifts is especially likely to entice a man because of their beauty or because of their value. Now nothing seems to be more beautiful among corporeal things than the sun's rays, by the beauty of which Leviathan is not enticed whether he is understood corporeally or spiritually, and to signify this fact is added *The rays of the sun will be under him*, namely, since he does not rate them as anything great. Consequently, one is given to understand that he rates nothing else among human things as outstanding. Now gold is reckoned very valuable among the things which come into man's use, and with respect to it He adds *and he will strew gold beneath himself like mud*, that is, he will scorn it as something cheap. And so it is clear that he cannot be enticed by man.

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After it has been shown in this way, then, that Leviathan cannot be overcome by man, God shows next that he cannot be overcome by the sea or by any fish of the sea either, and He shows this through the strong operations which he exercises in the sea. Now Pliny says that "there are certain beasts in the eastern sea of such great magnitude that they turn up the seas from the bottom" †12 and make storms on the sea, and these beasts, of course, seem to pertain to the nature of the whale. To signify this fact, He adds *He will make the deep sea boil like a pot*, for just as when a pot boils the boiling water is disturbed in it, so the waves of the sea are disturbed by the violence of this fish. And this disturbance begins at the bottom and reaches all the way to the surface of the water. Hence, He adds *and he will make it as when perfumes*, namely, which make a greater foaming and disturbance on the surface than mere water in which not so much air is contained, *boil*. Now by this verse is signified the turmoil which the devil stirs up in this world. And just as he produces a great effect when he moves on the bottom of the sea, so, too, he produces a great effect when he moves on the surface, and to signify this fact He adds *His path will shine behind him*. For just as when a ship moves through the sea a track of the passing ship is left behind for a long distance because of the disturbance and the foam generated in the water, so it happens also from the motion of that fish because of its magnitude. Now by this verse is signified that the effect of the disturbance which the devil stirs up in the world is not immediately wiped out but sometimes lasts a rather long time. Now since the whale works such strong operations in the sea, in no way does he fear the depth of the sea. Hence, He adds *he will count the deep*, that is, the depth of the sea, *as growing old*, that is, as having an end and as powerless to swallow him up. For that which grows old is both weak and near its end. Now by this verse is signified the fact that the devil does not rate the damnation of hell so great that he stops striving against God because of it, as if his damnation had to be terminated. And just as Leviathan cannot be overcome either by a man or by the sea or by any creature of the sea, so, too, he cannot be overcome by any other land creature. Hence, He adds *There is no power on earth to be compared with him*. For there is not on earth any animal as large as the whale of the sea; hence, Pliny says that in the sea are "animals greater than land animals, and the evident cause is the profusion of moisture." †13 Now by this verse is signified the fact that no corporeal power can equal the power of the demon, which is the power of a spiritual nature.

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Since, therefore, the Lord has premised many things about the properties of Leviathan in the figure of the devil, He next explains the metaphor just mentioned. And as has been said, all the properties just mentioned seem to pertain to two, one of which is that he cannot be injured by another, and with respect to this one He adds in explanation *He who was made to fear no one*, that is, the devil, has as a condition of his nature in which he was made by God that he fear neither man nor any corporeal creature. Now the other is that Leviathan has the faculty to exercise great and strong operations, and explaining this point He adds *sees every height*, that is, the devil's intention is to attempt whatever is sublime. And since these properties seem to pertain to pride He shows next that the devil is not only proud in himself but he exceeds everyone in pride and is the beginning of pride in others. Hence, He adds *he is king over all the sons of pride*, that is, over those who are subject to pride, all of whom follow his leadership. And here one should consider that the Lord began to manifest with respect to the proud His operation which He exercises against evil men, †14 and He terminates His narrative on the subject of proud men in order to show that Job had especially to fear that the devil, who had tried to tempt him, might try especially to lead him into pride

so that in this way Job might be transferred into his kingdom. Therefore, he ought to have been cautious of an attitude and words which smacked of pride.

Chapter Forty-Two

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(1) Now Job said to the Lord in response: (2) I know that You can do all things and no thought escapes Your notice. (3) Who is he who conceals his counsel without Your knowledge? Therefore, I have spoken unwisely and things which exceed my knowledge beyond measure. (4) Listen and I will speak; I will ask You, and You respond to me. (5) I heard You with the hearing of my ear but now my eye sees You. (6) Therefore, I reproach myself and I do penance in dust and ashes. (7) Now after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, He said to Eliphaz the Themanite: My fury is aroused against you and against your two friends since you have not spoken what is right before Me as has My servant Job. (8) Therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer a holocaust for yourselves. Now Job My servant will pray for you. The face of him I will lift up so that your foolishness may not be imputed to you. For you have not spoken what is right before Me as has My servant Job. (9) Therefore, Eliphaz the Themanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went away and did as the Lord had told them, and the Lord lifted up the face of Job. (10) The Lord was also won over at Job's penitence when he prayed for his friends. And the Lord also added everything which had been Job's, twofold. (11) Now there came to him all his brothers and all his sisters and all who knew him before and they ate bread with him in his house and they shook their heads over him. Also, they consoled him over every evil which the Lord had brought upon him, and each one gave him one sheep and one golden ear-ring. (12) Now the Lord blessed Job's new circumstances more than his beginning. And there came to him fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yokes of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. (13) He also had seven sons and three daughters. (14) And he named one Day, the second Cassia, and the third Cornustibium. (15) Now beautiful women like Job's daughters were not found in the whole land, and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. (16) Now Job lived one hundred forty years after these scourges, he saw his children and his children's children to the fourth generation, and he died an old man full of days.

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After the Lord has rebuked Job for careless speech which seemed to smack of pride, namely, because he was claiming that he was just so strenuously that this claim seemed to some to approach derogation of divine judgment, Job responds humbly, deeming himself convinced. He does so first, of course, by acknowledging divine excellence with respect to power—hence, the text says *Now Job said to the Lord in response: I know that You can do all things*—and also with respect to knowledge. Hence, he adds *and no thought escapes Your notice*. By the first of these observations he was acknowledging that God could remove the adversity induced by the devil, whom the Lord had described in the figure of Behemoth and Leviathan. By the second, however, he recognizes that he had been driven inwardly by some proud thought, which he recognizes did not escape God's notice. Therefore, next he inveighs against those who deny divine providence, saying *Who is he who conceals his plan without Your knowledge?*; that is, who is so presumptuous and foolish as to say that human counsel can be concealed from God without God's knowing it?

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Now from a consideration of divine excellence Job proceeds to a consideration of his own guilt when he adds *Therefore, I have spoken unwisely*, namely, not showing due reverence for divine excellence in my words, *and things which exceed my knowledge beyond measure*, namely, by discussing divine judgments. And since "I have spoken unwisely," for the rest I will speak wisely. Hence, he adds *Listen and I will speak*, namely, acknowledging my guilt, and since "I have spoken things which exceed my knowledge," for the rest I do not dare to speak of it but only to ask You about these things. Hence, he adds *I will ask You*, namely, by asking, seeking, knocking, †1 and *You respond to me*, namely, by instructing me inwardly. Now he shows why he has changed so, adding *I heard You with the hearing of my ear*, namely, formerly when I was speaking unwisely, *but now my eye sees You*; that is, I know You more fully than before just as that which is seen with the eyes is known more surely than that which is heard with the ear. For he had made progress both from being stricken and from divine revelation. Now the more someone considers God's justice the more fully he recognizes his own guilt. Hence, he adds *Therefore I reproach myself*, namely, by considering my own guilt. And since it is not sufficient to acknowledge guilt unless satisfaction follow, therefore he adds *and I do penance in dust and ashes*, namely, as a sign of the frailty of corporeal nature. For humble satisfaction is suitable for expiating the pride of thought.

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Therefore, since the Lord had rebuked Elihu and also Job above, †2 now third he rebukes his friends, chief among whom was Eliphaz—which is clear because he had begun to speak first. Hence is said *Now after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, He said to Eliphaz the Themanite: My fury is aroused against you and against your two friends*, namely, Bildad and Zophar. And here one should consider that Elihu had sinned out of inexperience whereas Job had sinned out of levity, and so neither of them had sinned gravely. Hence, the Lord is not said to have been angry with them, but He is said to have been gravely angry with Job's three friends since they had sinned gravely in asserting perverse dogmas, as was maintained above. †3 Hence, He adds *since you have not spoken what is right before Me*, that is, faithful dogmas, *as has My servant Job*, namely, who did not withdraw from the truth of faith. Now the ancients were accustomed to offer sacrifices for the expiation of grave sins. †4 Hence, He adds *Therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams*, namely, since they were the leaders of their peoples. Now seven is the number of a totality. †5 Hence, a seven-fold sacrifice is suitable for the expiation of grave sins. But since the faithless ought to be reconciled to God through the faithful, He adds *and go to my servant Job*, namely, so that through his mediation you may be reconciled to Me, *and offer a holocaust for yourselves*, namely, so that you who have sinned may make satisfaction. But your satisfaction requires the patronage of a faithful man. Hence, He adds *Now Job, My servant*, namely, who is worthy to be heard because of his faith, *will pray for you*. Hence, He adds *The face of him*, namely, of Job interceding, *I will lift up*, namely, by heeding his prayer, *so that your foolishness*, namely, of unfaithful dogma, *may not be imputed to you*, and He explains this statement, adding *For you have not spoken what is right before Me as has My servant Job*.

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Now having received the hope of pardon they fulfilled that which had been demanded of them. Hence follows the verse, *Therefore, Eliphaz the Themanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went away and did as the Lord had told them*. And so, through their obedience and humility they became worthy that Job's prayer for them be heeded. Hence follows the statement *and the Lord lifted up the face of Job*, namely, as he prayed for his friends. And not only his friends' humility but his own also lent efficacy to his prayer. Hence is added *The Lord was also won over*, namely, from fury to clemency, *at Job's penitence when he prayed for his friends*. For it was fitting that one who repented humbly for his own light sin should also gain pardon for others sinning gravely.

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Now each one's own penitence benefits himself more than it does others. Hence, if Job's prayer and penitence merited the removal of divine indignation from his friends, it was much more fitting that he himself also be freed from adversity. And although Job did not base his hope on recovering temporal prosperity but on achieving future happiness, nevertheless the Lord also restored to him abundantly his temporal prosperity, according to Matthew 6:33: "First seek the kingdom of God and His justice and all these things will be added to you." And this, of course, was consistent with the situation because of the state of the Old Testament in which temporal goods were promised so that in this way, through the prosperity which Job had recovered, an example might be given to the others so that they might turn back to God. It was also consistent with the character of Job himself, whose reputation among some men had been injured because of the many adversities which had overcome him; therefore, to restore his reputation to him He brought him back to the state of greater prosperity. Hence follows the verse *And the Lord also added everything which had been Job's, twofold*. Now chief among Job's adversities, as it were, was that he had been deserted by his friends; †6 therefore, the remedy for this adversity is put first when *Now there came to him all his brothers and all his sisters and all who knew him before* is said, in which is designated the remembrance of former friendship, *and they ate bread with him in his house*, in which is designated the return to the old familiarity, *and they shook their heads over him*, namely, showing compassion for his affliction. And since one ought not only to have compassion for the afflicted but also to offer a remedy for their affliction, first, of course, they offered a remedy for his internal pain with consoling words. Hence is added the statement *Also, they consoled him over every evil which the Lord had brought upon him*. Now second they offered the remedy of assistance against his external want, and since he had lost both the animals in the fields and his household furnishings in the overturning of his house, they therefore came to his aid in both, for there follows *and each one gave him one sheep* with respect to animals *and one golden earring* with respect to household goods.

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Now these contributions would have been too little for his restoration, but the Lord applied His hand so that he might progress from these resources to greater ones. Hence follows *Now the Lord blessed Job's new circumstances*, namely, by multiplying them *more than his beginning*, that is, than his original prosperity. For He is "able to do more than we understand or ask," as is said in Ephesians 3:20. Now above at 29:2 Job had expressed the desire that he might be "as in previous months," but the Lord restored to him greater resources, even double, as was said above (v. 10). Hence follows *And there came to him fourteen thousand sheep*. For it was said above that "his possession amounted to seven thousand sheep" [1:3]; *and six thousand camels*, for at first he had had "three thousand camels," as was said above [*ibid.*]. He had also had "five hundred yokes of oxen" [*ibid.*]. Hence, double the number is posited here when the text says *and a thousand yokes of oxen*. It was also said above that he had had "five hundred she-asses" [*ibid.*], but double the number is posited here when *and a thousand she-asses* follows.

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Now Job had lost not only his possessions but also his children, who are restored to him but not doubled, for there follows *He also had seven sons and three daughters*. There can be two reasons for this condition, one pertaining to the future life since, namely, the children whom he had had had not totally perished for him but were being reserved to live with him in the future life. The other reason can be considered with respect to the present life, for if after everything else had been doubled the number of children had also been doubled, the fortune of the house would not seem to have been augmented since each of the children would have had the same quantity in his goods as before. Therefore, it was more proper that his offspring be increased not in number but rather in value. This notion is insinuated unobtrusively in the daughters, who, one reads, were very beautiful, whose names are also consistent with their beauty, for there follows *And he named one Day*, namely, because of her splendor, *the second Cassia*, which is a species of aromatic tree, because of her sweetness, †7 *and the third Cornustibium*. Now stibium is what women use to decorate the eyes, according to IV Kings 9:30: "She painted her eyes with stibium and adorned her head," and this stibium, of course, is kept by women in a horn †8 to have it ready

when they need it. Hence, he called her Cornustibium to designate the surpassing beauty of her eyes. Hence also, concerning their beauty is added *Now beautiful women like Job's daughters were not found in the whole land*. By this verse one is also given to understand that his sons were preeminent in virtue, for there follows the statement *and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers*, namely, to designate the symmetry of virtue in each of the children.

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And since Job had also been scourged in his own body, length of days is added to the increase of prosperity for him. Hence follows *Now Job lived one hundred forty years after these scourges*. And so that it may be understood that he lived this whole time in prosperity the author adds *he saw his children and his children's children to the fourth generation*. Also, one is given to understand that that prosperity lasted until death. Hence follows *and he died an old man*, which pertains to the length of his life, *full of days*, which pertains to the prosperity of his life. Hence, he said above to designate his adversity, "So I, too, have had unprofitable months" [7:3]. Hence, by the fullness of days is also designated his abundance, both with respect to the goods of fortune and with respect to the goods of grace, by which he was led to future glory, which lasts forever and ever. Amen.

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Footnotes

p 2

[†1](#) Cf. Ernest Fortin, "St. Thomas Aquinas," in *History of Political Philosophy*, ed. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (2nd ed.; Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968), pp. 223-50; Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. L. K. Shook, (New York: Random House, 1956), pp. 7-15; Ralph McInerny, *St. Thomas Aquinas* (Boston: Twayne, 1977), pp. 30-74.

p 2

[†2](#) Cf. *Summa Theologiae* [henceforth *ST*] I.1.8, *ad* 2; I.60.1, *ad* 3.

p 2

[†3](#) E.g., on 3:25; 5:2; 7:9; 17:9; 17:16; 38:20; 40:11.

p 2

[†4](#) E.g., on 4:18.

p 2

[†5](#) E.g., Prologue *in princ.*; on 1:2; 7:17.

p 2

[†6](#) E.g., on 7:9; 38:7.

p 2

[†7](#) Aristotle, *Physics* VII.1, 250 b 22ff.; *Metaphysics* XII.6, 1071 b 6-10. Cf. Thomas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, *ad loc.*, sec. 2490, with sec. 2598.

p 2

[†8](#) *Metaphysics* XII.9, 1074 b 25ff. Cf. Thomas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, *ad loc.*, sec. 2614.

p 2

[†9](#) D. Aquinas I.4, 408 b 18-21; II.2, 412 b 24-26; III.5, 420 b 17-25. At present, these passages are

‡9 *De Anima* I.4, 408 b 18-21; II.2, 415 b 24-29; III.5, 450 a 11-25. At any rate, these passages are referred to by Thomas, *On the Unity of the Intellect against the Averroists* I.31 (trans. B. Zedler [Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1968], p. 35) as suggesting—misleadingly, according to Thomas—that for Aristotle only the intellect survives the death of the body (cf. I.36ff. [Zedler, pp. 37ff.]).

p 3

‡10 E.g., *Summa Contra Gentiles* [henceforth *CG*]; II.16.2, 8; *ST* I.44.1.

p 3

‡11 E.g., *CG* III.76.1f.; *ST* I.22.1, *ad* 1.

p 3

‡12 E.g., *CG* IV.82.6.

p 3

‡13 Cf. Anton C. Pegis, "General Introduction," *Summa Contra Gentiles* (4 vols. in 5; Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), vol. I, p. 19.

p 3

‡14 For the following, see Martin D. Yaffe, "Myth and 'Science' in Aristotle's Theology," *Man and World* 12 (1979), 70-88.

p 3

‡15 Cf. *Physics* II.3, 194 b 16ff.; *Metaphysics* V.2, 101 a 24ff.

p 4

‡16 *Physics* II.1, 192 b 8ff.

p 4

‡17 Cf. Clarence P. Bill, "Notes on the Greek *Theoros* and *Theoria*," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 32 (1901), 196-204.

p 4

‡18 Cf. *Metaphysics* I.2, 982 b 12ff.; Thomas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, *ad loc.*, sec. 53-56, with Augustine, *City of God* VIII.2.

p 4

‡19 For the following, see Martin D. Yaffe, "Providence in Medieval Aristotelianism: Moses Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas on the Book of Job," *Hebrew Studies* 19-20 (1980-81), 62-74. Corrigenda: p. 70, l. 39, replace "Testament, but it" by "Testament. It"; ll. 45-46, replace by "that Job arrived at his viewpoint by his own reasoning, i.e., as a philosopher."

p 5

‡20 *Guide of the Perplexed* III.22-23 (trans. S. Pines [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963], pp. 486-97).

p 5

‡21 Cf. Prologue, *in princ.*; on 1:1, with 38:1, 39:34f., and 42:1.

p 5

‡22 Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), pp. 292-308.

p 5

‡23 See notes 19, 20, above.

p 6

‡24 Yaffe, "Providence in Medieval Aristotelianism," 73f. For a fuller substantiation, see below.

p 6

‡25 E.g., on 2:11; 4:7; and *passim*.

p 6

‡26 E.g., on 2:11; 3:13, 15, 19; 7:1, 8f., 18, 21; 11:18; 13:15; 14:5-15; 19:23-29; 21:30-33; 24:19; 25:1; 26:6; 32:22; 37:24.

p 6

‡27 See on ch. 22-24.

p 6

‡28 Cf. Fernand van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West*, trans. L. Johnston (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1955); *Thomas Aquinas and Radical Aristotelianism* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1980); James A. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 272-85.

p 6

‡29 On 38:4-6.

p 6

‡30 E.g., on 3:15; 19:23, 27; 27:8.

p 7

‡31 On 39:33ff.

p 7

‡32 Cf. on 6:28ff.; 7:21; 10:21; 13:3, 13, 17-23; 15:3-13, 17; 21:4; 22:2; 23:3, 4f.; 33:12f.; 34:33; 38:1ff.; with Otto Bird, "How to Read an Article of the *Summa*," *New Scholasticism* 27 (1953), 129-59, esp. 136ff.; F. A. Blanche, "Le vocabulaire de l'argumentation et la structure de l'article dans les ouvrages de saint Thomas," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 14 (1925), 167-87, esp. 171ff.; M.-D. Chenu, *Introduction à l'étude de saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Montréal: Institut d'études médiévales, 1954; Paris: Vrin, 1954), pp. 73-81; P. Mandonnet, "Introduction" to *Questiones disputatae s. Thomae* (5 vols.; Paris: Lethielleux, 1925), vol. I, pp. 1-18; Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Pantheon, 1962), pp. 75-88. Thomas's reading of the Book of Job as a *disputatio* follows that of his teacher, Albert the Great; cf. Albert's *Commentarium in Job*, on 1:1; 3:1; 4:1; 6:1; 11:2f; 24:25; 32:1; 33:1; 37:24; 41:25 (ed. Melchior Weiss [Freiburg im Bressgau: Herder, 1904], pp. 17, 50-54, 68, 96f., 155, 370, 378, 439f., 503). Cf., Antonin-M. Jutras, "Le Commentarium in Job d'Albert le Grand et la disputatio," *Études et recherches* (Ottawa) 9 (1955), 9-20.

p 7

‡33 Cf. Matitiahu Tsevat, *The Meaning of the Book of Job and Other Biblical Studies* (New York: Ktav, 1980; Dallas: Institute for Jewish Studies, 1980), pp. 1-38.

p 7

‡34 Cf. Marvin H. Pope, *Job: A New Translation and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973), pp. xxiii-xlii.

p 8

‡35 For the following, see Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino*, pp. 116ff., 368ff. On the method of an "exposition," cf. also Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Introduction à l'étude de saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Montréal: Institut d'études médiévales, 1954; Paris: Vrin, 1954), pp. 213-16; Harry V. Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 25-46; John P. Rowan, "Introduction" to Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* (2 vols.; Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1961), vol. I, esp. pp. viii-xi.

p 8

‡36 Of Aristotle's authentic works, Thomas completed expositions on *Posterior Analytics*, *Physics*, *On the Soul*, *On Sense and Sensibilia*, *On Memory*, *Metaphysics*, and *Nicomachean Ethics*. His commentaries on *On Interpretation*, *On the Heavens*, *On Generation and Corruption*, *Meteorology*, and *Politics* were left for others to complete.

p 9

‡37 See our preliminary remarks below on Job's "debate" with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar (Job 4-28).

p 9

‡38 Cf. Prologue, *in princ.* See also note 39, below.

p 9

‡39 *ST* I.1.10. Cf. *Scriptum super Libros Sententiarum*, Prologue, I.5; *Quaestiones de Quodlibet* VII. 6.14-16; *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, on 4:24a (trans. F. R. Larcher [Albany, N.Y.: Magi Books, 1966]), p. 137f. Also Henry de Lubac, *Éxégèse médiévale* (2 vols. in 4; Paris: Aubier, 1959-64), vol. 2, pp. 272-302; and Hugh Pope, "St. Thomas as an Interpreter of the Holy Scripture," in *St. Thomas Aquinas*, [ed. Alfred Whitacre et al.] (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1925), pp. 111-44, esp. 131ff.; Maximino Arias Reyero, *Thomas von Aquin als Exeget* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1971), pp. 311-50; James A. Weisheipl, "Introduction," *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, Part I*, trans. James A. Weisheipl and F. R. Larcher (Albany, N. Y.: Magi Books, 1966), p. 10f.

p 10

‡40 On 3:8. Cf. on 40:10, 20; 41:16.

p 10

‡41 On 1:6-7; 40:10. Cf. *ST* I.51.3, *ad* 1.

p 10

‡42 *ST* I.66.1, *ad* 1, 3; I.68.3; I.69.2, *ad* 3; I.70.1, *ad* 3; I.70.2; I.71.1, *ad* 3; I.74.1, *ad* 2.

p 10

[†43](#) On 2:3. Cf. on 26:7.

p 10

[†44](#) Cf. Marvin Pope, *loc. cit.*

p 10

[†45](#) Cf. Tsevat, p. 1, n. 2.

p 10

[†46](#) Cf. Prologue, *in princ.*; on 1:1.

p 11

[†47](#) On 1:1.

p 11

[†48](#) Prologue, *in princ.*

p 11

[†49](#) On 1:8; cf. on 3:1.

p 12

[†50](#) Cf. Henry Adams, *Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959), pp. 388ff.; Jaffa, p. 48f.

p 13

[†51](#) *Metaphysics* I.3, 983 b 7ff.

p 13

[†52](#) Thomas himself introduces the term "providence" while commenting on how Aristotle refutes those who would deny contingency (*Metaphysics* VI.3, 1027 a 29-b 16), but is careful not to attribute the term to Aristotle himself; see *Commentary on the Metaphysics, ad loc.*, sec. 1203f. and 1216ff.

p 13

[†53](#) Prologue, *in princ.*

p 13

[†54](#) *Ibid.* See also note 286, below.

p 14

[†55](#) *Ibid.*

p 14

[†56](#) *Ibid.* Cf. on 18:5f.

p 14

[†57](#) *Ibid.*

p 14

†58 *Ibid.*

p 14

†59 *Ibid.*

p 14

†60 *Ibid.*

p 15

†61 *Ibid.*

p 15

†62 *Ibid.*

p 15

†63 *Ibid.*

p 15

†64 *Ibid.*

p 16

†65 See Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. anonymous, Library of the Fathers, vols. 18, 21, 23, 31, (4 vols.; Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1844-50); Migne, *Patrologia Latina* [henceforth *PL*], vols. 75-76.

p 16

†66 Prologue.

p 16

†67 On 1:1.

p 17

†68 Cf. on 1:1, 6, 7f., 12, 20; 3:1, 2, 4, 11, 14f., 19, 26 *bis* (including an apparent exception); 4:18; 5:8, 9, 17, 20; 7:2, 17, 20; 9:4, 8, 30, 35; 21:16; 40:5.

p 17

†69 Cf. on 1:5, 8 (an apparent exception), 11, 20; 2:2; 3:25; 5:1; 7:12, 21; 8:3, 4; 14:14 *bis*; 32:1, 22; 40:4.

p 17

†70 Cf. on 1:8, 12, 13 *bis*, 19, 21; 2:11, 12; 3:4, 10, 16; 4:2; 5:3; 7:10, 17; 8:13 *bis*, 22; 9:7, 9, 11 *bis*, 19, 25; 10:9, 10; 11:5, 6 *bis* (including an apparent exception); 13:10, 14; 14:14, 16; 18:6, 12; 19:25; 20:29; 21:17; 22:30; 23:8 (an apparent exception); 27:13; 32:22; 37:9; 24; 40:3, 10, 14, 16 (an apparent exception).

p 18

†71 See note 5, above.

p 19

[†72](#) On 1:1.

p 19

[†73](#) On 1:2.

p 20

[†74](#) *Ibid.*

p 20

[†75](#) On 1:12. Cf. also note 146, below.

p 20

[†76](#) On 1:6.

p 20

[†77](#) *Ibid.*

p 20

[†78](#) Cf., e.g., Aristotle, *Metaphysics* XII.8, 1073 a 14-b 17, with *Commentary on the Metaphysics, ad loc.*, esp. sec. 2460-62.

p 21

[†79](#) On 1:6; cf. on 1:7.

p 21

[†80](#) On 1:6.

p 21

[†81](#) On 1:7.

p 21

[†82](#) *Ibid.*

p 21

[†83](#) On 1:9-10.

p 21

[†84](#) *Ibid.*

p 21

[†85](#) Cf. on 1:12b-2:13, *passim*. J. Kreit's French translation of the *Exposition*, titled *Job: Un homme pour notre temps* (Paris: Téqui, 1981), offers a skeletal outline of each chapter of the Vulgate text in anticipation of Thomas's commentary. Kreit ignores the "protreptic" design we attribute to the *Exposition* as a whole, however.

p 22

[†86](#) On 3:1.

p 22

[†87](#) Cf. note 85, above.

p 23

[†88](#) On 3:1.

p 23

[†89](#) On 3:4.

p 23

[†90](#) *Ibid.*, with Jerome, *Prologus in Libro Job de Hebraeo Translato* [PL 28, 1140].

p 23

[†91](#) On 3:4-5.

p 23

[†92](#) *Ibid.* Also on 1:20; 6:6, 12. Cf. Augustine, *City of God* IX.4; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II.3, 1104 b 24-28, with Thomas, *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*, *ad loc.* sec. 272; also *ST* I-II.59.2.

p 24

[†93](#) On 3:1.

p 24

[†94](#) On 3:2-3; cf. on 9:16, 18. Cf. also *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* II.3, sec. 270.

p 24

[†95](#) On 3:15, with 3:3; 6:10. Cf. also on 10:1-2.

p 25

[†96](#) For the following, see Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino*, pp. 110-29, in addition to the references cited in note 32, above.

p 26

[†97](#) Cf. Yaffe, "Providence in Medieval Aristotelianism," 66; also Leonard E. Boyle, *The Setting of the Summa Theologiae of Saint Thomas*, The Etienne Gilson Series, 5 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1982), pp. 15-20.

p 26

[†98](#) *ST*, Prologue.

p 26

[†99](#) Cf. on 28:23-26, with note 10, above.

p 26

[†100](#) Cf. on 7:12, 17-18; 9:6, 35; 10:2, 9; 16:15; 17:51; 24:1-25; 26:4-14; 27:1-23; with note 11, above.

p 26

†101 Cf. on 3:15, 16-19; 7:1, 8, 10, 17-18, 21; 8:3; 9:25; 10:21; 12:5; 13:15, 28; 14:5-6, 13-22; 16:22-23; 17:1-16; 19:23-29; 20:1-3; 21:17f., 34; 24:19f.; 26:6; with note 12, above.

p 27

†102 See on 38:1, 3; 39:33-35; 40:3; 42:1.

p 27

†103 On 15:15; cf. on 1:1, 5, 22; 2:11; 10:2; 13:23; 39:35.

p 27

†104 Cf. Thomas's comment on 2:13, where Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar are said to visit Job in order to console him not merely by showing compassion, but also "by offering him [their] company" (*ei societatem exhibendo*)—a possibly ambiguous expression that may also be translated, "by showing him society [*sic*]."

p 27

†105 On 7:21. Cf. also on 9:19; 10:21.

p 28

†106 Cf. *CG* III.64-113; *ST* I.19-23, 103-19.

p 29

†107 Cf. on 6:28-30; 39:31-32, 35; with note 102, above.

p 29

†108 On 4:1-16.

p 29

†109 On 4:2.

p 29

†110 On 4:3.

p 29

†111 See our remarks above on Job's "cursing" his day (Job 3).

p 29

†112 E.g., on 4:7-12; 5:17; 6:1-3; 7:1, 5, 11, 16; 8:1-7, 22; 11:1-8, 17-20; 12:1-5; 13:3-28; 15:135; 16:1-11, 21; 17:1, 4-6, 10-16; 18:1-4; 19:1-5; 20:1-3; 21:1-6; 22:1-30; 23:1-7; 24:1; 25:1f.; 26:1f.; 27:1.

p 29

†113 On 4:7-5:16.

p 30

†114 On 4:7.

p 30

^a
[†115](#) On 4:17-19.

p 30

[†116](#) On 5:6-13.

p 31

[†117](#) On 6:12. See note 92, above.

p 31

[†118](#) On 5:17-27.

p 31

[†119](#) On 5:17.

p 31

[†120](#) Cf. on 38:1; 42:7-10.

p 32

[†121](#) On 6:1-3a. Cf. on 6:1.

p 32

[†122](#) Cf. on 6:1, with note 115, above.

p 32

[†123](#) On 6:1.

p 32

[†124](#) Cf. on 6:2, with note 101, above.

p 32

[†125](#) On 6:3b-7:10.

p 32

[†126](#) On 6:6, with note 92, above.

p 33

[†127](#) On 6:10.

p 33

[†128](#) *Ibid.* Cf., note 95 above.

p 33

[†129](#) On 7:1-10.

p 33

[†130](#) On 7:6.

p 33

†131 On 7:10, with *CG* IV.82, sec. 11, which cites Augustine, *City of God* XII.13, referring explicitly to King Solomon (Ecclesiastes 1:9-10) and implicitly to the Stoics. Thomas also refers to the Pharisees in this connection in *Lectura super Mattheum*, on 22:28. However, that Christianity's belief in resurrection follows by and large the Pharisees' is shown by Ellis Rivkin, *A Hidden Revolution: The Pharisees' Search for the Kingdom Within* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), esp. pp. 23, 28, 95f. (on Matthew 22:23-40, etc.), 110f., 113, 303-11. See also note 133, below.

p 33

†132 On 7:9. Thomas refers explicitly to Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* II.11, 338 b 11-19.

p 34

†133 On 7:9; cf. on 10:21. Thomas's doctrine here would seem contradicted by references to the Pharisees' belief in resurrection as found in Josephus (e.g., *Against Apion* II.218-19; *Antiquities* XIII.12ff.; *The Jewish War* III.370-75) and in the Pharisaic writings themselves (e.g., *Mishnah*, *Sanhedrin* 6:2, 10:1; *Peah* 1:1; *Berakoth* 5:2, 9:5); cf. Rivkin, *A Hidden Revolution*, pp. 56f., 291f., 318-21 (on Josephus) and 229-31 (on *Mishnah*); also note 131, above.

p 34

†134 On 13:19; cf. on 19:25. On Job as prefiguring Christ according to Patristic (in contrast with Rabbinic) accounts, cf. Judith R. Baskin, *Pharaoh's Counsellors: Job, Jethro, and Balaam in Rabbinic and Patristic Tradition* (Chico, Ca.: Scholars Press, 1983), ch. 1, esp. pp. 32-43.

p 34

†135 Viz., on 7:11-16a and 7:16b-21; cf. Thomas's remark on 7:16b.

p 34

†136 On 7:12.

p 35

†137 On 7:11b-12.

p 35

†138 On 7:12.

p 35

†139 Cf. note 103, above.

p 35

†140 On 7:13-14.

p 35

†141 Cf. on 7:12.

p 36

†142 On 7:16b-21.

n 36

p 35

†[143](#) See note 138, above.

p 36

†[144](#) On 7:17.

p 36

†[145](#) On 7:18.

p 36

†[146](#) Cf. Prologue; on 1:1, 8, 12; 2:1, 3, 10; with our remarks above.

p 36

†[147](#) On 7:18.

p 37

†[148](#) *Ibid.*

p 37

†[149](#) *Ibid.*; cf. on 7:21, with note 101, above.

p 37

†[150](#) On 8:1-2.

p 37

†[151](#) On 8:3.

p 37

†[152](#) *Ibid.*

p 38

†[153](#) On 8:4.

p 38

†[154](#) *Ibid.*

p 38

†[155](#) On 8:1-4.

p 38

†[156](#) On 9:5.

p 38

†[157](#) *Ibid.*

p 38

†[158](#) *Ibid.*

p 38

[†159](#) *Ibid.*

p 39

[†160](#) *Ibid.*

p 39

[†161](#) *Ibid.* Cf. on 3:26; 4:9; 5:26; 6:2; 9:13; 10:17; 13:11; 14:13; 20:28; 35:15; 40:6.

p 39

[†162](#) On 9:22-10:22; cf. Thomas's summary on 10:22.

p 39

[†163](#) On 9:23.

p 39

[†164](#) *Ibid.*

p 40

[†165](#) *Ibid.*

p 40

[†166](#) On 11:5.

p 40

[†167](#) *Ibid.*

p 40

[†168](#) On 11:6.

p 40

[†169](#) *Ibid.*

p 41

[†170](#) *Ibid.*

p 41

[†171](#) *Ibid.*

p 41

[†172](#) See our remarks below on God's "determination" (Job 38-42:8).

p 41

[†173](#) On 12:1.

p 41

[†174](#) *Ibid.*

[†114](#) *Ibid.*

p 41

[†175](#) On 12:6-10, esp. on 12:10.

p 41

[†176](#) *Ibid.*

p 42

[†177](#) *Ibid.*

p 42

[†178](#) On 12:17.

p 42

[†179](#) *Ibid.*

p 42

[†180](#) *Ibid.*

p 42

[†181](#) On 13:3-10.

p 43

[†182](#) Cf. on 12:1; 13:19-22; 15:5-13; 22:1-4; 33:12-13; with 21:1f., 4 and 23:3-4; also, note 134, above.

p 43

[†183](#) On 13:10.

p 43

[†184](#) On 13:10.

p 43

[†185](#) On 13:23.

p 43

[†186](#) *Ibid.*; cf. on 1:1, with our remarks above on Thomas's digressions.

p 43

[†187](#) See on 2:11, with notes 103 and 112, above.

p 43

[†188](#) On 14:1-22.

p 43

[†189](#) On 14:13-15. Cf. our preliminary remarks above on Job's "debate" with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar (Job 4-28).

p 44

[†190](#) On 14:13.

p 44

[†191](#) *Ibid.*, with note 161, above.

p 44

[†192](#) *Ibid.*

p 44

[†193](#) *Ibid.*

p 44

[†194](#) Cf. *ST* I.76.5, *ad* 1.

p 44

[†195](#) On 14:15.

p 44

[†196](#) *Ibid.*

p 45

[†197](#) Cf., e.g., notes 68, 69, and 70, above.

p 45

[†198](#) On 15:1.

p 45

[†199](#) On 15:3-5.

p 45

[†200](#) *Ibid.*

p 46

[†201](#) On 16:1-3a. Cf. note 187, above.

p 46

[†202](#) On 16:3b.

p 46

[†203](#) On 16:4-15.

p 46

[†204](#) On 16:7-8.

p 46

[†205](#) On 16:12-15.

[¶205](#) On 10:12-13.

p 46

[¶206](#) See our remarks above on the "history" of Job's suffering (Job 1-2).

p 46

[¶207](#) On 16:9.

p 46

[¶208](#) On 16:9-10.

p 47

[¶209](#) On 16:21-22.

p 47

[¶210](#) On 18:1-3.

p 47

[¶211](#) On 18:4.

p 47

[¶212](#) On 18:5-21.

p 47

[¶213](#) On 18:5.

p 47

[¶214](#) *Ibid.*

p 48

[¶215](#) On 19:1-5. Cf. note 187, above.

p 48

[¶216](#) On 19:6-8.

p 48

[¶217](#) On 19:25-27.

p 49

[¶218](#) Viz., 2 Cor. 13:4 *bis*; John 5:25; Heb. 13:8; John 6:40; 1 Cor. 15:53; and Wis. 9:15.

p 49

[¶219](#) On 19:25a. Cf. notes 131 and 133, above.

p 49

[¶220](#) On 19:25b. Cf. notes 92, 117, and 131, above.

~ 40

p 47

[†221](#) On 19:26.

p 49

[†222](#) On 20:1-3.

p 49

[†223](#) On 20:10b-15.

p 50

[†224](#) On 20:11.

p 50

[†225](#) On 20:22-23.

p 50

[†226](#) On 21:1f.

p 50

[†227](#) On 21:4.

p 51

[†228](#) See note 225, above.

p 51

[†229](#) On 21:22.

p 51

[†230](#) *Ibid.*

p 51

[†231](#) *Ibid.*

p 51

[†232](#) On 21:29.

p 52

[†233](#) Cf. [Stuart MacClintock], "Averroism," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (8 vols.: New York: Macmillan Company and Free Press, 1967), vol. I, pp. 23-26; also, note 28, above.

p 52

[†234](#) Cf. on 23:13.

p 52

[†235](#) On 22:12.

p 52

[†236](#) On 22:13-14. Cf. Averroes on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, *Commentary*, 51 (Variorum ed., vol. VIII, p. 225).

[†236](#) On 22:12-14. Cf. Averroes on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Commentary 51 (Venice ed., vol. VIII, p. 333 D).

p 52

[†237](#) On 22:13. Cf. Averroes, *loc. cit.* (vol. VIII, p. 337 A).

p 53

[†238](#) On 23:3-9.

p 53

[†239](#) On 23:8-9. Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* II.2, 284 b 6-30; Thomas, *In Aristotelis Libros De Caelo et Mundo, ad loc.*, sec. 300-304.

p 53

[†240](#) Cf. note 286, below.

p 53

[†241](#) On 23:10.

p 53

[†242](#) On 23:11-13.

p 54

[†243](#) On 25:1f.

p 54

[†244](#) On 25:2. Cf., e.g., on 23:6.

p 54

[†245](#) On 25:4.

p 54

[†246](#) On 26:1-4.

p 55

[†247](#) On 26:5-13.

p 55

[†248](#) *Ibid.*, *passim*. Cf. note 286, below.

p 55

[†249](#) On 26:14. See also note 294, below.

p 56

[†250](#) On 27:1.

p 56

[†251](#) Cf. explicitly on 27:3-16 and implicitly on 26:7-9-10

[†251](#) Cf. explicitly on 27:5, 10, and implicitly on 20:7, 9, 10.

p 56

[†252](#) On 27:8-10.

p 56

[†253](#) Cf. note 30, above.

p 56

[†254](#) On 27:11-23.

p 56

[†255](#) On 28:1-18.

p 57

[†256](#) On 28:23.

p 57

[†257](#) On 28:27.

p 57

[†258](#) 29:1f.

p 57

[†259](#) See note 189, above.

p 57

[†260](#) On 29:1f.

p 58

[†261](#) Cf. *Rhetoric* I.2, 1356 a 36-b 25.

p 58

[†262](#) Cf. esp. on 29:9-17.

p 58

[†263](#) On 31:16-18.

p 58

[†264](#) *Ibid.*

p 59

[†265](#) Cf. notes 96, 102, and 226, above.

p 59

[†266](#) On 32:8.

n 59

p 57

†[267](#) *Ibid.*

p 59

†[268](#) Cf. note 134, above.

p 59

†[269](#) On 32:22.

p 60

†[270](#) On 32:1. Cf. also on 34:34.

p 60

†[271](#) Cf. on 36:12; 37:24.

p 60

†[272](#) On 33:10-12; 34:1-37; 36:22-37:24.

p 60

†[273](#) Cf. esp. on 33:10, 11f., 12f.; 34:5-6, 9-10; 35:1-3; 36:12; 37:24.

p 60

†[274](#) Cf. on 33:13, with 33:10-12.

p 60

†[275](#) On 33:13. Cf., e.g., on 3:1; 7:18; 23:4.

p 60

†[276](#) On 32:17-18.

p 61

†[277](#) On 38:1.

p 61

†[278](#) On 38:2f.

p 61

†[279](#) On 38:1.

p 61

†[280](#) Cf. note 273, above.

p 61

†[281](#) See below, on 42:7-9.

p 61

†[282](#) On 38:1. See also note 102, above.

p 61

†283 Cf. note 279, above.

p 62

†284 On 38:4-6.

p 62

†285 On 38:8-39:32. Cf. on 38:12, 17, 36, 41; 39:5, 31. Cf. on 5:9 and 9:8.

p 62

†286 On 38:17, 21, 25, 33, 34, 36; 39:31; with 40:10, 14, 20; 41:16. Cf. Prologue, *in princ.*; on 4:17; 10:8; 11:5, 7 *ter*, 8 *bis*; 23:8; 26:5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14; also 37:9, 11.

p 62

†287 See note 8, above.

p 62

†288 On 39:33-35.

p 63

†289 On 40:10, 20, and *passim*.

p 63

†290 On 40:13.

p 63

†291 *Ibid.*

p 63

†292 Cf. on 40:10-15, 17-28; 41:1-20, 22-25.

p 63

†293 On 40:13.

p 64

†294 On 40:14. For God's "ways," see on 11:7; 21:14; 24:13; 26:14; 34:21, 27; 36:23, 24; cf. also on 4:6.

p 64

†295 On 40:14.

p 64

†296 *Ibid.*

p 64

†297 On 42:9-16.

n 64

p 57

‡298 On 42:10.

p 65

‡299 See note 2, above.

p 65

‡300 Cf. note 263, above.

p 67

‡1 Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I.3, 983 b 6ff.; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* I.4, sec. 74-92; *CG* II.39, sec. 9.

p 67

‡2 Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* II.4, 196 a 24-b 4; *Metaphysics* I.4, 985 b 2-20; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Physics of Aristotle* II.7, sec. 203-204; *Commentary on the Metaphysics* I.7, sec. 112-18.

p 67

‡3 Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* II.3, 196 a 20-24; *Metaphysics* I.3, 984 b 32-985b 4; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Physics* II, 1.7, sec. 202; *Commentary on the Metaphysics* I.6, sec. 104-111.

p 68

‡4 The Latin term *quaestio* here refers to a topic of formal debate in the medieval university. Cf., e.g., [P. Michaud-Quantin and J. A. Weisheipl], "Dialectics in the Middle Ages," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 4, 846-49, esp. 848.

p 68

‡5 E.g., Moses Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* III.22 (trans. S. Pines [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963], p. 486).

p 69

‡6 *disputandi*. Cf. note 4, above.

p 69

‡7 The mystical or spiritual sense is referred to here. Cf. *ST* I.1.10.

p 69

‡8 Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, "Epistle," ch. 3-4 (*Library of the Fathers*, vol. 18, pp. 7-9 [*PL* 75, 513ff.]).

p 72

‡1 Cf. Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* II.3, 737 a 27ff.

p 74

‡2 Cf. *ST* I-II.103.1.

p 75

‡3 Cf. esp. Lev. 1:9, 13, 17 and 6:2, with 6:19 and 7:15ff.

p 75

†4 Cf. *ST* II-II.35.1.

p 76

†5 Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* III.1-7 (trans. Pines, pp. 415-30).

p 76

†6 Cf. *ST* I.1.10, *ad* 3.

p 76

†7 Cf. *ST* I.103-119; *CG* III.64-113.

p 76

†8 Cf. Isidore, *Etymologiae* VII.5 [*PL* 82, 272 A]; Allan of Lille, *Distinctiones*, s.v. "Diabolus" [*PL* 210, 766 C].

p 76

†9 Cf. *ibid.* VIII.11 [*PL* 82, 316 A].

p 76

†10 Cf. *ibid.*

p 77

†11 *On the Celestial Hierarchy*, ch. 13 (trans., p. 55) [*PL* 3, 300].

p 77

†12 Cf., e.g., *ST* I.46.1, *ad* 5.

p 78

†13 Matt. 3:17, 17:5.

p 78

†14 Thomas, *De Veritate* XII.7, refers to Jer. 1:13 and Zech. 6:1.

p 79

†15 Plato, *Parmenides* 137 e 3-4.

p 79

†16 Ps. 11:9 (Vulg.).

p 80

†17 Thomas, *De Veritate* V.4, refers to Avicenna, *Metaphysics* IX.6.

p 80

†18 Cf. *ST* II-II.19.14.

p 83

†19 *Glossa Ordinaria* on Gen. 3:1; cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram* XI.3 [PL 34, 431].

p 85

†20 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* III.17, 1418 b 4.

p 86

†21 Cf. *ST* I.110.2-3.

p 86

†22 On the translation of *virtus* sometimes as "virtue," sometimes as "power," see translator's Preface.

p 87

†23 IX.4.

p 92

†1 Cf on 1:6.

p 92

†2 Cf. *ST* I.70.1 and I.74.1.

p 92

†3 Cf. on 1:7.

p 92

†4 Cf. *ST* I.19.5; *CG* I.86, 87 and III.97.

p 93

†5 Cf. on 1:11.

p 93

†6 Cf. on 1:12a.

p 94

†7 Cf. the preceding note.

p 94

†8 Cf. Gen. 2-3.

p 97

†9 Ovid, *Remedia Amoris* 127f.

p 99

†1 On 1:20.

p 99

†2 Cf. Matt. 26:34; Mk. 14:34.

p 100

†3 I.1 (Poem) [PL 63, 581].

p 102

†4 *Prologus in Libro Job de Hebraeo Translato* [PL 28, 1140].

p 102

†5 Thomas, *ST* II-II.122.4, cites Ex. 20:11.

p 102

†6 Thomas, *ST* I-II.102.2, arg. 1, cites Ex. 13:9.

p 103

†7 Matt. 14:6; Gen. 40:20.

p 106

†8 See especially on 14:13ff. and 19:23ff.

p 107

†9 On 3:3.

p 109

†10 E.g., Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* V.6, *ad loc.* [PL 75, 684 C-D].

p 110

†11 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* IV.9, 1128 b 11f.

p 115

†1 Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VII.9, 1151 b 34ff.

p 117

†2 Cf. Matt. 14:8.

p 122

†3 *Peri Archon* I.6 [PG 11, 169 C]; cf. Augustine, *City of God* XXI.17.

p 123

†4 E.g., Plato, according to Nemesius, *De Natura Hominis* III [PG 40, 593 B]; cf. Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* III, d. 22 q. 1 a. 1 and *De Spiritualibus Creaturis* a. 2.

p 124

†5 Cf. II Ki. 19:2ff. (Vulg.).

p 124

†6 Ps. 18:13 (Vulg.).

p 124

‡7 *Ibid.*

p 127

‡1 As Antoine Dondaine observes in the preface to the Leonine edition of Thomas's *Expositio Super Job* (p. 141), the divisions of the text of Job in the Bible used by St. Thomas do not always correspond to those of the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate now common. There are three cases in which they differ: 1) Chapter Five of the Clementine begins one verse earlier than in the *Expositio* (cf. ch. 4, l. 575); 2) Chapter Fourteen of the Clementine begins four verses earlier than in the *Expositio* (cf. ch. 13, l. 436); 3) Chapter Thirty-seven of the Clementine begins two verses later than in the *Expositio* (cf. ch. 37, l. 48). The Leonine edition points out these divergences in their places, but it respects the divisions of St. Thomas's commentary. Not to do so would have disturbed the structure of the *Expositio*.

p 128

‡2 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VII.7, 1149 a 25ff. Cf. *ST* I-II.46.4, *ad* 3.

p 128

‡3 Cf. on 3:1, above.

p 131

‡4 Thomas, *De Potentia* III.16, cites Avicenna, *Metaphysics* IX.4.

p 132

‡5 Cf., for the following, Aristotle, *Physics* IV.5, 213 a 1ff. and *On the Heavens* IV.5, 312 a 25ff.

p 134

‡6 On 4:2, 7.

p 134

‡7 Thomas, *ST* III.31.3, *ad* 3, cites Augustine, *De Consensu Evangelistarum* II.4 [PL 34, 1077]. Cf. also on 42:8.

p 135

‡8 Cf. Rom. 8:36.

p 137

‡1 Cf. on 5:17ff., 4:1ff., 4:17ff.

p 137

‡2 Cf. on 4:19.

p 138

‡3 Cf. on 3:26.

p 139

‡4 Cf. on 1:20.

p 140

-
[¶5](#) Cf. note 4, above.

p 143

[¶6](#) Cf. note 1, above.

p 144

[¶7](#) Cf. *ST* II-II.38.1.

p 144

[¶8](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutations* I.11, 171 b 18ff.

p 145

[¶1](#) Cf. on 5:17-27.

p 148

[¶2](#) Cf. *CG* IV.82 with Augustine, *City of God* XII.13.

p 148

[¶3](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I.1, 980 a 26f.; *On Sense and Sensibility* 2, 437 a 3ff.

p 149

[¶4](#) Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* II.11, 338 b 11ff.

p 149

[¶5](#) Cf. note 2, above.

p 150

[¶6](#) Dondaine, ad loc., suggests that Thomas here refers to the Pharisees, as at *Lectura super Mattheum*, ad 22:28. Yet Thomas may simply be following Augustine (as in note 2, above), who refers to unnamed persons who cite Solomon's words in Eccl. 1:9-10.

p 150

[¶7](#) In the reference cited in note 2, above, Augustine refers to unnamed philosophers who subscribe to the general doctrine of eternal recurrence.

p 150

[¶8](#) III Ki. 17:23; IV Ki. 4:35; Matt. 9:25, 27:52.

p 152

[¶9](#) Cf. Allan of Lille, *Distinctiones*, s.v. "Os" [*PL* 210, 885].

p 155

[¶10](#) Cf. Ex. 4:21; 10:1; Is. 6:9; 63:17; Rom. 9:18.

p 155

[¶11](#) Cf. *ST* I-II.17.1.

p 158

[†1](#) Cf. on 5:23.

p 159

[†2](#) Cf. on 7:6.

p 167

[†1](#) I.e., in the celestial as in the earthly bodies.

p 167

[†2](#) I.e., all those bodies which are composed of mixtures of the four simple elements: earth, water, air, and fire. Cf. Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* II.8, 334 b 31ff.

p 167

[†3](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.12, 282 b 4ff.

p 167

[†4](#) Cf. *ST* I-II.1.2 *sed c.*, with Aristotle, *Physics* II.8, 196 b 21, and 13, 199 a 7.

p 167

[†5](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I.2, 1094 a 23f.

p 168

[†6](#) Cf. on 3:26.

p 168

[†7](#) Cf. note 2, above.

p 168

[†8](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* II.14, 296 b 21ff.

p 168

[†9](#) E.g., Aristotle, *Meteorology* II.8, 366 a 4ff.

p 168

[†10](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.2, 269 b 1ff. and II.6, 287 a 23ff.; *Metaphysics* XII.7, 1072 a 20ff. The word "power" in this paragraph is translated from the Latin *virtus*.

p 169

[†11](#) On 9:5.

p 170

[†12](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* II.10, 362 b 25ff.

p 170

[†13](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* II.2, 285 b 1ff. and II.14, 297 b 31ff., with Thomas, *In Libros Aristotelis de Caelo et Mundo Expositio* II.3, esp. sec. 328, and II.28, sec. 542.

p 171

[†14](#) Wis. 11:21.

p 173

[†15](#) Cf. on 3:26.

p 173

[†16](#) Trans. Stephen McKenna (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1963), p. 103 f. [PL 42, 873].

p 176

[†17](#) Cf. on 4:7.

p 176

[†18](#) Cf. on 6:1ff.

p 176

[†19](#) Cf. on 8:4.

p 177

[†20](#) I.e., Satan.

p 177

[†21](#) Cf. on 9:22.

p 177

[†22](#) John 8:34.

p 178

[†23](#) Cf. on 10:8.

p 179

[†24](#) Cf. on 4:7.

p 180

[†25](#) Cf. on 9:4ff.

p 181

[†26](#) Cf. on 9:23.

p 184

[†1](#) Cf. note 2, below.

p 185

[†2](#) Augustine, *De Haeresiis* 46 [PL 42, 38].

p 186

†3 Cf. note 2, above.

p 187

†4 13:1 in the Masoretic text.

p 188

†5 Gen. 3:19.

p 188

†6 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* I.18, 725 b 3f. and 726 a 26f.

p 188

†7 Cf. *ibid.* II.4, 739 b 20f.

p 188

†8 Cf. Aristotle, *Topics* III.1, 116 b 21f.

p 188

†9 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* II.3, 736 a 35ff.

p 188

†10 Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI.13, 1144 b 2ff.

p 189

†11 Cf. on 10:2.

p 192

†12 Cf. on 7:6.

p 192

†13 Certain ancients, according to Augustine, *City of God* XII.13; cf. Thomas, *CG* IV.82.

p 192

†14 Cf., e.g., on 14:13 and 19:25.

p 192

†15 Cf., e.g., on 5:19 and 8:3.

p 196

†1 Cf. *ST* I-II.21.1.

p 196

†2 Aristotle, *On the Soul* I.12, 411 a 5.

p 196

†3 Rom. 1:20.

p 197

[f4](#) E.g., Ex. 33:13, with Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* I.54.

p 198

[f5](#) Cf., e.g., *CG* III.49. The Latin for "power" here is *virtus*.

p 207

[f1](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I.2, 71 b 34ff. and *Metaphysics* V.11, 1018 b 30ff.

p 209

[f2](#) Literally, "operative." Cf. *ST* I.14.16.

p 210

[f3](#) The Latin text here has *impotentes* and *potentia* respectively for "powerless" and "power."

p 213

[f1](#) Cf. on 12:13ff.

p 213

[f2](#) Cf. on 11:6ff.

p 216

[f3](#) E.g., Ez. 38:19; Wis. 18:20.

p 216

[f4](#) Cf. on 11:15.

p 216

[f5](#) Cf. on 11:19.

p 217

[f6](#) Cf. on 4:2, 7.

p 218

[f7](#) Cf. especially on 14:13ff. and 19:25ff.

p 220

[f8](#) Cf. on 1:1.

p 223

[f1](#) Cf. note on 5:1.

p 226

[f2](#) Cf. on v. 10.

p 226

†3 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.3, 270 a 12ff.

p 227

†4 Cf. on v. 11.

p 227

†5 Cf. on 7:6.

p 227

†6 Cf. Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* II.10, 336 b 27ff.

p 227

†7 Cf. on v. 6.

p 228

†8 Cf. on 7:1f.

p 228

†9 Cf. on v. 6.

p 230

†10 Cf. on 9:5.

p 231

†11 Cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* I.8, 491 b 9f.

p 231

†12 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Soul* III.4, 429 a 18ff., b 5ff.

p 231

†13 Thomas, *ST* I-II.35.2, arg. 1, cites Augustine, *City of God* XIV.7.

p 235

†1 Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI.8, 1142 a 15ff.

p 236

†2 I.e., from the major premise implied in v. 15.

p 237

†3 Cf. on 1:12.

p 239

†4 Cf. on 12:6.

p 239

†5 Cf. Prov. 11:2.

p 245

[†1](#) Cf. on 14:22.

p 245

[†2](#) Cf. *ST* I-II.37.1

p 245

[†3](#) Cf. on 7:5.

p 245

[†4](#) Cf. on 4:7.

p 246

[†5](#) Cf. on 15:32.

p 246

[†6](#) Cf. on 15:20, 34.

p 247

[†7](#) Cf. on ch. 1-2.

p 247

[†8](#) Cf. Isidore, *Etymologies* XI.1 [*PL* 82, 409], and on 40:11.

p 249

[†9](#) Cf. *ST* I-II.109.8.

p 249

[†10](#) Cf. vv. 14, 16, 18.

p 250

[†11](#) Cf. on 7:6.

p 251

[†1](#) Cf. on 18:12; 34:10; with Thomas, *De Motu Cordis*.

p 253

[†2](#) Cf. on 5:18.

p 253

[†3](#) *Morals on the Book of Job* V.45 [*PL* 75. 726 C].

p 253

[†4](#) On v. 7.

p 254

[†5](#) Cf. *ST* II-II.158.1, *ad* 2.

p 254

†6 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* III.8, 1116 b 31ff.

p 254

†7 Cf. on 5:19, 8:6, 11:17.

p 255

†8 Cf. on 5:17.

p 255

†9 Cf. on 5:18, 7:1, 8:3, 10:21.

p 262

†1 Cf. on 17:13.

p 263

†1 Cf. on 18:2.

p 264

†2 Cf. on 18:4ff.

p 264

†3 Chapters 3, 6-7, 9-10, 12-14, and 16-17.

p 264

†4 Chapters 4-5, 8, 11, 15, and 18.

p 265

†5 Cf. on 14:7.

p 266

†6 Cf. on 21:30.

p 266

†7 Cf. on 1:15, 17, 19, with 5:17 (Eliphaz), 8:3f. (Bildad), and 11:6 (Zophar).

p 268

†8 Thomas, *ST* II-II.30.1, cites Augustine, *City of God* IX.5; cf. also Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II.8, 1385 b 13ff.

p 268

†9 Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* XIV.49 [PL 75, 1068 b].

p 269

†10 Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* III, d. 2, q. 1, a. 3, qc. 2, cites Gennadius, *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus*, ch. 2 [PL 58, 981 C].

p 270

[†11](#) Cf. on 7:6, above.

p 270

[†12](#) Cf. Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* IV, d. 44, q. 1, a. 1, qc. 1; *De Articulis Fidei*, art. 5.

p 270

[†13](#) Thomas, *ST* I-II.4.6, cites Augustine, *City of God* XXII.26.

p 270

[†14](#) XXII.29.

p 271

[†15](#) 338 b 16ff.

p 276

[†1](#) Cf. on v. 11.

p 280

[†2](#) Wis. 5:21, with Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* IV, d. 47, q. 1, a. 2, qc. 1.

p 282

[†1](#) Chapters 4-5 and 15 (Eliphaz); 8 and 18 (Bildad); 11 and 20 (Zophar).

p 282

[†2](#) Cf. on 20:5.

p 282

[†3](#) Cf. on 20:8.

p 284

[†4](#) Cf. on 19:25.

p 284

[†5](#) Cf. on 7:9.

p 286

[†6](#) Cf. also Thomas's Prologue.

p 287

[†7](#) Thomas, *ST* I-II.5.8, arg. 3, cites Augustine, *On the Trinity* XIII.5 [PL 42, 1020].

p 288

[†8](#) Cf. on 19:11.

p 288

[†9](#) Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* XV.60 [PL 75, 1118 D].

p 291

†1 Here the translation follows the reading of the beta (1) gamma Rho manuscript.

p 292

†2 The Vulgate differs here from the Masoretic text (of Psalm 16:2).

p 293

†3 10:13 in the Masoretic text.

p 293

†4 Cf. Averroes, *Aristotelis Metaphysicorum Commentarium* XI.51 (vol. 8, p. 335 1).

p 294

†5 Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* I, d. 35, a. 3, cites Averroes, *loc. cit.* [vol. 8, p. 337 A].

p 294

†6 Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* I, d. 36, q. 1, a. 1, cites Algazel, *Metaphysics* I, tr. 3 and 5, sent. 5 [ed. Muckle (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1933), pp. 66, 71].

p 294

†7 Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* III.17, *re* Aristotle.

p 296

†8 Cf. on v. 16f.

p 298

†9 Cf. on 5:17-26.

p 299

†1 Cf. on 22:5, 12.

p 301

†2 *On the Heavens* II.2, 284 b 21ff.

p 301

†3 Cf. Averroes, *De Coelo Commentarium* II.13 [vol. 5, p. 102 H].

p 301

†4 Cf. Aristotle, *loc. cit.*, 3, 285 b 23ff.

p 302

†5 Cf. *ibid.*, 285 b 31ff.

p 303

†6 *affectus*. Cf. on 31:5, with *ST T.82.5, ad 1*.

p 303

[f7](#) *operandi*. Cf. on 30:12 ("working").

p 306

[f1](#) Cf. on 22:5.

p 306

[f2](#) Cf. on 22:12-14.

p 306

[f3](#) *Idem*.

p 308

[f4](#) Wis. 6:14.

p 310

[f5](#) Cf. Albert the Great, *De Vegetabilibus et Plantis* VII.2.4.

p 310

[f6](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II.7, 1107 a 2ff.

p 310

[f7](#) Ch. 12.

p 311

[f8](#) Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* IV, d. 50, q. 2, a. 3, qc. 2 *sed contra*, cites Augustine, *City of God* XX.22.

p 313

[f1](#) Cf. on 22:5, 12.

p 313

[f2](#) Cf. on 23:6.

p 313

[f3](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.3, 270 a 12ff.

p 314

[f4](#) Cf. Augustine, *On the Trinity* IX.4 [PL 42, 873].

p 314

[f5](#) The Platonists, according to Thomas, *ST* II-II.94.1, which cites Augustine, *City of God* XVIII.14.

p 314

[f6](#) Thomas, *ST* II-II.153.2, arg. 3, cites Augustine, *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* I.24 [PL 44, 429].

p 315

†7 Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* XVII.17 [PL 76, 23 A]; cf. also on 17:14, above.

p 317

†1 Cf. further on 27:1 and 29:1.

p 319

†2 Cf. on 5:18; 8:3; 10:21; etc.

p 319

†3 Cf. on 9:9.

p 319

†4 Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* IV.6, 213 a 27ff.

p 320

†5 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* I.9, 346 b 32ff.

p 320

†6 Cf. on 5:10 and 38:10; also, *ST* I.69.1, *ad* 4.

p 320

†7 Cf. Thomas, *Responsio 36 Questionibus*, qq. 1-4 and *Responsio 42 Questionibus*, esp. qq. 3-5.

p 321

†8 Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* XVII.29 [PL 76, 31].

p 321

†9 Cf. *ibid.*, XVIII.32 [PL 76, 35 C].

p 321

†10 Cf. on 11:7; 36:23.

p 324

†1 Cf. Aristotle, *On Youth, Old Age, and Respiration* 5, 472 b 27f.

p 324

†2 I.2, 492 b 10-12.

p 325

†3 Cf. on 19:25, 21:32.

p 325

†4 Thomas, *ST* II-II.111.4, arg. 1, cites *Glossa Ordinaria* on Col. 3:23.

p 326

†5 Wis. 2:4.

p 327

†6 Thomas, *ST II-II.78.1* cites Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics V.5*, 1133 a 20ff. and *Politics I.9*, 1275 a 35ff.

p 327

†7 Thomas, *ST II-II.188.7, ad 5*, cites Aristotle, *Politics I.7*, 1257 a 5ff.

p 328

†8 Luke 12:4.

p 331

†1 Cf. on 27:13.

p 331

†2 Cf. also on v. 15, below.

p 331

†3 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology III.6*, 378 a 26ff.; Albert the Great, *Meteora III.5*, *Mineralia III.1.2* and 5.

p 332

†4 Cf. Albert the Great, *Mineralia III.1.5* and 10.

p 332

†5 See the discussion of *virtus* in the translator's Preface.

p 333

†6 Cf. on v. 1.

p 334

†7 See note 5, above.

p 334

†8 Ps. 103:10.

p 335

†9 Cf. Albert the Great, *Mineralia II.2.11*.

p 336

†10 *Ibid.*, II.2.17.

p 336

†11 *Ibid.*, II.2.13.

p 336

†12 Cf. on 1:22.

p 337

†13 Albert the Great, *Mineralia* II.2.18. Thomas interpolates "or because in color."

p 337

†14 Thomas, *ST* II-II.95.3, cites Isidore, *Etymologies* VIII.9 [PL 82, 312].

p 337

†15 See the preceding note.

p 339

†16 Thomas, *De Veritate*, VIII.15, *sed contra* 1, cites Dionysus, *On the Divine Names* VII.2 (trans., p. 65).

p 342

†1 Cf. on 30:1.

p 342

†2 Cf. on 31:1.

p 342

†3 Cf. on 26:1 and 27:1.

p 343

†4 Thomas, *ST* II-II.117.2, *ad* 2, cites *De Disciplina Christiana*, ch. 6 [PL 40, 672].

p 343

†5 Cf. on 5:4.

p 344

†6 Thomas, *ST* II-II.129.3, *ad* 5, cites Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* IV.10, 1124 b 18ff.

p 345

†7 Cf. on vv. 8-10 and 11-16.

p 346

†8 Cf. on v. 21.

p 350

†1 Thomas, *On Kingship* II.1, cites Aristotle, *Politics* VII.7, 1327 b 23ff. and Vegetius, *Institutio Rei Militaris* I.2.

p 350

†2 Cf. on 1:15.

p 350

†3 Cf. on 23:11 and 31:5.

p 352

†4 Cf. on 17:14 and 25:6.

p 353

†5 Cf. on 29:1 and on v. 1, above.

p 353

†6 Cf. on 29:12ff.

p 353

†7 Thomas, *ST I-II.4.7.3*, *arg.* 1, cites Aristotle, *Rhetoric II.2*, 1374 a 15ff.

p 353

†8 Cf. on 39:15.

p 355

†1 Cf. on 29:1 and 30:1.

p 356

†2 Thomas, *ST II-II.37.1*, ad 2, cites Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics VII.11*, 1152b 18f.; *ST II-II.180.2*, ad 3, cites Augustine, *Soliloquia I.10* [*PL* 32, 878].

p 357

†3 Cf. on 11:11.

p 357

†4 *affectus*. Cf. on 23:10 ("will").

p 357

†5 Cf. on 23:10 and 30:12.

p 358

†6 Cf. Matt. 19:6.

p 358

†7 Cf. Gen. 2:24.

p 362

†8 Thomas, *ST II-II.94.4*, and *Expositio super Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos* on 1:25, cites Wis. 13:2.

p 363

†9 Thomas, *ST II-II.69.1*, ad 3, cites Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job XXII.15* [*PL* 76, 230].

p 366

†1 Cf. on 33:10-13; 34:5 and 9; 35:2 and 3.

p 366

†2 Cf. Prologue, and on 1:1.

p 366

[f3](#) Cf. on 12:12; 15:10.

p 367

[f4](#) Cf. the preceding note.

p 367

[f5](#) Is. 11:2.

p 369

[f6](#) Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job XIII.55* [PL 75, 1018 A].

p 374

[f1](#) Cf. on 34:1.

p 375

[f2](#) Thomas, *ST I.84.8, ad 2*, cites Aristotle, *On Sleep* 3, 456 b 17ff.

p 375

[f3](#) Cf. on 4:16.

p 376

[f4](#) Cf. Ecclus. 10:15.

p 377

[f5](#) Cf. *Glossa Ordinaria* on Phil. 4:4.

p 381

[f1](#) Cf. on 33:9 and 12b; cf. also on 35:1.

p 383

[f2](#) Cf. on 17:1; 18:12.

p 385

[f3](#) Cf. Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum IV*, d. 43, a. 4, qc. 2, *ad 2*.

p 386

[f4](#) Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job I.5* [PL 75, 557 D].

p 388

[f5](#) Cf. on 21:14f.

p 391

[f1](#) Cf. on 34:1.

p 391

†2 This is the more pointed of only two acknowledgements by Thomas in the whole *Expositio* of alternate readings. The other occurs in his commentary on 8:19. In the preface to the Leonine edition (p. 24f.), Dondaine cites these alternate readings in support of his thesis that the Vulgate used by Thomas belonged to a Parisian family of manuscripts, and that Thomas made no use of the correctories available to him. Otherwise, there might have been many more such notices. Cf. also on 35:10.

p 392

†3 Cf. Is. 66:1. Cf. also on 26:9; 36:29; 38:31.

p 392

†4 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.3, 270 b 20f.; *Meteorology* I.3, 339 b 21ff.

p 392

†5 Cf. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 4.2.

p 393

†6 Cf. note 2, above.

p 394

†7 Cf. on 28:21.

p 394

†8 *Idem.*

p 398

†1 Cf. further on v. 22.

p 398

†2 Cf. on 17:3.

p 400

†3 Cf. on 37:24.

p 400

†4 Cf. on 1:7.

p 400

†5 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* IV.3, 1124 b 26ff.

p 403

†6 Cf. on 11:7 and 26:14.

p 403

†7 Cf. on 35:10.

p 403

†8 Cf. on 11:6.

p 403

†9 Cf. Thomas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics* II.1, sec. 280.

p 404

†10 Cf. on 24:1.

p 404

†11 Cf. Is. 66:1. Cf. also on 38:34.

p 404

†12 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* II.9, 369 a 28ff.

p 404

†13 Cf. note on 5:1.

p 405

†1 Cf. Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* IV, d. 49, q. 4, a. 5, qc. 3 *ad* 3.

p 406

†2 Cf. on 7:8.

p 406

†3 Cf. Macrobius, *In Somnium Scipionis* I.14 (trans. Stahl, pp. 142 ff.).

p 406

†4 *Ibid.* I.9 (p. 126).

p 406

†5 Cf. on 12:11.

p 407

†6 Thomas, *ST* II-II.66.1, cites Aristotle, *Politics* I.6, 1256 b 20ff.; cf. also on 14:20.

p 408

†7 Cf. Isidore, *De Natura Rerum*, ch. 37 [PL 83, 1007]; Albertus Magnus, *Meteora* III.1.2.

p 408

†8 Cf. on 9:9.

p 408

†9 *Idem.*

p 409

†10 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* II.6, 364 b 14f.

p 411

†11 *Ibid.* 358 a 20ff

[¶11](#) *ibid.*, 356 a 2711.

p 411

[¶12](#) Cf. Isidore, *loc. cit.* (note 8, above); Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *On the Properties of Things* XI.3.

p 411

[¶13](#) Cf. Albertus Magnus, *De Caelo et Mundo* I.8.

p 411

[¶14](#) Thomas, *ST* I.68.4, cites John Damascene, *De Fide* II.6 [PG 94, 884 C].

p 411

[¶15](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* III.1, 299 b 13f.; *Meteorology* IV.4, 382 a 11ff.

p 412

[¶16](#) Cf. Albertus Magnus, *De Natura Locorum* I.8.

p 412

[¶17](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* I.10, 347 b 6ff., I.12, 348 b 2ff., with Thomas, *In Libros Aristotelis Meteorologicorum Expositio, ad loc.*; also Albertus Magnus, *Expositio Super Job* on 37:22.

p 413

[¶18](#) Rom. 11:33.

p 413

[¶19](#) Cf. on 32:22 (Elihu) and on 7:1ff. and 14:14 (Job).

p 413

[¶20](#) Cf. on 38:27 (Elihu) and on 4:7 and 5:6 (Eliphaz), 8:4 and 18:4 (Bildad), and 20:4 (Zophar).

p 413

[¶21](#) Cf. on 36:13 (Elihu) and on 4:17 (Eliphaz), 24:4 (Bildad), and 11:6 (Zophar).

p 413

[¶22](#) Cf., e.g., on 33:10 (Elihu) and on 22:1 (Eliphaz), 8:3 and 18:4 (Bildad), and 11:4 (Zophar).

p 414

[¶23](#) Cf. on 34:30.

p 414

[¶24](#) Cf. on 33:23.

p 414

[¶25](#) Cf. on 13:10 (Job) and 32:2 (Elihu).

p 415

[¶1](#) Cf. on 32:2.

p 415

†2 Cf. on 42:7.

p 416

†3 Ch. 1 (trans., p. 21f.) [PL 3, 121].

p 416

†4 Cf. on 33:12, 34:5, and 35:2.

p 416

†5 Cf. on 34:10 and 37:24.

p 416

†6 Cf. on 16:14 and 31:2.

p 417

†7 Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* II.15, 200 a 1ff., with Thomas, *Commentary on the Physics*, *ad loc.*

p 418

†8 Aristotle, *On the Heavens* II.26, 296 b 6ff.

p 418

†9 Cf. Gen. 1:14ff.

p 418

†10 Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* XXVIII.14 [PL 76, 467 D].

p 418

†11 Thomas, *De Creaturis Spiritualibus*, a. 6 ad 14, cites John Damascene, *De Fide* II.6 [PG 94, 885].

p 418

†12 Cf. Thomas, *On Separate Substances*, ch. 16; also Augustine, *City of God* XI.9.

p 419

†13 Cf. on v. 37 (Pythagoreans); also Thomas, *ST* I.70.3.

p 419

†14 Cf. on 26:11.

p 419

†15 Thomas, *ST* I.108.1, cites *On the Celestial Hierarchy* VII.2 [PG 3, 208 A].

p 419

†16 Cf. on 5:10.

p 419

†17 Thomas, *In Libros Aristotelis Meteorologicorum Expositio* II.1, sec. 142, mentions Anaxagoras and

[¶17](#) Thomas, in *Libros Aristotelis Meteorologicorum Expositio* II.1, sec. 172, mentions Anaxagoras and Diogenes.

p 419

[¶18](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* III.2, 761 a 32ff.; IV.2, 767 a 31ff.

p 419

[¶19](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I.4, 983 b 26ff.

p 419

[¶20](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* II.7, 359 b 27ff.

p 420

[¶21](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* V.17, 1022 a 5ff.

p 420

[¶22](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* VIII.10, 267 b 6ff.

p 420

[¶23](#) Cf. Gen. 2:7; cf. also on v. 4, above.

p 420

[¶24](#) Cf. also on v. 17.

p 422

[¶25](#) Cf. on 37:7.

p 423

[¶26](#) I.e., the body of the heavens.

p 423

[¶27](#) Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* IV, d. 48, q. 1, a. 4, qc. 2, arg. 2, cites Averroes, *De Substantia Orbis*, ch. 2; cf. also *ST* I.67.3, and *Commentary on De Anima* II.14, sec. 414.

p 423

[¶28](#) Thomas, *ST* I.115.3, ad 2, cites Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* II.10, sec. 255.

p 423

[¶29](#) I.e., longitude and latitude. "Astronomers" here translates *astrologos*. Cf. Thomas, *In Libros Aristotelis de Caelo* II.3, sec. 320-22 and Albertus Magnus, *De Caelo* I.6 and *De Natura Locorum* I.9.

p 424

[¶30](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* II.10, 362 b 19ff.

p 424

[¶31](#) Thomas, *ST* I.70.1, ad 3, mentions Ptolemy.

p 424

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[†32](#) Thomas, *ibid.*, refers to Aristotle, *On the Heavens* II.8, 289 b 30ff.

p 424

[†33](#) Ch. 12, 220 b 28ff.

p 425

[†34](#) PG 3, 697 B.

p 425

[†35](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* I.15, 347 b 12ff.

p 425

[†36](#) Cf. *ibid.*, 348 a 29ff.

p 425

[†37](#) Cf. on v. 19.

p 426

[†38](#) Cf. on 36:30.

p 426

[†39](#) Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* I.9, 346 b 20ff.

p 426

[†40](#) Cf. *ibid.*, I.11, 347 b 20ff.

p 427

[†41](#) Cf. *ibid.*, 347 b 23ff.

p 427

[†42](#) Cf. *ibid.*, I.10, 347 a 16ff.

p 427

[†43](#) Cf. Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* IV.6, 775 a 6f. and 14f.

p 427

[†44](#) Cf. Albertus Magnus, *De Natura Locorum* I.8.

p 427

[†45](#) Cf. Thomas, *In Libros Aristotelis de Coelo* II.9, sec. 374-81.

p 427

[†46](#) Cf. Isidore, *Etymologiae* III.71 [PL 82, 180].

p 427

[†47](#) Cf. on v. 12.

p 428

†48 Cf. Thomas, *In Libros Aristotelis de Coelo* II.28, sec. 542.

p 428

†49 Cf. on 9:9.

p 428

†50 Cf. Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* II.20.

p 428

†51 Cf. Albertus Magnus, *De Caelo* II.3.11.

p 429

†52 Cf. on 36:29.

p 429

†53 Cf. Is. 66:1. Cf. also on 26:9; 35:4; 36:29.

p 429

†54 Thomas, *De Virtutibus in Communi*, a. 8, arg. 15, cites Peter Lombard, *Glossa super Hebraeos* on 1:3 [PL 192, 404 A]; cf. also on 10:12.

p 430

†55 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Heavens*, II.9, 291 a 7ff.

p 430

†56 *Ibid.*, 290 b 12ff.

p 430

†57 Cf. on v. 4.

p 431

†58 Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 5.

p 434

†1 Cf. on 38:36.

p 434

†2 Cf. on 38:39-41.

p 434

†3 Cf. Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* XXX.10 [PL 76, 543 D].

p 434

†4 Cf. Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 4.

p 435

-
‡5 Cf. on 11:12.

p 435

‡6 Cf. Aristotle, *On Memory* 2, 452 a 27ff.

p 436

‡7 Cf. Isidore, *Etymologies* XII.2 [PL 82, 435].

p 437

‡8 Cf. Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 5.

p 437

‡9 Cf. *ibid.*

p 437

‡10 Cf. *ibid.*

p 437

‡11 Cf. *ibid.*

p 438

‡12 Cf. on v. 13, above.

p 438

‡13 Cf. Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 5.

p 438

‡14 Cf. *ibid.*, ch. 4.

p 439

‡15 Cf. Prov. 19:12.

p 439

‡16 Cf. Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 4.

p 440

‡17 Cf. Isidore, *Etymologiae* I.14 [PL 82, 89 A].

p 440

‡18 Cf. Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 5.

p 440

‡19 *Glossa Ordinaria* on John, Prologue by pseudo-Augustine [PL 35, 1377].

p 440

‡20 Cf. Bartholemaeus Anglicus, *On the Properties of Things* XII.1.

p 441

†21 Cf. on 13:3.

p 441

†22 Cf. on 6:2.

p 441

†23 Cf. on 33:10.

p 443

†1 Cf. on 38:4ff. and 39:1ff.

p 443

†2 Cf., e.g., on 27:6 (Job) and 34:1ff. (Elihu).

p 443

†3 Cf. on 38:1 and 3.

p 445

†4 Cf., e.g., *ST* I-II.2.3; II-II.103.1, *ad* 3.

p 446

†5 *superbos*: *super* suggests "over."

p 446

†6 Cf. on 14:13, 19:11, and 21:30.

p 447

†7 Thomas, *Super Libros Sententiarum* IV, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 1, cites Aristotle, *Meteorology* IV.9, 386 a 13f.

p 447

†8 Cf. on 7:10 and 27:23.

p 448

†9 Cf. on 1:6 and 4:18.

p 448

†10 Cf. Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* XXXII.12 [PL 76, 644 C]; Isidore, *Etymologies* VIII.2 [PL 82, 317 A].

p 448

†11 Cf. on v. 20; also, Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* XXXIII.9 [PL 76, 682 C]; Isidore, *Etymologies* VIII.2 [PL 82, 317 B].

p 449

†12 Cf. Gen. 1:24 ff.

p 449

†13 Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram* I.1 [PL 34, 247].

p 449

†14 Thomas, *ST* I.74.2, cites Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram* IV.26 and 33 [PL 34, 314 and 318], and *City of God* XI.9.

p 449

†15 Thomas, *ST* I.61.3, *arg.* 1, cites Jerome, *In Epistolam ad Titum* I.2 [PL 26, 594] and John Damascene, *De Fide Orthodoxa* II.3 [PL 94, 873].

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†16 Manicheans, according to Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job* XXXII.12 [PL 76, 646 B].

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†17 Cf. *ibid.* [PL 76, 646 A].

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†18 IX.46, 630 b 18ff.

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†19 Cf. Albertus Magnus, *De Animalibus* II.2.3, n. 112.

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†20 540 a 21f.

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†21 510 a 15ff.

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†22 Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch 4.

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†23 Cf. on v. 10.

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†24 Thomas, *ST* I.63.7, cites Gregory, *In Evangelium* IV, hom. 34 [PL 76, 1250 B]; cf. also *Morals on the Book of Job* XXXII.23 [PL 76, 665 C].

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†25 Cf. on 1:12.

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†26 540 a 20.

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[¶27](#) Cf. Albertus Magnus, *Quaestiones de Animalibus* II.14.

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[¶28](#) 596 a 7ff.

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[¶29](#) Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *On the Properties of Things* XVIII.43.

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[¶30](#) 610 a 24f.

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[¶31](#) *Natural History* IX.2.4.

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[¶32](#) *Etymologies* XII.6 [PL 82, 451 B].

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[¶33](#) Cf. on v. 10.

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[¶34](#) *Loc. cit.*

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[¶35](#) Albertus Magnus, *De Animalibus* XXIV.28.

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[¶36](#) *Ibid.*

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[¶37](#) Cf. Isidore, *Etymologies* VIII.9 [PL 82, 312 A].

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[¶38](#) Cf. Albertus Magnus, *loc. cit.*

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[¶1](#) Albertus Magnus, *De Animalibus* XXIV.15.

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[¶2](#) Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 6.

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[¶3](#) Albertus Magnus, *De Animalibus* XXIV.15.

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[¶4](#) Cf. Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 139:5 [PL 37, 1087].

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†5 Cf. Avicenna, *Canones Medicinales* V.2.13.

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†6 Cf. Aristotle, *On Sense and Sensibilia* 2, 437 a 29ff., with Thomas, *In Aristotelis Librum De Sensu et Sensato, ad loc.*

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†7 Pliny, *Natural History* XVI.10.19; Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *On the Properties of Things* XIII.26.

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†8 Cf. Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* III.6, 669 c 8ff.; Albertus Magnus, *De Animalibus* II.1.6, n. 45.

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†9 504 b 17ff.

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†10 PG 3, 537 B; cf. Thomas, *ST* I.106.2 *ad* 1.

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†11 Cf. Is. 14:12ff.

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†12 Thomas of Cantimpré, *De Naturis Rerum*, ch. 6; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* IX.3.2.

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†13 Pliny, *ibid.*, IX.2.1.

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†14 Cf. on v. 6.

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†1 Cf. Matt. 7:7f.

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†2 Cf. on 38:2-3.

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†3 Cf. on 13:4.

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†4 Cf. on 1:5.

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†5 Cf. on 5:19.

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†6 Cf. on 19:13.

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†7 Cf. Isidore, *Etymologies* VIII.8 [PL 82, 622 C].

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†8 Latin: *cornu*.