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ST THOMAS' PROOFS THAT GOD IS.

.....

TEXT OF ST THOMAS (I, Q.2).

This question consists of three articles. After showing in the first article that it is not to us self-evident that God is (and in doing this refuting the value of the ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT which would endeavour to show that it is self-evident to us that God is), St Thomas in the second article asks whether it is demonstrable that God is; lastly, in the third article he asks whether God is. From need of brevity we omit the first article.

ARTICLE TWO.

WHETHER IT IS DEMONSTRABLE THAT GOD IS?

OBJECTIONS: 1. "It seems that it is not demonstrable that God is. For that God is, is an article of faith. But those things which are of faith are not demonstrable, because demonstration causes science; but faith is of things not appearing.....

2. "Moreover, the medium of demonstration is what a thing is" (i.e. its essence). "But about God we cannot know what he is, but only what he is not.....Therefore we cannot demonstrate that God is.

3. "Furthermore, if it were demonstrated that God is, this would be only from his effects. But his effects are not proportionate to him, since he is infinite, and the effects finite; but there is not proportion of the finite to the infinite. Therefore, since a cause cannot be demonstrated through an effect not proportionate to it, it seems that it cannot be demonstrated that God is."

"I ANSWER THAT: Demonstration is twofold: One which is through the cause, and it is called (demonstration) WHEREFORE, and this is through what is simply prior. The other is through the effect, and it is called demonstration THAT, and this is through what is prior TO US. For when some effect is more manifest to us than its cause, we proceed through the effect to knowledge of the cause.

"But from whatsoever effect it can be demonstrated that the proper cause of it is, so long as its effects are more known to us; because, since effects depend on the cause, given the effect, it must needs be that the cause preexist.

"Wherefore that God is, according as it is not self-evident to us, is demonstrable through effects known to us.

"REPLY TO OBJECTION 1: That God is, and other such, which through natural reason can be known about God,.....are not articles of faith, but preambles to the articles.....

"REPLY TO OBJECTION 2: When a cause is demonstrated through an effect, it must needs be that the effect be used in place of the definition of the cause to prove that the cause is; and this is especially the case in regard to God, because to prove that something is, it is necessary to take as the medium what its name signifies, but not what it is" (i.e. not its essence), "because the question what it is, follows the question whether it is. But the names of God are imposed from his effects.....; wherefore in demonstrating God to be through effect, we can take for the medium, what this name 'God' signifies.

"REPLY TO OBJECTION 3: Through effects not proportionate to the cause, there cannot be had perfect knowledge of the cause, but nevertheless from whatsoever effect it can be manifestly demonstrated to us that the cause is.....And thus from the effects of God it can be demonstrated that God is, although through them we cannot perfectly know him according to his essence."

EXPLANATION OF PROOF FROM MOVEMENT.

I. PREAMBLES.

1. WHAT IS MOVEMENT: Movement:

A. According to its NOMINAL definition is PASSAGE FROM POTENCY TO ACT.

B. According to REAL definition is THE ACT OF WHAT IS BEING ACTUALISED AS IT IS BEING ACTUALISED.

2. WHAT UNDERGOES MOVEMENT accordingly is WHAT IS PASSING FROM POTENCY TO ACT, or WHAT IS BEING ACTUALISED.

3. WHAT IS A MOVEMENT: A movement is THAT WHICH BY ACTING EXERTS INFLUENCE UNTO THE PASSING OF SOMETHING FROM POTENCY TO ACT.

4. PRINCIPLE OF MOTION OR OF DISTINCT MOVENT: WHATEVER UNDERGOES MOVEMENT IS MOVED BY ANOTHER.

A. This principle:
a. is self-evident, that is, those natures (blocks of reality) which are the subject and the predicate, IF UNDERSTOOD, motivate, without any third term of comparison, their identification by the mind (i.e. cause the mind to affirm their identity);
b. but it is indirectly demonstrated by reduction of its contradictory to negation of the principle of non-contradiction.

B. This reduction is enacted in an easily understood manner thus:

> That which undergoes movement LACKS the be whereto it is moved (v.g. water as it is undergoing heating lacks 'be-hot'), for that which is does not become; while that which moves HAS the be whereto it moves (v.g. the heater of the water has 'be-hot'), because something gives not what it has not.
> But the same cannot together lack some be and have it.
> Therefore the same cannot together, with respect to the same movement, be that which is undergoing movement and that which moves.

5. A MOVED MOVENT is that which, moved (by another), moves (another), as the walking-stick, moved by the hand, moves the stone.

A. This is a subordinated movent.

B. But there are two modes of subordination (cf. nn. 6-7).

6. A MOVENT 'PER SE' SUBORDINATED is a movent which moves INASMUCH as itself is moved, i.e. it is subordinated formally as a movent, or IN MOVING.

A. Which means that it is moved by another to pass from not-be-moving to be-moving.

B. Thus it is moved TO MOVE (as the staff is moved by the hand TO MOVE the stone).

7. A MOVENT 'PER ACCIDENS' SUBORDINATED is a movent, which, moved by another, moves another, but not INASMUCH as itself is moved, i.e. it is subordinated but not formally as a movent.

A. Thus a son, generated by his father, generates a grandson; but he, in being generated by his father, is moved to BE, not TO GENERATE (i.e. not TO MOVE the grandson from be-not to be).

B. Thus the son is subordinated to his father AS REGARDS HIS OWN BECOME, not as regards his moving of the grandson or the become of the grandson.

8. HENCE A SERIES OF MOVED MOVENTS 'PER ACCIDENS' SUBORDINATED is a series of movents wherein each subsequent movent is subordinated to its antecedent only 'per accidens'.

A. In other words, each intermediary member is not moved by the preceding member TO MOVE the subsequent member.

B. According to St Thomas:
a. it is not apodictically demonstrated that such a series cannot admit infinite regress;
b. nor is proof that God is, based upon impossibility of infinite regress in such a series.

9. BUT A SERIES OF MOVED MOVENTS 'PER SE' SUBORDINATED is a series wherein each subsequent movent is subordinated to its antecedent 'per se'.

A. In other words each member of the series is moved by the preceding member TO MOVE the subsequent member.

B. Thus the staff moves the stone:
a. but the staff is moved by the hand to move the stone,
b. while the hand is moved by the muscles of the arm to move the staff,
c. while these muscles are moved by the pertinent nerves to move the hand,
d. while these nerves are moved by the cerebral motor centre to move the muscles,
e. while the cerebral centre is moved by the locomotive power to move the nerves,
f. while the locomotive power is moved by the sensitive appetite to move the cerebral centre,
g. while the sensitive appetite is moved by the will to move the locomotive power

10. WHAT IS AN UNMOVED MOVENT: An unmoved movent accordingly is a MOVENT WHICH MOVES WITHOUT BEING MOVED.

11. THEREFORE AN UNMOVED MOVENT FULFILS THE CONCEPT OF GOD: For an unmoved movent must be its own DO: otherwise it would be merely in potency to do, and would therefore require to be moved by another from can-do to does-do.

A. But that which is its DO, also is its BE.
a. For that alone by reason of itself gives be, which by reason of itself has be.
b. But that alone by reason of itself has be, which IS its be; for otherwise it would need to have its be from another, - in which case it would not by reason of itself have be.

B. But:
a. a being which is its be, cannot lack be, and therefore is a NECESSARY BEING;
b. Moreover:
b1. since be is the ultimate act, so that in a being who is his be, be is both unreceived and unreceptive, i.e. PURE ACT,
b2. and since BE is the form of BEING,
b3. a being who is his be is BEING WITHOUT LIMIT, i.e. is BEING SIMPLY OR ABSOLUTELY INFINITE.
c. Furthermore, a being who is his be:
c1. since composition of essence and be is presupposed to every other composition, is utterly SIMPLE, and therefore:
c1a. is UNIQUE, i.e. one only,
c1b. and is a SPIRIT,
c1c. and therefore is INTELLECTUAL, and indeed IS his UNDERSTAND,
c1d. and therefore enjoys WILL, and indeed IS his LOVE,
c2. and since he is PURE ACT,
c2a. is IMMUTABLE,
c2b. and therefore ETERNAL.

C. But such a being:
a. since he enjoys these attributes, is TRANSCENDENT over all finite, composite, multiple, mutable, contingent beings, as well as over everything corporeal and non-intellectual,
b. and since he is the PRIME PRINCIPLE of all movement, so that whatsoever undergoes movement, does undergo movement only forasmuch as its movement is reduced to him as to its supreme principle, and so that all other things which move, do move only forasmuch as they are moved by him to move.
c. fulfils the concept of GOD.

12. PRINCIPLE OF LIMITED REGRESS: THERE CAN BE NO INFINITE REGRESS IN MOVENTS 'PER SE' SUBORDINATED; because (by 'moved-movent' meaning a movent 'per se' subordinated):

A. A moved-movent has not from itself the reason of its 'move'; but according to what it has from itself, it is not sufficient, but is insufficient or deficient.

B. But a whole series of moved-movents is just as deficient or insufficient for 'move' as is any single member of the series.

a. For howsoever far back the series be carried, so far back is carried the insufficiency or deficiency; so that a sufficiency or sufficient reason is not obtained;

b. therefore, if the series be carried back unto infinity, then the insufficiency or deficiency is carried back unto infinity; so that a sufficiency or sufficient reason is excluded.

C. Therefore the whole series, even though infinite, is insufficient for 'move', and deficient in regard to reason of 'move'.

D. But without a sufficiency for 'move', or without a reason of 'move', there is no 'move'; for nothing is without a reason of be.

E. Therefore an infinite series of moved-movents contains no 'move'.

F. But a series of moved-movents containing no 'move' is self-contradictory, and therefore impossible, - for without 'move' there is neither moved nor movent.

G. Therefore an infinite series of moved-movents ('per se' subordinated) is self-contradictory and accordingly impossible.

13. FACT OF MOVEMENT: That things are moved is most evident:

A. For it is evident to our senses that there is:
a. Local movement, as when a ball passes across the field.
b. Qualitative movement, as when water becomes hot.
c. Quantitative movement, as when a plant or animal grows.

B. And it is evident to our consciousness that there is psychic movement, as when we pass from not-knowing something to knowing it, or from not desiring something to desiring it.

II. ARGUMENT.

Things are moved.....EXISTENTIAL FACT.
But things cannot be moved unless God be.....ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLE.
Therefore God is.....EXISTENTIAL CAUSE OF FACT.

MAJOR: Cf. n.13.

MINOR: Things cannot be moved unless there is an unmoved-movent.
But an unmoved-movent is God.
Therefore things cannot be moved unless God be.

MINOR: Cf. n.11.

MAJOR: A thing cannot be moved unless there be a movent distinct from it.
But no thing is a movent unless:
either itself be an unmoved-movent,
or there be an unmoved-movent distinct from it.
Therefore a thing cannot be moved unless there be an unmoved-movent.

MAJOR: WHATEVER UNDERGOES MOVEMENT IS MOVED BY ANOTHER (cf. n.4).

MINOR: A thing cannot be a movent unless:
either itself be an unmoved-movent;
or it be a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated.
But if it be a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated, there is an unmoved-movent distinct from it.
Therefore a thing cannot be a movent unless:
either itself be an unmoved-movent,
or there be an unmoved-movent distinct from it.

Major: This is evident from the SUPREME PRINCIPLE:
a) for 'unmoved' and 'moved' are contradictorily opposed,
b) so that there is no third (PRINCIPLE OF THE EXCLUDED THIRD).

Minor: If a movent is a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated, there is a movent distinct from it, and if this movent is a moved-movent 'per se' subordinate, there is another movent distinct from it, - so that there is a series of moved-movents 'per se' subordinated.
But a series of moved-movents 'per se' subordinated cannot be infinite, but before it there must be a unmoved-movent.
Therefore if a movent is a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated, there is an unmoved-movent distinct from it.

Major: WHATEVER UNDERGOES MOVEMENT IS MOVED BY ANOTHER (cf. n.4).

Minor: THERE CANNOT BE INFINITE REGRESS IN MOVENTS 'PER SE' SUBORDINATED (cf. n.12).

III. SIMPLE STATEMENT OF ARGUMENT.

There is movement in the world, i.e. things undergo movement.
But whatever undergoes movement is moved by a second. And if this second is moved TO MOVE (not merely to be or to become), it must be moved by a third, - which must be in order to move; and if this third is moved TO MOVE, it must be moved by a fourth, - which must be in order to move.
But this regress cannot be unto infinity, because if there is none that is and STARTS the series, then neither will there be any intermediary movents, nor will there be any movement.
Therefore there must be a movent which STARTS movement, and therefore is a PRIME MOVENT ITSELF UNMOVED.
But a PRIME MOVENT ITSELF UNMOVED is GOD.
Therefore God is.

.....

PROOF FROM MOVEMENT THAT GOD IS.

1. PREAMBLES.

1. WHAT IS MOVEMENT: Movement:

A. According to its NOMINAL definition is PASSAGE FROM POTENCY TO ACT (i.e. from canniness to doesyness, as from can-be-hot to does-be-hot).

B. According to REAL definition is THE ACT OF WHAT IS BEING ACTUALISED AS IT IS BEING ACTUALISED.

2. WHAT UNDERGOES MOVEMENT accordingly is WHAT IS PASSING FROM POTENCY TO ACT, or WHAT IS BEING ACTUALISED.

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B. This reduction is enacted in an easily understood manner thus:

> That which undergoes movement LACKS the be whereto it is moved (v.g. water as it is undergoing heating lacks 'be-hot'), for that which is does not become; while that which moves HAS the be whereto it moves (v.g. the heater of the water has 'be-hot'), because something gives not what it has not.
> But the same cannot together lack some be and have it.
> Therefore the same cannot together, with respect to the same movement, be that which is undergoing movement and that which moves.

5. A MOVED MOVENT: Is that which, moved (by another), moves (another), - as the staff, moved by the hand, moves the stone.

A. This is a subordinated movent.

B. But there are two modes of subordination (cf. nn. 6-7).

6. A MOVENT 'PER SE' SUBORDINATED is a movent which moves INASMUCH as itself is moved, i.e. it is subordinated formally as a movent, or IN MOVING.

A. Thus it is moved TO MOVE (as the staff is moved by the hand TO MOVE the stone).

B. Which means that it is the conveyor of a motive influence derived to it from another movent whereby it is moved to move.

7. A MOVENT 'PER ACCIDENS' SUBORDINATED is a movent, which, moved by another, moves another, but not INASMUCH as itself is moved, i.e. it is subordinated but not formally as a movent.

A. Thus a son, generated by his father, generates a grandson; but he, in being generated by his father, is moved to BE, not TO GENERATE (i.e. not TO MOVE the grandson from be-not to be).

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e. while the celebral centre is moved by the locomotive power to move the nerves,
f. while the locomotive power is moved by the sensitive appetite to move the cerebral centre,
g. while the sensitive appetite is moved by the will to move the locomotive power.

10. WHAT IS AN UNMOVED MOVENT: An unmoved movent accordingly is a MOVENT WHICH MOVES WITHOUT BEING MOVED. Therefore it is a PRIME MOVENT.

11. THEREFORE AN UNMOVED OR PRIME MOVENT FULFILS THE CONCEPT OF GOD: For a prime or unmoved movent must be its DO: otherwise it would be merely in potency to do, and would therefore require to be moved by another from can-do to does-do.

A. But that which is its DO, also is its BE.

a. For that alone by reason of itself gives be, which by reason of itself has be.

b. But that alone by reason of itself has be, which IS its be; for otherwise it would need to have its be from another, - in which case it would not by reason of itself have be.

B. But:

a. a being which is its be, cannot lack be, and therefore is a NECESSARY BEING:

b. Moreover:

b1. since be is the ultimate act, so that in a being who is his be, be is both unreceived and unreceptive, i.e. PURE ACT (i.e. PURE DOESYNESS, lacking all canniness),

b2. and since BE is the form of BEING,

b3. a being who is his be is BEING WITHOUT LIMIT, i.e. is BEING SIMPLY OR ABSOLUTELY INFINITE.

c. Furthermore, a being who is his be:

c1. since composition of essence and be is presupposed to every other composition, is utterly SIMPLE, and therefore:

c1a. is UNIQUE, i.e. one only,

c1b. and is a SPIRIT,

c1c. and therefore is INTELLECTUAL and PERSONAL, and indeed IS his UNDERSTAND,

c1d. and therefore enjoys WILL, and indeed IS his LOVE,

c2. and since he is PURE ACT,

c2a. is SUPREMELY PERFECT,

c2b. and IMMUTABLE, (since mutability supposes potency or canniness),

c2c. and therefore ETERNAL.

C. But such a being:

a. since he enjoys these attributes, is TRANSCENDENT over all finite, composite, multiple, mutable, contingent beings, as well as over everything corporeal and non-intellectual,

b. and since he is the PRIME PRINCIPLE of all movement, so that whatsoever undergoes movement, does undergo movement only forasmuch as its movement is reduced to him as to its supreme principle, and so that all other things which move, do move only forasmuch as they are moved by him to move,

c. fulfils the concept of GOD.

12. PRINCIPLE OF LIMITED REGRESS: THERE CAN BE NO INFINITE REGRESS IN MOVENTS 'PER SE' SUBORDINATED:

A. Which is manifest thus:

a. A movent 'per se' subordinated has not from itself the reason of its 'move'; but according to what it has from itself, it is not sufficient, but is insufficient or deficient.

b. But a whole series of movents 'per se' subordinated is just as deficient or insufficient for 'move' as is any single member of the series,

b1. For howsoever far back the series be carried, so far back is

carried the insufficiency or deficiency; so that a sufficiency or sufficient reason is not obtained;

b2. therefore, if the series be carried back unto infinity, then the insufficiency or deficiency is carried back unto infinity; so that a sufficiency or sufficient reason is excluded.

c. Therefore the whole series, even though infinite, is insufficient for 'move', and deficient in regard to reason of 'move'.

d. But without a sufficiency for 'move', or without a reason of 'move', there is no 'move'; for nothing is without a reason of be.

e. Therefore an infinite series of movents 'per se' subordinated contains no 'move'.

f. But a series of movents containing no 'move' is self-contradictory, and therefore impossible, - for without 'move' there is neither moved nor movent.

g. Therefore an infinite series of movents 'per se' subordinated is self-contradictory and accordingly impossible.

B. The same is manifest also thus:

a. Let it be supposed that with respect to some mobile which is moved, a series of movents 'per se' subordinated, regresses to infinity.

b. Then two mutually contradictory consequences follow:

b1. FIRST: movement occurs in the mobile (v.g. in the stone).

b2. SECOND: movement does not occur in the mobile (v.g. in the stone), because no motive influence is possessed by the proximate movent (v.g. by the staff).

b2a. For the proximate movent enjoys only motive influence conveyed to it by intermediary movents.

b2b. But intermediary movents are only conveyors of motive influence, - not originants thereof.

b2c. But if the series of intermediary movents regresses to infinity, an originant of motive influence is excluded (i.e. there is no originant of motive influence), for all the movents beyond the proximate movent (v.g. the staff) are then intermediary (i.e. are mere conveyors).

b2d. But the members of an infinite series of mere conveyors without a motive influence to convey, convey no motive influence.

b2e. But then no motive influence is conveyed to the proximate movent (v.g. to the staff).

b2f. And thus the proximate movent has no motive influence,

b2g. And therefore it does not move the mobile (v.g. the staff does not move the stone).

b2h. Therefore movement does not occur in the mobile (v.g. in the stone).

c. But a supposition from which follow two mutually contradictory consequences, is itself self-contradictory, and therefore is a supposition of the impossible.

d. Therefore it is self-contradictory, and accordingly impossible, that a series of movents 'per se' subordinated regress unto infinity.

13. FACT OF MOVEMENT: That things undergo movement is most evident:

A. For it is evident to our senses that there is:
a. Local movement, as when a ball passes across the field.
b. Qualitative movement, as when water becomes hot.
c. Quantitative movement, as when a plant or animal grows.

B. And it is evident to our consciousness that there is psychic movement, as when we pass from not-knowing something to knowing it, or from not desiring something to desiring it.

II. ARGUMENT.

Things undergo movement ..... EXISTENTIAL FACT.
But things cannot undergo movement unless God be ..... ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLE.
Therefore God is ..... EXISTENTIAL CAUSE OF FACT.

MAJOR: Cf. n. 13.

MINOR: Things cannot undergo movement unless there is a prime or unmoved-movent.
But a prime or unmoved-movent is God.
Therefore things cannot undergo movement unless God be.

MINOR: Cf. n. 11.

MAJOR: A thing cannot undergo movement unless there be a movent distinct from it.
But no thing is a movent unless:
either itself be a prime or unmoved-movent,
or there be a prime or unmoved-movent distinct from it.
Therefore a thing cannot undergo movement unless there be a prime or unmoved-movent.

MAJOR: WHATEVER UNDERGOES MOVEMENT IS MOVED BY ANOTHER (cf. n. 4).

MINOR: A thing cannot be a movent unless:
either itself be a prime or unmoved-movent;
or it be a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated.
But if it be a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated, there is a prime or unmoved-movent distinct from it.
Therefore a thing cannot be a movent unless:
either itself be a prime or unmoved movent,
or there be a prime or unmoved-movent distinct from it.

Major: This is evident from the SUPREME PRINCIPLE:
(a) for 'unmoved' and 'moved' are contradictorily opposed,
(b) so that there is no third (PRINCIPLE OF THE EXCLUDED THIRD).

Minor: If a movent is a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated, there is a movent distinct from it, and if this movent is a moved-movent 'per se' subordinate, there is another movent distinct from it, - so that there is a series of moved-movents 'per se' subordinated.
But a series of moved-movents 'per se' subordinated cannot be infinite, but before it there must be a unmoved-movent (i.e.a

prime movent).
Therefore if a movent is a moved-movent 'per se' subordinated, there is a prime or unmoved-movent distinct from it.

Major: WHATEVER UNDERGOES MOVEMENT IS MOVED BY ANOTHER (cf. n. 4).

Minor: THERE CANNOT BE INFINITE REGRESS IN MOVENTS 'PER SE' SUBORDINATED (cf. n. 12).

III. SIMPLE STATEMENT OF ARGUMENT.

There is movement in the world, i.e. things undergo movement.
But whatever undergoes movement is moved by a second. And if this second is moved TO MOVE (not merely to be or to become), it must be moved by a third, - which must be in order to move; and if this third is moved TO MOVE, it must be moved by a fourth, - which must be in order to move.
But this regress cannot be unto infinity, because if there is none that is and STARTS the series, then neither will there be any intermediary movents, nor will there by any movement.
Therefore there must be a movent which STARTS movement, and therefore is a PRIME MOVENT ITSELF UNMOVED.
But a PRIME MOVENT ITSELF UNMOVED is GOD.
Therefore God is.

IV. FURTHER CLARIFICATION OF THIS PROOF.

PRINCIPLE: A. Whatever undergoes movement, is moved by another.
B. In movents 'per se' subordinated, there is no infinite regress.
] Wherefrom it follows that: if movement occurs, there is a PRIME MOVENT.

FACT: But movement occurs.

CAUSE: Therefore there is a PRIME MOVENT.

PRINCIPLE: But a PRIME MOVENT IS GOD.
[Because it is its DO.
And therefore is its BE.
And therefore is
[an UNCAUSED BEING,
and a NECESSARY BEING.
and PURE ACT
[and therefore IMMUTABLE
and therefore ETERNAL,
and absolutely INFINITE,
and SUPREMELY PERFECT
and absolutely SIMPLE
[and therefore UNIQUE,
and therefore the SOLE PRIME MOVENT,
and a SPIRIT,
and therefore INTELLECTUAL
and therefore PERSONAL, and his own UNDERSTAND; and his own LOVE.

CAUSE: Therefore GOD IS.