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Cosmic structure and the knowledge of God: Thomas Aquinas' "In Librum beati Dionysii de divinis nominibus expositio"

Marsh, Harry Clarke, Jr., Ph.D.

Vanderbilt University, 1994

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COSMIC STRUCTURE AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD: THOMAS AQUINAS' IN LIBRUM BEATI DIONYSII DE DIVINIS NOMINIBUS EXPOSITIO

By

Harry C. Marsh, Jr.

Dissertation

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APPENDIX:
A TRANSLATION OF THOMAS AQUINAS' IN LIBRUM BEATI DIONYSII DE DIVINIS NOMINIBUS EXPOSITIO

PROEMIUM

<But now oh blessed, etc.> In order to understand the books of the blessed Dionysius it must be considered that those things which are said of God in holy scripture Dionysius skillfully divides in four ways. For in a certain book, which we do not have and is entitled De divinis ypotiposibus, i.e., the divine characteristics or distinctions, he handed down those things concerning God which pertain to the unity of the divine essence and the distinction of persons. A sufficient similitude of this distinction and unity is not found in created things, but this mystery exceeds every faculty of natural reason. But those things which are said of God in scripture, of which some similitude is found in creatures, are disposed in two ways. For one similitude of this kind in some things is understood according to something which is derived from God into creatures, as from the first Good are all goods and from the first life are all living things and so forth. And such things Dionysius concerns himself with in the book De divinis nominibus, which we have before us. But in some things a similitude is perceived according to something translated from creatures to God, as when God is called a lion, rock, sun or something of this kind; for in this way God is named symbolically or metaphorically. And Dionysius dealt with this kind in one of his books which he entitled De simbolica theologia. But since every similitude of the creature to God is deficient and that which God is exceeds all that is found in creatures, whatever is known by us in creatures is removed from God in so far as it is in creatures, so that, after all that our intellect, having been lead by created things, is able to conceive of God, that which God is remains hidden and unknown. For not only is God not a stone nor the sun, i.e., such things as are apprehended by the senses, but neither is God life or essence, things which can be conceived by our intellect. And thus, that which God is, since it exceeds all which is apprehended by us, remains to us unknown. Therefore concerning the remotions of this kind by which God remains hidden to us he made another book which he entitled De mistica, i.e., hidden, theologia. (ll.1-21)

But it must be considered that the blessed Dionysius uses an obscure style in all his books; which he does not do from

lack of skill, but from industriousness, so that he might hide the holy and divine dogmas from the derision of the infidels. For difficulties occur in the aforementioned books from many factors: first since he often uses the mode of speaking which the Platonists once used, which is not customary among the moderns. For the Platonists, wanting to reduce all composites or material things to a simple and abstract principle, posited separated species of things, saying that Human Being is outside of matter, and similarly Horse, and thus of other species of natural things. Therefore they said that this singular and sensible human being is not that which Human Being is, but is called human being by participation of that separated Human Being. Whence in this sensible human being something is found which does not pertain to the species of humanity, as individual matter and things of this kind. But in separated Human Being there is nothing except that which pertains to the species of humanity. For which reason they called separated Human Being Human Being per se in so far as it is not in matter and Human Being itself because it has nothing except what is of humanity, and Human Being principally in so far as humanity is derived to sensible human beings from separated Human Being through the mode of participation. In this way it can also be said that separated Human Being is the humanity of all sensible human beings in that the nature of humanity purely befits separated Human Being and is derived in sensible human beings from it. (21-35)

The Platonists not only considered abstractions of this kind regarding the ultimate species of natural things, but also concerning the highest commonalities, which are the Good, the One and Esse. For they posited one First which is the essence itself of goodness and unity and esse, which we call God, and that all other things are called good or one or beings through derivation from that First. Whence that First they called Good itself or Good per se or principally good, or beyond good, or even the goodness of all goods or also goodness or essence or substance, in the way in which it was explained concerning separated Human Being. (35-41)

To these opinions of the Platonists neither the notion of faith nor of the truth agrees in so far as it concerns natural separated species, but regarding what they say concerning the First Principle of things their opinion is most true and consonant with the Christian faith. Whence Dionysius calls God at times the Good or the One itself, at times Good per se or beyond good, or principally good or the goodness of every good. And similarly he names God beyond life, beyond substance and the deity itself he names thearchia, i.e., principle deity, since even in certain creatures the name of deity is received according to some participation. (41-47)

But secondly difficulty occurs in his speech, since often he employs efficacious reasonings to demonstrate a proposition and many times he implies them with few words or even with one word.
(47-49)

Thirdly, since many times he employs a certain multiplication of words which, although they seem superfluous, they nevertheless are found to contain a great profundity of opinion to those who diligently consider them.
(49-51)

BOOK ONE

I - 1

Therefore in this book, which is inscribed On the Divine Names, in the custom of those who hand down knowledge in a scientific way, first he sets out certain things necessary to the following consideration; secondly he begins to pursue the principal intent in the third chapter which begins: <And first if it seems etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows the notion of the divine names; secondly he shows which of the names which are treated in this book are common to the whole trinity; and this is in the second chapter which he begins <The whole thearchical essence etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he connects himself with the preceding book, where addressing the blessed Timothy, he says that after the theological hypotiposes, i.e., the divine distinctions, by which the persons in the Trinity are distinguished from one another, he will pass over to the opening up, i.e., to the manifestation, of the divine names as far as he is able. For it seems to be above human ability to expound them perfectly. (1-10)

Secondly, <But let there be also now etc.> he begins to set forth certain things necessary to the following work. But he sets forth two things: first the mode of proceeding in this work; for it is necessary to know this beforehand in any teaching; second he shows the notion of the divine names concerning which he directs his attention in this book <These following thearchical etc.> And these two things are sufficiently expressed in the title of this chapter which is thus: "What is the intention of this discourse" for the first and "What is the tradition of the divine names" for the second. (10-15)

Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows from what principles he is to proceed in this work; second, those things which are to be here handed down <Therefore universally it is not to be dared etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows from what principles he is to proceed in this work, since it must not depend on human reason but divine revelation, receiving this from the Apostle who says in I Cor. 2 "Not in persuasive words of human reason but in the manifestation of the spirit and of

power" etc. And this is what he says: Let there be, i.e., may there be, also, i.e., even also, now a law of elocution, i.e., which is handed down in holy scripture, predefined, i.e., predetermined, by us, as it was formerly from the Apostle, which is a law indeed: to affirm to us, i.e., to arrange or to manifest, the truth of the things said concerning God, not in persuasive words of human wisdom, i.e., not depending, as by principal means to proving the proposition, by principles of human wisdom which proceed according to natural reason, but in demonstration of the power of the theologians, i.e., of those who handed down canonical scripture, namely the apostles and prophets, of power, I say, moved by the spirit, namely the Holy Spirit. For Dionysius depends in his teaching on the authority of Holy Scripture which has strength and power in that the Apostles and prophets were moved to speak by the Holy Spirit revealing to them and speaking in them. (16-29)

Secondly he introduces the reason of the aforementioned law <According to which by the ineffable and unknown, etc.> And the force of his reason is thus: we are able to rely on those doctrinal principles of human wisdom in which those things are handed down which are knowable and speakable by human beings and by those who have these doctrines they can both be known and spoken. But in the teaching of faith certain unknown and unspeakable things are proposed to humans in which they inhere while having faith, not by knowing or perfectly explaining with words, although they more certainly inhere in them and an inherence of this kind is higher than some natural cognition. Therefore in the teaching of faith we are not able to rely on principles of human wisdom. And this is what he says 'according to which', namely the virtue of revelation proceeding from the Holy Spirit in the apostles and prophets, we are conjoined through faith to ineffable and unknown things, i.e., to the divine truth which exceeds all human locution and cognition. Nor does faith so conjoin to them that it makes them to be known and spoken as they are by believing humans, for this would be the opening of vision, but it conjoins ineffably and unknowably: "For we see now through a glass" etc., as it is said in I Cor. 13. (29-40)

And lest someone should despise this conjunction because of its imperfection he adds 'according to the better union of our rational and intellectual virtue and operation', i.e., above the virtue and operation of our reason and intellect, as he posits the genitive for the ablative in the custom of the Greeks. For we are conjoined through faith to things higher than those are to which the natural reason pertains and we inhere in them more certainly, to the extent that divine revelation is more certain than human cognition. But he says rational and intellectual, since of those things

which we know naturally certain things are perceived by us through themselves without some investigation and the intellect is proper to these; but some things are known through inquiry and reason is proper to these. But he says 'of operation and power', since we know many things by power by which we do not speculate in act. (40-47)

Then when he says <Therefore universally etc.>, he shows what things are to be handed down in this teaching. And first he posits a proposition; second he demonstrates it <For the supersubstantial etc.> (48-49)

But he concludes the proposition from the premises. For this is observed even in human sciences, that the principles and the conclusions are of the same genus. Therefore if the principles from which this teaching proceeds are those which are received through the revelation of the Holy Spirit and handed down in holy scripture, it follows that nothing is handed down in this doctrine other than what is found in holy scripture. This is therefore what he concludes, that in no way ought someone to speak, to pray or to think in his heart something concerning the deity, which is above all substance, and is because of this hidden to us to whom created substances are proportionate to knowing and therefore to speaking, besides those things which are expressed to us through holy expressions. But significantly he does not say in holy expressions, but by (ex) holy expressions, since whatever can be elicited from these things which are contained in holy scripture are not foreign to this doctrine, although they themselves are not contained in holy scripture. (49-59)

Then when he says <For the supersubstantial etc.>, he introduces a reason to demonstrate the proposition. And first he posits the reason; secondly he proves certain things which are presupposed in the reason <For also if something befits etc.> (59-61)

Therefore the force of his reason is thus: concerning that which is known by something alone, nothing can be thought or spoken except to the degree that it is manifested by that thing. But it befits God alone to perfectly know Godself according to what God is. Therefore nothing can truly be spoken of God or even thought except to the degree that it is revealed by God; which divine revelation is contained in holy scripture. And this is what he says that it befits God, namely God alone, to attribute supersubstantial knowledge of the unknown supersubstantiality, i.e., of the unknown divine supersubstantiality. Which supersubstantiality is not unknown because of some defect of its own, but because of its excess, namely since it is above created reason and intellect and even above created substance itself which is

an object commensurate with created intellect, as uncreated essence is proportionate to uncreated knowledge. And for this reason, as the divine essence is supersubstantial, thus he called also God's knowledge supersubstantial. For it is always necessary that the object of the cognitive virtue be proportionate to the virtue of the knower. Nevertheless lest we be constituted wholly ignorant of God he adds: it befits us, I say, to the degree that we look through spiritual contemplation to the superior, i.e., to that which is above us, namely God, so does the ray, i.e., the truth, of the thearchical, i.e., the divine, expressions send itself, i.e., extend itself, to the superior splendors, i.e., to the intelligible truths of divine things. For the truth of holy scripture is a certain light through the mode of a ray derived from the first truth. Which light does not extend itself to the point that through it we are able to see the essence of God or to know all that God in Godself knows or the angels and the blessed who see God's essence, but as far as some certain terminus or measure the intelligibles of divine things are made manifest by the light of holy scripture. And thus, while we do not extend ourselves to the knowing of divine things more than the light of holy scripture extends itself, we are constricted through this, as if constrained by certain limits, concerning divine things by temperance and sanctity: by sanctity while we preserve the excellent truth of holy scripture from all error; by temperance when we do not press on to those things more than is given to us. (61-82)

Then when he says <For also if something etc.>, he demonstrates what he presupposed in this reason: and first that God is known to Godself alone, but is hidden to us; secondly he shows the way by which the divine cognition is communicated to us, <Nevertheless it is not incommunicable etc.> He shows the first in two ways: first by reasons; second by authorities, <For also as the same from the same etc.> (82-86)

But first he posits two reasons, the first of which is thus: divine things are revealed by God according to the proportion of those to whom they are revealed; but to know the infinite is above the proportion of the finite intellect; therefore that which God is is not known by anyone by divine revelation. And this is what he says, that divine things are revealed by God and beheld by us according to the proportion of the mind of each one. And this I say, if it is fitting to believe something of theology, i.e., holy scripture, all wise and most true; for it is said in Matt. 25 " . . . he gave . . . to each one according to his own power". (86-92)

And it should be noted that he posits two reasons why holy scripture is maximally to be believed. For that someone should not be believed occurs from two things: either he is or is reputed to be ignorant or that he is or is reputed to be a liar. Whence, since holy scripture is all wise and most true since revealed and handed down by God, who is truth and all knowledge, holy scripture is maximally to be believed. And this, I say, is by the thearchical i.e., divine, goodness segregating from measured things, i.e., from finite things, by immeasurability, i.e., by the infinity of the divine essence, not that it is in no way known but as it is not comprehended. And for this reason he adds 'as incomprehensible'. For the divine essence is touched by the blessed mind, but it is not comprehended. And this God does in salutary righteousness. For the notion of distributive justice consists in this, that it is given to each one according to his own condition. And, as through the order of distributive justice the entire political order is preserved by the ruler of the city, thus through this order of justice the entire order of the universe is preserved by God; for if this were removed all would remain confused. And this God does as befits God; for it befits God to preserve by God's goodness what God has constituted. (92-102)

He posits the second reason <For as the incomprehensibles etc.> which is thus: a superior grade of beings can not be comprehended through an inferior, as intelligibles can not be comprehended perfectly through sensibles nor simple things through composites nor incorporeals through corporeals. But God is above every order of existents; therefore God can be comprehended through nothing of existing things. And this is what he says: for as the intelligibles are incomprehensible and incontemplable by the sensibles, i.e., through sensible things, and the simple things and unfigured things through those that are in composition and figure, i.e., that are composite and figured (for there is no figure except of composites), and as lack, i.e., privation, of form, namely bodily form, of things incorporeal, which lack or privation is intangible and infigurable, i.e., incorporeal things themselves, which lack form and are intangible and unfigurable (as the abstract is understood to be posited for the concrete) are incomprehensibles and incontemplables although formed according to figures of bodies, i.e., by bodies themselves, just so, I say, is this according to the same reason of truth, that Unity, i.e., God who is unity itself as if existing one through God's own essence, which is supersubstantial, is posited above substances, and which is above mind is posited above minds, i.e., simple intellects; and the Good itself, namely God, which is above deliberation, i.e., above all reason, is indeliberable by all deliberators, i.e., not investigable by some created

reason, and what is above speech, i.e., is above every locution of the creature, is ineffable, i.e., not speakable, by every created word. (103-118)

Here he mentioned four things, namely substances, which are the objects of cognition, mind, i.e., the simple intellect, and deliberations, i.e., the inquiring reason, which things pertain to the cognitive powers, and speech, which pertains to the manifestation of the knowers. But he posits these four since he intends not only to show that God can not be comprehended through some cognitive power or be manifested perfectly by locution, but that neither can God be manifested through some created object nor through any created similitude of any kind. Whence also in the examples which he posits he does not say that the intelligibles are incomprehensible by the senses, but by the sensibles, since the intelligibles can not be comprehended through sensible things. And the same reason applies to the others. (118-125)

And it should be noted that he did not only say that the intelligibles are incomprehensible via sensibles, but also incontemplable, since those things of a superior order not only cannot be comprehended through those which are of an inferior order, but neither can they be contemplated. For we contemplate one thing through another, when through one thing we can see the essence of a higher thing so that we might know what it is. But the essence of a thing is comprehended as it is perfectly known in so far as it is knowable. For whoever knows a demonstrable conclusion through a probable medium, even if it is contemplated in some way, nevertheless does not comprehend it since it does not pertain to the perfect mode of his cognition. In this way therefore God is incomprehensible by every created intellect since God is above all mind and reason, since God has more of the clarity of truth in God's essence, which pertains to God's knowability, than some created thing known from power. Whence no creature can attain to a perfect mode of God's cognition, which he called supersubstantial knowledge, for this would be to comprehend God. Nevertheless the created intellect can contemplate God's essence by attaining to some mode, not however through some objects or species or any created similitudes, since none of these can lead to the divine essence, much less than the body can lead to incorporeal substance. Thus therefore according to the reason of Dionysius it is necessary to say that God is incomprehensible by every intellect and incontemplable by us in God's essence as long as our cognition is bound to created things, since they are connatural to us; and this is our current situation. (125-140)

And since he called God unity, lest someone should believe that God is the unity formally inhering in things, as if

participated in those things, to exclude this he adds 'unity', namely subsisting through itself, 'unifying the universal unity,' i.e., diffusing unity in all things which participate unity in any way. Then since he named God supersubstantial unity and the Good above mind, someone could believe that God can in no way be called substance or mind or something of this kind. And to exclude this he adds that God is indeed substance, but supersubstantial. (140-145)

For the evidence of this it must be considered that names of things, since they are imposed by us, signify in this way in so far as the things fall in our cognition. Therefore since that which God is is above our cognition, as was shown, but our cognition is commensurate with created things, names imposed by us do not signify in so far as it befits the divine excellence, but in so far as it concerns the existence of created things. But the esse of created things is derived from the divine esse according to a certain deficient assimilation. Thus therefore in so far as a similitude of any kind is of created things to God, names imposed by us are able to be spoken of God, not indeed as they are spoken of creatures, but through a certain excess. And this signifies what he says, that God is supersubstantial substance, and similarly that he adds, that God is unintelligible intellect, i.e., God is not such an intellect which is understood by us, and God is an unspeakable word, i.e., not the kind of words which are spoken by us. (146-155)

But as the names imposed by us can be said of God in that there is some similitude of creatures to God, thus in so far as creatures defect from the representation of God the names imposed by us can be removed from God and their opposites can be predicated. Whence he adds that God is thus called reason, which can also be called irrationality, and thus God is called intellect, which can be called unintelligibility, and thus God is called speech, which can be called unnameability: not because these things are deficient to God, but because God exists according to nothing of existing things, i.e., God does not exist according to the mode of some existing thing. And God is the cause of being to all things, transferring to all things in some way God's own similitude, and thus God can be named from the names of creatures. But God is not existing, not as if defecting from being, but as above all existing substance. And God is unnameable as God enunciates properly and knowingly concerning Godself, i.e., according to the propriety of God's esse and according to the perfect knowledge of Godself, in which way nothing can enunciate God. (155-165)

By the things stated he infers the principal conclusion when he adds "Concerning this therefore', which was explained above. (165-166)

Then when he says <For also as the Same etc.>, what he had shown above by reasons he shows by authorities. And he says that Deity itself handed down concerning itself in holy expressions, as befits God's goodness, that God might hand down the truth, namely concerning Godself. This, I say, God handed down, because the knowledge and contemplation of God is inaccessible to all existents, i.e., no one can draw near to God: not knowledge or contemplation of any kind whatsoever, but that by which what God is is known or contemplated, which is comprehensive knowledge of God's substance. And this knowledge or contemplation is inaccessible, since it is segregated from all things supersubstantially, i.e., according to the supersubstantial excess of divinity. For it befits God alone to know what God is. And this principally seems to be taken from what is said in Exodus 33 "A man will not see me and live", and I Tim. last chapter ". . . he dwells in light inaccessible; which no one . . . " etc. And also many theologians are found to praise God not only as invisible and incomprehensible, but also as inscrutable and not investigable, according to Romans 11 " . . . because God's judgments are incomprehensible and past finding out . . " etc. (167-178)

And why God is called non-investigable he consequently expounds, since there does not exist some vestige of those who pass over to God's hidden infinity. For one negative is superfluous there, and he speaks according to the propriety of the designation: for to investigate properly speaking is to be led to the terminus of a course through the vestiges of something going out through that course. Thus therefore the deity can be investigated, if someone who draws near to the cognition of God should leave to us some example, as some vestige, through which we could draw near to seeing God. But this does not occur: either because none pass over to God, if it refers to comprehensive vision, or because those who pass over to seeing God through essence, as do all the blessed, can not express to us the divine essence itself. Whence also Paul when taken up to the third heaven says he heard hidden words, which are not permitted to a person to speak, II Cor 12. Thus therefore he excludes the triple mode of cognition: first that by which something is seen through itself when he calls the deity invisible; second the way in which something is known through the inquiry of reason, when he calls God inscrutable; for to scrutinize implies inquiry; third the way by which something is known by learning from another, when he says 'non-investigable'. (179-190)

Then when he says <Not nevertheless incommunicable etc.> he shows how the cognition of the hidden divinity is communicated to others. For it would be against the notion of the divine goodness, if God should keep to Godself God's own cognition so that God would communicate it to no other, since it is from the notion of the good that it should communicate itself to others. And for this reason he says that, although the supersubstantial knowledge of God is to be attributed to God alone, nevertheless, since God is Good itself, it cannot be that God should not be communicated to some existents. Nor however is God's cognition communicated to others as God knows Godself, but the Same arranging, i.e., firmly conserving, singularly in Godself the supersubstantial ray, i.e., reserving to Godself alone the supersubstantial cognition of God's own truth, superappears, as if to say God appears from above, benignly, as if to say not from necessity but from grace, by proportional illuminations, i.e., according to proportional illuminations, of each and every existent, as if he should say: the notion of God's goodness is such that, while a certain mode of cognition is reserved to Godself which is singular to Godself, God communicates to inferior things from God's grace some mode of cognition according to their own illuminations which are according to the proportion of each one. And God not only superappears and illuminates, but also the very fact that inferior illuminated minds, using the given light, draw near to knowing God, is from God. And this is what he adds, that God extends holy minds to the contemplation of Godself that is possible to them since, as was stated above, God in some way is contemplable by all. And since those who contemplate God in a certain way are made one with God, in so far as the intellect in act is in some way the intellected thing in act, and consequently they are assimilated to God in the sense of being informed by God, he adds 'both communion and assimilation'. (191-207)

But consequently he shows the conditions of the holy minds which are extended to God, the first of which is that, in so far as it is permitted to them from divine concession and in so far as it befits them from a proper condition, they convey themselves to God, i.e., they neither presume from pride something above what is fittingly given to them according to the divine revelation or superapparition, nor again are they cast down to the inferior, i.e., they do not cast themselves below that which is given to them, from subjection to the worse, i.e., from a certain pusillanimity, so that having left the better things they inhere in the worse. The second condition of the holy minds is that they are extended firmly and indeclinably to the supersplendent ray itself, i.e., to the truth manifested to them from above, as firmness refers to certitude and indeclinability to immobility. The third condition is that

they exhibit the desire of the manifest love for divine thigns. And this is what he adds, that by the commensurate love of fitting illuminations, namely that their desires concerning it which are given to them according to their measure persist, they are elevated to divine things by other spiritual things, namely by contemplations or intellectual powers, with reverence both chaste and holy: reverently in so far as they keep themselves from those things which are above them, but chaste in so far as they do not keep themselves back with inferior things, and holy in so far as they firmly inhere in those things which are given to them according to the ordination of God. (208-222)

I - 2

<Following these thearchical laws etc.> After Dionysius shows the mode of this doctrine as far as those things which are handed down in it and proceed from it, here he begins to pursue the notion of the divine names, which he intends to treat in this book. And first he shows what cognition of God we are able to receive through the divine names; second in what way God can be named, <And if it is better etc.> (1-4)

Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows what cognition of God we receive through the divine names; second he shows how it is that after cognition of this kind that which God is remains hidden to us <But now as it is possible to us etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows what sort of cognition of God can be received through the divine names; second he designates the difference of this cognition to the cognition which will be in patria, <And by these we are taught etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows what cognition of God we can receive through the divine names; second he shows this by example through certain names of God, <These from divine expressions etc.> (5-11)

He says therefore first that we, following the aforementioned thearchical, i.e., divine, laws, i.e., commensurately according to our measure, both firmly and with love send ourselves out to the divine illuminations. These laws not only govern holy people, but also the holy and ornate order of supercelestial substances, i.e., the beautiful and ordered dispositions of the angels, venerating through this also the hiddeness of divinity which is above mind and substance, by inscrutable reverences of mind, i.e., by being so disposed toward God that we do not search out the hiddenness of God, and holy, since such reverence pertains to sanctity; and venerating the unspeakableness of deity by a chaste silence, which he says since we venerate hidden things when we do not scrutinize them and

ineffabilities when we do not speak of them. And this comes from the sanctity and chastity of the soul not extending itself beyond its own boundaries. Thus, I say, venerating divine things according to the result of divine laws, we are extended toward splendors dawning upon us in holy expressions, i.e., to the truths of holy scripture revealed to human beings, and by the same splendors of holy scripture we are illuminated to the thearchical hymns, i.e., to knowing the divine names, by which God is praised. For through these we know to name God living, good and other names of this kind, since these are handed down to us about God in holy scripture. We, I say, illuminated by the same hymns supermundanely, i.e., beyond the virtue of natural reason, and in a certain way configured to the holy enunciations of the hymns, i.e., of the divine praises, which are handed down in scripture through the divine names, namely in so far as we are illuminated by their faith: illuminated, I say, and figured in this respect, that through hymns of this kind we might see according to our measure the divine lights given to us, and also in this respect that we might praise the principle of the entire holy apparition of spiritual light; which principle not only bestows spiritual light to minds, but universally the Good, as the principle itself hands down concerning itself in holy expressions: in the Psalm "When you open your hand, all things will be filled with goodness", and in Luke 11 it is said "Your father from heaven, he will give the good spirit to those who ask him". (11-32)

It is therefore the sense of the foregoing that we desist from the investigation of divine things according to our reason, but we should inhere in holy scripture in which the divine names are handed down to us, through which names the gifts of God and the principle of those gifts are manifested to us. Therefore through the divine names, which are handed down to us in scripture, we know two things, namely the diffusion of holy light and of every goodness or perfection and the principle itself of this diffusion, namely when we call God living, we know the diffusion of life in creatures and the principle of this diffusion to be God. And this principle we do not know through the divine names just as it is, for this is unspeakable and inscrutable; but we know God as principle and as cause. (32-39)

And in order to show the notion of this principle he first posits certain things which pertain to the universal notion of a principle, when he says 'just as that which is the cause and principle of all', as the cause is referred to an end which is the first cause, and a principle to an acting cause from which operation and motion begins. But consequently he states those things which pertain to the notion of a principle with respect to determinate effects:

and first in terms of the institution of things when he says 'both substance and life', since through this principle all subsistences exist and all living things live; then in terms of the melioration of things in spiritual things, which is attained according to three things, namely according to purgation, illumination, and perfection. But these three things are completed by the angels according to intellect simply: who purge ignorance by removing it; and they illuminate the support to the intellect by granting that it know the truth; and they perfect while they lead to the cognition of the truth. For the perfection of a thing consists in this that it attains to an end. Whence in the seventh chapter of the Angelic Hierarchy it is said that purgation, illumination and perfection is the assumption of divine knowledge. But not only does intellect pertain to God, but also to change the will toward the better, and in this respect he speaks here of purgation, illumination and perfection. (39-51)

But he states five things pertaining to purgation. For since the sin by which the will is defiled occurs when a person is turned from unchangeable good for the sake of a temporal good, it is first in the purgation of the will that the will be conducted to unchangeable good; and regarding this he says that the deity is the recalling and resurrection of those that are fallen from it, namely through sin. And he says recalling and resurrection since not only does God draw us, which is to recall, but God also gives the power so that being recalled we might rise up. But the second is that, from the fact that God satisfies the human will, it abandons that commutable good because of which it receded from God; and regarding this he says that God is the recalling and reformation of those who have fallen to something corruptive of deiformity, i.e., of the divine similitude in us; but this is sin. But it happens that, while God begins to satisfy someone and to scatter sin, from the beginning he suffers a certain wavering of mind, drawn now this way now that; whence he needs to be gathered together in one; and regarding this third he says that God is the holy collocation of those who are moved according to a certain impure commotion. But further a person needs, after he is collocated in one, that he be established in that one lest he be easily removed from that condition through temptations; and regarding this he says fourthly that God is the establishment of those who stand. But further it is necessary that a person progress to better things; and regarding this fifth he says that God is the upraising leading of those who act in an upward direction, i.e., of those who are effected, i.e., progress, in an upward direction, to deity itself. But God is called an upraising leading since not only does God offer a hand of assistance

to those who want to progress, but God also excites them to progressing. (52-68)

Therefore after these five things which pertain to purgation he adds something concerning illumination when he says: 'And of those who are illuminated, the illumination'. This illumination is understood in this respect that God bestows the light of God's own grace whether to the perfection of intellect or to the perfection of affection. (68-70)

And further he adds something concerning perfection, which he touches upon in two ways: first in that something is said to be perfected when it attains a proximate end, for example justice or some such virtue; and this when he says 'and of those who are perfected the principate of perfection', since whatever is the proper perfection of a thing principally exists in God, just as the rule of a city principally preexists in the prince. But regarding the attainment of the ultimate end he says 'and of those who are deified, the thearchy', i.e., the principle deity. For a rational creature is said to be deified when it is united to God in its own mode, so that in this way deity principally befits Godself, but secondarily and participatively those who are deified. (70-77)

But further he states those things which pertain commonly to the betterment of all things. Now it must be considered that a twofold process is found in things, namely of resolution and composition; and in both ways things tend toward the divine similitude. For according to the way of resolution things tend from composition toward simplicity which is in God in the highest way; and regarding this he says that God is the simplicity of those who are simplified. But according to the way of composition things tend from multitude toward unity, since the one is from many. But unity is first in God; and regarding this he says 'and of those who are made one, unity'. But not only is it communicated to things from God that they subsist in themselves and are made better, but also that they are the principle or cause of existence and improvement to others; and in this regard he adds that God is 'supersubstantially the superprincipal principle of the universal principle'. For God is not a principle in the same way in which others are principles, but more eminently as God has esse more eminently. And so that he might comprehend the universal effects of God, he adds that God is the good tradition of that which is hidden. For it was shown that whatever things are in creatures preexist in God more eminently. Now creatures are manifest to us, but God is hidden. Thus therefore in so far as the perfections of things are derived in creatures from God through a certain participation, the tradition is in its manifestation what it was hidden; and this is in so far as it is fitting, namely

according to the proportion and suitability of each one. (78-91)

And since he had said that God is both the substance and life of all things, lest someone should understand that God is the formal essence or life coming into composition with things, he excludes this perverse understanding when he adds that: so that God is called simply, i.e., God is called universally, life of the living and the substance, i.e., essence, of existents as the acting principle and final cause of every life and substance, not indeed because of God's necessity, but because of God's goodness, which both leads existents to esse and contains them, i.e., conserves them in esse. And just as he explained concerning substance and life, thus it must be understood also concerning all things following, namely that God is understood to be the recalling and reformation of things, and simplicity and unity and other things which he said above, in so far as God is the principle and cause of these. (92-99)

Then when he says <These from the divine expressions etc.>, he shows through a certain divine name mentioned in scripture that we receive the aforementioned cognition of God from the divine names. And he says that these things which were said above, namely that through the divine names God is known as principle and cause, we do not say from ourselves, but we commemorate by receiving the divine expressions; and that it is thus said, every hymn, i.e., praise of God, of the holy theologians you will find, if you will look diligently in the scriptures, dividing, i.e., distinguishing, the nominations of God to the good processions of the thearchy, i.e., according to the processions of perfections which come into creatures from the divine goodness. (99-105)

For that God is called good, living, wise, and is named with many other names is not from some multitude or diversity existing in God's essence, since all these things are one in God, but from the diverse perfections of creatures we receive diverse names which we attribute to God as to the first principle of all these processions. And this manifestively and laudatorily: manifestively in so far as God becomes known to us through God's own effects and in so far as also through names of this kind attributed to God perfections of this kind are manifested to us to be in things from God; but laudatorily in so far as all of this pertains to the goodness of God, that perfections are communicated to things. (106-112)

And this he first expounds in the name of unity, adding that in almost every theological work, i.e., in every book of theology, we see the deity praised as monad and unity; which

two words seem to signify the same thing, since one is Greek and the other is Latin. The name of unity seems to be attributed to God because of two factors. First because of that which is in God; and he touches upon this when he says 'because of the simplicity and unity of supernatural impartibility'. For the notion of unity consists in impartibility; for one is a being which is not divided. But it happens that something is not divided in act which is divided in potency, as a line or a house, of which both can be said to be one, but not simply. But there is something undivided not only in act, but also in potency, as unity and a point; and these can be called not only one, but also simplicity. But in God both kinds of indivisibility exist, since God is neither divided in act nor in potency; and for this reason significantly he said 'because of simplicity and unity'. And he added 'of supernatural impartibility', since no simplicity or unity of natural things can be compared to the divine simplicity and unity. (112-123)

But secondly the name of unity is attributed to God because God communicates unity to things; and this is what he adds 'from which', namely the divine unity, and by God's unifying virtue two things come to us: the first of which is that we are unified, i.e., we have a certain unity, according to which we say one person or one animal. The second is that, since our unity is not so perfect that it excludes all diversity, even those things which are diverse in us are reduced to a certain unity in that even those things which are diverse simply in the created order are one, so that in this way they at least imitate the unity of God. And this is what he says, that we are gathered together to a certain monad, i.e., unity, that is deiform, i.e., like God, as far as those things which are already made one, and to a certain imitative unity of God as far as those which become one; and this by our enclosed alternating, i.e., diverse, divisibilities, i.e., which occur by some division, supermundanely, i.e., by supermundane virtue. Or when he says 'we are united' can refer to the fact that everything is one in itself; but what follows 'and by our divisibilities etc.' can refer to the fact that many things, although they are diverse and other, are nevertheless reduced to some unity either perfectly or imperfectly. For a monad, i.e., unity, designates the perfection of unity, but union designates the way to unity in which the imperfection of unity is shown. (123-136)

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Then he shows the same in the name of Trinity; and he says that we find God to be praised as Trinity in order to manifest the supersubstantial fecundity of the three persons, which are not distinguished except according to

origin; from which divine fecundity all paternity is derived, i.e., the fecundity which is understood by the name of paternity, as the Apostle says in Eph. 3, that from God the Father "all paternity in heaven and on earth is named"; not only is it named, but it also exists or is caused. (M.57)

But thirdly, he shows the same in the name of Cause; and he says that God is praised as the Cause of existents, because all things are lead to <u>esse</u> from God's goodness, by substantifying things, but not from the necessity of nature. (M.58)

But fourthly, he shows the same through the names of Wise and Beauty; and he says that the theologians praise the deity as wise and beautiful, since all existents, in which there is found a proper nature preserved apart from corruption, are full with all divine harmony, i.e., perfect consonance or order to God, and are, again, full with holy decorum; so that when he says 'harmony' it refers to wisdom, whose it is to ordain and commensurate things; but when he says 'decorum' it refers clearly to beauty. But through the fact that something is diminished from harmony or decorum, corruption comes into things according to a recession from their proper nature, as illness in bodies and sin in the soul. (147-150)

Fifth he shows the same thing from the name of benignity. And he say that divine scripture praises the deity as benign, nevertheless differently from the aforementioned names. For according to the foregoing names God is praised in so far as God has not communicated Godself; but God is praised as benign in so far as in the work of incarnation in one of the persons of deity itself, namely in the person of the Son, God communicated with us, i.e., with those things which pertain to our nature, not bearing a celestial body, as Valentinus said, truly, i.e., according to the truth, not fantastically, as Manicheus said, totally, i.e., as far as to all parts of our nature, not assuming the body without the soul or the body and soul without the intellect, as Arrius and Appollinaris said. And that he might show the end of the incarnation, he adds 'recalling' from the state of sin 'human extremity', i.e., human nature, which is the highest of creatures according to the order of creation, to Godself, namely the deity, and not only recalling by drawing near to it, but also restoring by working in it. (150-159)

And lest someone should believe that God had communicated with us according to inhabitation alone, as Nestorius said, instead of according to a true union in person and hypostasis, so that namely he himself, who is God, is truly human, he adds from which, namely from the deity operating,

or from which, i.e., according to which humanity, Jesus, who is ineffably simple according to divinity, himself the same in hypostasis, is composed according to humanity; and he who is eternal according to divinity received a temporal presentation, i.e., so that he might be temporal in some present time according to human nature; and who according to divinity supersubstantially exceeds every order according to any nature whatsoever was made within our nature truly human, contained under the human species as also other human beings are; through all of which he gives to understand that the same is in subject God and human being. (159-167)

And lest someone should perversely understand that God was made human according to some conversion of divinity into flesh or into soul or also according to some assemblage so that there would in this way be one nature of God and human being, as Eutyches devised, he adds 'with an intransmutable and unconfused collocation' i.e., by a firm preservation, of properties, i.e., of the properties of both natures, since neither the divinity was converted into humanity nor the humanity into divinity. And since many things could be said concerning the mystery of the incarnation which he presently omits because this is not his principal intention, he adds that not only are the foregoing things understood through the divine benignity, but also any other deifying lights, i.e., any other divine verities, the hidden tradition of our leaders, namely of the apostles and other doctors after them, has given to us clearly along with the succession of divine expressions, i.e., in so far as it is handed down in holy scripture. (167-176)

Then when he says <And these things we are taught etc.>, he shows the difference between the cognition which we receive in the present life concerning God through the divine names and the cognition which the saints have in the future life. And he says that these things which were said in the exposition of the divine names concerning God we are taught now, i.e., in the present life, according to our proportion through the holy veil of expressions, i.e., of holy scripture, and of the hierarchical tradition, i.e., of other dogmas which the apostles and their disciples handed down which are not contained in holy scripture, for example the things which pertain to the rites of the sacred mysteries. For the hierarchy is the same as the sacred principate; whence the apostles and other ecclesiastical prelates are called hierarchs as if sacred princes. (176-183)

But he says through holy veils, since in the present life we can not see the essence itself of God as it is in itself through those things which are handed down to us, but we are instructed concerning God in the scriptures through the similitude of God's effects, as if through certain veils,

according to I Cor. 13 "We see now through a glass in an enigma". But of what sort those veils are he explains, adding that from the benignity of God the intelligibles are enshrouded through the sensibles, as when the scriptures speak concerning God and angels under the similitude of certain sensibles, as is clear in Isaiah 6 "I saw the Lord sitting upon an exalted throne"; and later "The seraphim were standing above it, six wings to one and six wings to another". And similarly supersubstantials are veiled, namely the divine things, through existents, just as not only are sensible things attributed to God, but also the intelligible perfections of creatures, as when we attribute to God life, intellect and perfections of this kind found in created things. And similarly from the same goodness corporeal forms and figures are placed around incorporeal things, not formable or figurable in this way. And similarly a simple supernatural and unfigurable thing is multiplied and composed through the variety of divisible signs, namely in so far as Godself, who is supernatural and simplex, through diverse things is manifested to us in scripture, whether they be diverse processions or diverse similitudes. But significantly he said 'by the benignity'; for that in scripture intelligibles are expressed to us through sensibles and supersubstantials through existents and incorporeals through corporeals and simplicities through composites and diversities, is not because of jealously, so that the cognition of divine things is withdrawn from us, but for the sake of our utility, since scripture by condescending to us hands down to us those things which are above us according to our mode. And this mode of cognition is that by which we are able to know God in the present life. (183-201)

But then, namely after the blessed resurrection, when we will be incorruptible and immortal, this corruptible receiving incorruption and this mortal receiving immortality, as is said in I Cor. 15, and when we will attain the christ-formed end, i.e., assimilation to Christ, according to Phil. 3 "he will reform the body of our humility, configured to the body of his own brightness", and most blessed, since not only will the soul be beatified, but also in its own mode the body will be glorified, then "we will always be with the Lord, according to the saying", as it is said in I Thess. 4. We, I say, filled with a visible apparition, i.e., by a sensible and corporeal one, of Godself as far as the humanity of Christ, and this in the most chaste contemplations since we will not be affected by the body of Christ carnally, but spiritually and divinely, according to the Apostle in II Cor. 5 "and if we knew Christ according to the flesh, but now we know him thus no longer": by Christ himself, I say, pouring out around us through his own body brightness by most manifest splendors just as he

had done around the disciples in that most divine transformation, i.e., transfiguration, when, as it is recorded in Matt. 17 "his face shone as the sun", and not only will we be filled with his sensible apparition, but also we will be intelligible participants by the gift of the light of Christ himself which he will pour out in us according to the virtue of his own divinity. (201-214)

And we will participate this light in an impassible and immaterial mind. For our mind now is passible accidentally from the union to the body and it is made material through affection to material things; and for this reason, it is not now capable of participation of such light as it will be then, when it will not be impeded in any way through corporeal passions nor will it be subjected to material affections. And through this participation of light we will be also participating the unity which is above mind, namely that by which our mind will be united as to the intelligible God, who is above mind; and this will be through the unknown and blessed immissions of the superbright rays, i.e., of divine illuminations, which are now hidden to us as unexperienced, by which then the holy minds will be beatified. And humans will attain this according to the imitation of supercelestial minds, i.e., of the angels, in a more divine mode than now. For now, although in every contemplation of the truth human minds are illuminated to the unity of the angels, nevertheless we fall short in many ways from equality with them; but then we will be equal to the angels, as the truth of the expressions say, and "they will be sons of God, existing as sons of the resurrection," as this is recorded in Luke 20. (214-225)

Then when he says <But now as it is possible to us etc.>, he shows that after every cognition which we have of God in the present, that which God is remains hidden to us. And concerning this he does two things: first he proposes what he intends; second he proves the proposition, <In which every end etc.> (226-228)

He says therefore first that now, i.e., in the present life, as was explained above, we use proportionally as it is possible to us proper signs to know divine things. These signs are as much the perfections which proceed from God in creatures as are also metaphors which are transferred to God through a similitude. And signs of this kind are called proper cognitions of divine things from our part, since it is not possible that the divine things become known to us otherwise than in this way. Nevertheless we do not use signs of this kind in the cognition of divine things in such a way that our minds remain in them, judging God to be nothing beyond these kinds of things, but on the contrary, from these signs we are extended according to our proportion to

the simple and united truth of intelligible wonders, i.e., of admirable contemplations, which we receive concerning divine things through signs of this kind. But he says 'to the simple and united truth', so that simplicity responds against the composition of the signs, but unity against their multiplicity and diversity. (229-238)

And lest someone should believe that through the aforementioned signs we are able to comprehend the truth and intelligibility of divine things perfectly, he adds that we send ourselves out to the supersubstantial ray, i.e. to knowing the truth concerning God, not perfectly, but in so far as it is lawful to us, namely quieting, i.e., resting, our intellectual operations, lest we are borne beyond what is given to us. And this, I say, after every deiform union corresponding to us, as if he should say: after we will be united according to deiformity through cognition to things divine in every way that it is possible to us, still something concerning things divine remains hidden to us, from the inquiry of which it is necessary for us to quiet our intellect. (238-245)

Then when he says <In which every end etc.>, he proves what he had said. And concerning this he does three things: for first he introduces the thing to be proved; second he expounds it, <And of every substantial etc>; third he proves a certain thing that he had supposed in the proof, <For if cognitions etc.>. (245-247)

But for the evidence of the first part it must be considered that no finite virtue extends itself to the infinite, but it is concluded in some certain terminus. Whence since every cognitive virtue of the creature is finite, there is some certain terminus of any cognition of the creature beyond which it does not extend. And an example of this can be received from diverse sciences. For geometry has some terminus beyond which it does not extend, and similarly natural science. And this must be understood concerning every created cognition. But it is clear that what exceeds the terminus of some cognition is not attained by that cognition. But the supersubstantial ray, i.e., the divine truth itself, exceeds all termini and ends of every cognition, since all ends of every cognition preexist eminently in that ray itself as in a primordial cause, in a mode ineffable to us because of its eminence. Whence it remains that the aforementioned ray we can neither think by inquiring nor express by speaking nor perfectly contemplate in any mode, not because of its own defect, but because it is distinct from all things and consequently unknown by all, as if existing above all. (248-259)

Then when he says <And of all substantial etc.>, he expounds what he had said, namely that the ends of cognition preexist in the supersubstantial ray. And he says that, since that ray is supersubstantial, but cognitive virtues and cognitions themselves are substantial, i.e., proportionate to created substances and consequently finite, it is clear that the aforementioned ray pre-receives in itself, as a supreme cause, the terminations of all the aforesaid cognitions and virtues, not indeed successively so that now it has this one and now that one, but simultaneously and unitedly; nor again particularly so that it has this termination and not that one, but universally all; nor again does it have in itself terminations of this kind in the mode in which they are in created substances, but supersubstantially. (259-266)

And since what he had said 'which neither to think' etc. someone could refer only to the cognition of the present life, he further extends this also to angels. And he says that the supersubstantial ray is collocated not only above human minds, but also above celestial minds, i.e., angelic, not so that it is in no way attained by them, but thus that it can not be comprehended; and this is what he says 'by an incomprehensible virtue'. (266-270)

Then when he says <For if cognitions etc.>, he proves what he had presupposed, namely that in God the terminations of all cognitions preexist. And the reason for this is such: all cognitions are of existing things, for the object of cognition is being; but existents are finite; therefore finite being is the object of finite cognition. Therefore God, since God is infinite, exceeds all finite substance, pre-having in Godself the ends of all things; and consequently God is separated from all cognition in so far as God exceeds every cognition of the creature, so that God can be comprehended by none. (270-275)

I - 3

<And if it is better in every discourse etc.> After Dionysius had shown what cognition of God we can receive through the divine names, here he shows how God can be named. And first he proposes a doubt; second he solves it, <But what we said when the theological etc.> (1-4)

Therefore the doubt is such: it was shown that God is more powerful than all our locution and every cognition and God not only exceeds our locution and cognition, but God is universally collocated above every mind, even the angelic, and above very substance. And lest someone should believe God to be above every remotion such that not only would God be not known, but that neither also would God know those

things which are below Godself, he adds that God is circumapprehensive of all things in so far as God knows the properties and circumstances of things, and comprehensive in so far as God perfectly knows the quiddities or essences of all things, and pre-apprehensive, namely in so far as God does not receive the cognition of things from things themselves as we do, but God's knowledge exists prior to things, since it is their cause. And nevertheless God is incomprehensible by all things and neither can God be comprehended by sense nor phantasy, or imagination, nor by opinion, i.e., by judgement, in which things even the brutes participate. Nor also can God be comprehended through those things which are the properties of rational things: since neither is there a name for God, as comprehending God, nor some complex word, nor touch, i.e., simple intellectual intuition, nor knowledge, which arises from deduction from principles to conclusions. If God is therefore thus, how will some discourse concerning the divine names be able to be handled by us, since it has been demonstrated that the supersubstantial deity cannot be signified by a voice, namely since it is existing above every name. For it seems ridiculous to discuss the names of a thing which can not be named. (4-18)

Then when he says <But what we said etc.>, he solves the aforesaid doubt. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows how God can be named; secondly how the divine names must be treated, <But now whatever things are of the present work etc.>. The first part is divided in three according to the three modes of nomination of God which he designates; the second part begins, <But since just as of the goodness etc.>; the third, <But it is when from certain etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he posits the basis of the first mode of nomination; second he designates the first mode of nomination of God, <Those deiform etc.> (18-23)

He says therefore first that, just as it was said in the book <u>On the theological distinctions</u>, the One itself through itself, which is God, which is unknown and above all substance and which is the Good itself, i.e., the essence itself of goodness, and which is that which is, i.e., <u>Esse</u> itself through itself, namely the triune unity itself, in which there is no gradation, but all three persons are simultaneously and equally God and simultaneously and equally the Good itself, not that the Son is the shadow of goodness as Origen and Arrius had said: that One, I say, according to what it is in itself is not possible to us either to speak or to think; for we cannot see the essence of God itself, which is a unity in the Trinity, in the present life. And although the angels see the essence of God, nevertheless even they are to us the ineffable and

unknown unions of the holy virtues which befit the angels, namely by which they are united through cognition to the divine essence itself by in some way attaining to it, but not by comprehending it; which, namely the unions, it is necessary to call either immissions or susceptibilities of the superunknown and superbright divine goodness; for it is not unknown because of obscurity, but because of an abundance of brightness. But they can be called immissions in so far as the divine goodness itself sends itself out in some way to holy minds, but receptions in so far as holy minds receive it according to their own mode. And although unions of this kind are now ineffable and unknown to us, they enter nevertheless to some humans, but only to those who are held to be worthy by the angels themselves, i.e., by the society and consortium of the angels, of superangelic cognition. But the vision of God through essence is above the nature of every created intellect, not only human, but angelic. (24-39)

Then when he says <Those deiform etc.>, he designates the first mode of the nomination of God, namely which is through remotion. And he says that the minds of the saints conformed to God, namely of the prophets and apostles, united, i.,e., conjoined by the aforementioned immissions and receptions, according to the imitation of the angels, not indeed equally to the angels, but as far as it is possible in this life, praise God most properly through remotion from all existents; and this is because the union of holy minds to God, who is above every light, is such, namely through remotion from all existents, according to the rest of all intellectual operation, i.e., in an ultimate sense, in which all of their intellectual operation quiesces. For this is the ultimate to which we are able to attain concerning the divine cognition in this life, that God is above all that which can be thought by us, and for this reason the nomination of God which is through remotion is most proper. For those who praise God in this way through remotion through the illumination of God truly and supernaturally are taught this from a most blessed conjunction with God, that God, since God is the cause of all existents, is nothing among existents, not as if defecting from being, but supereminently segregated from all things. And for this reason the divine supersubstantiality, which is the essence of goodness, by those who are lovers of divine truth, which is above all truth, cannot be praised, in terms of what it is, i.e., comprehensively, so that neither should God be called reason nor virtue nor mind nor life nor substance. And the same reason applies concerning all other names, which signify the processions of God in creatures. (40-55)

But they praise God as superexcellently segregated from every disposition, which can be referred to artificial

things or to any exterior circumstances; and motion as far as natural things; life as far as living things; fantasy, opinion, i.e., judgement, as far as sentience; name uncomplex, word complex, deliberation, i.e., inquisitive reason, as far as rational things, as are humans; intellect as far as intellectual things, as are the angels; and universally with respect to all things he says substance, if the <u>esse</u> of things is considered; station, collocation as far as the permanence of things, as station is referred to the establishment of a thing according to which it consists in itself, but collocation in that it is established in another; and as far as the perfection of things he adds union, end, infinity, and universally from all things that exist in any mode. (55-63)

Therefore this is the first mode of nomination of God through abnegation of all things for the reason that God is above all things, and whatever is signified by any name whatsoever is less than what God is, who exceeds our cognition, which we express through names imposed by us. (63-65)

Then when he says <But since as the essence of goodness etc.>, he hands down the second mode of nominations of God, namely those which name God as cause. And concerning this he does three things: first he sets forth the notion of nominations of this kind; second he posits the nominations themselves, <Therefore the theologians knowing this etc.>; third he excludes a certain error, <And truly the substance of all is praised etc.> (65-69)

For the evidence of the first part it must be considered that while effects proceed through a certain assimilation to their causes, according to the mode by which something is a cause, it prepossesses in itself the similitude of its effects. For if something is the cause of another according to its species or nature, the effect has in itself a similitude according to its nature: just as human being generates human being and a horse generates a horse. But if it is the cause of another according to some superadded disposition, according to this it will also have a similitude to its own effects. For the builder is the cause of the house, not according to his nature, but according to his art; whence the similitude of the house is not in the nature of the builder, but in his art. (73-75)

But further it must be considered that, since the Good has the notion of an end, since the Good is what all things desire, but the end is the first of causes, the Good is that to which the notion of causing first applies. Therefore in so far as something is disposed to the Good, for this reason it is disposed to the Good in so far as it is a cause.

Therefore since God is the Good, not as if participating goodness, but as the essence itself of goodness, God is not the cause of things through some participated disposition, but through God's own esse itself God is the cause of all existents. Nor is it for this reason excluded that God acts through intellect and will, since God's to understand and to will is God's esse itself. Thus therefore in God's own esse itself God prepossesses the similitude of all God's effects. (76-82)

But every cause as such can be named from the name of its effect in so far as it has in itself its similitude. For if the similitude is according to identity of notion, the same name befits the cause and the thing caused, as the name human being befits the one generating and the one generated. But if a similitude is not according to the same notion, but is supereminent in the cause, the name would not be said of both according to one notion, but supereminently of the cause, as heat is said of the sun and of fire. Thus therefore since the similitude of all things preexists in the divine essence, not through the same notion, but more eminently, it follows that the providence of divinity as the princeps of all good, i.e, having principally in Godself all good and diffusing it to others, is fit to be praised by all caused things, nevertheless not univocally but supereminently, which occurs because of the suitability of creatures with God; which suitability he designates when he adds 'since also around him are all things'. For effects are said to consist around a cause in so far as they draw near to its similitude, according to the similitude in which lines going out from the center stand around it according to a certain similitude derived from it. But some things are found to be around something, which nevertheless exists for the sake of those things which stand around it, just as a pillar exists for the sake of a house. But God is not for the sake of creatures, but conversely; and for this reason he adds 'and its cause' are all things, in that mode of speaking in which medicine is said to be the cause of health, i.e., for the sake of health. (83-97)

But it happens among us that what is for the sake of an end is the active cause of the end and prior to it in generation, just as medication is related to health. And lest God should be believed to be an end in this way, he adds 'and he himself is before all things'. Also some things are for the sake of an end which, although they do not precede that because of which they are, nevertheless they confer something to that thing, just as clothes are for the sake of human beings. And in order to exclude this from God he adds 'and all things are constituted in God'; whence God can acquire something from nothing, but all things acquire whatever they have from God. And lest someone should believe

God to be the cause of things only through the mode of an end, as some supposed, and not through the mode of making and conserving, he adds 'and this esse', namely deity or divine providence, 'is of the whole', i.e., of all things or perfections, 'the deduction', i.e., the production, 'and substance'; as if he should say: the deity itself through its own esse is the cause of the production and existence of things. (97-105)

But it must further be considered that every effect is converted to the cause from which it proceeds, as the Platonists say. The reason of which is that everything is converted to its own good by desiring it; but the good of an effect is from its cause; whence every effect is converted to its own cause by desiring it. And for this reason after he had said that all things are derived from the deity, he adds that all things are converted to it through desire; and this is what he says 'and all things desire it'. (106-110)

And lest someone should believe that all things know God, he shows how in diverse ways diverse things desire God, adding: intellectual things, i.e., angels, and rational things, i.e., human beings, desire God cognitively, i.e., by knowing God; for God cannot be known except by an intellect or reason. But those things subject to these do not desire God cognitively: but others only sensibly, as the brute animals, and others according to a vivified motion, as the plants, or according to a substantial aptitude, as those things which are moved according to generation and corruption, or disposition, as in other motions which are according to quality and quantity and place. For all things of this kind, although they do not know God, nevertheless are said to desire God in so far as they tend toward some particular good. But in every particular good shines the first Good from which it has every good which is desirable. (110-119)

Then when he says <Therefore the theologians knowing this etc.>, he posits the divine nominations according to the aforementioned notion. And he says that the theologians, considering the foregoing, namely that God is segregated from all things and nevertheless is the cause of all, sometimes call God unnameable, but sometimes attribute to God the names of all things. They call God unnameable, just as when they say that the divinity itself, in one of the mystical visions, which were according to an imaginary divine apparition, significantly upbraided him who asked: what is your name? by the angel who appeared in the person of God. And as if he should exclude God from all cognition which can come from the name of God, he said: Why do you ask my name which is wonderful? And this occurs in Gen. 23 and Judges 13. And truly this name is wonderful, which is above every name, as it is said in Phil. 2, that God is

unnameable, as if collocated above every name which is named whether in this age or in the future, as it is related in Eph. 2. (119-128)

And not only is God praised in scripture as unnameable, but also as of many names, just as when God is introduced saying "I am who I am', Ex. 3, and life and truth, Jn. 14, and light, Jn. 8, and God, Ex. 3 "I am . . . the God of Abraham". And not only do the names themselves introduce God speaking concerning Godself, but also those who were experienced concerning deity, as the apostles and prophets, praise God as the cause of all from many effects. But it is not necessary here to distinguish the diversity of these effects which he adds here, since they will thus be distinguished in the distinction of the chapters, while he reduces all effects of this kind to certain chapters. For they praise God as the good, Lk. 18; as the beautiful, Cant. 1; as wise, Job 9; as lovable, Cant. 5; as the God of gods, Ps. 49; as Lord of lords, Apoc. 17; as Holy of holies, Dan. 9; as eternal, Baruch 3; as existing, Job 14 "Are you not alone who is ?"; as cause of the ages, Eccl. 24; as the giver of life, Acts 17; as wisdom, I Cor. 1; as mind, Is. 27, where another translation has 'intellect'; as reason, Is. 53 "I am he who speaks justice", where another translation has "I am he who disputes justice", or it can better be said that 'ratio' is called 'logos' in Greek which also signifies word, which is found often in the scriptures; as knower, II Thi. 2; as prepossessing all treasures of universal knowledge, Col. 2; as virtue, I Cor. 1; as powerful, Ps. 88; as King of kings, Apoc. 19; as Ancient of Days, Dan. 7; as without age and invariable, James 1; as salvation, Mt. 1; as justice, as sanctification, as liberation, or redemption according to another translation, I Cor. 1; as in magnitude exceeding all things, Job 23; as in a still voice, I Kings 19. And they say God also to be in minds, or hearts, Eph. 3; in souls, Wis. 7; in bodies, I Cor. 6; in heaven and in earth, Jer. 23; And simultaneously in the same thing, i.e., as far as the same nature, they say God to be mundane, i.e., in the world, Jn. 1; around the world, Eccl. 24; beyond the world, [this he says because of certain Platonists who posited some gods to be mundane and others supermundane] Is. 66; supercelestial, Ps. 112 "Exalted above all peoples etc."; supersubstantial, Mt. 6; the sun, Mal. 4; a heavenly body, i.e., a star, Apoc. 22; fire, Deut. 4; water, Jn. 7; spirit, Joel 4; dew, Hos. ult.; a cloud, Hos. 6; a stone, Ps. 117; a rock, I Cor. 10. And all other existing things are attributed to God as to a cause, and God is nothing among existents in so far as God superexceeds all things. Thus therefore it befits God, who is the cause of all things and nevertheless exists above all things, both to be unnameable in so far as God exists above

all things, and also all names of existents befit God as the cause of all; and he adds the reason. (129-156)

For the evidence of this it must be considered that the rule of the universe is the highest possible. But for the goodness of rule it is required that the one who rules is not entirely alien from those who are ruled, but has some suitability with them, so that he might be useful, and nevertheless that he superexceed the subjects, lest his ability to command be held in contempt. And this is what he says, so that the reign of the whole, i.e., so that the rule of the universe, is diligently, i.e., proceeds optimally, all things are around the first cause, as if derived from it according to some similitude; and all things are segregated from it as from a cause for the sake of which all things are, as from a principle from which they flow out, as from an end which they attain; and God also in this way is all in all in so far as God is all perfections of all things causally, according to the sayings; for this is written in I Cor. 15. (156-164)

Then when he says <And truly he is praised etc.>, he excludes a certain error. For there were certain Platonists who reduced the processions of perfections into diverse principles, positing one principle to be of life which they called the first life and another principle to be of understanding which they called the first intellect and another of existing which they called the first being and the good. And in order to exclude this he says that God is truly praised as principal substance of all things in so far as God is the principle of being to all things, and God is called the perfective cause of all things in so far as God gives all perfections to things, and God is called a containing cause, custodian and food, which three things seem to pertain to the conservation of things. For there are some things which have no need except that they be preserved in their principles, since they can not be corrupted by exteriors, as water by fire; and as far as this he says 'custodian', since these things are defended by God lest they be corrupted by others beyond the order of their notion. But there are some which need supplements for their conservation, as humans and animals need food; and as far as this he says 'food', namely since God administers to all things those things which are necessary to their conservation. God is even also a conversive cause for them, since the fact that things are converted to God by desiring God as an end is in them from God. And all these things befit God unitively, i.e., not according to diverse virtues but according to one simple virtue, and communicably segregated, since God thus communicates to others the aforementioned causalities, nevertheless such that a certain

singular mode of causing remains separate with God. (164-181)

But for this reason God is praised as cause in diverse ways, since not only is God a cause of containing, i.e., of the salvation of things, but of life and perfection, as the divine goodness which is above every name ought to be named from this alone or from another providence, i.e., causality, but the divine goodness itself pre-receives in itself all existing things simply, i.e., not in such a way that it is composed by all things, but those things which in themselves are many and composite are in God one, simple and incircumfinite since, while singular determinate names signify something distinct from other things, by coming into divine predication they do not signify God finitely, but infinitely: just as the name of wisdom as it is understood in created things signifies something distinct from justice, as for example existing in determinate genera and species, but when it is understood in divine things, it does not signify something determined to genus and species or distinct from other perfections, but something infinite. And for this reason God is fittingly praised and named from the most perfect goodnesses, i.e., perfections, which come into things through the providence of that supreme cause; which since it is one and the same, is nevertheless the cause of diverse, nay of all, things, namely when God is named by the name of substance or life or something of this kind. And God is also named from universal existents because of the perfections participated in them, namely if God should be named sun because of brightness and rock because of firmness and thus concerning others like these. (181-195)

Then when he says <And not those alone etc.>, he posits the third mode of the nomination of God. And he says that the holy theologians commend not only those nominations of God to us which are taken from providences or provisions, perfect or particular, so that through providences we should understand perfections communicated to things, as goodness and wisdom, but through provisions the things themselves participating perfections of this kind, as a human being or the sun; of which things those are called perfect providences which are universals, as the good, existing, and those of this kind, but particulars which befit some genus of things, as wise and just. But it happens sometimes that they name the goodness of God, which is supernameable because of its supersplendent splendor, by certain divine apparitions, i.e., by imaginary visions, by which either prophets or teachers are illuminated {which he says because of those who co-write holy writings} either in holy temples or in other places, and this according to diverse causes and virtues. For from diverse reasons diverse apparitions were made; whence they placed around God human forms or flames or electrons and to God's praise they describe God's eyes and

voices and other members and they place around God crowns and thrones and others of this kind, which is easy to consider from the diverse places of scripture. And concerning names of God of this kind he pledges himself to speak in the book On symbolic theology, which we no longer have. (195-208)

Then when he says <But now everything etc.>, he shows how he is to treat the divine names. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows which divine names he will discuss in this book; second what mode of doctrine is to be served both as far as those who teach and as far as those who hear, <And what always according to every theologian etc.>; third he exhorts Timotheus to whom he writes to observe this, <Therefore to you etc.> (209-213)

He says therefore first that he must now proceed in this book to the manifestation of the intelligible divine names, i.e., those which are not taken from sensible things symbolically, but from the intelligible perfections proceeding from God into creatures, as are esse, to live and those of this kind, thus that any names that pertain to the present work be gathered together from sacred scripture and that these things which were said in this chapter should be used as a certain rule, to which it is necessary to look in the entire present work. For since there were set forth three genera of nominations of God, the first, which is through remotion, is treated in the Mystical theology, the second, which is through intelligible processions, in this book, the third, which is through sensible similitudes, in the book On symbolic theology. (213-220)

Then when he says <And that always etc.>, he shows the mode of determining the divine names, when he says that it must be considered that properly in this book the contemplations by which God appears are spoken. And he says properly against metaphorical apparitions. And again it must be seen that to the manifestations of the holy names of God the holy ears are sent out, namely of the faithful, who hear piously and reverently, not of the unfaithful who deride and blaspheme, so that thus we might place holy things among the saints according to the divine tradition as God admonishes: "you do not wish to give holy things to dogs", Mt. 7, so that holy things are carried away by the derisions of the uninstructed; even more so humans themselves, if those who are totally resisting divine things should be liberated from the assault of God; for by deriding divine things they do not injure divine things, but themselves. And this, I say, is to be provided in this book, since always according to every theological doctrine the hierarchical law, i.e., that which is handed down through holy princes, introduces, i.e., prescribes or exhorts, these things to be observed

according to a certain deliberation which does not come from human wisdom, but from the circumspection itself of God. (220-231)

Then when he says <Therefore to you etc.>, he induces Timotheus to observe these things. And he says that it is useful to him to guard the aforementioned things, namely that these most holy things be recorded, and that those things which are divine he should neither speak nor in any way expose, i.e., make known to the uninstructed, namely to infidels or to any untaught persons, who, while not receiving these things, deride them because of ignorance. (231-235)

But finally in a prayer he ends the present chapter, asking God that God might give to him with the praise of God, in so far as it befits God, to hand down diverse nominations of deity, which cannot be expressed nor named with a voice, and that the word of truth would not depart from his mouth. (235-237)

BOOK TWO

II - 1

<The entire thearchical essence etc.> After Dionysius in the preceding chapter proposed the mode of proceeding in the work and the notion of the divine names, in this second chapter he intends to show that the divine names, which are discussed in this book, are common to the whole Trinity. And for this reason this chapter is entitled "On united and discreet theology", since in this chapter there are proposed what things are said commonly of the whole Trinity and what things are said distinctly of the persons. And there is proposed in the same chapter what is the notion of community and distinction in divine things, which pertains to the second part of the title, when he says <And what is the divine unity and discretion>. But this chapter is divided into two parts: in the first he shows what things are said commonly and what are said distinctly in the Trinity; in the second he designates the notion of community and distinction, <But it is necessary that I judge etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows that the divine names, which are to be discussed in this chapter, must be understood in the whole Trinity; second he removes an objection in the fact of contraries, <But if someone should say etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he proposes the intended truth; second he proves it, <And as in the theological etc.>; third he excuses himself from a more diligent proof, <Therefore these things by us etc.> (1-13)

He says therefore first that goodness through itself is praised in holy scripture as determining, i.e., distinguishing from others, and manifesting the entire divine essence, whatever it is, since if anything befits the divine essence, it befits it to be goodness through itself and vice versa. And he proves this through the fact that in holy scripture divinity itself is introduced in the person of the Son, saying "Why do you ask me concerning the good? There is no good except God alone", as it is appears in Luke 18: which must be understood concerning goodness through itself. And since it is this way concerning the name of goodness, therefore in other books also after inquiry it

must be demonstrated by us that all names befitting God are praised in holy scripture, not particularly as if befitting one person alone, but the entire and perfect and integral and first deity of the Trinity. (13-21)

But the whole is not here understood as composed from parts, for in this way it could not be congruent with deity, namely as being repugnant to God's simplicity, but as according to the Platonists there is said to be a certain totality before parts, which is before the totality which is from parts, namely if we should say that a house, which is in matter, is a whole from parts and preexists in the art of the builder, which is a whole before parts. And in this mode the entire universe of things, which is as a whole from parts, preexists as in a primordial cause in deity itself, so that in this way the deity itself of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit might be called a whole as if prepossessing in itself the universe. Similarly when he says 'perfect' it must not be understood according to the mode of signification of the word: for perfect means completely made, just as we say that we have gone around when we have completed walking; whence that which is not made cannot for this reason be called perfect. But since things which become then come to the end of their making when they attain the nature and virtue of their proper species, thence it is that this name perfect is taken to signify everything which attains its proper virtue and nature. And in this mode deity is called perfect in so far as it is maximally in its nature and virtue. But integral and perfect seem to be the same, nevertheless they differ in notion: for something seems to be called perfect in attaining to its proper nature, but integral through remotion of diminution, just as we say some person not to be integral, if after he or she attain their proper nature they should be truncated in some member. (22-36)

And since from the deity of the Trinity nothing can be subtracted, to signify this he adds 'integral'. But 'first' is added to signify that the deity of the three persons is not participated deity; for that is called first which is unparticipated, as deity per se and goodness per se. And they seem to be posited in order to exclude the error of Origen and Arrius, who posited the deity of the Son to be participated. And so that he might show that the names of God not only are commonly said of the three persons, but equally and in the same mode, he adds that also all the aforementioned nominations were demonstrated to be apposed, i.e., attributed, perfectly to the universal totality and of all, i.e., of the entire deity: so that when he says 'universal' it refers to the number of persons, but the others to the perfection of essence; and this 'simply' which responds to when he said 'first': for those which are

unparticipated are said simply, but those which are participated goods are said particularly, according to Augustine "take this and that and . . . you will see . . . the good of every good"; 'absolutely' which responds to when he said 'integral', for those which are corrupted can not be named absolutely, just as a dead human being is not called a human being absolutely; 'unobservedly', i.e., apart from some observance of distinction, which responds to when he said 'perfect', for unless deity is perfect in every person, it would be necessary to observe how something should be said of one person and how it is said of another. (37-51)

Then when he says <And as in the theological, etc.>, he proves what he had supposed. And first specifically regarding certain names; second commonly of all, <And as summarily someone might say etc.> (51-53)

He says therefore first that, just as it was commemorated in the book On the theological characteristics, if someone should make this statement: that "there is no good except God alone" does not apply to the entire deity, i.e., to all persons, and through this he presumes erroneously to divide the unity of the divine Trinity, it must be said against him that even the Word itself, i.e., the Son of God, as naturally having goodness said in John 10 "I am the good shepherd", and in the Psalm it is said "Your good Spirit". And similarly, what is said in Ex. 3 "I am who I am", if someone should say that this was not said to be praised of the whole deity, i.e., of all parsons, but of one simply, how should this be understood which is said in the Apocalypse 1 of the Son "These things he says who is and who was and who is coming, the omnipotent", and what the Apostle says regarding the Son in Heb. 1 "But you yourself are the same", and of the Holy Spirit it is said in John 16 "The Spirit of truth who is, who proceeds from the Father"?, although our text does not have 'who is'. And similarly if someone should say that the entire divinity is not life, how is it true what the Son of God said in John 5 "As the Father revives and vivifies the dead, so also the Son vivifies whom he wills", and John 6 "The Spirit is the one who gives life"? And also if the entire deity does not have domination of all, it could not be said in so many places of holy scripture this name 'lord' frequently appears of the Father and of the Son, and this so that we might speak of the deigenic deity of the Father or the filiation of the Son; but also the Spirit is lord, as is said in II Cor. 3. And similarly beautiful and wise are praised in all persons of the deity and light and deifying and cause and all things whatever which are of the entire deity the holy expressions derive to every divine laudation, sometimes simultaneously by comprehending all persons, as when it is said "All things are from God", but sometimes distinctly of one person, as

when it is said of the Son in Col. 1 "All things were made through him and in him", and "all things in him consist", and in the Psalm "Send forth your spirit" etc. (53-72)

Then when he says <And as summarily someone might say etc.> he shows the proposition commonly of all the names of God, saying that in summary it might be said of all, the Word of God himself said in John 10 "I and the Father are one", through which it is shown that whatever things are said of the Father are said of the Son, and John 16 "and all which the Father has is mine", and John 17 "and all mine are yours and yours mine". And similarly whatever things are of the Father and of the Son holy scripture attributes commonly and unitedly to the divine Spirit, namely the divine operations, divine honor, the fontanal and unfailing cause and the distribution of benign gifts. And all these things are found in I Cor. 12 "One and the same works all these things" etc. And these things are true to the extent that nothing customary in the divine expressions, which do not have a corrupt intention in them, I judge to contradict these things, namely that all names befitting God are in the entire deity according to a perfect mode of speaking of God. (73-81)

Then when he says <Therefore these by us etc.> he excuses himself from a more diligent inquiry of the aforementioned things. And he says that these things are here determined and demonstrated briefly and particularly from holy scripture, but in another book sufficiently. Whence whatever nomination of God that we attempt to expound in the present work, it is necessary for the name to be understood in the entire deity, i.e., in all persons; and for this purpose the entire present chapter is presented. (82-85)

Then when he says <But if someone should say etc.>, he excludes an objection. And first he states the objection; second the mode of solving it, <For if someone is etc.>; third he explains the solution, <Therefore unions etc.> (86-88)

But someone could object that through the fact that all names which are said of the Father are attributed to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, the distinction of persons is entirely destroyed and confusion is introduced in the divine persons, which things do not befit God. But he says that if anyone makes this objection it must not be judged that his discourse is sufficient to persuade that he speaks the truth; for the distinction of persons is not destroyed through this. (88-92)

Then when he says <For if someone etc.>, he states the mode of solving the problem, saying that if the one who objects

in this way totally contradicts holy scripture, such a one is entirely removed from our wisdom. It does not pertain to the theologian to prove those things which are of faith to one who does not receive the scriptures, since faith is above reason. Whence if that one does not take care that the divine expressions are venerated, why should we care and lead him to divine wisdom, since it is this way in philosophical science that no wise person disputes against one who denies the principles of his art. But if someone who objects in this way wants to look to the truth of the sacred expressions, we, using holy scripture as a certain rule and light manifesting the truth, proceed, not by declining from sacred scripture, in order to excuse ourselves from the aforementioned objection, and we say that sacred scripture hands down certain things commonly of the three persons, certain things distinctly, and it is neither lawful to distinguish those things which are common, nor to confound those things which are distinct; but, by following sacred scripture as far as we are able, it is fitting for us to look to the divine verities. Since, while we look to the manifestation of God from sacred scripture, it is necessary for us to guard those things which are stated in sacred scripture as a certain optimum rule of truth, so that neither should we multiply them by adding, nor diminish them by subtracting, nor pervert them by expounding them evilly, since while we keep holy things we are kept by them and by them we are confirmed in order to keep those who keep holy things. For it is necessary not only to conserve those things which are handed down in scared scripture, but also those things which were said by the holy doctors, who preserved sacred scripture unspotted. (92-108)

Then when he says <Therefore united etc.>, he explains the stated solution regarding what he said, that sacred scripture hands down certain things regarding the trinity unitedly and certain things discretely. And he says that things united of the entire divinity, i.e., things common to the whole Trinity, as was said in the book On the theological characteristics, and is proved through many authorities received from sacred scripture, are in two genera of names: first those things which are said of God remotively through a certain excellence, as supergood, supersubstantial, superliving, superwise and any other things said of God through remotion because of God's excess; with which secondly are to be connumerated all causal names, i.e., which designate God as the principle of procession of perfections which emanate from God into creatures, namely the good, beautiful, existing, generative of life, wise and any others through which the cause of all goods is named from the gift of God's goodness. And from this can be understood the magistral rule, that all names designating an effect in creatures pertain to the divine essence. But

discrete names, i.e., pertaining distinctly to the three persons, are: the name of Father substantially or hypostatically, i.e., personally, and the use of the Father, i.e., his act which is generation, and similarly the name of the Son and his act which is to be generated, and the name of the Holy Spirit and his act which is procession, so that in such names no conversion ought to be superinduced, as if it should be said that the Father generates the Son and conversely, and communion of any kind, as if it should be said that the Father and the Son generate some other person. And similarly distinctly to one person pertains the mystery of the incarnation, since only the person of the Son was incarnated; and this is what he says that it is discrete to the aforementioned, that the essence of Jesus, perfect and invariable according to the nature of divinity, is in accordance with us through union of humanity and any other substantial, i.e., personal, mysteries pertaining to the benignity of the incarnation. (108-126)

II - 2

<But it is necessary as I judge etc.> Since in the solution to the objection stated above he had said that the theologians handed down certain things of the divine persons unitively and some discretely, he intends here to explain of what sort are union and discretion in divine things. And first he explains it as far as it is possible; second he shows that it can not be totally and perfectly explained by us, <But of these and of unions etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he discusses the mode according to which he intends to explain; second he explains that mode, <For they call what in other places I said etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that for a fuller understanding of the foregoing solution it is necessary in his judgement to explain more the perfect mode of the divine union and discretion, taking up the solution from a principle, so that all our discourse concerning this might be conspicuous, i.e., manifest. In order to attain which he states two things to be avoided and three to be observed: for there must be avoided or rejected all variation, i.e., everything confused or mixed. For when someone says diverse things confusedly and indistinctly, it is necessary that they speak now of this and now of that and thus in the discourse variation appears; also there must be rejected everything not plain, i.e., obscure, which can occur if intelligibles are handed down apart from the leading of sensible examples or also if some manifest truth should be discussed through uncommon words. But over against these two he posits two things to be observed: namely so that his discourse should determine according to the virtue of the speaker things proper, i.e., connatural to us, 'discretely' to counter when

he had said 'variation', and 'plainly' to counter when he had said 'not plain'. And he adds a third, namely 'ordinately'; for it is necessary in order for doctrine to be clear, that it proceed according to an order of discipline beginning from things more manifest and from these through the cognition of which other things are known. But he commits himself to explain the perfect mode of the divine union and discretion, since he will designate all modes according to which union and discretion can be understood in divine things, but not so that the mode itself, in so far as it is perfect in God, could be manifested; for this is above our virtue, as he will prove below. (6-21)

Then when he says <For they call etc.>, he proceeds with the exposition of the divine union and discretion: and first as it pertains to deity; second as it pertains to the humanity of Christ, <But it is discrete from the benign etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he explains the two common modes of union and discretion; second he subdivides both, <And the sacred expressions say following etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he explains the common mode of union; second the common mode of discretion, <But discretions etc.> (21-26)

He says therefore first that, just as he had said in his other books, namely in the book On theological characteristics, the holy teachers of our theological tradition, i.e., of christian doctrine, namely the apostles and their disciples, called the divine unions certain hidden and inegressible divine supercollocations which are of the divine singularity, superineffable and superunknown. (26-30)

For the evidence of which it must be considered that, since every multitude of things flows out from a first principle, the first principle in so far as it is considered in itself is one; but according to the emanation by which the multitude proceeds from it, already there is found that from which the first principle can be distinguished, since the notion of a multitude consists in distinction. Therefore to consider the first principle itself in so far as it is in itself, this is to consider its union, and this existence of the first principle in itself, he calls supercollocation; and he names this supercollocation both hidden and inegressible: hidden since as such God can be known by us in so far as we know the participations of God's goodness, but in so far as God is in Godself God is hidden to us; but he says inegressible, since in so far as it is in itself the first principle is communicated to nothing and thus it does not go out from itself. And because of this also, divinity itself thus considered, through the excellence

distinguishing it from all things, he calls singularity, since what is singular is incommunicable. (30-40)

Then when he says <But discretions etc.>, he explains the common mode of discretion through its opposite. And he says that the aforementioned teachers call the discretions processions and manifestations of divinity, which befit it in so far as it is the Good itself, since it is of the notion of the Good that effects proceed from it through its communication. And it must be considered that counter to what he had said above 'hidden and inegressible' he posited sufficiently and congruently processions and manifestations, since it is manifested through effects proceeding from it and in some way deity itself proceeds in effects, while it hands down its similitude to things according to their proportion, nevertheless such that its own excellence and singularity remains in itself, not communicated to things and hidden to us. Therefore these processions are called discretions, since, unless others things flow out from a first principle, the first principle would not have that from which it could be discerned. (40-48)

Then when he says <And the holy expressions say etc.>, he subdivides both of the things said. And first he posits the subdivision; second he explains it, <Just as in the divine union etc.> (49-50)

He says therefore first that those who follow the sacred scriptures and who follow the proper notions of the aforesaid union and again of the aforesaid discretion say that as there are common to the aforesaid union certain proper unions and discretions so also they are common in the aforesaid discretion. (50-53)

Then when he says <Just as in the divine union etc.>, he explains the subdivision. And first he shows how in the aforesaid mode of common union there is a certain union and discretion; second he shows that also in the aforesaid discretion there is union and discretion, <But there is also discretion in supersubstantials etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows how in the aforesaid union there is proper union; second how in the aforesaid union there is discretion, <The dwelling of the principal persons etc.> (53-58)

Therefore for an understanding of this part it must be considered that, since above he had understood the notion of the divine union from the perspective of God considered in Godself according to God's own superexcellence, this consideration is twofold. For this superexcelling existence of God can be considered in itself or according to essence and thus it is unitive and common to the whole Trinity; or

in so far as one of the divine persons is in another and thus in union there is found discretion. This is therefore what he says, that in the divine union, i.e., supersubtantiality, as if he should say: I understand in this way the divine union according to the common notion of union posited above, in that the notion of union consists in a certain excellence of deity; in this, I say, common union there is united and common to the principal Trinity whatever pertains to the superexcellence of the divine essence, and through this he gives to understand that the proper notion of union, which he now expounds, is nothing other than the *esse* common to the three persons; and he exemplifies it as supersubstantial essence, deity beyond deity, i.e., above the mode of deity communicated to things, and supergood goodness, and identity which is above all things, namely according to which God is the same to Godself, and unity above principate, unity, I say, of the total propriety existing above all. (58-70)

And he says this because the One has the notion of a principle. But anything is one in so far as it is undivided in itself. But this occurs in so far as it retains the property of its own nature: as if he should say that in so far as it is unity it is a principle above every principle, having in itself its own property by which it exists above all. It also pertains to this excellence that it is ineffable to us because of its excellence and that it is unknown by us because of the excellence of its light and that it is perfectly intelligible, i.e., comprehensible, to no intellect, and that all things can be affirmed of it and all things denied according to the mode explained in the preceding chapter, while nevertheless it is above every affirmation and negation; for it is above our intellect which composes affirmations and negations. (70-78)

Then when he says <The dwelling of the principal persons etc.>, he explains how there is discretion in the common mode of union, which is a collocation of superexcellence. And concerning this he does three things: first he proposes what he intends; second he illustrates the proposition through a sensible example, <How lights etc.>; third he shows the example to be deficient from a simple representation of the thing, <And these totally etc.> (78-82)

He says therefore that the dwelling of the principal persons in each other, i.e., in so far as one of the divine persons is in another, and the collocation of one in another, if it must be named in this way, since it implies a distinction, is nevertheless totally superunited, i.e., pertaining to that union of excellence which was discussed above. (82-85)

Then when he says <How the lights of luminaries etc.>, he shows through a sensible example that in the foregoing union there can be discretion. In the example he does three things: first he states the sensible example, in which he says there is simultaneously union and discretion; second he shows what in the example is union <And we see etc.>; third what in it is discretion, <But also if some one etc.> (85-89)

He says therefore first, so that we might use examples that are sensible and proper to us, the lights of a plurality of luminaries existing in one house are all both in each other totally and nevertheless they have a diligent, i.e., optimum and perfect, discretion from each other as properly subsisting; and thus many lights are united with discretion and discrete with union. (89-92)

Then when he says <And we see in a house etc.>, he shows that the aforesaid lights have union with each other. And he says that we see in many luminaries existing in one house that the lights of all the luminaries are united in one certain light, since the lights of all the luminaries shine in the same part of the air. And this is what he adds 'and in one clarity indiscrete', i.e., indistinct according to place or subject, 'resplendence'; and, as I judge, no one can discern from the others the light of this luminary in the air, which contains all lights, and see one of them without the other, because the entire light of one is concreted with another without mixture, i.e., by destroying discretion. (92-98)

Then when he says <But also if some one etc.>, he shows that discretion remains there, since if someone should take out one of the luminaries, as one of the candles, at the same time there would go out with it all of its proper light, which was in the house from that luminary, and from this it is clear that the light in the house would be found to be lessened, nevertheless such that something of the other lights would not simultaneously go out with the light going out, nor also would something of the latter remain with the other lights; which could not happen, if there were a mixture of lights, as if water should be mixed with ashes or flour all the water could not be extracted without something remaining of the flour or ashes admixed and without also something of the ashes or flour being destroyed or going out at the same time. But this does not occur in lights, because there was a conjunction of all the lights in a perfect whole apart from all mixture and no existing confusion of parts. (99-107)

But here it must be considered that the opinion of the philosophers concerning light was twofold. For some said

light to be a body and according to this opinion the proposed example seems to proceed clearly enough. For Dionysius seems here to speak of many lights from the diverse luminaries proceeding into a single air, just as if he should speak of many bodies and perhaps because he says that they have a subsisting discretion, for to subsist is of substance as such, and also because he says that one light goes out without another, by which seems to be designated a certain local motion, which is of bodies as such. But if light is not a body but a quality, according to another opinion, the light would not have a subsisting discretion, but rather from the diverse luminaries as from diverse acting causes a single light would become more intense in the air and, with one luminary subtracted, the superaddition of intensity would cease: just as from many heat producing causes heat is extended into things capable of being heated and, one cause being subtracted, the heat is diminished. But this second opinion regarding light is truer; whence it can be said that Dionysius here speaks of the subsisting discretion of lights and the departure of some of them with respect to the luminary and not according to themselves. Nevertheless it must be considered that the philosophers as well as the sacred doctors were accustomed at times to use some examples in order to illustrate a proposition, which are according to some probable opinions held by some people, although they did not follow those opinions themselves. (107-121)

Then when he says <And these totally in a body etc.>, he shows that the example falls short of a simple representation of the thing. And he says that these things which were said of diverse lights are completely appropriate in the case of corporeal and material things, namely in corporeal air as in a place, if lights are bodies, or as in a subject, if light is a quality, and again in sensible light depending from material fire. But in the divine persons we say the supersubstantial union to be collocated, not only above the unions which are in bodies, but also above those unions which are in souls themselves and even in the angelic minds themselves; which unions the deiform and supercelestial lights, i.e., the angels themselves, have, the whole through the whole unmixed and supermundanely, while namely one angel is conjoined to another completely through intellect and affection. And an unconfused union of this kind in minds and souls is according to a proportional participation of that union which is in the divine persons, which is supersegregated from all participants, namely since nothing of participants can perfectly imitate the divine union. (121-132)

Then when he says <But discretion is etc.>, he explains how in the common mode of discretion signified above there is

found both discretion and union, i.e., something common to the whole Trinity and something distinct pertaining to the persons. For it was said above that the divine discretions are said according to the processions of deity. But there is a twofold procession of deity: one in that one proceeds from another and through this the divine persons are multiplied and distinguished, and in this respect proper discretion is perceived in the common mode of discretion; there is another procession according to which the creature proceeds from God, according to which are the multitude of things and the distinction of creatures from God, and this discretion is united, i.e., common to the whole Trinity. Therefore first he explains how some discretion pertains to the distinction of persons; second how some discretion pertains to the unity of essence, <But if also the divine discretion etc.> (132-141)

He says therefore first that discretion in supersubstantial theologies, namely regarding the divine persons, is not only that which I already described which is through common union itself, which pertains to the superexcellence of deity, i.e., whatever of the divine persons is unmixed and unconfusedly collocated in another, but also that those things which pertain to the supersubstantial fecundity of God are never converted to another, as those things which pertain to the personal collocation were converted. For mutually the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, nevertheless the Father does not mutually generate the Son and the Son the Father. And this is what he adds, that only the Father is the supersubstantial fountain of deity, so that in a fountain, authority should be understood or a principle that is not from a principle; nor is the Son the Father nor the Father the Son, while the divine praises preserve according to the faith of the christian religion the properties of each of the divine persons. (141-149)

Finally by way of an epilogue he adds that those things which were said are unions and discretions pertaining to the ineffable divine essence itself and to its ineffable union, since what follows of union and discretion pertains to creatures. (149-151)

II - 3

<But if also the divine discretion etc.> After Dionysius explained how under the common mode of discretion, which is according to procession, proper discretion is contained, which is according to the procession of one person from another, now he intends to explain how under the same common mode of discretion there is contained also a certain proper union, namely which is according to the procession of creatures from God, pertaining to the entire Trinity. And

concerning this he does two things: first he proposes what he intends; second he illustrates it through an example, <How a point etc.> (1-6)

Therefore for the evidence of the first part it must be considered that someone could say that the procession of creatures is not contained under the divine discretion; whence although the procession of creatures might pertain commonly to the whole Trinity, nevertheless it can not be said that some divine discretion is common or united in the Trinity. And for this reason he wants to show that the procession of creatures is in some way a divine discretion, nevertheless not in the mode in which the procession of the divine persons is. For in the procession of the divine persons the same divine essence itself is communicated to the person proceeding and thus there is a plurality of persons having the divine essence, but in the procession of creatures the divine essence itself is not communicated to the creatures proceeding, but it remains uncommunicated or unparticipated; but its similitude, through the things which it gives to the creature, is propagated and multiplied in creatures and thus in some way the divinity through its similitude, not through essence, proceeds into creatures and in them is multiplied in some way, so that in this way the procession itself of creatures can be called a divine discretion, if a view to the divine similitude is maintained, but not if the divine essence is considered. This is therefore what he says, that if the procession befitting the divine goodness which is of the superunited divine union, i.e., of the unity of essence, in which the three persons are united, which is above every unity, which in some way acts itself or leads forth from its own goodness into plurality and multiplies itself, namely according to its similitude, if, he says, such a procession can be called a divine discretion for the reason that through it the divine unity is in some way multiplied, then consequently it must be said that the traditions, i.e., the donations of the divine gifts, which are incomprehensible on the part of the principle, are united, i.e., common to the whole Trinity according to the divine discretion, i.e., according to the common mode of the divine discretion, which was understood according to procession. And what those traditions are he shows adding 'substantifications', in that God gives esse to all things subsisting; 'vivifications' in that God gives life; 'sapientifications' in that God gives wisdom; and other gifts of the divine goodness, which is the cause of all, according to which the divine gifts participated through similitude, not participably, in so far as the essence remains unparticipated, are praised from the participations, i.e., from the participated gifts, as are esse, wisdom and life, and by the participants, to which namely they are communicated. But he speaks plurally of

divine things either because of the plurality of persons or because of the plurality of names which are attributed to God; and this is common to the entire deity. (6-30)

And lest the community of notion be understood simply as genus is common to species and species to individuals, he adds 'and united', as he shows one in number to be in three. And lest someone should understand unity congregated from many as a house is united from parts, he adds 'and this one', namely all divinity itself, i.e., according to whatever persons, wholly to be participated by every participant through similitude and by none of the participants to be participated in any of its parts through a commixture of its substance. But he says the whole of it to be participated, nevertheless not totally or perfectly, since it is incomprehensible to all, as was said above. (31-37)

And since this last dictum seemed difficult and implying a contradiction, he illustrates this consequently through an example, when he says <Whatever point etc.> And concerning this he does three things: first he posits the example; second he shows it to be deficient, <But it exceeds also these etc.>; third he objects against the aforementioned example and solves it, <Although someone might say etc.> (37-40)

He says therefore that it is the case regarding the participation of deity just as a point which is in the middle of a circle is divided by all lines circumposited in the circle, namely which are protracted from the center to the circumference, in so far as every line receives indivisibility according to latitude in the similitude of the indivisibility of a point, just as we might imagine a point by its own motion to make a line and nevertheless the point according to situation is distinct from the longitude of the line, and also as many expressions of a seal participate the archetype in the seal, i.e., the principal figure in the seal, -- for an archetype is named from 'archos' which is chief, and 'typum', which is figure -- the entire and same archetype in the seal existing in each of the expressions according to similitude and in none of them according to any of its parts through commixture of substance. (40-47)

Then when he says <But it exceeds etc.>, he shows this example to be deficient from the representation of divine things. And he says that the imparticipability of deity, which is the cause of all, exceeds the aforementioned example, for deity is more imparticipable and less commixed with participants than a point and a seal. For there is no contact of deity with creatures, namely in that mode in

which there is a unity from seal and wax through contact; nor also is there some other communion through which it is commixed with the parts of things, as a point is commixed with a line in so far as it is its terminus. (48-53)

Then when he says <Although someone might says etc.>, he objects against what he had said, that the seal wholly exists in each of the impressions. For someone can say this is not true, because some impression is found which does not perfectly receive the form of the seal. But he responds that the cause of this is not on the part of the seal, since one and the same seal wholly bears itself to each impression, but the diversity of the participants makes dissimilar impressions, i.e., representations, of one and the same principal form which has form totally. But how the form of one seal is received in diverse ways in diverse things, he shows adding: for if those things in which there is an impression are as such soft things which can easily receive a figure, and plain, i.e apart from swellings, so that an impression might be made in them uniformly, and immaculate, lest a commixture with alien matter should impede the impression of the figure, and neither are there contrary figures, as if someone wants to impress the figure of one seal in wax already signed by another seal, and nevertheless in order to retain the figure it is somewhat durable, so that there would not easily be fusible and unstable things, since in this case the impression of the figure would not remain, when these conditions exist, the matters in which the impression is will have the figure of the seal pure apart from mixture of another figure, and plain without deformity, and permanent. But if something falls short from the aforesaid aptness for figuration, this will be the cause that the figure is not participated or that it is not plainly, i.e., uniformly, participated and of other defects, whatever ones pertain to the inopportunity of participation. (53-68)

Then when he says <But it is discrete etc.>, he expounds the discretion which is according to the humanity of Christ. And he says that it is discrete, i.e., pertaining to one person simply, the supersubstantial Word, i.e., the Son of God, to be made according to us, i.e., a human being like us in nature, by flesh received from us, not brought down from heaven, according to Valentinus, totally, the souls or intellect not subtracted, according to Arrius and Appolinaris, and truly, not fantastically, according to Manicheus. And not only is the incarnation itself discrete, but also the actions and passions of God incarnate; whatever things are with a certain election and segregation from others attributed to Christ according to a consideration of his humanity, as to be conceived, to be born, to eat, to drink, to sleep, to be crucified and others of this kind.

For in these the Father and the Spirit communicated according to no notion, since neither of them was incarnated or died, unless perhaps someone might say they communicated in the foregoing according to will befitting the divine goodness in our behalf: for the Father and the Holy Spirit accepted the incarnation of the Son and the passion and others of this kind and similarly they communicated according to every divine operation placed above creatures and ineffable to us, which Christ did while made according to us, i.e., made a human being, remaining invariable as God and the Word of God. For he was not made human such that he left divinity; whence existing as a human being he had divine operation, which is common to himself and to the Father and to the Holy Spirit. And thus here is destroyed the error of those who posit one operation in Christ, through this that he attributes to Christ divine operation common to the whole Trinity and human operation proper to himself. (69-84)

But finally by way of an epilogue he says that thus we are eager by our discourse both to unite and to discern divine things just as they are united and discrete in truth. (85-86)

II - 4

<But also of these unions etc.> After Dionysius expounded the mode of the divine union and discretion, he exempts himself from a perfect manifestation of these. And it is divided into two parts: in the first he shows that the divine discretions and unions can not sufficiently be explained by us; in the second he proceeds with the discretion which is according to the procession of creatures, since this pertains foremost to the intention of the present book, <Therefore concerning these it is sufficient etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he states the exemption from a perfect explanation of the aforementioned things; second he designates the reason, <For all divine etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that in the book On theological characteristics he had explained, as far as it was possible for him, the causes, i.e., reasons, of the aforesaid unions and discretions which he found in holy scripture befitting to God, treating what was proper to each one, nevertheless thus that certain things he reflected upon, i,e, discussed, by a veridical discourse and unlocked, i.e., opened, and further reduced them into manifest visions of expressions, i.e., into the manifest authorities of holy scripture which contain visions and revelations made to the prophets and apostles, what can be understood in a holy and manifest way after discussion and disclosure. For it is not enough in

things divine to discuss and uncover the truth by human ingenuity unless the truth, which is found after discussion, concords with holy scripture and is confirmed through it. And since he had disclosed certain things in this way, nevertheless by certain things as by mystical, i.e., hidden, unions it was above intellectual operation in so far as it was handed down from God; for it has been ordained to us by God, that we, adhering through faith, are united to those things which are above our intellect. (7-16)

Then when he says <For all divine etc.>, he designates the reason why there are in divine things certain mystical things, which exceed our intellect. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows this on the part of divinity; second on the part of the humanity of Christ, <But what is manifest of every theology etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he designates the reason of the foregoing; second he illustrates the designated reason through examples, <As if supersubstantially hidden etc.>; third he proves it through a similarity in other causes and effects, <For neither is it diligent etc.> (17-22)

He says therefore first that all divine things which are manifested to us are known by us by participations alone. This is because nothing is known except according to what it is in the knower. But there are certain knowables that are below our intellect, which have a more simple esse in our intellect than in themselves, as are all corporeal things; whence things of this kind are said to be known by us through abstraction. But divine things are more simple and more perfect in themselves than in our intellect or in any other things known to us; whence the cognition of divine things is said to come about not through abstraction but through participation. But this participation is twofold: on the one hand divine things are participated in the intellect itself, namely as our intellect participates intellectual virtue and the light of divine wisdom; but on the other hand divine things are participated in things which offer themselves to our intellect, namely in so far as through participation of divine goodness all things are good and through participation of divine esse or life things are called existing and living. And according to both of these participations we know divine things. But it was shown above that God is participated by creatures through a similitude in such a way that God nevertheless remains unparticipated above all things through the property of God's own substance. Whence if divine things are not known by us except by participations alone, it follows that divine things themselves, of what sort they are and according to the proper notion of a principle and in so far as divine things are collocated in themselves, are above all things,

as above all mind and above all substance and above all cognition. (22-37)

Then when he says <As if supersubstantially etc.>, he illustrates the proposed reason through examples; and first in the processions of creatures; second in the processions of the divine persons, <Again what the Father etc.> (38-40)

He says therefore first that, if we should name that hiddenness of the divine essence, which is above all substance, either God or life or substance or light or reason or any other such name, not through this will we understand what God is, but our intellect conceives nothing other than the virtues which come to things from God, by which they are formally deified or substantified or vivified or sapientified. But since God is above all processions of this kind, it is necessary that we send ourselves out into God in order to know according to remotion from all intellectual operations, i.e., from all that falls in our intellect, and for this reason since we ourselves cannot through intellect see some divinity or life or substance, which can be perfectly compared to that cause which is segregated from all things according to a total excess. For there does not occur in our intellectual vision anything except another created and finite being which entirely falls short from uncreated and infinite being, and for this reason it is necessary that we understand God to be above all that we can apprehend by intellect. (40-50)

Then when he says <Again what the Father etc.>, he illustrates the same in those things which pertain to the processions of the divine persons. And he says that from holy scripture we understand that the Father is the fountain of deity, i.e., that the Father is the fountain and principle of the whole deity, and that the Son and the Holy Spirit, if it is necessary so to speak, are certain sproutings of the deigenic deity, i.e., of the Father who is God generating, sproutings, I say, not outside the divine nature as a creature, but in the divine nature and they are also as flowers and supersubstantial lights. Nor is it strange if these things are said plurally of the divine persons, for if in metaphorical locutions the thing itself signified by the metaphors is understood, it must be predicated singularly of the divine persons; but if the metaphors themselves are understood, they can be predicated plurally; for through light truth is understood metaphorically. Therefore we can say that the Son and the Holy Spirit are one light, since they are one truth; we can also say that they are two lights, as the sense is that they are signified through two lights, i.e., through two rays proceeding from one luminary, as also through two flowers, since both proceed from the Father. Nevertheless this does

not exclude that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son. (50-61)

But in what mode these things are we cannot speak nor think, that is, that we might express or know of what sort that paternity or filiation is, but to the point of knowing this alone the entire virtue of our intellect extends itself, that both to us and to the supercelestial virtues, namely the angels, from the principal divine paternity, which is segregated from all creatures, and similarly from the principal filiation is given all paternity and filiation which is according to propagation in divine things, i.e., as one angel purges, illuminates and perfects another and one human being another, namely from that principal paternity and filiation the minds of the angels conformed to God both are through participation of the divine gifts and are named in scripture both gods and sons of gods and fathers of gods, namely through assimilation to the principal paternity and filiation. (61-69)

And lest the communication of properties should seem to be absent from the Holy Spirit, he adds that such paternity and filiation is perfected in the holy angels spiritually; and he explains spirituality through three things: for spiritual signifies something incorporeal and immaterial and intelligible. And although this spirituality is found in angels, nevertheless the divine Spirit is supercollocated above all intelligible immateriality of angels or souls, as both the Father and the Son are segregated through the mode of excess from all paternity and filiation which is in creatures according to participation of things divine. (69-75)

Then when he says <For neither is it diligent etc.>, he proves what he had said through a similitude in other causes and effects. And he says that between causes and effects there cannot be a diligent, i.e., perfect, comparison, since causes exceed their effects, but there is some comparison of effects to causes in so far as effects have images, i.e., similitudes, of causes. For every cause produces its effect through some mode of similitude, nevertheless effects do not attain a perfect similitude to a cause, but contingently, i.e., as it occurs according to its proportion. But for this reason there is no perfect comparison, since causes are separated from effects in so far as they are subjected to them according to the notion of a proper principle, i.e., in that notion by which they are principles. (75-82)

And he illustrates this through examples taken from things which are among us: and first from the passions in that pleasures and griefs make to be pleased and to grieve not through the mode of an efficient cause, but formally, as it

is said that whiteness produces a white thing, but pleasures and griefs themselves are not pleased nor grieve; for from the fact that something is pleased or grieves, pleasure or grief are predicated through participation, but not from the pleasure or grief themselves through essence; and thus the cause exceeds its effect. Then he states an example in acting causes when he says that fire which makes hot and burns is not said to be made hot or to be burned, but to be hot and dry through its nature. After this he states an example in formal causes, namely from life itself or light itself, nevertheless such that by this there should not be understood some separated light or life, but the participated forms themselves, according to which mode neither can it be said concerning life that it lives nor of light that it is illuminated according to the aforesaid notion except perhaps equivocally, so that life is understood to live, since it is the cause of living. And he designates the notion of these examples and similes through this that those things which belong to effects through the mode of participation belong to causes superabundantly and substantially, as to live belongs to living things participatively, but belongs to life itself essentially. (82-94)

Then when he says <But what is of all etc.>, he illustrates the same concerning the humanity of Christ: and first through his own words; second through the words of Hierotheus, <But these also by us etc.> (94-96)

He says therefore first that, although in all things which are said of God what pertains to the incarnation seems most manifest, nevertheless the composition by which Jesus was divinely composed according to us, i.e., in that he has our nature, can not be sufficiently spoken by any word nor can it be to be known by any mind even of a supreme angel itself. We understand according to the scriptures, as a certain hidden mystery, that Jesus himself was made a substance in a human way, i.e., a human hypostasis, but we do not know sufficiently how his body was compacted from virginal bloods by a certain law beyond nature; for it was done by the virtue of the Holy Spirit, which is incomprehensible to every created mind. And we cannot even know perfectly how he walked on the water of the sea, which is a wet and unstable substance, with dry feet, not by the gravity of the body being laid aside through the assumption of an endowed agility, as some had said, but by feet still having the gravity of matter: for this was done by incomprehensible divine virtue. And the same reason occurs in all other things which pertain to the cognition of Jesus, which exceeds natural light or natural reason. (96-107)

<But these also by us etc.> To these things which he had set forth as necessary to the mystery of the incarnation, he adds certain words of Hierotheus concerning the praise of Christ. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows whence Hierotheus received these words which he said, namely since he had these from the doctrine of the apostles or from the study of holy scripture or from special revelation made to him; second he states his words, <The cause of all and the fulfilling etc.> (1-5)

He says therefore first that the aforesaid things which pertain to the praise of Christ he sufficiently said in others places, namely in the book On the divine characteristics, and they were also praised with excellent intensity beyond the natural mode by a certain Hierotheus, who was a noble leader, i.e., teacher, disciple of the apostles, and this in a certain book of his which he entitled On the theological stoicheosis, i.e., the divine obscure comments. And he states consequently three modes by which Hierotheus was able to acquire those things which follow: one way is that he received them, by learning from the holy theologians, i.e., from the apostles. Another way is that he himself by proper study examined them from wise and subtle discussion of the holy scriptures. This subtle inquiry consists in two things, the first of which he adds saying 'from wrestling concerning it', in which assiduousness of study is designated; for someone wrestles much with scripture, when someone upon finding a difficulty of scripture struggles to understand the difficulty. The second he adds saying 'and by contrition', in which is designated a diligent exposition of scripture, for what is crushed is divided to the smallest things; therefore someone crushes holy scripture, when he searches out diligently the subtle senses latent in it. The third mode of having is that he was taught these things which he said from a certain inspiration more divine than is common to many, not only learning, but suffering divine things, i.e., not only receiving the knowledge of divine things in the intellect, but also by loving, united to them through the affections. For passions seem to pertain more to appetite than to cognition, since things known are in the knower according to the mode of the knower and not according to the mode of the things known, but appetite moves in things according to the mode in which they are in themselves, and thus through love for something a thing is in some way transformed. (5-22)

But just as someone who is virtuous from the habit of virtue which he has in the affections is perfected to judging rightly concerning these things which pertain to that virtue, thus he who is affected by divine things receives divinely right judgement concerning things divine. And for this reason he adds that from compassion toward divine

things, i.e., that by loving divine things one is conjoined to them -- if nevertheless the union of love ought to be called compassion, i.e., simultaneous passion -- Hierotheus was perfected, i.e., instructed, to the union and faith of the same, i.e., so that to those things which he said he was united through the union of faith, I say 'unteachable', i.e., which can not be taught by human magistry, 'and mystical', i.e., hidden, in so far as it exceeds natural cognition. And so that in a few things we might comprehend many and blessed visions, i.e., revelations, of powerful deliberation, i.e., of virtuous discussion, of him, namely Hierotheus, although he had said many other things, nevertheless these which follow he says to the praise of Jesus Christ in the book named above. (22-31)

Then when he says <The cause of all etc.>, he states the words of Hierotheus concerning Christ. And first he states those things which pertain to the praise of his deity; second those things which pertain to the praise of his incarnation, <Whence since etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he comprehends in summary the praise of the deity of Christ; second he explicates it specifically, <Which parts in totality etc.> (32-35)

He says therefore first that the deity of Jesus Christ is the cause of all things in so far as through it all things are produced in esse, and it is also fulfilling of all things in so far as through it all things are replete with their own perfections. (36-37)

Then when he says <Which parts in totality etc.>, he expounds the foregoing causality through singulars. Now it must be considered that he first shows the aforesaid divinity to be the cause of those things which pertain to the essence of things; second of those things which are outside the essence of things, <And he is the measure of existents etc.> (38-40)

Concerning the first it must be considered that in the essences of things the following process and order is to be considered: for first there are the principles of things; second the substance of a thing constituted from the principles; third the determination of a thing to its proper species which is through form; fourth from form the thing attains perfection, not only in esse specifically, but also as far as proper operation and end; fifth diverse things which singularly have a certain perfection in themselves, having been united by a certain order, perfect some whole. (41-45)

Therefore Hierotheus proceeds to show the causality of the deity of Christ by a retrograde order through the way of

resolution, beginning from the whole. And he says that the deity of Jesus preserves the parts consonant, i.e., proportionate, to the totality, in which consists the perfection of the whole; and neither is he a part nor the whole and nevertheless he is whole and part. The whole and part is the deity of Christ, as in himself not dividedly, but simultaneously receiving everything both part and whole, since whatever is of perfection in any whole or part completely preexists in God. But God is neither whole nor part, since God does not have the perfection of the whole and part in the same mode as a whole and part, but supereminently and beforehand. (46-52)

Second he shows the causality of the deity of Christ as far as the perfection of things, <But it is perfect etc.> And he says that the deity of Christ is called perfect through comparison to the imperfect in so far as it is the principle cause of all perfection; but if it is compared to perfect things, it is called non perfect, not as if defecting from perfection, but more supereminently and having prior perfection. (52-55)

Third he shows the same concerning forms. And he says that the deity of Christ compared to those things which lack form can be called form effectively in so far as it is productive of form; but compared to forms it can be called without form, not through defect, but through excess, since it is above every form. (56-58)

Fourth he shows the same as far as substances. And he says that the deity of Christ can be called causally substance in so far as it supervenes all substances, i.e., to all and to each according to the whole, through the mode of a certain participation; but nevertheless he supervenes immaculately, since it is not participated through a commixture of substance, but through the mode of a similitude; and again it is segregated from every substance in so far as it exists supersubstantially. (58-62)

Fifth he shows the same as far as principles. And he says that the deity of Christ determines all principles -- for of diverse things there are diverse principles -- and it determines the order of principles to the things principated; but nevertheless it is supercollocated above all order and above every principle.(62-65)

Then he shows the same through comparison to those things which are outside the essence of a thing: and first as far as the measure of the duration of things. And he says that the deity of Christ is the measure of existents, as if determining to each one the measure of its esse or since everything as such has esse in so far as it approaches it;

and it also is the eternity which is called the measure of being just as time is the measure of change, and nevertheless it is above eternity and before eternity in so far as it is the measure superexceeding all created esse. Second he shows its causality as far as the supervening perfections by which the capacity of things is filled, just as the intellect is filled with intelligible species. And he says that the deity of Christ compared to the deficiencies which lesser existences are called is called full, as if the cause of plenitude, and compared to those things which are full it is called superfull, as if exceeding all plenitude. Third he deals with those things through comparison to intellect and locution which are outside a thing. And he says that it is unspeakable and ineffable, since neither by a complex or non complex discourse can it be expressed; and it is above mind and above all life, since it exceeds all cognition and every act of life. (65-76)

And since he had attributed many supernatural things to the deity of Christ, consequently he shows that it does not possess them in a defective mode, but in a supereminent one. And this is what he says, that it has what is supernatural supernaturally and what is supersubstantial supersubstantially. For to absolve from sin is supernatural, but a pure man does not have this supernaturally as does the Son of God, and similarly it must be said concerning other things of this kind. (76-80)

Then when he says <Whence since etc.>, he praises the humanity of Christ. And he says since the deity of Christ is so excelling, thence it is that he through his own benignity comes even to our nature and truly was made a substance, i.e., a hypostasis of our nature, and while he was supergod, he was made a man, i.e., a human being. These things which are said according to his propitiation, through which he assumed human nature, ought to be praised above mind and above reason. For although he received the properties of our nature, nevertheless in the human things themselves they have something supernatural and supersubstantial, i.e., in one mode, in so far as he communicated with us, assuming our nature apart from variation of the divine nature and apart from commixture of it and confusion with human nature, thus that through an ineffable emptying, concerning which the Apostle speaks in Phil. 2, nothing was suffered in his superfullness, i.e., nothing was diminished of the plenitude of his deity; for it is not called an emptying through the diminution of deity, but through the assumption of a deficient nature. In another way, since, what is among all new things more new and wonderful, he was in our natural things supernaturally and in our substantial things supersubstantially, having all human things, which he received from us, above us: since his lack was of more

virtue and dignity than that of others and his soul was more worthy than every soul and his corporeal actions also were vivifying and salutary from the adjoined virtue of deity. (80-94)

II - 6

<Therefore concerning these etc.> After Dionysius expounded the mode of the divine discretion and union, here he pursues the mode which principally pertains to the matter of this book, namely the divine discretion which is understood according to the procession of creatures; which discretion is united and common to the whole Trinity, as was said above. Concerning this therefore he does two things: first he expounds how this discretion is with union; second he commits himself to explain these things which pertain to this discretion in what follows, <Those common etc.>. Concerning the first he does three things: first he states his intention; second he illustrates the proposition, <And as plainly etc.>; third he designates the reason of what was said, <For also in divine things etc.> (1-8)

He says therefore first that of those things which pertain to the praise of Christ the things which were said both by him as well as by Hierotheus suffice for the present; but one must proceed further to those things which pertain to the intention of the discourse which he intends in this work, namely that we might discuss according to our ability the names pertaining to that divine discretion, which are understood according to the processions of creatures; which names are common to the whole Trinity, and not only common, but united. For animal is common to human being and to horse, nevertheless the same animality in number is in both; but goodness and essence and things of this kind are thus common to the whole Trinity, that they are one in number in the three. (8-15)

Then when he says <And as plainly etc.>, he shows how the divine discretion can be with union. And he shows this in four ways: first in the Good itself; second in Being, <Afterwards since existing etc.>; third in the One, <But also one existing etc.>; fourth in the name of Deity itself, <Again from its deification etc.> For these four seem maximally to befit God: the first three because of their community, for they are not determined to some genus or species which seems to befit the infinity of the divine nature; but the fourth because of the use of the name, which all attribute to the highest principle of things. (15-21)

He says therefore first that we say the divine discretion to be the processions of deity, which befit it according to the notion of the Good, as was said above. And for this reason

we begin first from the Good so that consequently in other things that might be shown more manifestly what was shown concerning the Good. For the Good is disposed universally to all processions: for whatever God communicates to the creature God communicates from God's goodness. But other names designate some special processions. Thus therefore what was manifested in the universal will be able to be seen more plainly in special cases. (21-26)

But it must be considered that a multitude proceeds from one in three ways: in one way through division, as one whole is divided into many parts, but such a multitude destroys the plenitude and union which was in the whole. In another way through the mode of community, as from one genus come many species and from one species many individuals; but that one thus multiplied is not one singularly but commonly. In a third mode there is multiplied among us some one through effusion, as from one fountain comes many streams; but this is with a certain egression, namely in so far as water going out from a fountain diffuses itself into many streams. In the existence of all good participations, as wisdom, life, and things like these, the same goodness is discerned, i.e., distinguished, while distinct goods come forth from it, but this is unitively: for nothing is diminished from the plenitude by which all goods are united in itself; and again it is effected into plurality, i.e., it is plurified in its effects, not as some universal, but singularly remaining in itself; and again it is multiplied through diffusion from one inegressibly, since nothing goes out from its substance. And this is because discretion and multiplication and diffusion are perceived according to certain similitudes of the divine goodness, but the divine goodness itself remaining, according to its existence, indistinct and one and collocated in itself. (26-39)

Then when he says <Afterwards since existing etc.>, he shows the same in being. And he says that God is supersubstantially being as far as God's essence, but nevertheless gives <u>esse</u> to all existents and produces universally the substances of things, and because of this that one supersubstantial being, which is God, is said to be multiplied in itself, namely by similitude; and in so far as many existents are brought forth from God, but nevertheless notwithstanding, being of this kind remains one, according to its essence, in the multiplication which is through its similitude; and it remains united, i.e., united in procession; and it remains full and integral in distinction. And this is because God in God's substance is supersubstantially segregated from all beings, and since all things are produced by God unitively, i.e., according to one virtue which when producing diverse things is not divided; and integral, since the diffusion of God's gifts, which he

distributes to things, and they cannot be lessened, is not lessened. For it must not be said that in this way God communicates God's gifts that they can not be communicated more fully: for in no way is the plenitude of God's goodness diminished through a communication of this kind. (39-50)

Then when he says <But also one being etc.>, he exhibits the same as far as the one. And he says that God, since God is one and gives one <u>esse</u> to the part and to the whole even to the common unity and multitude in so far as every multitude in some way participates the one, God, I say, thus existing one and giving unity, supersubstantially is one similarly as good and being, since God is not something of those to which God grants to be one. For God is not as the one which is a part of a multitude, since nothing can be connumerated with God equally; nor also is God one as some whole constituted from parts; and thus neither is God one in the same mode in which others are, nor does God have one as if participating it. But nevertheless God is one removed from those which here are one in so far as God is above one which is found in created existents; and this is the one which produces the multitude of things in <u>esse</u> and perfects it by attributing to things proper perfections and contains it by preserving all things in their <u>esse</u> and in their order. (50-59)

Then when he says <Again from the same etc.>, he shows the same in the name of deity itself. And he says that there seems to be and is said of the one God discretion and multiplication in so far as many gods come into being from the fact that God deifies some creatures through conformity to God according to the virtue of each one that is deified, not that they can be perfectly conformed to God or that they are called gods through existence. And although they are and are called many deified gods, nevertheless notwithstanding there is one principal God who is above all communicated deity, supersubstantially existing one God. And while God exists in all things, God remains indivisible in divisible things existing in which things God communicates <u>esse</u> and is united in Godself and is not admixed with a multitude and is not multiplied in so far as God is considered in Godself. (59-66)

And supernaturally understanding this, blessed Paul who was a leader, i.e., instructor, to divine illumination of Dionysius himself as well as his leader, i.e., Hierotheus, who, namely Paul, knew much of divine matters and who is the light of the world, as he himself says in himself fulfilled, Acts 13, what is said in Is. 49: "I placed you for a light of the gentiles", and he said in his own holy epistle, namely I Cor. 8, moved through inspiration by God, since "even if there are those who are called gods whether in heaven or in earth . . . nevertheless to us there is one God

the Father from whom are all things and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things and we through him". For from this authority it is clear that a multitude of the deified both in heaven as are the angels and in earth as are holy people does not prejudice the unity of deity which is common to the Father and the Son. (66-74)

Then when he says <For also in divine things etc.>, he designates the reason of what was said. For for this reason the aforementioned procession and multiplication and discretion does not destroy the divine unity, since in the divine unions the discretions remain and are principated by them; for the unions are perceived according to the divine essence itself, but the discretions according to the similitudes of God impressed in things, which many fall short of their principle and for this reason divine things nevertheless remain united, after that one, which is God, is discerned through diverse similitudes, by an inegressible discretion, since nothing goes out from the divine essence, and a unitive discretion, since such a discretion does not destroy the divine unity. (74-80)

Then when he says <These common and united etc.>, he commits himself to treat of this kind of things in what follows. And he says that he will attempt according to his ability, with praise of God, to expound the aforementioned discretions which are united and common to the whole divinity whether also they be named processions befitting the divine goodness. But he intends to exhibit them from the divine names which are handed down in scripture, which demonstrate processions of this kind, as when we call God living and wise the procession of life and wisdom from God into creatures is demonstrated. Nevertheless this ought to be known beforehand since, as was said, it must be understood that every name of God pertaining to God's beneficence of any of the divine persons will be said of all persons apart from all difference. (80-87)

BOOK THREE

III - 1

<And first if it seems etc.> After Dionysius set forth certain things necessary to the following doctrine, here he begins to pursue his intention. And first he sets forth a certain proemium to the entire following work; second he begins to discuss the doctrine of the divine names which he intends in Chapter 4. Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows that it is necessary that he begin with prayer; second he excuses himself that after Hierotheus he himself has tried to treat the same things which that one had treated, and how in this he maintains reverence toward his teacher, <And this perhaps etc.> And these two are touched upon in the title of the chapter, which is thus: 'What is the virtue of prayer' regarding the first part of the chapter, 'and of the blessed Hierotheus and of reverence and theological reflection' regarding the second part. Concerning the first he does three things: first he proposes what he intends; second he illustrates the proposition through reason, <For it is necessary for us etc.>; third through examples, <As if many etc.> (1-10)

He says therefore first that, if this seemed fitting, among other divine nominations the first we ought to consider is the name of the Good itself, i.e., according to which God is called good. And to understand the reason for this it must be considered that the Platonists, not distinguishing matter from privation, placed it in the order of non being, as Aristotle says in I Physics. But the causality of being does not extend itself except to existence. Thus therefore according to them the causality of being did not extend itself to prime matter, to which nevertheless the causality of the Good extends itself. The sign of this is that matter desires the Good. But it is proper to an effect that it be converted through desire to its cause. Thus therefore the Good is more universal and a higher cause than Being since its causality extends itself to more things. And although Dionysius seems to touch upon this in the following chapter, nevertheless he seems to have considered another reason for this order. For he intends in this book to treat of the divine names manifesting the processions of creatures from God in that God is the cause of things. But that which has the notion of a cause first and universally is the Good,

which is apparent from a twofold reason: first since the Good has the notion of an end; but an end first has the notion of a cause. For form is a cause in so far as it makes matter to be in act; but matter is in act first when it begins from an agent. Second since an agent acts similar to itself, not in so far as it is being in every mode, but in so far as it is perfect. For the perfect, as is said in VIII Metaphysics, is what can make something similar to itself. But the perfect has the notion of the Good. Thus therefore whatever God communicates to creatures, whether to be or to live, and anything else entirely proceeds from the divine goodness, and the whole pertains to the goodness of the creature. And for this reason he says that the nomination is perfect in so far as it comprehends all things and is manifestive of all divine processions. (10-28)

But in order for us to treat of the procession of the Good, it is necessary for us by praying to invoke the holy Trinity, which is the principle of every good and is above every good. For just as it gives all gifts provided by it from its benignity, thus by it alone can it sufficiently be manifested: for works of art are optimally known and manifested by the artificer. (28-32)

Then when he says <For it is necessary for us etc.>, he illustrates the proposition through reason, namely that it is necessary for us in order to know the divine processions of the divine goodness to invoke the Trinity by praying. And concerning this he does three things: first he states the reason for the principal proposition; second he illustrates a certain thing presupposed in the reason, <For also it etc.>; third he proves a certain thing assumed in this reason, <For it neither in a place etc.> (32-36)

He says therefore that it is necessary for us to be produced, i.e., to be extended, through prayers to the Trinity itself as to the principle of every good procession, since by praying we draw near to it; and to the degree that we draw near to it, the more we can learn the gifts of God's goodness, which are collocated around it, as if derived from it through a similitude of goodness; for to the degree that someone more closely approaches something, the more he knows what things are around it. (36-40)

Then when he says <For also it etc.>, he illustrates a certain thing which he had proposed, namely that through prayer we draw near to the holy Trinity. And he says that the holy Trinity itself is present to all things in so far as it communicates its gifts to all things, but not all things are present to it in so far as they fall short of participation of it. But when we invoke it, then we are present to it, drawing near to it. But in order for the

prayer to make us near to it, three things are required: first that our sensuality be pure from all carnal and mundane affections, since through this we are dragged downward, and this he touches upon when he says 'by most chaste prayers'; second that our intellect be not darkened by a mist of fantasies, which attach themselves to those who do not want to hold spiritual things above corporeal things, as those who portrayed God by a figure of a human body, because of which also we are impeded from an ascent to God, and regarding this he says 'by a revealed mind'; third that our will through charity and devotion be ordered toward God, and this is what he adds 'and by an aptitude to divine union'. (40-50)

Then when he says <For it neither in a place etc.>, he proves what he had supposed, namely that deity is present to the universe, which he proves by two reasons. For deity is not in a place as defined or circumscribed in a place. For all that is present to something, not existing elsewhere, or what thus passes over to something so that it departs another thing, is in a place as circumscribed and defined. Therefore this cannot be said of deity. For it is clear that it is present to something, but no less to itself; therefore it is present to all things. (51-55)

He states the second reason, <But also to say in all things etc.> Every infinite which is above all things and comprehends all things is present to all things; but the Trinity is like this; therefore it remains that it be present to all things. From this it can be understood that no creature is everywhere, while from the infinity of God it consequently remains that God is in all things. (55-59)

But finally he concludes the principal intention, that we ought to extend ourselves through prayer to the higher consideration of the rays of the divine goodness. (59-60)

Then when he says <Just as of many lights etc.>, he illustrates the proposition through examples. And first he proposes two examples to illustrate the proposition; second he concludes the principal proposition, <Because of which also before all things etc.> (60-62)

The first example is that we imagine a chain of many lights which hang from the summit of heaven and descend to earth before our face. If we take that chain and always change hands towards the higher, we will seem to draw the chain downward, but truthfully we will not bring it down, since it would be present both above and below, but we ourselves would be elevated into greater splendor of that luminous chain. (62-66)

He posits the second example, <Or as if a few etc.> And he says that, if we should ascend into a ship and we should take some ropes which are extended from some rock exterior to us, which would be given to us as an aid, we would not draw the stone to us, but actually we would lead both ourselves and the ship to the rock; and contrarily if someone standing in the ship should strike against the rock which stands next to the sea, it would do nothing against the rock, which is standing and immobile, but he will separate himself from it, and the more so the more he strikes it. (66-71)

But so that those examples should be adapted to the proposition, it must be considered that concerning prayer it is necessary to judge in diverse ways according to five opinions. For some have totally taken away the providence of God, positing all things to occur by chance; and this was the opinion of the Epicureans. But some posited the providence of God around things incorporeal and universal, but excluded divine providence from things human; and this was the opinion of the Peripatetics. But some extended the providence of God to all things, but said that all things had necessity of occurring from the divine providence, totally removing contingency from things; and this was the opinion of the Stoics positing according to the inevitability of a series of causes, which they called fate, all things to occur from necessity. The fourth was the opinion of some Egyptians who said divine providence to be mutable. The fifth was the opinion of some Platonists who said that divine providence is immutable, but under it are contained some things mutably and contingently. (72-81)

Therefore the first three positions totally eliminate the fruitfulness of prayer. For if there is no care of God concerning things or at least there is no concern for human things or if all things come from necessity, prayers are uttered uselessly to God. But the fourth opinion does not destroy the fruitfulness of prayer, but attributes to it more necessity, namely to render the divine providence immutable. Whence only the fifth opinion has a right judgement about prayer, which Dionysius here follows, namely that through prayer we bear ourselves, existing mutably, to participation in the divine providence, but let us not believe ourselves able to change the divine providence. (81-87)

Therefore the chain of light hanging from the summit of the immobile heaven or the ropes extended from the immobile rock signify the order of divine providence proceeding from the immobility of the divine wisdom. But when he says that the chain is everywhere present in heaven and in earth and then present to all things, signifies also that its providence is

extended to all things (against the first opinion). But when he speaks of the immobility of the stone and that the chain of light can not be borne toward us, signifies that the divine providence is immobile (against the fourth position). But when he says that we ourselves are led upward through the immobile chain and we draw near the rock through the rope or are separated from it through impulsion, signifies our mobility to attain the fruit of divine providence (against the third position). (87-94)

Finally he concludes the proposition, that namely before all things and maximally before every theological work it is useful for us to begin from prayer, not thus that we through prayer draw to ourselves the divine virtue, which is everywhere present and is never closed, but as through divine commemoration and vocation we bear ourselves and unite ourselves to it. (94-97)

III - 2

<And perhaps by this excuse etc.> The necessity of prayer having been set forth, Dionysius proceeds to vindicate himself. And first he states whence something can seem blameworthy; second he vindicates himself, <For also if that one etc.> (1-3)

He says therefore first that this seems to merit justification that, since Hierotheus who was his noble teacher had united, by speaking subtly, certain reflections concerning divine things, Dionysius wrote both other reflections concerning things divine and the present book, as if the reflections of Hierotheus would not suffice, which seems to pertain to a certain irreverence. (3-6)

Then when he says <And also if that etc.>, he proceeds to his own defence. And concerning this he does three things: first he vindicates himself from irreverence; second he shows his reverence to Hierotheus, <Since also with those etc.>; third he concludes his intention by composing this work, <Therefore those and us etc.> (6-9)

But he vindicates himself in three ways: the first justification is that those things which Hierotheus said in a universal way, he from the mandate of Hierotheus and from the petition of Timothy treated singularly. And this is what he says that, if Hierotheus, who had been worthy to treat in an orderly way all things which pertain to theological consideration and the treatment of all of theology, which he accomplished in a certain general and summary way, would have wanted to mention cursorily by investigating in particular, Dionysius would not have come to such a furor or perversity, that he would want to write of divine things.

This would pertain to furor or perversity in one of two modes. One is that Dionysius would have judged to elevate himself to theological considerations more perspicacious and divine than Hierotheus. Another way is that he would not believe himself to speak more highly, and then two unfitting things would follow: of which one is that by repeating the same things which Hierotheus had said, he would write uselessly and thus he would commit vain speech; another unfittingness is that, as if by furtively seizing for himself the most noble contemplation and manifestation of divine things than Hierotheus himself, he would do him injury, while he nevertheless had been his teacher and friend and Dionysius was introduced to theological cognition maximally from the words of Hierotheus, nevertheless after the doctrine of Paul. (9-21)

But Hierotheus expounded certain clear demonstrations, i.e., understood with great difficulty and understanding, which also comprehend many things in one universal, prudently introducing humans to divine things according to the truth of the matter. And he admonished Dionysius and others like him, who are teachers of souls which are newly instructed, that according to their ability they should show and distinguish high and universal determinations of the profound contemplation of that man, in which many things are involved in one, and this they should do with speech commensurate to them, not in an universal, as was the practice of Hierotheus. Also Timothy himself often exhorted Dionysius to complete this same thing, and he referred to him the book of Hierotheus, as exceeding his capacity. Since therefore these things are so, for this reason we determine the aforementioned book to be the teacher of perfect considerations, not suitable for everyone, but to those who exceed the multitude in their capacity, thus that that book has a certain second authority from the expressions of canonical scripture, to which no other authority can be equalled, so that the words of that book consequently are related to the words of the christs of God, i.e., to the words of the holy apostles, which are called christs because of the plenitude of spiritual grace and because of the dignity of a priest. (21-34)

And thus, since that lofty book communicates such things to the perfect, we according to our proportion will hand down divine things to those who according to us, i.e., the imperfect, are similar to us. For we are not sufficient to hand down perfect teaching to the perfect; for if solid food, i.e., perfect doctrine, belongs to the perfect as such, as is said in Heb. 5, since they alone can receive perfect teaching, it is of a greater perfection for others to eat such food; for it is greater to teach others perfect doctrine than what they can receive from others. But it must

be considered that to the degree that some intellect is higher and more perfect it can comprehend many things in one. For infirmity of intellect requires that singulars be explicated particularly. And for this reason the doctrine of Hierotheus, comprehending many things in a few, he called perfect. (34-41)

He states the second justification, <Therefore rightly etc.> And he says that it can be said rightly for his defence, that for someone to look by himself toward the understanding of divine expressions, which are the expressions of holy scripture whose teaching is clear considered in itself, requires perfect virtue. But that someone should have knowledge and consideration of words leading to the foregoing consideration and doctrine, and that he should learn those words, can be fitting also to the more imperfect, both to the teachers whom he calls sanctifiers and to those taught whom he calls sanctified. Therefore just as to look by himself and to teach perfect knowledge of divine things pertained to Hierotheus who was perfect, thus to have knowledge by expounding the aforesaid doctrine and to learn the exposition of this kind pertains to lesser ones, among whom Dionysius reckons himself. (42-49)

He states the third justification, <Although also this by us etc.> And it is said that Dionysius also observed this studiously, that he totally did not apply his hand to illustrate the words of Hierotheus regarding those things which Hierotheus wanted to distinguish according to a plain manifestation. (50-52)

Then when he says <Since also with them etc.>, he shows the reverence which he has towards Hierotheus. And first by showing its magnitude; second by recognizing proper humility, <For thus we etc.> For from these two things it follows that someone holds another in reverence, that concerning that one he feels great things and concerning himself small things. But he commends Hierotheus in two ways: first in that he spoke wisdom among the perfect; second in that he knew how to give milk usefully to the small ones in Christ, <And as mystical etc.> (52-57)

He says therefore first that Dionysius himself, simultaneously with Timothy and Hierotheus himself and many other holy brothers, gathered together with the apostles to see his body who is the principle of all life and which received God. And this can be understood of the corporeal vision of Christ, of which the Apostle makes mention in I Cor. 15. For the body of Christ is the body of God, who is the prince of life, and that body received God through union; whence also it was called a temple, according to John 2 "Here he spoke of the temple of his body". It can also be

understood that they convened for seeing the body of the blessed virgin in its death, which also received God in the womb. And in that gathering James was also present, the brother of the Lord, and Peter, who was the highest head of all the apostles. (57-64)

But after the aforementioned vision, it was seen by all that the universal apostles and bishops, who were present there, praised the infinite goodness of the divine infirmity, i.e., the humanity, as it was possible to each one. And then Hierotheus remained among all the teachers after the apostles, to whom no other ought to be compared. And in that praise he was wholly exceeding all sensible and mundane things and as if placed outside of himself, he seemed conjoined to those things which he praised through a certain union to all who heard and saw him, but whether they recognized him or not he was judged accepted by God and a divine laudator. And what can be said of these things which he there theologized, which were such sublimities? Which, as Dionysius said, if it did not fall from his mind, often he recognized certain parts of those divine praises, which Hierotheus brought forth, while God inspired him, while he heard them put forth by Timothy. For such was Timothy's study concerning the divine things, that those things which he heard he was also careful to retain in memory. (64-74)

Then when he says <And also mystical etc.>, he commends him concerning the erudition of simple things. And he says that, so that he should refrain from speaking about those hidden things spoken there, since they are not to be spoken to a multitude or since they were made known to Timothy, this must be said that, when it was necessary to communicate divine things to the multitude and to reduce those things which holy ones were able to know, by a cognition proportionate to the imperfect, Hierotheus exceeded many of the holy teachers also by time spent since most of the time he spent or expended in teaching and in purity of mind which was not covered up with fantasies or errors by which he was impeded from a right judgement of the truth and diligence of demonstration, i.e., efficiency of words in demonstrating the truth, and in other things which are required for holy locutions. Whence he concludes that never was it his attempt that he should look against the sun as such, namely Hierotheus, by preferring or equating himself to him. (74-82)

Then when he says <For also we etc.>, he shows what humility he feels concerning himself. And he says that he is thus conscious of himself that he is not sufficient to understanding divine things, not only those that are above human intellect, but also many things which are intelligible by other humans; and similarly he considers himself

insufficient to speak and show those things which can be said of divine cognition by others; and in many things he considers himself to fall short by far from the knowledge of theological truth which the more perfect possess. And he introduces this because of the perfect reverence which he has for those greater and for divine things that he totally does not dare to think or to speak anything of divine wisdom except those things which he can receive according to his own mind, and that also he dares also to say, since it is not necessary to neglect the cognition of divine things which some can possess. And to this he was persuaded in two ways: first from the natural desire of minds which always with a certain love desire the contemplation of supernatural things which they can receive, since through this they are best perfected; second since the highest disposition of divine laws prohibits many to scrutinize those things which are above us, both since they are above our dignity and since it is impossible for us to attain to them, as is clear in Eccl. 3 "do not seek things higher than you". But those things which are desired by us and are given to us so that we might be able to receive them, the divine law prescribes to learn by attending to them and to hand them down to others benignly, according to Wis. 7 "which without fiction I distributed" etc. And this also appears in many other places of scripture. (82-97)

Then when he says <Therefore those etc.>, he concludes his intention. And he says that he was persuaded by the foregoing and was not prevented from finding the truth of divine things according to his ability either because of laziness or because of fear of timidity. Again his soul could not suffer that he should send them away without help, who were not able to contemplate greater things than he. Because of all these things he committed himself to writing this work, nevertheless thus that nothing new would he dare to introduce, but those things which were said by Hierotheus clearly in a certain universal understanding he wants to distinguish and to show through certain inquiries more particular and subtle by descending to singulars. And he speaks through a similitude of corporeal things, in which as much as some whole is divided in many parts, the parts are ade more subtle. (97-105)

BOOK FOUR

IV - 1

<If it is now necessary by word etc.> Introductory matters having been set forth, he now undertakes to pursue his principal intent. And as the intention, number, and order of the following chapters is evident, it must be considered that, as it was said in the first and second chapters, in this book he intends to expound the divine names by which the processions of God in creatures are made manifest. But the common principle of all these processions is the Good, as was said in the third chapter, since whatever proceeds from God in creatures, God communicates this to God's own creatures on account of God's goodness. And for this reason he first deals in this fourth chapter with the Good and also with those things which pertain to the consideration of the Good.
(1-7)

But if the processions which the divine names manifest are considered singularly, we see three things to be attributed to things from the divine Goodness: first as they are in themselves and are perfected; second as they are compared to each other; third as they are ordained to an end. But if things themselves are considered in themselves, the first and most common thing which is found in them is to be, second to live, third to know, fourth to be just or virtuous. And according to this order he proceeds concerning the divine names: first after the Good, on Being in the fifth chapter, second on Life in the sixth, third on Wisdom in the seventh, fourth on Virtue and Justice in the eighth. But a comparison of things to each other is understood according to two things: first according to something intrinsic, as one thing is said to be similar or equal to another, the same or different, because of a conformity in substance, quantity, or quality, and he discusses these in the ninth chapter; but secondly according to something extrinsic, whether it is contained under one part or it is contained under one measure, and he discusses these in the tenth chapter, where he deals with Almighty and Ancient of Days; but peace and tranquillity of order follows this ordination of things, whence in the eleventh he treats of Peace. But concerning the order of things to an end two

things are to be considered, namely the providence of the governor and ordainer to the end, and he discusses this in the twelfth chapter, where he deals with the King of kings and Lord of lords; and secondly the end itself to which things come through providence and governance, and this pertains to the thirteenth chapter, in which he treats of the Perfect and the One. (7-22)

In order to know the contents of this fourth chapter it must be considered that opposites are of the same consideration; but evil is opposed to the Good; whence in the chapter on the Good he determines also concerning evil. On the other hand since an act is known through its object, act and object are reduced to the same consideration; but the Good is the proper object of love; whence in this chapter on the Good he also treats of love and ecstasy which is the effect of love, as will be evident, and of zeal which signifies a certain intensity of love. Moreover while the Good is what all things desire, whatever includes in itself an appetible notion seems to pertain to the Good; but light and beauty are of this kind, which he also discusses in this chapter. And the title expresses this intention of the chapter, which is thus "On the Good, Light etc." (22-30)

Therefore first in this chapter it is determined concerning the Good: and first he shows how the Good is in God; second how it is communicated to creatures, <Because of those they subsist etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows in what way it is attributed to God; secondly he introduces an example <For also as our sun etc.> (30-33)

Therefore he says first that after the preceding matters now it is necessary to direct the discourse to this name 'Good' which in holy scripture is excellently attributed to the supreme deity and in goodness it is distinguished from all other things, as is evident through Luke 18 "No one is good except God alone". And this is because of two things: first since the divine essence itself is Goodness itself, which is not the case in other things; for God is good through God's essence, but all others through participation. For whatever is good is such in so far as it is a thing in act; but to God it is proper that God is God's own esse; whence God alone is God's own goodness. Moreover other things, even if in so far as they are they are good, nevertheless they attain perfect goodness through something added over and above their esse; But God has the fullness of God's goodness in God's own esse itself. Moreover those things are good through an order to something other, which is the ultimate end; But God is not ordered to some end outside Godself. Thus therefore the first peculiar characteristic of the divine Goodness is that Goodness itself is the divine essence. Its second characteristic is that it extends

goodness to all beings, and this for the same reason that God is substantially good; for it is necessary for all things which are named through participation to be derived from that which is named through essence. (33-45)

Then when he says <For also as our sun etc.>, he shows through an example what he had said concerning the diffusion of goodness. And he says that just as our sensible sun illuminates all things which are able to participate in its light according to their own proportion through their natural esse, not by reasoning or preferring one to another, thus also the Good which is God, which is the archetype, i.e., the principal exemplar or figure, through excellency separated above the sun, as above some obscure and deficient image, through God's essence God proportionally sends forth to all existents rays of God's goodness as far as to all that pertains to goodness. But it must be considered that he did not refer to God, "not reasoning" or "not preferring" which he had said concerning the sun; but, as he said concerning the sun that it illuminates through its own esse, thus concerning God he adds that God hands down goodness to all things through God's own essence. For the esse of the sun is not its "to understand" or "to will", even if it should have intellect and will, and for this reason what it does through its esse it does not do through intellect and will. But the divine esse is its "to understand" and "to will", and for this reason what God does through God's esse God does through intellect and will. And for this reason he says significantly that God is segregated from the sun, as the archetype above an obscure image. (45-57)

Then when he says <On account of those they subsist etc.> he says in what way goodness is found diffused in creatures by God. And first in what way it is found in angels; second in what way it is found in rational souls, <But also after those holy things etc.>; third in what way it is found in other corruptible creatures, <But also concerning irrational things themselves etc.>; fourth in what way it is found in prime matter, <But if also he is above all existents etc.>; fifth in what way it is found in celestial bodies, <But that we running past the middle etc.>. Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows in what way the Good is found in angels according to themselves; second as they are considered under hierarchy and order, <Whence the super mundane orders themselves etc.>. Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows how the Good is found in angels with respect to their nature; second with respect to their conservation, <And the mansion from the goodness etc.>; third with respect to the order to an end, <And those desiring themselves etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows how they have esse from the divine Goodness; second how they have life, <On account of those

they are etc.>; third how they have intellect, <And as incorporeals etc.> (57-69)

He says therefore first that because of the rays, i.e., diffusions of divine Goodness, the subsistent angelic creatures are produced in esse, in which is found substance, power, and operation, as is said in the eleventh chapter of the Celestial Hierarchy. And they are called intelligibles in so far as they are in act according to their nature and intellectual in so far as they intellect in act, although the Platonists distinguished in separated substances intelligibles from intellectibles. For the intellect through participation of the intelligible is intellecting, and for this reason the intelligible is more abstract and higher. And according to this it can be said that intelligible substances names the supreme angels, but intellectuals the inferiors, although it is better that the same are understood as intelligibles in so far as they are intellected and intellectuals in so far as they understand. (69-77)

Then when he says <Because of those they are and live etc.>, he proceeds with the life of the angels. And he says that because of the diffusion of the divine Goodness the angels not only have esse, but also to live by a more eminent life than us; for it does not cease through death as our life, nor is it lessened through diminution and age as our life does when it is prolonged. For this also occurs in inferior living things, since they are subject to generation and corruption and variation which is according to quality and quantity, through which unstable things are made to appear and pass away and have themselves in diverse ways. And this occurs in inferior things because they have matter; but the angels are elevated and deployed above all those things. (77-83)

Then when he says <And as the incorporeals etc.>, he proceeds with their intellect. And first how they are intelligibles. And he says that they are intellected as incorporeals and immaterials. For bodies are sensible and imaginable, but not intelligible in act; similarly no form existing in matter is intelligible in act, but only in potency. And for this reason the angels are intelligibles in act in so far as they are incorporeal and immaterial. Second he shows how they understand. And he says that they understand supermundanely, i.e., above the mode by which we understand, as certain separated minds and intellects. For an immaterial form, from the fact that it is in the mind, is understood, but from the fact that it is subsisting mind, understands. Third he says what they understand and whence. And he says that they are illuminated by God from the intelligible reasons through the intelligible reasons of

existents, since they have cognition of things through intelligible reasons implanted in them by God, not by collecting intelligible reasons from things as we do. Fourth he says that they bestow proper intellected things to those which are proximate to their own genus in so far as the superiors manifest their own intellected things to inferiors. (83-94)

Then when he says <And a mansion etc.>, he posits those things which pertain to conservation. And he posits five according to the similitude of the bodies of things; for corporeal things have a dwelling in place with respect to substances; angels have a dwelling or habitation through operation of the intellect and will in these which understand and love, according to the Apostle, Phil. 3 "our conversation is in heaven". But a corporeal habitation needs a foundation in which it might be established; and similarly a dwelling, which is according to intellect, is founded in the first intelligible truth and a dwelling which is according to will, in the ultimate end; and for this reason he says that from the divine Good not only is there a dwelling for them but also a collocation, or foundation, according to another translation. On the other hand inferior corporeals are contained under the order of superiors, as also the angels are contained under the order of divine providence; but God alone is the one who contains and is not contained; and for this reason he adds 'and continence'. Moreover corporeals in so far as they are corruptible need a preserver lest they be corrupted; but the angels are not mutable according to substance but according to will, and for this reason they need to be preserved by God lest their will be averted from the divine order; and this is what is added "and a preserver'. Moreover living corporeals need refreshment through which they are sustained; and similarly the angels are conserved in the Good in that their intellects and affections are satisfied by the divine fruition and consideration of the intelligibles; and for this reason fifth is added 'and the food of the goods'. (94-108)

Then when he says <And the desirers themselves etc.>, he proceeds with the order to an end. For the divine Goodness converts everything to itself, as was said above; and for this reason it follows that because of the divine goodness angels desire it, not as if lacking that which they desire as the imperfect, but as having esse and well-being with respect to the same things, and configured by the divine goodness and made good-like in so far as they communicate to inferiors divine gifts, which come to them from the highest good; and this, as the divine law leads. For it is by the inviolable divine law that the goods which we receive from God we should communicate to inferiors, and thus we are

conformed to God's goodness from which all goods flow forth. (109-115)

IV - 2

<Then those supermundane etc.> Having stated these things pertaining to their nature which the angels attain from the divine Goodness, here he posits those things which pertain to them in so far as they are contained in order and hierarchy. And concerning this he does three things: first he posits those things which pertain to the angels as far as they are in order; second those things which pertain to them in so far as they are in hierarchy, <But also whatever celestial etc.>; third those things which befit them in so far as they are commonly named angels, <From which also by good-formed etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that from the divine goodness there are supermundane orders in the aforementioned substances, as some are said to be in the order of the seraphim, some in the order of cherubim and thus concerning the others. But it must be considered that to order three things concur; first a distinction with mutual suitability, second cooperation, third an end. But I say a distinction with mutual suitability, since where there is no distinction order has no place; but if those things which are distinguished do not come together in anything, they would not be of one order. Therefore it is necessary for the angels, who are of one order, to be united to one another in so far as they are contained under on order; and this is what he says 'to the unitions one to another'. But certain things are united in an order as such apart from continuity or contact, as a house in a city and cities in a kingdom; but the unitions of the angels are in one order with some contact or even continuity; and for this reason he adds 'in apprehensions of one another', since namely one angel embraces in itself another through intellect and affection. Nevertheless such a union does not destroy the distinction which is according to the propriety of the substance of each one; and for this reason he adds 'unconfused discretions'. (6-16)

But just as there is a proper operation of each substance, thus of whatever order there is to be understood some cooperation of those which are contained under the order, for which cooperation three things are required: first as inferiors are elevated toward superiors so that they might be subject to them and supported by them; and this is what he says that from the divine Goodness the virtues of the subjects, i.e., of the inferior substances, are acting upward in them, i.e., elevating them, to the better ones, i.e., to the superiors. Second as the superiors provide for the inferiors; and this is what he adds 'by the providence

of those who advance', i.e., the superiors, around the second group, i.e., around the inferiors. And lest someone among the superiors or inferiors should thus extend itself that it forgets itself, he adds thirdly, that each is solicitous to the keeping of its proper virtue; and this is what he says 'by the keeping of the properties of the virtue of each one', i.e., of those things which properly pertain to the virtue of each one, so that each one should be preserved in its own grade. (17-25)

But just as of every order there is some operation, thus also there is an end. But it is of those who are in an order to receive a twofold end: one namely, which is in the ordered themselves in so far as they are ordered to one another, which consists in a habitude of one to the other; and he refers to this end when he says 'and intransmutable convolutions', i.e., circuits, around themselves. Concerning this it must be considered that, since circular motion is uniform through the whole since in any of its points it has both principle and end, it is in potency, not in act; but straight motion is diversified according to principle and end and distance to both. Thus therefore the intellectual operations of the angels by reason of uniformity are called convolutions; nevertheless the intellectual operations of the angels have that which is of perfection in circulation, namely uniformity, without that which is of imperfection, namely mutation; and for this reason he names them intransmutable convolutions around themselves in that one angel understands and loves another. The second end is the Good which is above the order; and this: as the leader is the end of an army, thus also God is the end of the angels contained under the order. And he refers to this order when he says 'around the object of desire of the good', i.e., of God, 'identities', since all come together in this or since they have themselves always in some way around this, 'and the highest things', since all their desires are referred to this highest object of desire, or 'the sublime things', according to another translation, since the more sublime of the rest desire God. And not only are those things in them from the divine Goodness pertaining to the notion of order, but also whatever other things are said in the book of the Angelic Hierarchy, in which he treats of the angelic properties and orders. (26-41)

Then when he says <But also whatever etc.>, he enumerates those things which pertain to the notion of hierarchy. And he says that also from the cause of all and from the divine Goodness, which is the fountain of all goodness, there comes to the angels whatever actions of the celestial hierarchy which are suitable to them. But it must be considered that, since the hierarchy is a holy principality, and it pertains to the princeps to direct, the hierarchical action will be

to direct to holy things. And according to this there are threefold actions of the hierarchy, namely cleansings, i.e., purgations, supermundane illuminations, and those things which are perfective of the entire angelic perfection. But one angel cleanses or purges another, not indeed from the stain of guilt which is in no way in them, but from ignorance, as he himself says in the seventh chapter of the Celestial Hierarchy. For the superior angels see God more clearly than the inferiors and are filled more fully by the same light in order to know many mysteries. Therefore purgation pertains to the washing away of ignorance, illumination to the communication of light, perfection to the cognition of those things which are known through the light. (42-51)

But since although the superior substances are distinguished according to orders and hierarchies, nevertheless they all come together in this that they are called angels, consequently he expounds the notion of this name when he says <From which also by the good-like etc.>. Concerning this it must be considered that, just as the light of the sun can not be seen in itself alone by us because of the excellence of the light, but it is seen either in clouds or in mountains irradiated by the sun and thus clouds or mountains manifest to us the brightness of the sun, so also Goodness itself as it is in the highest source of things can not be perceived by us because of the excellence of brightness, but in so far as its similitude in angels is found more near to us, the brightness of the divine Goodness is in some way manifested to us in them. And this is what he says that from the divine Goodness it is given to the supreme substances in a good-like way, i.e., conformity to the divine goodness, and that through this the hidden goodness of God is manifested in them. Thus therefore in one way they manifest the divine Goodness in so far as the similitude of the divine Goodness shines in them, and according to this they can be called the manifestors of God. (52-62)

But above this they are called angels, i.e., messengers, in so far as they manifest God through proper action. And this in two ways: first through the mode of a certain locution; and this is what he says 'as expressive of the divine silence'. For it is plain that the conception of the heart or the intellect without a voice is silent, but through sensible voices that silence of the heart is enunciated. But as exterior voices are more manifest to us and less simple than interior concepts of the heart, so also all modes of manifestation are better known to us and less simple than the conception of the divine word. Thus therefore, while the angels manifest to us something from the divine wisdom whether by conversing sensibly or according to a suitable

apparition or according to intelligible locution by which also they converse with one another, they are always enunciators of the divine silence. Secondly through the mode of illumination; and this is what he adds that the angelic substances are proposed to us just as bright lights are interpretive of it, i.e., of the divine light, which is hidden, i.e., concealed from us. But this is according to necessity, since it is necessary for someone after something is enunciated that he understand the things enunciated. For this reason therefore because those things which are enunciated to us through the angels we can receive in intellect and understand, by the brightness of their own light they help our intellect to receive the hidden things of God. (62-75)

Then when he says <But also after those etc.>, he posits in what way the divine goodness shines in rational souls. And he says that because of the Goodness of God, which is above all goodness, souls and whatever pertains to the soul have goodness, nevertheless in a second grade after those holy and admirable minds of the angels. And he posits first three things that pertain to their nature, namely that are intellectuals and that they have substantial life, i.e., so that they are able to subsist through themselves, and that their esse and power are inconsumptible in so far as they are immortal and incorruptible. Second he posits their order to the angels. And he posits three things, namely that they are extended to angelic lives, in so far as they participate something from their similitude; and again through the angels themselves, as through certain good leaders, they are elevated to the highest principle of all goods; for in this way subjects even in human things are subjected to imitating leaders and also to serving them, and through them they are ordered to the highest prince; and thence, i.e., from the angels, souls are made participators, according to their proportion, of the illuminations emanating from God, just as also in human things directions and precepts come to the people from the king through the leaders. Third he touches the order of souls to God. And he says that the god-like souls participate in the gift of grace according to their proper virtue; and souls not only have this from the divine Goodness, but also whatever other things are enumerated by us in a discourse concerning the soul. For he made a book on the soul which we do not have. (75-89)

IV - 3

<But also concerning irrational souls themselves etc.>
Having determined these things which rational creatures participate from the divine Goodness, here he approaches irrational creatures. And first he continues with those things which pertain to irrational animals. And he says: If

it is necessary to speak not only of noble creatures but also of ignoble ones, as perhaps of irrational souls or animals, it must be known that certain of them cut the air by flying, as birds; certain of them have motion on the earth and this in two ways: for some go, i.e., walk, as fourfooted animals; some are extended in the earth, i.e., they are moved through extension of their own body, as reptiles; some are allotted life in water, as the fish, or amphibiously, as some animals which live now on earth now in water; but some live under the earth, as moles, and affected with dust, as certain vermin which are found under the dust. So these and whatever others universally have substance and sensible life, that they are and that they thus live, they have from the divine Goodness. (1-10)

Then when he says <And the plants etc>, he continues concerning plants. And he says that all plants have life from the divine Goodness, not sensible life, but that which is meant according to nutrition and motion of augment and decrement. (11-13)

Then when he says <And whatever inanimate things etc.>, he continues concerning inanimate things. And he says that every inanimate and non-living substance has that it is from the divine Goodness and that it maintains a substantial habit, i.e., that it is subsistent, through which it exceeds accidents. (13-15)

Then when he says <But if also above all etc.>, he continues concerning prime matter. Concerning this it must be considered that Plato corrected the error of the ancient natural philosophers, who did not distinguish between matter and form in generable and corruptible things, positing prime matter to be some body in act, as fire or air or something of this kind. For Plato understood corporeal forms to underlie matter which in its own essence does not have some species, but nevertheless he did not distinguish matter from privation, as Aristotle says in I Physics. Whence he himself and those of his sect call matter 'non-being' because of joined privation. And Dionysius also here uses this mode of speaking, although according to Aristotle it is necessary to distinguish matter from privation, since matter is sometimes found under form, sometimes under privation; whence privation is adjoined to it accidentally. (15-23)

Moreover it must be considered according to the Platonists that as much as a cause is higher to that degree its causality is extended to a plurality of things. Whence it is necessary that that which is the first subject in effects, i.e., prime matter, is solely the effect of the prime cause which is the Good, while the causality of secondary causes does not pertain to this. But every effect is converted

toward its cause through desire; whence prime matter desires the Good, which desire seems to be nothing other than privation and the order of the same to act. (24-28)

Again it must be considered that, just as prime matter is called unformed through defect of form, thus unformedness is attributed to the first Good itself, not through defect but through excess; and thus according to a certain remote assimilation the similitude of the first cause is found in prime matter. According to this therefore Dionysius says that God, since God is above all existents, forms things in so far as God is the Good and lacks form through excess. And he exhibits this in singulars: for in Godself alone it is found that there is an excess of substance since, he says, God subsists excellently; and from this God is called non-existing as other things; and similarly, since God is exceeding Life, God is called non-living; and, since God is excelling Wisdom, God is called without mind; and similarly concerning all other things whatever which are in the Good, namely God, spoken through negation concerning the number of things not formed, nevertheless they are of exceeding formation, since those forms are in God through superexcess. And if it is proper to say: that Good, which is above all existents and non-existing, as was said, non-existing itself, i.e., prime matter, desires, in so far as it desires form which is the similitude of the divine esse, and it struggles in some way toward the Good, i.e., so that it might be assimilated by the first Good, which struggle is nothing other than its inclination toward form; and thus it struggles so that it might be, namely being and good, which truly, i.e., essentially, is predicated from the substantial Good, which is named according to ablation from all things through negative names, not because of defect, as prime matter, but because of excess. (29-43)

Then when he says <But that we in the middle etc.> he continues concerning celestial bodies which he avoided treating in the first place in the middle position. For the consequences of order required that between incorruptible incorporeal substances and corruptible corporeal substances should be treated incorruptible corporeal substances, but because of the adjoining of souls to corruptible bodies he omitted the aforementioned order. But concerning celestial bodies first he posits those things which pertain to the celestial spheres themselves. And he posits three things: first their habitude to inferiors; for the celestial bodies are active principles with respect to generable and corruptible bodies, and the distinguishing terminus of each of them is fixed according to the celestial bodies; and this is what he says, that the divine Good is the cause of the celestial principles and terminations. The second pertains to the mode of their substance. Concerning this it must be

considered that some of the ancients, believing the celestial bodies to be of the nature of fire, maintained that they were fed and nourished by vapors distilled from the earth and water and through this way to preserve the celestial bodies, just as fire is preserved through adding firewood; and in order to remove this he says that the divine Good is the cause of it, namely the celestial body, not augmentable, namely through some addition, and not able to be lessened through some consumption, and nevertheless invariable since according to their own nature they can not be altered. Third he posits what pertains to their motion, from which the Pictagorics said certain harmonic sounds come. But excluding this, he says that the Good is maximally the cause of the revolution of the motion of heaven, which is without sound, if it is necessary to speak thus; for some said the contrary. (43-59)

Then he posits those things which pertain to the fixed stars, in which four things must be considered: first the ordinations of them to each other according to distance, nearness and position, just as from them diverse figures are constituted; secondly their beauty which is through brightness and figure and quantity; thirdly their light in so far as they have an effect through their rays on these inferiors; fourth their collocations in that they are fixed immobily in their spheres. (59-64)

Then he posits what pertains to the five planets, namely Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, and Venus. And he says that the divine Good is the cause of the many transitive motions of these stars. But he calls the motion of these stars transitive, since they do not preserve the same figure according to position neither to each other nor to other fixed stars, but they pass from figure into figure, while sometimes they are found in Aries, sometimes in Taurus or in some other sign. But he attributed to them a multitude of motions, since that which appears sensibly from the motion of each one of them necessitates that it result from many motions, since they seem to be moved sensibly sometimes more quickly, sometimes more slowly, because the invariability of the celestial bodies does not endure. (64-71)

...ally he continues concerning the luminaries, i.e., the sun and the moon. And he says that the divine Good is the cause of the circular motion of the two luminaries, i.e., of the sun and the moon, which holy scripture calls 'great', Gen 1, in that the circular motions are restored from the same signs to the same. And according to these luminaries days and nights are differentiated by us, and years and months are measured; they determine, i.e., distinguish, and enumerate, i.e., measure, and ordain according to prior and posterior and contain according to determinate luminations

circulations and motions of time and of all things which are moved in time. But he says circulation of time in that it is returned from morning to morning and from spring to spring. But it is manifest that through the distinction of years and months and days and nights we distinguish those things which are done in one time from those which are done in another, and through the same means also we know the quantity of time and of action in that it lasts more or less days, months, and years. Also it is known what is done prior or posterior, from the fact that it was done in that day, month or year. Also the principle and termination of each duration and action are distinguished according to a determinate day and month and year, and through this they are said to contain all things which are done in time. (71-83)

IV - 4

<What some say about it etc.> After he had proceeded with those things which pertain to the name of Good, here he proceeds with those things which pertain to the name of Light. And first he shows in what way the name of the light of the sun is attributed to God metaphorically; second in what way the intelligible light is attributed to God, <But these in the symbolic theology etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows that the name of the light of the sun is attributed to God by reason of similitude; second he manifests the similitude, <Just as to the existents above all etc.>; third he excludes error, <And I do not speak according to the ancient etc.> (1-7)

He says therefore first that, just as the aforementioned things have esse and well being from the divine Goodness, thus also the ray of the sun in itself is considered from the goodness of God and is a certain image, i.e., an expressed similitude, of the divine Goodness. And from there it is that the Good itself, which is God, is praised by the nomination of the light of the sun in that the divine Goodness is manifested in such a light as the archetype, i.e., principle figure or principle exemplar, in an expressed image. For it is said in Mal. 3 "To you who fear my name will be raised up the sun of justice". (7-12)

Then when he says <For just as to existents etc.>, he manifests the similitude set out beforehand: and first with respect to the procession of things from the divine Goodness; second with respect to the order of things in it, <And just as all things to himself etc.> (12-14)

First therefore he posits those things which pertain to the divine Goodness in so far as things proceed from it. And concerning this he posits three things: first its universal causality. And he says that the Goodness of the divinity

above all existents passes in causing from the supreme and most perfect substances to the last. But some might believe that it would pass through all things as mixed in them and enclosed in them; and to exclude this he adds that, although it passes through all things by handing down its own similitude to things, still nevertheless it is above all things through the singularity of its own substance. Someone might also believe that, although it exceeds all substance, nevertheless the supreme substances attain even to it through the mode by which an inferior body attains to its own superior; and to exclude this he adds that the superior substances do not attain to the excess of the divine Goodness. Again someone might believe that certain things, which are last in things, are not caused by God because of their imperfection, as the Manichees posited corruptible bodies not to be caused by God; and to exclude this he adds that inferior things do not pass the compass of God's causality. (14-24)

Second <Himself also illuminates etc.>, after he posited that its causality is extended to all substances, he shows what substances follow from the divine Goodness. And he says that the divine Goodness illuminates all things which can be illuminated, namely rational substances, but universally it creates all substances, giving to them esse, end it vivifies all things that live, and contains, i.e., preserves, and perfects them, giving to them their perfections. (25-29)

Third, <And measure etc.>, he shows what habitude the divine Goodness has to things already produced. And he says that it has the habitude of measure. For it is the measure of all existents, since from this it can be known what each one of existing things has from the nobility of being, that it approaches it or is distant from it, as if we should say that white is the measure of all color, since any color is more noble as it is closer to white. But specifically he descends to certain special measures. But the measure of the duration of motion and of mutable things is time; but the esse of immobile things is not measured by time but by eternity. From which it is apparent that esse is not measured in time except accidentally by reason of added motion, but the proper measure of being is eternity; but the duration of each esse is prefixed and measured by God, and according to this God is called the eternity of all existents. There is also found among species of quantity some measure which is number, and this measure is also attributed to God who is the number of all things in so far as the distinction of all things and the determination of their multitude, which pertains to the notion of number, proceeds from the divine wisdom. But order follows the notion of both time and number, since one species of number naturally is prior to another, and time also is the number

of motions according to prior and posterior. Whence he fittingly says that God is the order of all things in so far as all that are from God are ordained. There is also among the species of quantity some measure which is place, which measures by circling a body locally; and this also he attributes to God, since God encircles all things immediately. But God not only has the habitude of measure towards things produced, but also the habitude of acting cause and end; and for this reason he adds 'both cause and end'. (29-45)

Then when he says <Thus also the divine etc.>, he shows how the similitude of God is found with respect to the foregoing. And first with respect to the universality of causing. And he says that, just as the aforementioned befit the divine Goodness, thus that the sensible sun, which is the highest, transcending all celestial bodies according to quantity, and shining entire, not having some darkness like the moon, and above lighting, or always lighting, different from the moon whose light is increased and diminished and sometimes ceases, and that it sometimes seems to be eclipsed is not because of a defect of light in itself, but because its light does not reach us because of the interposition of the moon: that sun, he says, as a certain manifest image of the divine Goodness according to much resonance to the divine Goodness, illuminates whatever things are able to participate its light, and nevertheless its light is superextended since nothing can attain to equality of its light, and it extends the splendors of its rays to that entire corporeal and visible world, both above and below, since not only those inferiors but also the superior celestial bodies are illuminated by it. And if there is something which does not participate its light, it is not because of a debility or paucity of illuminative power in it, like there is in a candle which because of paucity or debility of its light only illuminates a small space; but that some things are not illuminated by the sun is because of the defect of those who can not extend themselves to participating the light of the sun because they are not fit or apt to receiving light. But nevertheless the solar ray, neglecting to illuminate many such weak bodies, illuminates the sequence, just as overlooking some cloud it illuminates those things which are under the cloud; and briefly nothing is visible to which the causality of the sun does not reach according to the magnitude of its splendor. (46-63)

Second when he says <But to the generation etc.>, he shows the similitude with respect to the effects which God produces in all things. For it was said that the divine Goodness gives esse to all things through creation, but in this the sun has some similitude of it, which gives esse through generation. For it contributes to the generation of

sensible bodies as a certain universal agent and non-univocal cause. It was also said that God vivifies things, and in this the sun is simulated to it, because it moves inferior bodies to life. For it is manifest that from the rays of the sun living things are generated, not only those that are generated without seed, but also the power of the sun is operative in those which are generated from seed. And it also touches certain things which pertain to the act of life, namely nutriment and increase, which are caused from the power of the light of the sun, as are also other corporeal motions. The solar ray also perfects sensible bodies in so far as by its virtue they are led to the perfect state, and also if some things incur some corruption and old age through the withdrawal of the sun, when the sun approaches again they are purged and renovated, just as trees and all plants in the spring sprout and grow. (63-74)

Third <And measure etc>, he shows the similitude in terms of the notion of measure. And he says that the sun is the measure and number of hours and days and of all our time, which maximally is measured and numbered through the motion of the sun. And lest someone should cite the instance of the three first days which one reads in Gen. 1, before the fourth day, in which the sun is said to be made, he adds that, while Moses said that on the first day God said "Let there be light and light was made, and God divided the light from the darkness and called the darkness night and the light day", that light was the light of the sun, which was nevertheless first created unformed as the rest, but afterwards was formed and perfected on the fourth day, when one reads that the sun was made; and thus the solar ray determined and distinguished also the first three days of our time. (74-81)

Then when he says <And thus all to itself etc.>, he expounds the foregoing similitude in terms of the order of things to the divine Goodness. And first he posits that which pertains to the divine Goodness; second he shows its similitude in the sun, <According to the same etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows from what cause it occurs that all things are ordained to God as to an end; second what is the notion of order <And all the same etc.>; third the mode of order <And that which all things desire etc.> (81-86)

But he designates the cause of this order, saying that the divine Goodness converts all things to itself; for the fact that things are ordained to God they have from Godself. But things are dispersed and segregated in so far as they are ordained to diverse proper ends, but in so far as they communicate in an order to the ultimate end they are thus congregated. Therefore the divine Goodness in so far as it

converts all things to itself is principally the congregator of all dispersed things just as a certain principal and unifying deity. (86-90)

Then when he says <And all themselves etc.>, he designates the notion of order: for in so far as all things are converted to the same thing, to that extent all things desire the same thing by a threefold reason, namely as an active principle, and as a container, i.e., conservative of things, and as an end. And this is the threefold notion of desire: for we desire God as principle since from God the good comes to us; as a container since from God the good is preserved in us; and the end which we intend to obtain. And he manifests these three. For that God is a principle is apparent from this that, as the scripture says, all things subsist and are from God, derived from God as from some perfect cause. And that Godself is containing and preserving all things is apparent through this that all things consist in God preserved from exterior injury and contained through the conservation of their proper virtue as in some all powerful planting. For as trees are preserved in that they are planted in the earth, thus all things are conserved in that they are established in the power of the omnipotent God. That also all things desire the divine Goodness as end, he shows consequently when he says that to it all things are converted just as singulars to their proper ends. (91-102)

Then when he says <And that all things desire etc.>, he shows the mode of order. And he says that intellectual beings, as angels, and rational creatures, as humans, desire the divine Good cognitively; for these alone are able to know the Good itself which is God. But sensible things desire it in so far as they desire some sensible good which is a similitude of the highest Good. But plants, which are devoid of sense, desire the divine Good by a natural vital motion of desire, since also the good itself, toward which they tend by natural inclination through the work of life, is some similitude of the highest Good. But those which lack life, as inanimate bodies which are mere existents, desire the divine Good through a certain aptitude from God to participating subsisting esse, as their aptitude itself is understood to be their desire. (102-109)

Then when he says <According to the same etc.>, he shows how the similitude of the aforementioned is found in the sun. And he says that, just as the aforementioned things befit the divine Goodness, in this way not principally but according to the notion of an image the light of the sun draws together and converts all things to itself. For those which live desire the light of the sun in order to live, and those which are moved and are illuminated and which are warmed desire the light of the sun for this necessity. And

similarly in whatever way some things are contained, i.e., they depend or are caused by the shining of the sun, and for this reason it is named in Greek hulios, namely since it makes all bodies to be indestructible and gathers together dispersed things in so far as those which are in themselves separated commonly desire it: either so that they live or so that they are moved or so that they are warmed or whatever way they desire to be contained by the power of light. (110-118)

Then when he says <And I do not speak according to ancient etc.>, he removes an error. And he says that in the foregoing he did not speak according to the opinions of the ancients, who said that God was the sun and that the sun was the creator of the entire sensible world and that it governs the entire sensible world, but in that the invisible things of God are manifested "through those things which are made", as the Apostle says. (118-122)

IV - 5

<But these things in the symbolic theology etc> After he shows how the name of sensible light is transferred to divine predication through a certain similitude, now he shows how intelligible light is attributed to God. And first he joins himself to the preceding; second he continues the proposition <And it must be said that the intelligible light etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore first that these things, which through the idiom of the sensible light concerning God and concerning the similitude of the sun to God, were said in the book On symbolic theology, but now it is necessary to consider how the divine Good is to be praised by the name of intelligible light. For it is not the intention of this book to treat of sensible names translated to God, but of intelligible names. (5-8)

Then when he says <And it must be said etc>, he continues the intention, namely concerning the intelligible light, which designates in God the causality of the intelligible light. Whence concerning this he does three things: first he touches upon the causality of light; second he shows how God is related to those things in which light is caused <Therefore the intelligible light etc.>; third he shows what is the end of the diffusion of this light, <And intellectual and rational things etc>. Concerning the first he does two things: first he touches upon the causality of the intelligible light in angels; second in rational souls <But all ignorance etc.> (8-14)

He says therefore first that God, who is good through God's own essence, is named the intelligible light, John 8 "I am the light of the world", because God fills every supercelestial mind, i.e., angelic, with intelligible light, which is nothing other than the cognition of the truth. But when he says 'he fills', he designates the perfect cognition of truth given to the angels by God. (14-18)

Then when he says <But all ignorance etc.>, he shows the causality of light in souls. And first he posits two things which the divine light does in souls; second he designates the mode of both, <And their intellectual eyes etc.> (18-20)

But of the two things which the divine light does in souls, the first is that it expels all ignorance and error from every soul in which it is born. Ignorance pertains to the remotion of the truth, but error to the adherence of falsity; but he says 'it is implanted', as he alludes to what is said in 2 Peter 1 "while it shines and the morning star rises in your hearts". But he did not say this concerning the angels in which ignorance and error have no place, although there is in them the nescience of some things from which they are purged, as Dionysius said in the sixth chapter of the Celestial Hierarchy. For not all nescience can be called ignorance, but only nescience of those things to which something is natural and ought to know. Second, what the divine light does in souls is that it hands down the holy light to the souls themselves. And note that he says 'holy light', both because it is sent from God and because it orders to knowing God. And it must be noted that here there was not the use of the word 'filling', but simple 'handing down' in order to show that the cognition of the truth is imperfect in souls in comparison to that plenitude which the angels possess from God. (20-31)

Then when he says <And their intellectual etc>, he expounds the mode of both; and first the first; second the second, <And he hands down prior etc.> (31-32)

Concerning the first it must be considered that corporeal darkness does three things in bodies: for first it renders those things squalid and sordid from which those that are in darkness are not eagerly purged. Second by the darkness all things are made immobile; whence it is natural for the greater part of the animals that at night they are quiescent and in the day they are moved, since through the light they are directed in motion, by seeing which they go. Third darkness closes up corporeals, as in the darkness someone does not prepare themselves to do or acquire something, and naturally it conveys a certain sluggishness. And these three things also the spiritual darkness, i.e., ignorance of the truth, produces. For first uncleanness is acquired from

these things not only of errors in the intellect, but also of perversity of affections in affect and disordering of action in act, as long as a person neither avoids nor purges the evil things which he does not know. Second it renders people otiose since, while they have ignorance of the good which is the end and the way by which it comes to it, they do not move themselves to following the end. Third it renders them closed since, while they do not know the good, their affections are not opened through desire to receive it in themselves. But the intelligible light, i.e., cognition of the truth, removes these three things: and with respect to the first he says that the intelligible light cleanses the intellectual eyes of those souls from feces, i.e., impurity, surrounding them, i.e., by coming upon them, from ignorance; to the second he says 'and it moves', namely to acting well; and to the third 'and it opens', i.e., it renders them apt to receiving through desire, those, namely those who formerly were enclosed by oppressing darkness, i.e., by sending a certain slowness toward the good. Therefore since they were enclosed, they were in need of opening; since they were oppressed, they were in need of motion. (33-49)

Then when he says <And he hands down formerly etc.>, he shows the mode and order by which the light is handed down to holy souls. And he says first that the intelligible light is handed down to each one according to a determinate measure, according to Eph. 4 "to each one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ". And since spiritual enjoyments which, being unknown formerly were held in contempt, excite desire, after the first reception of light, enjoyed now by the cognition of the truth, it is more desired, and to those who desire more it enters in more: for the effects of divine grace are multiplied according to the multiplication of desire and love, according to Luke 7 "her many sins are forgiven her, since she loved much"; thus therefore a certain circulation is perceived, while from the light the desire of light increases and from desire of the source the light increases. But the circulation according to its nature is perpetual, and thus always the divine light extends souls toward previous things through increase, not nevertheless in all equally, but according to the proportion of each with respect to the light: for certain ones more diligently look to the incoming light, who desire more and make more progress. (49-60)

Then when he says <Therefore the intelligible light etc.>, he shows how God is related to those in whom God causes the intelligible light. And he posits three habitudes, namely of diffusion and of excess and of comprehension. Therefore for the first he says that the supersubstantial Good, although it is above all light both sensible and intelligible, is

nevertheless named the intelligible light in so far as it is a certain ray and fountain of all intelligible light. And lest the fountain be understood to be consisting in itself alone, he adds that it is an effusion of light remaining above; and in order that it be known in whom it abides, he adds that from its own plenitude it illuminates every supermundane mind with respect to the assisting angels, and circummundane with respect to the ministration of those by whose ministry this world is governed, and mundane with respect to souls. And not only does it illuminate minds from a principle, by giving to them natural cognition, but it renews all their intellectual virtues, by superfusing the new light of grace and glory and new revelation. Second he posits what pertains to excess. And he says that the divine light exceeds all minds, although it is diffused in them, since it is always superexcessive through its substance. Third he posits what pertains to comprehension. And he says that God comprehends all things which are in the aforementioned minds in that God is situated above them, just as a superior cause prepossesses in itself whatever is found in inferior effects. Whence to expound this he adds that Godself both has above and beyond universally all domination, or power, of illuminative virtue, i.e., whatever pertains to the cognition of whatever thing or to any virtue of instructing, God coassuming in Godself, i.e., God assumes simultaneously, not knowing diverse things through diverse powers, just as we know colors by vision and sounds by hearing, but according to one power God knows all things, and God superpossesses them, since anything is known more excellently than it is known from another, and God prepossesses them, since God does not acquire the cognition of virtue or the power of instructing from another, but all from God. And this is fitting in that God is principally illuminating and the principle of light and above all illuminating. (60-80)

Then when he says <And intellectual and rational things etc.>, he shows the end and fruition of the causality of light. And he says that through illumination it gathers together all intellectual things, i.e., angels, and rational things, i.e., humans, and makes them indestructible, since while they are united in virtue they are preserved in it. And consequently he expounds this from its opposite: for just as ignorance is divisive of those who are led into error, thus the presence of the intelligible light, through which the truth is known, gathers together those who are illuminated to each other and unites them in one known truth; for it is plain that there is only one way to speak the truth, but many ways to err from the truth. And for this reason those who know the truth come together in one statement, but those who are ignorant are divided through diverse errors. For the presence of the light is perfective

in that it constitutes in an end of a thing known which is truth, and it is conversive, i.e., revocative, to the truth, converting humans from many opinions which have no foundation of truth. And it not only transfers them from opinion to certain knowledge, but also from truth to uniformity; and this is what he adds that it gathers together various visions or, as is more properly said, fantasies to one true cognition through the opposition of falsity. And it not only converts them to the light of truth, but also fills them by the light of truth itself, which is in itself one and unitive of others. (80-93)

IV - 6

<This good is praised etc.> After Dionysius treats of the Light, now he deals with the Beautiful to the understanding of which the Light is prerequisite. And concerning this he does two things: first he sets out that the beautiful is attributed to God; second he shows the mode in which it is attributed to God, <But the beautiful and beauty etc.> (1-4)

He says first therefore that this supersubstantial good, which is God, is praised in holy scripture as the Beautiful, in Cant. 1 "behold you are beautiful, my beloved", and as Beauty, Psalm 95 "confession and beauty in his face", and as Love, I John 4 "God is love", and as Lovable, as introduced by the authority of the Canticles, and whatever other nominations pertaining to beauty are befitting to God: whether through the causality of beauty, which he says because of the beautiful and beauty, or in that beauty is possessed graciously, which he says because of love and the lovable. (4-10)

Then when he says <But the beautiful and beauty etc.,> he shows how they are attributed to God. And concerning this he does three things: first he sets forth that the beautiful and beauty are attributed to God and to creatures differently; second in what way they are attributed to creatures, <For these in existing things etc.>; third how they are attributed to God, <But the supersubstantial beauty etc.> (11-14)

He says therefore first that in the first cause, namely God, the beautiful and beauty are not to be divided as if the beautiful is other than beauty, since the first cause alone because of its simplicity and perfection comprehends the whole, i.e., all things, in one; whence even if the beautiful and beauty differ in creatures, nevertheless God comprehends both in Godself as one and the same. (14-18)

Then when he says <For these in existing things etc.>, he shows how they are attributed to creatures. And he says that

in created beings the beautiful and beauty are distinguished according to participating and participated so that the beautiful is called that which participates beauty, but beauty is the participation of the first cause which makes all beautiful things beautiful: for the beauty of the creature is nothing other than the similitude of the divine Beauty participated in things. (18-22)

Then when he says <But the supersubstantial beautiful etc.>, he shows how the aforementioned things are attributed to God: and first how beauty is attributed to God; second how the beautiful is attributed to God, <But the beautiful as the most beautiful etc.> (22-24)

He says first therefore that God, who is the supersubstantial Beautiful, is called Beauty because God gives to all created beings beauty according to the property of each; for the beauty of the spirit is other than that of the body, and it differs for this and that body. And in what the notion of beauty consists he shows, adding that thus God hands down beauty in so far as God is the cause of consonance and brightness in all things; for thus we call a person beautiful because of a fitting proportion of members in quantity and position and because he or she has clear and vivid color. Whence proportionately it is to be understood in other things that anything is called beautiful in so far as it has brightness of its own genus whether spiritual or corporeal and in so far as it is constituted in due proportion. (24-32)

But how God is the cause of brightness he shows, adding that God gives to all creatures with a certain brightness the tradition of God's luminous ray, which is the fountain of all light; which traditions are to be understood by the brightness of the divine ray according to the participation of a similitude, and those traditions are beautiful-making, i.e., making beauty in things. On the other hand he expounds another member, namely how God is the cause of consonance in things. But there is a twofold consonance in things: first according to the order of creatures to God; and he touches upon this when he says that God is the cause of consonance, just as calling all things to Godself in so far as God converts all things to Godself as to an end, as was said above, and because of this beauty in Greek is called '<u>kallos</u>' which is taken from calling. But the second kind of consonance is in things according to their order to each other; and he touches upon this when he adds that God gathers together all in all to the same thing. And this can be understood according to the statements of the Platonists that superior things are in inferior things by participation, but the inferiors are in the superiors through a certain excellence, and thus all things are in all

things. And because all things in all things are found in a certain order, it follows that all things are ordained to the same end. (32-44)

Then when he says: <But the beautiful etc.>, he shows how the beautiful is said of God; and first he shows that it is said according to excess; second that it is said through cause, <From that beautiful etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he proposes excess; second the expounds it <And always existing etc.> (44-47)

But excess is twofold: one in genus, which is signified through the comparative or superlative; the other outside of genus, which is signified through the addition of the preposition 'super': for example, if we should say that fire exceeds in heat by excess in genus, whence it is called most hot; but the sun exceeds by excess outside of genus, whence it is not called most hot but superhot, since heat is not in it in the same way but more excellently. And although this twofold excess in caused things does not come together simultaneously, nevertheless it is said in God simultaneously both that God is most beautiful and super beautiful, not that God is in a genus, but since all things which are in any genus are attributed to God. (47-53)

Then when he says: <And always existing etc.>, he expounds what he said. And first he expounds why God is called most beautiful; second why God is called superbeautiful, <And just as of every beautiful etc.> (53-55)

For just as something is said to be whiter since it is more unmixed with black, thus something is said to be more beautiful through remotion from defect of beauty. But there is a twofold defect of beauty in creatures: one, that there are certain things which have variable beauty, as is apparent in corruptible creatures. And this defect he first excludes from God, saying that God is always beautiful according to the same and in the same way and thus alteration of beauty is excluded; and again there is no generation or corruption of beauty in God, nor also its increase or diminution, as is apparent in corporeal things. But the second defect of beauty is that all creatures have in some way particular beauty as also a particular nature. And he excludes this defect from God with respect to every mode of particularity. And he says that God is not in some part beautiful and in another part shameful, as sometimes occurs in particular things; nor also is God beautiful in some time and not in another time, as occurs in those things whose beauty falls under time; nor again is God beautiful in one way and not in another, as occurs in everything which is ordained to one determinate use or end: for if they be applied to another, consonance will not be preserved, and

thus neither beauty; nor also is God in some place beautiful and in another not beautiful, which occurs in some places because in some places there seems to be beautiful things and in others there seems not to be, but God is beautiful in every respect and simply. (55-69)

And he designates the reason of all the foregoing, when he adds that God is the beautiful according to Godself; through which it is excluded that God's Beauty is not according to one part alone, nor in some time alone, nor in some place alone; for what is befitting to something according to itself and first, befits it wholly and always and everywhere. Moreover God is beautiful in Godself, not through respect to something determinate, and for this reason neither can it be said that for something God is beautiful and for something God is not beautiful nor that in some ways God is beautiful and in some ways not beautiful. Again God is always uniformly beautiful, through which is excluded the first defect of beauty, namely of variability. (69-75)

Then when he says <And as of all beautiful etc.>, he shows why God is called above beautiful. And he says that God is called above beautiful in so far as God has in Godself excellently and before all others the fountain of all beauty. For in God's simple and supernatural nature itself all beauty and every beautiful of all beautiful things derived from it preexist, not indeed dividedly, but uniformly through the mode in which multiple effects preexist in a cause. (75-79)

Then when he says <From this beautiful etc.>, he shows how the beautiful is said of God according to cause. And first he posits the causality of the beautiful; second he expounds it, <And it is the principle of all etc.> (80-81)

He says therefore first that from the Beautiful esse comes to all existing things: for it is clear from the consideration of beauty, as was said; but every form, through which a thing has esse, is a certain participation of the divine brightness; and this is what he adds, that singulars are beautiful according to a proper notion, i.e., according to a proper form; whence it is apparent that from the divine beauty the esse of all things is derived. Similarly also it was said that consonance is from the notion of beauty; whence all things, which pertain to consonance in any way, proceed from the divine Beauty. And this is what he adds, that because of the divine Good there is concord of all rational creatures with respect to intellect: for they agree who come together in the same opinion; and friendship with respect to affection; and communication with respect to act or something extrinsic;

and universally all creatures, whatever unity they have, they have from the power of the Beautiful. (82-91)

Then when he says <And he is the principle of all things etc.>, he expounds what he said concerning the causality of the Beautiful; and first as far as the notion of causing; second as far as the diversity of effects, <This one good etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: he first designates according to which notion the beautiful is called a cause; second he infers a certain corollary from what was said, <Because of this etc.> (91-94)

He says therefore first that the Beautiful is the principle of all things and as a cause containing, i.e., preserving, all things; for these three things seem to pertain to the notion of an efficient cause: that it give esse, move, and preserve. But a certain acting cause acts from desire of the end, which is of an imperfect agent not yet having what it desires; but it is of a perfect agent that it acts because of its love which it has, and because of this he adds that the Beautiful, which is God, is an effective and moving and containing cause, by a proper love of beauty. For since it loves proper beauty, it wants to multiply it as far as possible, namely through communication of its own similitude. But second that the Beautiful, which is God, is the end of all things as the final cause of all things; for all things are made that they might imitate the divine Beauty in some way. Third it is an exemplary cause, since all things are distinguished according to the divine Beautiful, and the sign of this is that nothing endeavors to imitate or represent anything except the Beautiful. (94-104)

Then when he says <Because of which etc.>, he infers a certain corollary from what was said. And he says that, since in so many ways the Beautiful is the cause of all, thence it is that the Good and the Beautiful are the same, since all things desire the Beautiful and the Good as a cause in all ways, and since there is nothing that does not participate the Beautiful and the Good, while anything is beautiful and good according to a proper form; and also further we will be able to say this boldly that even non-existing, i.e., prime matter, participates the Beautiful and the Good; for then even non-existing itself has a certain similitude with the divine Beautiful and Good, since the good and beautiful are praised in God through all ablation; but in prime matter ablation is considered through defect, but in God through excess in so far as God exists supersubstantially. But although the Beautiful and the Good are the same in subject, since both brightness and consonance are contained under the notion of the Good, nevertheless they differ in notion: for the Beautiful adds

above the Good an order to a cognitive power determining it to be of this kind. (104-114)

IV - 7

<This one good and beautiful etc.> After Dionysius expounded according to which notion the beautiful is a cause, here he shows of what things it is a cause. And concerning this he does two things: first he proposes in general cases; second he continues by distinguishing through singulars, <From this of all existents etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore that the Good and the Beautiful, although they are one, are the cause of all good and beautiful things, which are many. (4-5)

Then when he says <From this all things etc.>, he continues through singulars concerning those of which the Beautiful is the cause: And first as far as being itself; second as far as the one, <Unions etc.>; third as far as order, <Of the providence of superiors etc.>; fourth as far as rest and motion, <All stations etc.> (5-8)

He says therefore that from the Good are caused all substantial essences of beings. For every essence is either a simple form or has a complement through form; but a form is a certain irradiation coming forth from the first brightness; but brightness is from the notion of beauty, as was said. (8-11)

Then when he says <Unions etc.>, he posits those things which pertain to the notion of the One. Where it must be considered that the One adds indivisibility beyond the notion of being; for one is a being undivided; whence distinction or discretion is opposed to unity. And for this reason first he posits unions and discretions to be caused by the divine Beauty. But one in substance makes sameness, but discretion in substance makes diversity; and for this reason he adds 'other things', i.e., diversities. But from one in quality is caused likeness, but from discretion dissimilarity; and for this reason he adds 'dissimilarities'. But similarly one in quantity causes equality and discretion inequality, but he does not make mention of these since they pertain to the commensurability of things, concerning which he will treat afterwards. But this is observed in things, that dissimilars also come together in something, just as contraries in genus and matter; and also those which are united according to something remain distinct, as parts in a whole; and for this reason he adds 'communions of contraries' as far as the first, 'unmixed unities' as far as the second. But all these things are reduced to the causality of the Beautiful since

they pertain to consonance, which is from the notion of beauty, as was said above. (11-23)

Then when he says <Providences of superiors etc.>, he enumerates those things which pertain to the order of things. And first as far as action: just as superiors provide for inferiors, which he touches upon when he says 'alternate habitudes of coordinate things', i.e., of equals; and just as inferiors are converted to receiving from superiors perfection and rule, and this is what he says 'conversions of those who have less'. (23-27)

Second he touches upon those things which pertain to the existence of things themselves; and this is what he adds that from the Beautiful there are mansions conservative of them, i.e., of some things in themselves. For by this something is conserved, that it remains within the limits of its own nature; for if it should totally flow out from itself, it would perish. But he adds 'and intransmutable . . . collocations', i.e., foundations: for just as from the fact that something remains in itself it is preserved, thus also from the fact that something has a basis in itself upon which it is established it is intransmutable. (28-32)

Third he posits those things which pertain to the dwelling of one thing in another. Here it must be considered that, while it is necessary that something be constituted from some other things, first it is required that the parts come together, just as the many stones from which a house is constituted come together with one another, and similarly all universal parts come together in the notion of existing. And for this reason he says that not only from the Beautiful are the dwellings of things in themselves, but also the communions of all things in all things according to the property of each one; for all things are not in all things in one way, but the superiors are in the inferiors by participation, and the inferiors in superiors excellently, and nevertheless all things have something common with all things. Second it is required in parts that even though they are diverse they can be composed with one another; for a house is not made from cement and stone unless they are joined to each other, and similarly universal parts are joined in so far as they can fall under one order; and this is what he says 'and suitabilities'. Third it is required that one part be helped from the others, just as a wall and roof are supported by the foundation and the roof covers the wall and foundation, and similarly in the universe the superiors give perfection to the inferiors and in the inferiors the power of the superiors is manifested; and this is what he says 'and unconfused friendship', since mutual help is without prejudice of the distinction of things. Fourth a due proportion is required in the parts, so that

there might be such a foundation which is suitable to the other parts; and this is what he says 'and the harmony of all things', i.e., of all parts of the universe. For harmony is caused in sound from the due proportion of numbers. Therefore in parts thus disposed, their composition in a whole follows in that from all parts of the universe one universe of things is constituted; and this is what he adds 'in all', i.e., in the universe, 'concretions'. (33-50)

But this concretion of parts in the universe is attained in a twofold way: first through the mode of local coherence, in that superiors are in beings in some way the place of inferiors whether spiritual or corporeal; and this is what he adds 'indissoluble of the coherence of existents', namely in that superiors contain them in an indissoluble order. Second as far as the succession of time, but nevertheless in generated and corruptible things in which posteriors succeed the priors; and this is what he adds 'indeficient successions of those things which are made'. But they are called indeficient successions of things, not because generation lasts perpetually, but because without alteration certain ones succeed certain ones as long as this status of the world lasts. But he says that all these things are caused from Beauty in so far as they pertain to the notion of consonance, which is from the notion of beauty. (50-58)

Then when he says <All stations etc.>, he continues concerning rest and motion, which also in so far as they include some habitude of the one to the other they pertain to the notion of consonance and beauty. And concerning this he does three things: first he proposes the causality of the Beautiful with respect to rest and motion; second he expounds certain motions which seem to be unmanifested, <And divine minds are said to be moved etc.>; third he concludes the proposition, <Therefore of those etc.> (58-62)

He says therefore first that from the divine Beauty are caused all stations, i.e., rests, and motions whether of minds or of souls or of bodies. And this is because that Beautiful, which is above all rest and motion, is cause to every rest and motion in so far as it collocates each one in its own proper notion in which a thing has its station and in so far as it moves all things to the divine motion, since the motions of all things are ordained to other motions by which they are moved toward God, just as the motions which are to secondary ends are ordained to the motion which is to the ultimate end. But the form from which depends the proper notion of a thing pertains to brightness, but order to an end to consonance; and thus motion and rest are reduced to the causality of the Beautiful. (63-69)

<And to be moved etc.> Since he had made mention of the motion of minds and souls which seem to be immobile, here he expounds what their motions are like: and first what are the motions of angelic minds; second what are the motions of rational souls, <But the motion of the soul is etc.> (1-4)

But it must be considered that, just as the Philosopher says in De anima, motion is two-fold: one which is the act of the imperfect, i.e., of an existent in potency; and such is the motion of corporeal things which according to this are said to be moved whether according to substance or according to quantity or quality or place in so far as they go out from potency into act. But another is the motion which is the act of the perfect in that the operation itself of an existent in act, remaining in its own operation, is called motion, as to sense, to understand and to will. (4-9)

Therefore understanding motion in this way, he distinguishes the motion of angelic minds in three ways in terms of the similitude of local motion, which is more perfect among corporeal motions, namely circular, straight and oblique. But there are two things to be considered in circular motion: one, that it is uniform; another that circular motion is without principle and end. Therefore intellectual operation by which angelic minds contemplate God is compared to circular motion, since they are habituated uniformly in the contemplation of God and Godself is without principle and end. And for this reason he says that angelic minds, which are divine through participation, are said to move circularly by intellecting God in so far as they are moved unitedly, i.e., uniformly, through illuminations proceeding from the Beautiful and the divine Good, which are without principle and without end. (9-17)

But it is from the property of straight motion that there is found in it a principle and an end and that there is in it a certain order and manifoldness according to its nearness to the principle and end. Whence straight motion is said to be in them in that they tend to provide for inferiors, the principle of which providence is from the providing angel itself, but the terminus is in that to which ultimately the providence attains. And in this motion uniformity is not found, since the perfecting agents provide for the nearer things. And this is what he says that they are moved in a direction in that they proceed to the providing for inferiors; for their providence passes over through all inferiors in the mode of a certain straight line. (17-24)

But it is from the property of oblique motion that it is a medium between circular and straight, having something of both. And this motion befits the angels in so far as they are moved regularly to provide for inferiors, which pertains

to straight motion, from the contemplation of God itself, which pertains to circular motion. And this is what he says that the angelic minds are moved obliquely in that, while they provide for inferiors, they do not depart from the uniformity of their motion; which uniformity, or identity, befits them in that they incessantly encircle, as if forming a crown, through uniform contemplation the cause of the whole identity, which is the Beautiful and the divine Good. (24-30)

Then when he says <But the motion of souls etc.>, he expounds the motion of the soul. And first its circularity; second oblique motion, <But oblique etc.>; third straight motion, <But in direct etc.> (31-32)

But it must be considered that it is necessary to expound the circular motion of souls otherwise than that of angels. For since the motions of angels and of souls are their operation, but circularity of motion expresses the notion of uniformity, it is necessary for circular motion to be attributed to angels and to souls in the way in which uniformity of intellectual operation befits them. But an angel understands, not by receiving from things, but by receiving light from the first single simplicity, namely God; whence maximally in the intellectual operation of an angel it is understood that it is illuminated by Godself; and for this reason he said above that the divine minds are moved circularly by illuminations of the Beautiful and the Good. But it is connatural to the soul that it understand by receiving from exterior things which are multiform and divided. Whence in this reception its circular motion can not be perceived, but more in the fact that it is recalled from exterior things: first converted in itself, second elevated in consideration of angelic powers, but third even to Godself. (33-42)

This is therefore what he says, that the circular motion of the soul consists in this that it enters from exterior things into itself and there uniformly is rolled up just as in some circle according to its own intellectual powers; which convolution of the soul is guided and does not err. For it is manifest that the soul, by discursing from one to another as from an effect to a cause or from one similar to another as from contrary to contrary, ratiocinates in many ways; but all that ratiocination is judged through resolution into first principles in which error does not occur and by which the soul is defended against error. The first principles themselves by the simple intellect are known without discursion, and for this reason the consideration of them because of their own uniformity is named a circular convolution. Therefore through this convolution the soul is first gathered together to itself,

considering that which it has in its own nature in so far as it knows; then made uniform in this way it is united through a convolution of this kind with united powers, namely angelic, in so far as through the similitude of this uniform apprehension it considers the uniformity of the angels in some way; and further through this convolution it is led to the Beautiful and the Good, i.e., God, which is above all existents and is maximally one and the same and is without principle and interminable, which pertains to the notion of a circle, as was said. And for this reason the circularity of motion of the soul is completed in that it is led to God. (43-56)

Then when he says <But obliquely etc.>, he describes the oblique motion of souls which also is understood otherwise in souls than in angels. For in the operation of an angel nothing is multiform in so far as it understands; but in that it provides for inferiors its provision is variated through diverse things. And for this reason oblique motion, which is composed from straight and circular, having in itself something of uniformity and multiformity, is perceived in angels in that they thus provide for inferiors, while they nevertheless remain in uniform consideration of God, which they have as the rule of their provision. But the soul in its connatural cognition has multiformity in so far as it is natural not to know except by discursion through diverse things; but uniformity in it consists in this that it is added to a uniform principle, by which it understands. Thus therefore oblique motion, composed from uniformity and multiformity, is perceived in souls in that it receives the uniform illuminations of God not uniformly, but multiformly according to its own mode. This is therefore what he says, that the soul is moved obliquely in so far as it is illuminated with divine cognitions according to its own property, not indeed intellectually and singularly,, i.e., simply as the angels, but rationally and in a diffused way, i.e., by discursion and by diffusing itself through diverse things. And this he expounds adding 'just as by comixed operations': for in a certain way it mixes itself with things in so far as it diffuses itself to know diverse things; 'and transitive', which refers to this which he said 'rationally': for it is a property of reason to pass over or to discurse from one to another. (57-72)

Then when he says <But in the direct etc.>, he expounds the straight motion of the soul, which has multiformity from its own notion. But multiformity in the operation of an angel was understood according to provision for inferiors, but in the soul it is according to the variable and multiform apprehension of diverse things, from which it receives more simple and uniform cognitions. He says therefore that the soul is moved in a direction when it does not enter into

itself, so that it will operate by a certain singular, i.e., simple, intellectuality, since this pertains to its circular motion as was said, but when it goes forth to exterior things which are around it, from which just as from variable and multiple signs it is elevated to the contemplation of simple and united things. (72-79)

But it is clear from the sufficiency and distinction of these motions of the soul that the soul either from its own uniformity goes forth into superior things more uniform, and this is its completely uniform circular motion, or from the uniform influence of illumination it receives variable and multiform cognition, and this is its oblique motion, or conversely from multiform and variable things it progresses to simple cognition, and thus is its straight motion. (79-83)

IV - 9

<Therefore of those etc.> Having expounded the motions of the angels and of the soul, here he concludes the causality of the Beautiful and the Good with respect to the motions and rests of both them and of all other things. And first he shows the causality of the Beautiful and the Good concerning the differences of motions and rests; second concerning the differences of all things, <For also from the same and through the same etc.> (1-5)

He says therefore first that the Beautiful and the Good is the cause of those motions of minds and souls, concerning which it was said already, and also of three sensible motions, which are in this universe, since also in sensible things there is found a circular motion, as in celestial bodies, and straight motion, as in heavy and light things, and oblique motion, as in animals. And while immobile and resting things are prior according to nature to these things which are moved, since the principle of whatever motion is from something immobile, the Beautiful and the Good in many ways are the prior cause of the dwelling of each one, which is perceived in that one thing is said to be in another, and of their station in that one thing rests in another, and of their collocation in that one thing is preserved and established through another. (5-12)

But the Beautiful and the divine Good, which is above all station and motion of creatures, is not only their productive cause but also the containing, i.e., preserving, and final cause; and for this reason every station and motion is from it as from a productive cause and in it as in a containing cause and toward which and by whose grace as in a final cause: for to attain an end we are moved and by its grace we operate; whence when he says 'toward which'

pertains to the same nomination of an end, but when it is said 'by whose grace' looks toward the intention in that when we will one thing we tend toward it as toward an end. (12-18)

Then when he says <For also from the same etc.>, he unites the universal causality of the Beautiful and the Good concerning all differences of things. And first he posits the differences of things which are caused from the Beautiful and the Good; second the diverse modes of causing which are attributed to the Beautiful and the Good, <And simply every existent etc.> (18-21)

Concerning the first, he first posits three substantial differences, saying; for this reason it is necessary that every station and motion be caused from the Beautiful and the Good, since from it are caused all differences of things: for from it as from an active cause and through it as through an exemplary cause is every substance of whatever species it might be and every life, whether it is of an angelic mind which so lives that it does not vivify a body or of a soul which vivifies a body. (21-25)

Then he descends to corporeal things, in which first are considered differences pertaining to continual quantity. And he says that from it are caused all smallnesses, equalities and magnitudes of things of a corporeal nature; for the differences of quantity are great and small, of which the medium is equal, as is said in the tenth chapter of the Metaphysics. But these signify indeterminate quantity; but there are certain others that signify determinate quantity, as bicubit, tricubit; and to express this kind he adds 'all measures'. But from the determination of quantity a proportion arises which is the habitude of one quantity to another; and for this reason he adds 'and the proportions of existing things'. But certain proportions are fitting according to the nature and condition of things, and certain are not fitting; but fitting proportions in sound are called harmony, and through a certain similitude fitting proportions of any things whatsoever are called harmony; whence he adds 'and harmony'. The notion itself of continuity must also be considered in continuous quantity, to which pertains what he adds 'and concretions'. It is of the notion of continuity that it is divided; but division constitutes the notion of whole and part, since the part consists in that the whole is divided; and for this reason he adds 'total parts'. (26-38)

Then he approaches discrete quantity which is number, of which the principle is the one; whence he adds 'every one and multitude'. But there must be considered in multitude itself a certain unity in that from the many the one is

constituted either according to continuation or contact of parts, to which pertains what he adds 'and conjunctions of parts'; or in any other way, to which pertains what he adds 'the unions of every multitude'. But from the union of parts form results, which is the perfection of the whole; whence he adds 'the perfections of the totality'. (39-44)

Then he approaches the differences of diverse genera; whence he adds 'what kind' as far as the genus of quality, 'how much' according to the genus of quantity, 'in what order' as he calls order according to the genus of local position or 'in what order' as far as discrete quantity in that it refers to number; and he adds 'infinite' because it is congruent with continuous quantity according to division, but discrete quantity according to addition; and he also adds 'comparisons' as far as the genus of relation, and 'discretions', i.e., differences, as far as the same genus, as comparison pertains to the relation of fittingness: as the same, equal, similar, but discretion to the relation of difference: as diverse, unequal, dissimilar. And since he posited the infinite and relation as if by consequence a quantity and quality, he considered certain differences concerning both. And first concerning the infinite he considers the infinite itself when he says 'every infinite' and its opposite 'every end', and the effective end when he says 'all definitions'; for something is called infinite in that it is indeterminate. Then he posits diversities of comparison: but something is compared to another according to prior and posterior and as far as this he says 'orders', and according to greater and less and as far as this he says 'excess'; and as far as cause and effect he thus says 'elements' because of material causes and 'forms' because of formal causes. (44-57)

Further he approaches actions. And first he posits division according to substance and virtue and operation. Then he shows the process of operation in humans: in which first there is the habitus of the soul; second sense, i.e., cognition or apprehension; third speech; fourth more exterior action. Again he thus distinguishes action: for in corporeal things action is through contact and on this point he says 'every touch'; but in the intellect it is through science, which is as if a certain intellectual contact; but in the will action is through the union of love, which is also a certain touch of the will, whence he adds 'every union'. (58-64)

Then when he says <And simply etc.>, he shows the diverse modes of causing which befit the Beautiful and the Good. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows in what way the Beautiful and the Good are the cause of things in diverse ways; second that every causality of things

preexists in it, <And in the same etc.>; third he shows how all causality is derived from it, <And simply every principle etc.> (64-68)

He says therefore first that speaking universally all that is is from the Beautiful and the Good, which is God, as from an effective principle, and in the Beautiful and the Good as in a containing or preserving principle, and to the Beautiful and the Good it is converted, desiring the same as an end, and it is not only an end as something desired, but also in so far as all substances and actions are ordained to it as to an end. And this is what he adds 'and all things whatsoever that are and are made are and are made because of the Beautiful and the Good, and all things look toward it' as toward and exemplary cause, which they have as a rule of their operation, and from it they are moved as from a moving cause, and are contained and preserved in their motion and action. But it does not move a thing because of some extraneous end, but by its own grace with respect to its own intention, and in order that it be attained by things. (68-76)

Then when he says <And in the same etc.>, he shows that every causality of other causes also preexist in it. And he says that in it is every principle whether exemplary or final, efficient, formal and elementary, i.e., material, just as effects are in the virtue of their cause. (77-79)

Then when he says <And simply every principle etc.>, he shows how all causality is derived from it. And he says that universally every productive principle of things and every conservative principle and every end and, as I will say briefly, every existent are from the Beautiful and the Good [and every non existent] supersubstantially, since namely the negations of all things befit God through God's excess. But that God is said to be the principle and end of all things is above the mode of other principles and God's perfection is above the perfection of others. But this universal causality of the Beautiful and the Good he confirms through the authority of scripture, adding 'since from the same' as from an effective principle, 'and through the same' as through an exemplary principle, 'and in the same' as in a containing principle, 'and to the same' as to an end, are all things, as the holy word of the Apostle says, Rom. 11. But in what way all causality should be attributed to the Beautiful and the Good can be obtained from what was said above. (80-89)

IV - 10

<Therefore to all things is the Beautiful and the Good etc.>
After Dionysius discussed the Beautiful and the Good which

incite to loving, here he discusses love itself. And first through his own words; second through the words of Hierotheus, <These also our noble etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he determines concerning the divine love; second he shows how God is called both Love and Lovable, <But what totally etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he determines concerning love itself; second concerning ecstasy, which is the effect of love, <But it is also making ecstasy etc.>; third concerning zeal, which is a certain species of love, <Because of which those who are strong etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he determines concerning love; second he excludes a certain objection, <And someone does not judge us etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows how God is the object of love; second how God loves, <But he trusts also this etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: for first he shows what is the object of love; second in what way love enters singulars with respect to singulars, <And because of it etc.>; third what love does in lovers, <And all beautiful etc.> (1-13)

He says therefore first that, since the end of all things is from the Beautiful and the Good, it follows that the Beautiful and the Good is lovable by all things, desirable and delectable, since the object of desire and love is the Beautiful and the Good. But as evidence of those things which are said here it must be considered that love pertains to the appetite. But love is the first and common basis of all appetitive operations; which is manifest to those looking at singulars. For nothing is desired except that it is loved; nor does someone rejoice over a possession except that it love it, nor does someone grieve over something except that it is a contrary to the beloved. And for this reason it is necessary that the notion of love be understood from this that it is the common object of appetite. But this is the Good. Therefore something is said to beloved, because the appetite of the lover is disposed toward something as toward its own good. Therefore the habitude itself or the relation of appetite to something as to its own good is called love. But all that is ordained to something as to its own good has in a certain way that thing present and united to itself according to a certain similitude, at least of proportion, just as form is in some way in matter in that matter has an aptitude and order to form. But nevertheless it happens that the good loved totally is absent from the lover and thus there is caused in the lover desire of the beloved; but sometimes it is totally present in it and thus there is caused in it delectation or joy of the beloved; and contrariwise there are caused fear and grief concerning it and consequently other affections which are derived from these. (13-28)

Thus therefore it is evident how it differs when he says 'desirable and lovable'; for desire is a certain affection of love; for since love pertains to the appetite, according to order the appetitive is also the order of love. But the most imperfect appetitive natural appetite is apart from cognition, which means nothing other than natural inclination. But above this is the sensible appetite which follows cognition, but is apart from free choice. But the highest appetite is that which is with cognition and free choice; for this appetite in some way moves itself. Whence also the love that pertains to this is most perfect and is called dilection in that what is to be loved is discerned by free choice. (28-35)

Then when he says <And because of the same etc.>, he shows how love befits singulars with respect to singulars. Where it must be considered that, since love entails a habitude of appetite toward the good of the lover, it happens that something is loved in as many ways as there are ways that something is the good of another. Which first occurs in two ways; for the good is said in two ways just as being is: for in one way ens is said properly and truly that it subsists, as stone or human; in another way that it does not subsist but that by it something is, just as white does not subsist, but something is white by means of it. Thus therefore also the good is said in two ways: in one way as if it were something subsisting in goodness; in another way as if it were the goodness of another, by which something is well. Thus therefore something is loved in two ways: in one way under the notion of subsisting good and this is to be loved properly and truly, since namely we want the good to be in it, and this love by many is called benevolence or friendship; in another way through the mode of the goodness inhering in that something is said to be loved, not in so far as we want that it be good in itself, but in so far as we want that it be good for something else, just as we are said to love science or health. (36-47)

Nor is it unfitting if we should in this way love some things which subsist through themselves, not indeed by reason of their substance, but by reason of some perfection ich we attain from it: just as we are said to love wine, not because of the substance of wine as it is good in itself, but as through wine it is well with us or in so far as we are delighted by its flavor or in so far as we are sustained by its humor. But everything which is accidentally is reduced to that which is per se. Thus therefore this thing which we love, as it is good for something else, is included in the love of that which we love, as it is good in itself. But something must not be loved through that which is accidentally, but through that which is per se; and for this reason it is necessary to receive the diversity of love

according to those which we thus love so that we might want the good in them. (47-54)

And since whatever we love in so far as it is our good, it is necessary for love to vary in as many modes as there are modes in which something is the good of something else. Which occurs in four ways: in one way in that something is its own good and thus something loves itself. In another way in that something through some similitude is as if one with something else and thus something loves that which is equally coordinated with itself in some order, just as a person loves another person of the same species and as a citizen loves a fellow citizen and a blood relation a blood relation. In another way something is the good of another since it is some part of it, as a hand is a part of a human being and universally a part is something of the whole. But in another way conversely in that the whole is the good of the parts, for the part is not perfected except in the whole; whence naturally the part loves the whole and the part is freely exposed for the salvation of the whole. But what is higher in beings is compared to the lower as the whole to the part in so far as the higher perfectly and totally has what is had by lower things imperfectly and particularly and in so far as the highest contains in itself many lower things. (54-65)

Whence Dionysius also here posits four modes of love. And the first is that the lower loves its superior. And this is what he says that because of the Good and the Beautiful and its grace minor things, i.e., inferiors, love the better things, i.e., superiors, by converting themselves to them, since in them they have their perfection. Second he posits the mode in which equals love equals. And he says that they love coordinates, i.e., equals, communicatively, i.e., in so far as they communicate with them either in species or in some order. Third he posits the mode in which superiors love inferiors. And he says that the better things love the lesser provisively, namely in so far as they provide for them as contained under themselves. Fourth he posits the mode in which something loves itself. And he says that singulars love themselves contentively, i.e., in so far as something is contained in itself. (65-74)

Then when he says <And every beautiful etc.>, he shows what produces love in the lover. For since love is the common basis of appetite, it is necessary that every operation of appetite be caused from love, as was said. And since every operation of any thing is caused from appetite, it follows that every action of any thing is caused from love. And this is what he says, that all things make and will whatever it is that they make and will from the desire of the Beautiful

and the Good. And he takes here desire for love, which is its effect, as was said. (74-79)

Then when he says <But he trusts etc.>, he shows how God loves. And he says that we can confidently say that God, who is the cause of all, because of the excess of God's goodness loves all things; and from love God makes all things, giving them esse; and God perfects all things by filling singulars with their proper perfections; and God contains all things by preserving them in esse; and God converts the whole, i.e., God orders them to Godself as to an end. And thus we speak: love is good and is of the Good, i.e., of God as of a lover, and it is for the sake of the Good as of an object; for God loves nothing except for the sake of God's own goodness. And in order to expound what he said, he adds that the love by which God loves existents is operative of goodness in them; and because of this he said: the good itself causally also preexists in the Good, i.e., in God, according to excess, just as all things which are in creatures pertaining to perfection are more excellently in God, and for this reason he said the divine Love to be of this kind of good in so far as the divine Love does not permit itself to remain in itself without seed, i.e., without production of creatures, but love moves itself to operating according to the most excellent mode of operation in so far as it produces all things in esse. For from love of its own goodness it proceeds since it wills to diffuse its own goodness and to communicate it to others as far as possible, namely through the mode of a similitude, and that its goodness does not simply remain in itself, but flows outward to others. (79-92)

IV - 11

<And let no one judge us etc.> Here he excludes a certain objection: For it might seem to someone that the name of love always signifies material passion and for this reason it would not be useful in divine things. But he excludes this objection first through reason; second through authorities, <But not that we seem to say these things etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he says that the objection is irrational; second he applies reason, <It is necessary to see according to right reason etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that no one ought to suppose that we commend to God the name of love except by the custom and fittingness of holy scripture. For it is irrational and improper, as I believe, that a person does not keep in mind the power of the intention, i.e., that which someone intends to signify through the name, but only the words themselves. And this does not pertain to those who want to understand divine things, but to those who receive the sounds

themselves lightly, not pondering their significations and who also hold sounds merely externally, namely in the ears, so that they do not pass beyond to the intellect, who do not want to see what such diction signifies and how it happens to expound one saying through other clearer sayings that signify the same thing. But such things suffer something from the elements themselves, i.e., the letters, and lines, i.e., the written figures, being sensible and not intelligible, since the sounds of the saying themselves do not pass over to the intellectual part of the soul, but die around the lips of the speakers and around the ears of the hearers, and if it is not possible that the quaternary number should be signified through twice two or what I call a rectangle is signified through having straight lines or the maternal alone is signified through the paternal. And it is similar concerning any other things in which there occurs one intention to be signified by diverse parts of speaking. But those are said to be sympathetic with the letters and vocal (not intelligible) sayings who accept some sayings because they are affected by the words themselves but do not attend to their sense. (6-21)

Then when he says <It is necessary to see etc.>, he designates the reason of the foregoing; and first that it is not necessary to attend to the words when it is evident from the senses; second that one must use clearer words, <But when the mind etc.> (21-23)

He says therefore first that it is necessary to see according to right reason that we are accustomed to the elements, namely the vocalizations, and the syllables and sayings and lines, i.e., written lines, and speeches, whether written or spoken, because of the senses themselves, namely because of hearing and vision. But when our soul is moved by intellectual operation to participate intelligible things, then the senses of exterior sensibles are superfluous since sensibles are preparatory to the intelligibles; but when we come to a terminus, we recede from the way and thus when the sense is already established through the words concerning the intention the service of the words by which it is signified ceases. And for this reason one must not be deceived concerning this. And he posits an example of this, that the intellectual powers of our natural reason also are superfluous when our soul, conformed to God, casts itself to things divine, not by casting our corporeal eyes, but by a casting of faith, namely when the unknown and inaccessible divine light unites and communicates itself to us. For while we consider those things which are of faith, we do not judge them through natural reason; and similarly when we want to understand something, it is not necessary to judge this through words. (24-35)

Then when he says <But when the minds etc.>, he shows that one should use clearer words. And he says that when our mind strives to be moved to intellective contemplation through sensible things, then are they more precious, i.e., more useful, those sensible species which more manifestly bear or reveal intelligible intentions, so that speeches are more plain by more manifest visible things. But when those things which are not manifested in sensible things are represented by the senses, then neither the senses themselves can represent well sensible things to the mind, so that the intelligibles are received from the sensibles themselves. And since the name of love is clear and more common than the name of dilection, it is to be used more to signify the intelligible intention. (35-42)

Then when he says <But as those are not etc.>, he shows the same through the authorities of scripture. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows how holy scripture uses the name of love in divine things; second how certain ones think it more fitting to use the name of love than the name of dilection, <Although it was seen etc.>; third he shows that both are to be used indifferently, <But from the hearers etc.> (43-47)

He says therefore first that, so he might not seem to introduce the aforementioned reasons as if he wanted to pervert holy scripture, against those who accuse the name of love in divine matters, he introduces these authorities "love it and it will save you" etc., according to another translation; but our translation has, Prov.4 "love it", namely wisdom, "and it will preserve you" and thus "seize it and it will exalt you, and you will be glorified by it, when you will have embraced it". And many other things are said in scripture to the praise of love, as is apparent in the amative theologians, i.e., in the Canticle of canticles. (47-52)

Then when he says <Although it was seen etc.>, he shows that some thought this name of love should be more used in divine things. And concerning this he does three things: first he posits the statement of others; second he shows what seems to himself on this, <For to me they seem etc.>; third he designates the reason of the statement of others, <But because of this etc.> (53-56)

He says therefore that to certain doctors who treated holy discourse, although they did not write canonical scripture, it seemed that the name of love was more fitting to things divine than the name of dilection. Whence Ignatius Martyr writes concerning Christ saying, 'my love', i.e., Christ in whom all my love is, 'was crucified'. And Philo says in a book, which he made introductory to holy sayings, concerning

divine wisdom 'I was made a lover of its beauty', Wisdom 8. From which it is clear that the book of Wisdom was not yet held to be among canonical scripture. Whence he concludes that we ought not to fear to use the name of love nor ought some objection recall us from this, intending beyond this to handle the doubt raised. (56-63)

Then when he says <For it seems to me etc.>, he shows how it seems to him on this matter. And he says that it seems to him that makers of holy scripture commonly and indifferently use the name of dilection and of love. (63-65)

Then when he says <But because of this etc.>, he designates the reason why some say that the name of love is more to be used in divine matters. And he says that because of this it seems that the name of love is more applied to divine things, so that the understanding of those who unfittingly use the name of love might be excluded since, while in God, as it befits God, true love is praised not only by us who expound holy scripture but also by the scriptures themselves, multitudes of foolish men who are not able to receive the uniformity which the name of divine love signifies slip down according to their own custom to the love which is found in corporeal things, which is divisible and divided: since such love does not find the whole which satisfies it in one thing and for this reason it is divided and diverse; and if through a period of time it satisfies itself in one thing, nevertheless it does not last in this, but it is natural to it to seek what is pleasing to it in diverse things. And this befits corporeal things since they are divisible or divided. But here love is not true love, just as divided and divisible good is not true and perfect good, but good indivisible, which is maximally one; for the good and the one concur in the same thing, as Boethius proves in the book De consolatione. (65-76)

But here corporeal love is a certain idol, i.e., a similitude of true love, or more a certain defect or falling from true love. And for this reason multitudes sink down to this love, since they cannot grasp the uniformity of the divine love. And for this reason this name is ordered in divine wisdom, as appearing to many more offensive, i.e., unfitting, so that hey might be elevated and excited upward, as if reclining in superior things, to the cognition of true love and also so that they might be liberated from the difficulty which they suffer concerning this name: just as also in other nominations of God corporeal things more base are frequently attributed to God, so that the mind is forced not to remain in them but to understand God above all things, as is said in the second chapter of the Angelic Hierarchy. And for this reason scripture uses the name of love more in divine things, since we use this name more for

base and carnal love. But on the other hand it would be unfitting that they should be judged by us to be earthly zeals, i.e., loves in divine things, which seem to be expressed through the name of dilection in so far as it appears from the clarity of scripture. For someone says, namely David, II Kings 1, according to another translation "your dilection fell upon me, as the dilection of women", where our translation has "I lament over you, my brother Jonathan, beautiful and loveable more than the love of women". (77-90)

Then when he says <But from the hearers etc.>, he shows how the names of dilection and love are understood according to the scriptures. And he says that by those who rightly hear divine things this is understood, that the names of dilection and love are understood in the same virtue and signification by the holy theologians, who published holy scripture, according to those things which are manifested to them by God or which they themselves manifested concerning God. For both names are significant of a certain 'unitive virtue' in so far as it unites the lover with the beloved, as both desire the same thing, 'and conjunctively', as both connect with the other according to inclination, according to which two lovers are disposed to each other, 'and differently concretive', in that in such a conjunction the differences of both lovers are preserved, of which sometimes one is superior and the other inferior. And this virtue preexists in the Beautiful and the Good, namely in God who loves both Godself and others because of God's own beauty and goodness. (90-98)

And again this virtue is attributed to things created by God, who is beautiful and good, because of the Good and Beautiful which is the proper object of love; for nothing is loved except in so far as it has the notion of the Beautiful and the Good. And this virtue contains coordinates, i.e., equals, in that they are thus disposed to each other because alternately they communicate themselves to each other. Also the virtue of love moves superiors to provide for inferiors and collocates those who have less, i.e., inferiors, into superiors in so far as it converts these to those as to a proper good which they have in them. And this was expounded above. (98-104)

IV - 12

<But it is also making ecstasy etc.> After Dionysius determined concerning love, here he determines concerning ecstasy which is the effect of love. And concerning this he does three things: first he proposes ecstasy to be the effect of love; second he shows this in creatures, <And the

superior things show etc.>; third he shows this in God, <But this also must be dared etc.> (1-4)

Concerning the first it must be considered that there is this difference between the cognitive and appetitive power, that acts of virtue are cognitive in that they are known in the knower, but an act of virtue is appetitive according to the inclination which it has while desiring the thing which is desired. But the first operation of the appetite is love, as was said above; whence love entails the first inclination of appetite toward a thing in so far as it has the notion of the good, which is the object of appetite. But just as being is said in two ways, namely of that which subsists through itself and that which is in another, thus also is the good. In one way it is said of things subsisting which have goodness, as a human is called good. In another way it is said of that which is in something making it good, just as virtue is called the good of human being since by it human being is good; for similarly also white is called being, not since it is subsisting in its own esse, but since by it something is white. Love therefore tends toward something in two ways: in one way as toward a substantial good, which is when we thus love something that we desire the good in it, as we love a person while desiring their good; in another way love tends toward something as in an accidental good, as we love virtue, not indeed because we desire it to be good, but so that through it we might be good. But the first mode of love some name the love of friendship, the second the love of concupiscence. But it sometimes occurs that we also love some subsisting goods in this second mode of love, since we do not love them for themselves but for some of their accidents, as we love wine, desiring to be drunk by its sweetness; and similarly when a person is loved because of his or her enjoyment or utility, they are not loved for themselves, but accidentally. (5-21)

Therefore in both modes of love the affection of the lover is borne through a certain inclination to the loved thing, but in diverse ways; for in the second mode of love it is borne to the loved thing through an act of will, but through the intention of the affection it returns into itself; for when I desire justice or wine, my affection is inclined toward one or the other of them, but nevertheless it returns into itself, since it is thus borne towards these so that through them the good might be in it; whence such love does not place the lover outside of himself as far as the end of the intention. But when something is loved in the first mode of love, the affection is thus borne into the loved thing that it does not return into itself, since it desires the good of the loved thing itself, not because something accedes to it from the loved thing. Thus therefore such love produces ecstasy, since it places the lover outside himself.

But this occurs in three ways; for that substantial good into which the affection is borne can be disposed in three ways. In one way such that that good is more perfect than the one loving and through this the lover is compared to it as part to the whole, since those things which are in the perfect totally are in the imperfect partially; whence according to this the lover is something loved. In another way such that the loved good is of the same order with the lover. In the third way the lover is more perfect than the loved thing, and thus the love of the lover is borne into the loved thing as into something of itself. Thus therefore while the affection of the lover is borne into a loved superior, of which the lover itself is something, the lover orders its own good in the beloved: just as if the hand loved the person, it would order itself in the whole; whence it would be placed totally outside itself, so that in no way would something of its own remain in itself, but it would order the whole in the beloved. But it is not thus, while something loves something equal to itself or that which is below it: for not one hand, if it loved the other, would order all of itself to the other, nor a person loving his hand would order all of its own good in the good of the hand. Thus therefore something ought to love God, that nothing of its own remain in itself but be ordered in God. But when it loves equals or inferiors, it is enough that it tends toward others while going out of itself, because it does not intend itself alone but others; nor is it necessary that it totally order itself in them. (22-42)

Thus therefore divine love can be understood here in two ways: in one way as the love by which God is loved. And in this way these words are to be expounded that the divine love produces ecstasy, i.e., it places the lover outside of himself, i.e., it ordains him in God such that it does not permit the lovers themselves to be of themselves but of divine things which are loved, since nothing of their own remains in them which is ordered to God. In another way the divine love can be understood as that which is derived from God, not only in God, but also in others, whether equals or inferiors, and it must be understood in this way: not sending lovers to their own things simply, but to the loved things, i.e., to those which are loved, since love makes it that they do not intend themselves alone, but also others. (43-49)

Then when he says <And they show etc.>, he exhibits what he had said in creatures; and first through induction; second through authority, <Because of this Paul also etc.> (49-51)

He says therefore first that superiors demonstrate the aforementioned effect of love through the providence which they effect for inferiors; for by this they are in some way

placed outside themselves, because they attend to others. And similarly coordinates, i.e., equals, show it through the continence by which they contain each other, namely as one is helped and assisted by another. And inferiors also show it through this that the more divine are converted to their superiors, as to those in whom their good exists. For in all these cases it appears that something goes outside of itself, while it is converted to the other. But here he uses the genitive for the ablative, since the Greeks lack the ablative. (51-57)

Then when he says <Because of this Paul also etc.>, he shows the same through authority. And he says that because of this, that love does not permit the lover to be of itself, but of the beloved, Paul, greatly constituted in divine love as in a certain container, and by the virtue of divine love making him to go out of himself totally, as if speaking by the divine mouth, says, Gal. 2 "I live, but not I, but Christ lives in me", namely since by going out of himself he projected himself entirely into God, as a true lover and as suffering ecstasy, living in God and not living by his own life but by the life of Christ as the beloved, which life was to him intensely lovable. (57-63)

Then when he says <But it must be dared etc.>, he says that the aforementioned operation of love is also found in God, saying that this must be said boldly for the truth, i.e., by making this truth boldly, or for the truth, i.e., for truly asserting this, that God, who is the cause of all through God's beautiful and good love by which God loves all things, according to the abundance of God's goodness by which God loves things, is outside of Godself in so far as God provides for all existing things through God's goodness and love or dilection, so that in some way God is borne and in some way deposited by God's own excellence, in that God exists above all things and is separated from all things, so that God is in all things through the effects of God's own goodness according to a certain ecstasy, which God nevertheless thus makes it to be in all inferior things, so that God's supersubstantial virtue does not go out from Godself; for God thus fills all things that God is in no way evacuated from God's own virtue. And he added, so that when he said 'God is deposited', it should not to be understood as some diminution of Godself, but only that God communicates Godself to inferiors through participation of God's own goodness. (63-74)

Then when he says <Because of which they are stronger etc.>, he explains the meaning of zeal, which entails a certain intensity of love. And he says that, since the operation of love is found most excellently in God, for this reason those who are excelling in cognition of divine things name God

zealous, as is clear in Exodus 20 "I the Lord your God am zealous", since God has many things from good love to created existents. But zeal implies an intensity of love; which intensity sometimes occurs in human beings, that a person wanting singularly to possess what he loves does not suffer it to be loved by another, and according to this some define zeal saying: zeal is an intensified love that does not permit a partner in the beloved. But he excludes this from divine zeal when he adds that God excites all things to zeal of God's own amative desire; for God makes it that what God loves should also be loved by others. There is also found in human zeal and love another condition through which it differs from divine: for love and similarly zeal in us is caused from beauty and goodness; for something is beautiful not because we love it, but we love it because it is beautiful and good; for our will is not the cause of things but is moved by things; but the will of God is the cause of things, and for this reason God's own love makes those things which God loves good and not conversely. And this is what he says, that God is called zealous, as that through which those things which are willed or desired by God or by anyone else are made subject to zeal, i.e., intensely lovable. (74-89)

But it occurs sometimes that we also make certain lovable things which are from our labor, but nevertheless not all things which we produce through labor are lovable; for we occasionally make evil and defective works. But everything which God makes are from this very fact good and lovable. And this is what he adds, that God is called zealous, as by all those things which come through God's providence to zealable, i.e., intensely lovable, existents. (89-93)

Thus therefore having ended what he had intended to say concerning the Good and the Beautiful and love, he adds, as if by collecting the things set out beforehand, that the lovable and love is totally of the Beautiful and the Good as of an object and it preexists in the Beautiful and the Good as in a subject, although the first Beautiful and Good, namely God, cannot properly be said to be the subject of something; and again, because of the Beautiful and the Good love and lovability is and exists in things as from a cause. (93-97)

IV - 13

<But what the theologians totally wanting etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of love and those things which are consequent upon love, here he solves a certain doubt; and first he poses a question; second a solution, <For of this it is etc>; third he posits a manifestation of the solution, <But thus lovable etc.> (1-4)

He asks therefore first what the hearers of holy scripture, whom they call theologians, wanted to signify, when they sometimes named God dilection and love, as is clear in I John 4 "God is love"; but sometimes they name God lovable and delectable, as in Canticles 1 "The young maidens loved you exceedingly". (4-7)

Then when he says <For of this etc.>, he posits two solutions to the question set forth, the first of which is that God is called love and dilection causally, namely since God is the cause of love in so far as God sends out love to others and in some way generates love in them according to a certain similitude; but God is called lovable and delectable essentially, since God is what is lovable and delectable. And he designates the reason of this solution, since love signifies some motion by which a lover is moved, but delectable is that which moves with such a motion; but it pertains to God that God moves also by causing motion in another, and for this reason it seems to pertain to God that God is lovable, creating love in others. The second solution is that God is called love and lovable, sine God moves Godself and brings Godself to Godself; for to will is a certain motion. For God wills God's own good and according to this, as God is God's own goodness which in some way moves God's own will, God is called delectable and lovable by Godself. But in so far as to will Godself, by which God wills God's own good, is God's own esse and substance, God is God's own love. Thus therefore the first solution received was according to the love by which others love God; but this second love by which God loves Godself. (8-20)

Then when he says <But thus delectable etc.>, he explains the stated solution; and first in so far as God is called lovable; second in so far as God is called love, <But love etc.> (20-22)

He says therefore that God is called delectable and lovable in so far as God is beautiful and good; for in this is included the object of love. (22-23)

Then when he says <But love etc.>, he shows how God is called love. And concerning this he does three things: first he posits the effects of love which are attributed to God; second the properties of love, <And by the segregation of union etc.>; third the procession of love, <Preexisting in the good etc.> (24-26)

But the effects of love are threefold: the first effect is that it moves the lover to some operation; the second effect is that it converts the work of the lover through intention into the beloved; the third effect is that all love is manifestive of itself through signs and effects of love, and

through this the lover seeks that he not only love, but also be loved. And he attributes these three things to God. Whence he says that God is called love and dilection in so far as God moves both Godself and others through love to some operation, regarding the first effect; and at the same time with this God is called love by elevating others to Godself who alone is beautiful and good according to Godself, as the essence itself of beauty and goodness, and this regarding the second effect; and God is also called love just as love is manifestive of itself through itself, i.e., by its own proper virtue. (27-34)

Then when he says <And segregated etc.>, he posits five properties of love, the first of which is perceived according to its cause, which is some union of the lover and the beloved; for it is clear that anything naturally loves itself in so far as it naturally desires its own good; and since something is one with itself, it follows that it loves itself, and for this reason we love more those things which are more conjoined with us. And this is what he says, that love is attributed to God as a certain good procession of a certain segregation, i.e., of an excellent union, since as much as love is more perfect such also is the union from which it proceeds greater. The second property is taken from the part of the object; for it is a property of love that it make the lover tend toward the beloved, through which love is distinguished from cognition, which does not bear the knower to the thing known, but conversely; and this is what he says 'and amative motion'. The third property is what he calls 'simple'; for the first in any genus must be simple; whence while the first motion of the appetite is love, it is necessary that it be simple; and through this love differs from anger, which is a motion composed from provoking sorrow and vindictive desire. Its fourth condition is that it is mobile through itself, which also befits it in so far as it is the first motion of the appetite, since in any genus what is through itself is prior to what is through another; and through this love differs from fear: for fear is like a violent motion coming from outside, but love is like a natural motion proceeding from within. The fifth property is that it is operating through itself, which also occurs in it by reason of its own priority; and in this it differs from hope: for the one who operates otherwise because of hope operates because of another; but the one who operates something from love operates through himself what is pleasing to himself. (35-52)

Then when he says <Preexisting in the good etc.>, he explains the procession of love. And he says that this love is first in the Good itself, which is God, and from this Good it emanated into existing things, and on the other hand participated in existents it converts itself to its own

principle which is the Good; and as far as what the divine love is, he demonstrates differently before others its interminability and lack of principle, which pertain to the notion of a circle: for a certain circularity appears in love in that it is from the Good and to the Good, and this circularity befits the eternity of the divine love, since only circular motion can be perpetual. And this is what he says, that love is as a certain eternal circle in so far as it is because of the Good as an object, and from the Good as from a cause, and persevering in the Good, and tending to the Good to be attained, and thus it encircles the Good by a certain unerring convolution because of uniformity. For tortuous and difform methods are the cause of error, but uniformity of method preserves from error. And he describes this uniformity in the way of love when he says that love is in the same and according to the same, i.e., in the Good and according to the Good, and it proceeds as in a cause; and it always remains in so far as it retains the form of the Good as of a proper object; and it is restored in the same as in an end. (52-65)

IV - 14

<And this our noble etc.> After Dionysius discussed love, to confirm the foregoing he here introduces the words of Hierotheus concerning love; and first he states his intention; second he posits the words themselves, <Whether divine love etc.> (1-3)

He says therefore first, that these things which are posited below also befit the foregoing statements, which we said that Hierotheus, who was perfecter, i.e., our teacher in these things which pertain to sanctity, recited in certain divine praises which he made concerning love while inspired by God; which hymns it is not unfitting to commemorate here, so this that they might be imposed by our tractate on love, as a certain holy head, i.e., as a certain rule and a certain principle to confirm what was said above concerning love. (4-8)

Then when he says <Whether divine love etc.>, he posits the words of Hierotheus concerning love. And concerning this he does three things: first the words containing the division and definition of love are posited; second the words demonstrating the order of loves proceeding from a single love, <Since from one many etc.>; third the words demonstrating the reduction of all loves to one love, <Now on the other hand resuming etc.> (9-12)

But first five loves are distinguished, the first of which is divine love; second angelic love; third intellectual love, namely by which human beings love according to their

intellective part; fourth is animal love which pertains to the sensitive part, whether in humans or in animals; the fifth is natural love which pertains to natural appetite, whether in animals as far as the nutritive part or in plants or even in inanimate things. For when it is said that love implies the first motion of the will and appetite, in anything where there is will and appetite there is love. (13-18)

But a certain common notification of love is fitting to all the aforementioned loves; which he adds that, whichever of the aforementioned loves we might name, we understand through the name of love a certain unitive and concretive virtue. But virtue here is perceived neither for passion nor for habit, since love is not a passion or an act, but it is perceived commonly in that all that has efficacy to produce something can be called a virtue or virtuous; whence it would be clearer if he would say 'union' and 'virtuous concretion', but he preferred to say virtue, speaking emphatically, in order to show the efficacy of love. But union differs from concretion: for love is a union in that the lover and beloved come together in some one thing, whether that be the substance of both, as when something loves itself, or whether it is a species, as things which are of the same species love each other, or whether it is homeland, as compatriots love themselves, or whether it is any other thing; but concretion pertains to love in that those which are thus united in something remain distinct, at least as far as the notion of lover and beloved. (19-29)

But this union and concretion is found in diverse ways in diverse loves. For in cognitive things this union or concretion is from the apprehension of the lover who esteems the beloved in some way to be one with himself and from this he is moved toward it through the affection of loving, as also toward himself; and because of this diverse loves are distinguished according to the diverse notions of apprehensible things: for the notions of divine cognition and angelic cognition and human according to intellect, and of all animals according to sense, are different. But union and concretion in natural love comes from a certain natural suitability as something is inclined toward another as befitting itself; and such inclination is called natural love. But to what the virtue of love extends itself he shows adding, that it moves superiors to provide for inferiors; and equals to communicating with each other alternately to themselves; and inferiors in that they are converted to their superiors, by subjecting themselves to them and by attaining to them as to their causes and by desiring them as that from which their good depends. (29-40)

Then when he says <Since from one etc.>, he posits the words of Hierotheus, showing the order of the many loves derived from the divine love; and the words seem to be recapitulating some of the things said above. Hierotheus says therefore: since we ordered many loves from the one, i.e., we showed that from one divine love many loves come forth in an order, and also consequently we say of what quality are the cognitions and virtues of worldly and supraworldly loves, i.e., how mundane and supermundane loves are able to be known and what is the efficacy of both loves. From which it is given to be understood that he divided all loves into mundane and supermundane: naming mundane loves those by which the sensible goods of the world are loved by any love, but mostly animal and natural; but supermundane loves those by which intelligibles and true goods are loved. And among those loves he designated an order which consequently he touches upon: from which, namely mundane and supermundane loves, the supermundane loves exceed according to the designated notion those which are divided into two orders, of which the inferior and nearer to mundane love is the orders and splendor of intellectual loves, namely human - for above he called the human intellectual - (and intelligible). But he says 'intellectual' on the part of the lover, but 'intelligible' from the part of those that are loved. Because he adds above orders 'splendor', he shows in the intellectual loves not only order, but also a fittingness of order, which decorates order and makes it beautiful. But by ascending from mundane loves past human intellectual loves, the angelic loves are supereminent and were praised by Hierotheus, which he called intelligible through themselves since the intelligibles love without commixture with earthly affections. And he calls those divine, which are optimally assimilated to divine love, since in the angels there truly exist beautiful loves apart from any admixture of turpitude. (40-59)

Then when he says <Now on the other hand etc.>, having set forth the order of the many loves he now reduces all to one love; and first he reduces all into two; second he reduces those two further into one, <Act therefore etc.> (59-61)

But it must be considered that the superior construction depends on this, as if he should say: since we said the foregoing already, now on the other hand, taking up all loves, we collect and gather them together, i.e., by a certain revolution we unite and reduce them to the divine love which is in itself one and enclosed, since all notions of love are enclosed in God, and God is the Father, i.e., the principle, pouring forth all loves through a certain similitude. And in this there is a reduction so that we first collect every love to two universal amative virtues, since all that is loved is loved either because of a created

good or because of an uncreated good; for the notion of love is the good which is either an ultimate or a proximate end. But among these two amative virtues there exceeds the incomprehensible cause of all love, which is uncreated Good; and this is what he adds: the cause of love is from God who is above all things and to which cause all love extends itself from all beings, nevertheless in diverse ways according to the nature of each one, since all are converted toward the same God, as was said. He not only says that love exceeds having God for a cause, but also that it is ruled, since love which depends from created good is regulated by love which depends on uncreated good. (61-73)

Then when he says <Act therefore etc.>, he reduces further the aforementioned two modes of love in one first love. And he says that on the other hand, by gathering together the two aforementioned virtues of love in one first love, namely divine love, by which God loves, we say that it is one certain simple virtue, which moves through itself all that it loves to a certain unitive concretion, proceeding from the first Good which is God; and it comes through the mode of a certain derivation to the lowest number of existing things and through a certain conversion toward the end; on the other hand returning from that, namely from the last of existing things, consequently ascending through all things, it returns to the first Good through the mode of a certain circulation, reflecting itself and always in the same way revolved from the same and through the same primary proceeding virtue, since all secondary virtues are derived from the first through a certain similitude; and in the same, since through all things, not only through cause but also through effects, the similitude of the first virtue is found, and thus love always remains in that virtue and further always revolves toward it as toward an end. (73-84)

IV - 15

<And someone might say etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the Good and those things which pertain to the Good, here he explains the meaning of evil. And first he proposes doubts; second he determines the truth, <Therefore these perhaps etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he restates those things which were said about the Good which are the occasion of doubt; second he proposes the doubt, <How a multitude of demons etc.> (1-5)

But concerning these things which were said above, he resumes that the Beautiful and the Good is lovable and desirable and delectable by all things and that not only those things that are desire the Good, but also that which is not, namely prime matter, as was said above, desires the Good and in its own mode strives to be in the Good, namely

in so far as it has an inclination toward the Good in that it is in potency to it; both the Good, and that it forms those things which are not formed, and that it is called non existing, are said of the highest Good and are also in it, not through defect, as is said of prime matter and of pure negation or privation, but supersubstantially. For God is called non existing, not because God defects from existing, but because God is above all existents. (5-12)

Then when he says <How a multitude of demons etc.>, he proposes the doubts about evil; and first with respect to demons; second commonly with respect to all things, <And totally what is evil etc.> (13-14)

But he poses four questions about the evil of the demons, the first of which is: since all things desire the Good, as was said, how is it that the multitude of demons do not desire the Beautiful and the Good, but are inclined to desiring material things, like honors exhibited by humans and the smells of sacrifices and other material things of this kind? And because they are fallen from the uniformity of desire that the angels have for the highest good, they effect the cause of all evils, not only to themselves, but to others any evils are said to come to be with respect to humans, since "by the envy of the devil death entered into the sphere of earth", as is said in Wisdom 2. The second question is: how is it that the multitude of demons, since it is produced by the good God, was not made conformed to God in goodness, since it is natural for everything to make similar things? And since someone could say that the demons were made good, but were turned toward malice, he poses the third question: how is it that what was naturally good, since it was caused from the Good, was able to be changed? For those things which are natural always remain. And since all which is needs a maker, he poses the fourth question: what was that which made the demons evil? (15-26)

Then when he says <And totally what is evil etc.>, he proposes the doubts in common concerning evil and he poses four questions, the first of which is: what is evil universally? The second question is: from what principle does evil proceed? And the order of questions appears; for it must first be asked what is evil and afterwards whence is evil, as Augustine says. The third question is: in what of existents is evil found? But from these three proposed questions he multiplies the second question in two ways: first what it is, since either the cause of evil is Godself or something else. If it is granted that it is Godself, two doubts arise. The first is: how does God, since God is good, will to produce evil? For it is not of the Good that it should will to make evil. The second question is: if God wills to make evil, how is God able? For heat cannot

refrigerate and similarly neither can the Good make evil. But if evil is from another cause than from God, this seems impossible, since there is no other cause of being except the highest Good which is God. The second deduction is that, since it belongs to providence to impede or to exclude evil, it seems doubtful, since God has providence over all things, how evil can be made in the world or, once made, how it is not immediately destroyed. The fourth question is: how can something desire evil while neglecting the desire of the good? (26-40)

IV - 16

<These therefore etc.> Having set forth the questions concerning evil he here begins to solve them: and first the questions which pertain to evil simply; second questions which pertain to evil in so far as it is found in demons, <Therefore evil is non existing nor is evil in existents.> But the first part is divided in two: in the first he solves three principal questions which he had made concerning evil in common; in the second he proceeds to solve other secondary questions, which are posited in order to better explicate the question of the cause of evil, <But it is to say collecting etc.> The first part is divided in three parts: in the first he solves the first question where it is asked what is evil; in the second he solves the second where it is asked from what principle evil is constituted, <Whence therefore evil is someone might say etc.>; in the third he solves the third question where it is asked in what of existents is evil, <But neither in existents is evil etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he joins himself to the proceeding; second he exhibits the proposition, <And first etc.> (1-12)

He says therefore first that those things which were said before someone perhaps could say by doubting. But we ask him that he look to the truth of things and thus will he be able to find the solution to the question; in which he renders the listener both attentive and benevolent. (12-15)

Then when he says <And the first etc.>, he explains the proposition, namely that evil is not something subsisting which is evil through its own nature. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows that evil is not something existing according to its own nature; second that evil is not something non-existing, <And if all existents etc.> (15-18)

He explains the first by two reasons, the first of which is thus: every existent either has a cause or is itself the cause of another; but evil does not have a cause nor is it the cause of another; therefore evil is not something

existing. But the truth of the first proposition is patent through itself, since every existent according to its essence is in act; but everything acts in so far as it is in act. If therefore the essence of something is pure act, it will be a cause simply; but if it should have something of potency admixed, it will be able to be both cause and caused. But that evil does not have a cause he proves thus: for evil cannot be from the Good, and if it was from the Good it would not be evil; for one member of contraries is not the cause of the other, for it does not pertain to fire to refrigerate, nor does it pertain to the Good to produce those things which are not good, but everything produces what is similar to itself. Similarly also it cannot be said that evil is a productive cause of something; for what belongs to the notion of the good cannot be congruous with evil. But to produce and to conserve is natural to the Good and belongs to its notion, since generation and welfare are good; and similarly to corrupt and to destroy pertain to the notion of evil. Thus it follows that the Good alone is the cause of existents and that evil is the cause of no existents. Whence it follows that, if evil is not from the Good as from a cause, it does not have a cause and it is not caused. (18-31)

But it must be understood that the reason by which he proved that the Good is not the cause of evil proves that the Good is not the cause of evil per se, but not that it is not the cause of evil accidentally, since in this way even heat can accidentally be the cause of cold, as a greater flame by consuming the matter of a lesser accidentally induces cold. But this is not against the intention of Dionysius; for it is necessary that everything which has essence naturally has a cause per se and not accidentally. Whence if evil does not have a cause per se but only accidentally, it follows that evil does not have an essence. And this is what he adds, as if excluding, that neither is evil itself something, if evil is understood according to itself as something subsisting in the nature of evil. But everything which is totally something is essentially such, just as if something is totally good it is the essence itself of goodness; for if it participates the good, it is necessary that it be divided into participating and participated. If therefore evil is nothing essentially, that which is evil is not totally evil but has some good part and according to that its entire esse is that it is called evil. Thus therefore through this he showed what evil is. For evil cannot be some essence subsisting through itself, as the Good is the essence itself of goodness; but any evil thing is good through its essence, but is evil in that it defects from some good which it ought to have and does not have. (31-45)

He posits the second reason, <And if existents etc.>, which is thus: all existents desire the Beautiful and the Good, as is clear from what has been said above; and similarly all things, whatever they do, they do because it is good or perhaps because it seems good; and thus every intention of all existents has the Good for a principle and end, since the desire of the Good moves it, as a certain principle, to willing those things which are for the sake of an end; and again the will itself of those which are for the sake of an end we refer to the Good as to an end. And he shows this by saying that nothing does what it does while looking to the notion of evil, and if sometimes that to which it looks is evil, as someone does something so that he or she might fornicate, this occurs not by looking to fornication in so far as it is evil, but in so far as it is delectable. Thus it is clear that no existent desires evil except accidentally and that every existent desires the Good. But if something could be evil thorough its essence it would not be able to desire the Good, since a contrary does not desire its contrary because it is destructive of it, but it would desire evil in itself as similar and conformed to itself. Whence it remains that evil understood essentially neither is some part of some existent nor is universally existing. (46-58)

Then when he says <And if existents etc.>, he shows that something cannot be evil in itself such that it is non existing. And to prove this he introduces that, if all existents are from the Good and the highest Good is above all existents, it remains that it is found in the highest Good itself that it is non existing. For it is necessary that what is above all existents be non existing, just as what is above all bodies is non corporeal. But it cannot be said of evil, that what is called evil is non existing. For it is not existing, since it would not be totally evil, while to exist is a certain good; nor again is it non existing totally, since nothing is totally non existing except in so far as non existing is said of the highest Good according to its own supersubstantiality. But it cannot be said in this way of evil, since it belongs to the highest thing to exceed all substance. Whence it remains that the Good is located much higher and is supersubstantially existing and is above non existing in so far as it is found in things. But evil is neither in existents as if it is of the number of existents or some part or property of some existent; nor again is it of the number of non existents, rather it is more properly absisting, i.e., receding or distancing, from non existing which is from the good and is more alien from it, since evil is in the good at least as in a subject, but non being simply evil is not. And again evil is more without substance than non being, since non being

can be understood to be not in something, but it is necessary that evil be understood in some good. (58-73)

But two objections can be raised against what is said here; first since evil is a privation of good, and privation is non being; second since, while existing and non existing are opposed contrarily, there cannot be some medium between them; whence if evil is not existing, it follows that it is non existing. But it must be said that he speaks here of evil in so far as evil is called an evil thing. But evil is not some existing thing, which is evil through its essence; nor again is evil a thing totally non existing; but evil is a thing which is in part good and exists from that part, and it is called evil in that it defects from some esse. (74-80)

IV - 17

<Whence therefore is evil etc.> After Dionysius shows that evil does not have essence and that it is neither a cause nor something caused, he inquires whence evil comes to be in things. And first he proposes a doubt; second he solves it, <But he says to those true words etc.> But he proposes the doubt in two ways: first from the repugnance or contrariety which is found in things; second from the concomitants of generation and corruption, <And if corruption is of existents etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he proposes a doubt from those things in which the contrariety of good and evil clearly appears; second from others in which it is not clearly apparent, <And the passions fight against reason etc.> (1-8)

He says therefore first that, if evil does not have existence nor is it a cause nor something caused, as was shown above, someone objecting might say: whence therefore is evil found in things? For if you say that evil is not in things, two incongruities will follow. The first is that virtue and malice are the same both in the whole, i.e., virtue in general and malice in general, and in particular proportionally, i.e., specific virtue to specific malice itself is proportionally contrary, as justice to injustice, since also malice is contrary to virtue in general and specific malice is contrary to specific virtue. The force of this deduction consists in this that, differences by which some things differ from each other being removed, it follows that they are the same. But the differences by which virtue and malice differ are good and evil; for virtue is a kind of good of the mind, but malice a kind of evil of the mind. Therefore when the differences of good and evil are removed, if evil is not in things, it follows that virtue and malice are the same both universally and specifically. (9-18)

Second it is incongruous that, even if virtue and malice differ, it follows that evil is not contrary nor repugnant to virtue, since what is not cannot be contrary nor repugnant. For it is necessary for both of two contraries to be something and a manifest nature. For there is a contrariety of virtue to evil in that chastity and impurity are contrary, as are justice and injustice. And since someone could say that that contrariety is not except in that humans are contrary to each other, one of which has virtue and the other does not, this he excludes: and I do not say, says he, that chastity and impurity and justice and injustice are contrary only in that a just and pure person and an unjust and impure person are contrary to themselves, but through a prior order of nature, before the distance and contrariety which appears exteriorly opposed between the one who has virtue and the one who has vice, vices themselves, or malices, are separated universally from virtues in the same soul. For chastity and impurity are not contraries because of the contrariety of chaste and impure people, but rather conversely. Therefore first he proposes a doubt from the contrariety of virtue and malice, since it belongs to the notion of evil that it is the contrary of virtue; nor is it found in another genus that some species are distinguished through the difference of good and evil except in the virtuous and vitious habits of the soul. The reason of this is that virtues and vices pertain to the will, the object of which is good and evil. (19-33)

Then when he says <And to reason etc.>, he proposes a doubt about those which do not have from their notion that they are contrary to the Good, as the passions fight against reason. But passions are called motions of the sensitive appetite, which is divided through the irascible and concupiscible. But from the notion of these passions it is not the case that they are contrary to virtue, since it also occurs according to virtue to desire and to exult and to be angry and to have other passions of this kind; but they are contrary to virtue in that they are inordinate. But to be inordinate does not belong to their notion. Therefore passions of this kind war against reason since, just as it belongs to the apprehension of sensibles that it is here and now, thus it belongs to the sensitive appetite attaining an apprehension of this kind that it is good here and now and in this respect; but the good simply is what reason considers. Since therefore it happens that what is good here and now is not good simply, it follows that passion will war against reason and from those passions which war against reason it is necessary to grant something evil to be contrary to the good, although evil is not from the notion of the passions as it was from the notion of malices. And for this reason it was necessary that he proved that from conflicts of this kind follows the contrariety of evil to

the Good. For it was shown that the Good is not contrary to itself, but every good as proceeding from one principle and as born from one cause rejoices in mutual communion and friendship and unity. Nor also can it be said that less good is contrary to greater good, just as lesser heat or cold is not contrary to greater heat and cold. This must be understood from that part by which both are heat or cold, but in so far as less heat has something admixed from cold or more nearly approaches it, thus what is less hot is contrary to what is more cold, as the Philosopher says in V Physics; but this is in relationship to something and not simply. But Dionysius here speaks concerning contraries simply. Therefore holding that the good is in no way contrary to good, it remains that what is contrary to the Good and wars against it is evil. Thus therefore not only from the passions which war against reason, but from any other contraries and those that war against them, it seems to follow that evil is among the number of existents and is something existing and that it is contrary to the Good. (33-56)

Then when he says <And if corruption is etc.>, he proceeds in another way to show the same thing, namely from the concomitants of generation and corruption. And he says that, if evil is the corruption of existents, that does not rule out that it has essence; rather it is more proved through this that it is existing and that it is generative of existents. For the corruption of one is the generation of another; whence what is corruptive of existents is also generative of existents. But all that is generative of existents contributes to the perfection of the universe; it will follow that evil is contributing to the completion of all, i.e., of the universe, and that it bestows on the whole, i.e., on the universe, that it might not be imperfect, and this through itself, that it is unfitting, since what evil accidentally contributes to the beauty and perfection of the universe is not fitting, in so far as from evils goods follow accidentally, as Augustine says in the Enchiridion.(56-65)

IV - 18

<But he says to that true word etc.> Having proposed doubts concerning the existence and cause of evil, here he begins to solve them. And first he solves particularly that which was objected concerning the concomitants of generation and corruption; second universally everything which was opposed above, investigating the root of the truth, <But more neither etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore first that to the aforementioned true word he responds that evil in so far as it is evil produces no

substance nor generation, but speaking absolutely it causes only evil and the corruption of existents. And if someone objects that evil is operative of generation since by the corruption of one generation of another is granted, it must be replied according to the truth that corruption does not grant generation, but corruption only corrupts and evil only produces evilly, speaking absolutely, but generation and substance exist because of the good. This is patent as much in natural things as in moral things. For it was shown that fire generates fire and corrupts air; for there is conjoined in fire the form of fire which pertains to the good and the privation of the form of air which pertains to evil. But that fire generates fire is not because the form of air is lacking, but because it has the form of fire, otherwise that the form of air is lacking would produce fire, which is false; but it corrupts air in so far as from the necessity of the form of fire the privation of the form of air is adjoined to it. Similarly in morals: adultery corrupts virtue in that it lacks due order, which pertains to the notion of evil, but in so far as it is desirable, which pertains to the notion of the good, it desires and produces many other goods. Thus therefore it appears that evil in itself is corruptive, but it is not generative except accidentally, namely because of the good. And further it follows that in so far as it is evil it is neither existing nor effective of existents, but accidentally, namely because of the adjoining good, it is existing and existing as good and effective of goods. (5-20)

Then when he says <But more etc.>, here Dionysius expounds the aforementioned solution and investigates the virtue of the whole series of doubts more profoundly. And concerning this he does three things: for first he shows the universal virtue of the Good in causing; second the universal virtue of the Good in being, <But more as comprehending I will say etc.>; third the universal virtue of the Good in that it makes greater and lesser good and greater and lesser being, <But more all existents etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he distinguishes evil from good; second he shows what befits evil, <Therefore evil itself etc.>; third what befits the good, <The good in which perfectly etc.> (20-27)

But he had said above that evil does not generate in so far as it is evil, but in so far as it is good. But lest someone should believe that the same thing is evil and good in the same respect, he adds that the same thing is not good and evil in the same respect. Whence when it is said that evil does not generate in so far as it is evil but in so far as it is good, the distinction is not according to reason simply, as if the same thing according to one notion is good and evil according to another, but somehow according to the

thing, namely in that one and the same thing in so far as it has esse is good, but in so far as it is privated of due perfection it is evil. And similarly generation and corruption are not the same virtue of the same thing and in the same respect. For the same thing in the same respect is not simultaneously generated and corrupted. And since he had said that good and evil are not the same, nor are generation and corruption, and someone might believe that separated evil might be found existing through itself apart from the good and corruption apart from generation, this he consequently removes, saying that there is not some virtue existing through itself, but it is in the good as in a subject, thus that the same subject is good and evil with respect to different things. And similarly neither is corruption existing through itself apart from generation, but simultaneously there is both generation and corruption in a subject, but not in the same respect, since the generation of one is accompanied by the corruption of another. And when he says 'but more' it is the same as what is translated in the books of Aristotle 'but more so', and it signifies the addition of reason above reason. (27-41)

Then when he says <Therefore evil itself etc.>, he concludes from the premises what pertains to evil. For if evil in itself is not a virtue, it follows that evil itself (such that the 'ipsum' is posited in place of the article and evil is understood for the essence of evil), evil thus understood neither is existing nor is good nor produces generation nor is effective of existents and of goods; but a thing which is evil, in so far as it has something of the good, is existing and operative of generation and effective of existents and of goods. (42-46)

Then when he says <But the good etc.>, he shows what pertains to the Good. And concerning this he does two things: for first he shows that the Good is the universal cause of all good things; second he shows how the causality of the Good extends itself even to evil things, <But now this is of the good etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he proposes that through the Good there are certain perfect goods and certain imperfect goods; second he designates the mode through which this happens, <Since going through the universe etc.>; third he proves the reason by designating the premises, <For if not proportionally etc.> (47-52)

He says therefore that, while evil is not operative of goods, the good is what, formally speaking, makes more perfectly good those things which are generated from what is good through its own essence: perfect according to participation of goodness, unmixed according to the remotion of evil and integral according to the remotion of

corruption. But those which participate the Good to a lesser degree are imperfect goods and have some admixture of evil because of the defect of good which is not perfectly participated in them. And thus universally evil is not existing nor is good nor produces good; but that which more or less approaches to that which is good essentially, namely God, is good according to that proportion of the good; because of distance from the first Good this is called evil, not as if there is a universal privation from the Good, but in so far as there is in it some defect of the Good. (53-61)

Then when he says <Since going through the universe etc.>, he designates the mode of the aforementioned, namely how good is found to a greater and lesser degree in things. And he says that this is because perfect goodness, namely the divine, going through the universe, namely in so far as it communicates itself to all things through a similitude of its own goodness, does not proceed only to the only most holy substances of the angels which are near to God, but extends itself by diffusing through goodness even to the lowest substances. For to those most holy substances of the angels the divine goodness is wholly present as perfectly participated by them according to the mode possible to the creature; but to others subjectedly, i. e., in an inferior mode, it is present, namely to those that participate it, but not as perfectly as by the angels, which can refer to human souls; but to others extremely, i.e., in the lowest mode, it is present, as to irrational creatures; and this occurs according to the capability of each one to participate the divine goodness. For certain ones entirely perfectly, in so far as it is possible for the creature, participate the divine goodness, because of which he said that the divine goodness is totally present to them. But others are deprived of that perfect participation by receding from it more or less, as is apparent in diverse grades of beings and mostly in living creatures. But others have a more obscure participation of the good, as corporeal creatures and in particular non living things, in which the brightness of the divine goodness is somehow obscured because of their materiality and corruptibility, as their obscurity is understood in that they are not intelligibles in act, but according to potency as such. But to certain ones the good comes according to the ultimate resonance, namely those which hold the lowest grade in goodness, as are the corrupt things and those which are called evil. And he speaks in terms of the similitude which occurs in sound. For those who are near hear the entire sound, and in so far as they are more distant they hear the sound the less, thus that in the end they do not hear the sound itself, but only a certain resonance or reverberation. (61-81)

Then when he says <For if not proportionally etc.>, he designates two reasons of the aforementioned diversity, for the evidence of which it must be considered that the notion of diversity in effects of a cause acting through necessity of nature is otherwise designated than the diversity in effects of a cause acting through will. For in those which act through necessity of nature the entire notion of diversity is from the diverse proportion of matter. For a reason cannot be designated why fire liquefies wax and hardens clay, or why the sun illuminates some things more and some less, except because of the diverse disposition of the matter of the recipient, since it is always natural to a natural agent, as far as it is from itself, to produce one thing. But in those which act through will a double reason for diverse effects is designated: first from the part of the end; second from the diverse disposition of matter. Just as a builder makes the foundation in one way and the walls in another way and the roof in another way for the sake of a certain end, namely because of the completion of the house which requires this diversity; second so that this diversity can be in the parts, he obtains material disposed in diverse ways, or he himself even disposes it in diverse ways to constitute the diversity of parts. (81-92)

And similarly he designates a double reason for the diversity of divine effects: the first of which is from the part of the end which is the completion of the universe, which would not be if there were one grade of goodness simply in all equal existing beings. And this is what he says that, if the Good does not come to each one according to its own proportion in diverse ways, but all things would be equal, it would follow that those things which are nearest to God in things and most perfect would be in the same grade and order as the extremes, i.e., of the inferiors, and thus the universe would not be complete. The second reason he designates from the diverse capacity of things, which diversity is nevertheless produced by God for the sake of an end. Whence he says: how would it be possible that all things participate the Good uniformly, since not all existents would be disposed in the same way to the perfect participation of it? (92-100)

But with these designated reasons he further extends the virtue of the Good even to evil. And he says that the virtue of the Good appears to excel in this, that not only does it produce good things, but also founds and establishes those which are deprived of the Good and even the privation of itself, and this is according to the total participation of itself, i.e., according to the notion of its universal participation, since it is necessary that what is in any mode participate the Good, since it is a certain being; and consequently privation itself is established by the Good in

so far as it can not be except in a subject. And not only are privated things and privation itself established through the virtue of the Good, but also, if it is necessary to speak the truth boldly, those which are adverse to the Good, by virtue of the Good both are and can be adverse, since what acts adversely is in it by virtue of the Good. (101-109)

Then when he says <But more as comprehending I say etc.>, he shows the universality of the Good in being, which avails for his explanation that privated things and privation are established by the good. And concerning this he does three things: first he posits a proposition; second he illustrates through an example, <As impure etc.>; third he adapts it to the solution of the proposed doubt, <Why to become from corruption etc.> (109-113)

He says therefore first that not only is the good found in singular grades of beings but, so that by comprehending universally I might say, all beings, in so far as they are, are both good and from the Good; but in so far as they are deprived of the Good, they not only are not good, but also not existents; for it is not thus concerning the Good as it is concerning other particular habits or privations. For it is patent in heat and cold that subjects which are hot remain existents, after they are totally abandoned by heat; and many things also among beings, which lack life and mind, i.e., intellect; and God also is without substance, as if existing above all substance; and universally concerning all other forms and perfections, it occurs that some things both are and are able to subsist, both by receding from perfection and also entirely not having such perfection. But that which in every way is deprived of the Good, in no place, in no way, and in no time either is or can be. (114-123)

Then when he says <Just as the impure etc.>, he shows how those things which are called evil in morals possess something of the Good. And first he shows this in the evil of impurity which is according to the corruption of the concupiscible. For the impure is deprived of the good in so far as its concupiscence is deprived of the order of reason and to this extent it is not; for he does not posit that to be deprived of the order of reason is something, but is not something; and thus also to the extent that it does not desire existents, but it desires inordinate things which, in so far as they are inordinate, they are non existents; but nevertheless the impure participates the Good according to a certain obscure and defective resonance of unity and friendship, which we said above to befit the Good. Second he shows the same in the evil of bad temper, which is according to the disordering of the irascible. And he says that fury,

i.e., inordinate anger, participates the Good in that it is moved into something which appears to it good and just, namely to vindicate an offense, and in so far as it desires to reduce and convert those things which seem evil in themselves, as the injuries of those nearby, to something appearing good and beautiful; for it is a property of bad temper to always strive so that it seems to inflict revenge justly. Whence also the philosopher says in VII Ethics that bad temper is likened to the one who hears certain laws in so far as they are directed to vindicate sins, but is immediately moved before he hears the whole thing, namely by whom and how and to what extent the offenses inflicted ought to be vindicated. Third he shows the same in the one who sins in malice, not through passion, but acting through evil choice. And he says that the one who desires a ruined life, which nevertheless seems best to him, participates the Good with respect to the motion of desire itself and in so far as he looks to the best life, since he chooses an evil life in so far as it appears good to him. And universally he comprehends that, if the Good is entirely withdrawn, there will be neither substance nor life nor any desire nor motion nor anything else. (123-142)

Then when he says <Why also to be made etc.>, he applies the aforementioned truth to the solution of the proposed doubt. And he says: since thus it is that nothing, no matter how much it seems to be evil, is totally deprived of the Good, the fact that through the corruption of one, which is appropriated to evil, is the generation of another is not from the virtue of evil, but from the presence of an imperfect good: just as a disease which corrupts nature is a certain defect of some order, namely of the proportion of humors in which health consists, but not such that it is a defect of all order whatsoever since, if all order were destroyed, neither would disease itself remain in elements totally departed from each other; but order remains and illness itself has this for its substance, or essence, that it is a certain minimal, i.e., imperfect, order. And with respect to this order sickness is something and is able to corrupt, as through excess heat or something of this kind. For that which is entirely devoid of the Good neither is existing nor is in existents; but that which is mixed, i.e., having part of the Good and part of evil, and according to what it has from the good, it is numbered among existents and is in some way existing. (142-153)

Then when he says <But more all existents etc.>, he shows that diversity of grades in beings is from the Good and he applies this to the solution. He says therefore that all existents, to the degree that they more or less participate esse, they more or less participate the Good, since being in so far as it is being is good. The same holds for the good

as for being, since in esse itself, if something in no way exists by participating esse it follows that it will be in no way. But that which according to some part is and according to some part is not, just as a blind person is a certain person, but is not seeing, in so far as it defects from that which is always and perfectly existing, it is not, but in so far as it participates esse it exists to that degree; and as we speak universally, the non existing itself is held and preserved through esse itself; for as long as blindness remains, the person remains. It is thus similarly concerning evil, since if evil is something that totally recedes from the Good, it can in no way be, either among those which are more good or among those which are less good. But that which is good according to some part, but is not good according to another part, is contrary to good not universally, since it does not defect from the universal Good, but to some good from which it defects, as the evil of blindness is opposed to the good of vision. But evil itself, which is opposed to particular good, is retained through participation of the Good, namely in so far as the subject of privation participates some good and the Good itself grants the subject of some good, in so far as the Good is participated universally in all beings. Nor is it unfitting that good, universally speaking, is the subject of privation of some particular good, just as that which is the subject of some particular being is contained under common being. But while entirely receding from the good, something will neither be totally good nor will there be some good mixed with evil nor will there be evil itself, since when the subject is subtracted the privation also is subtracted. For if evil is in some imperfect good, it is clear that, if the good is totally subtracted, both the imperfect good and perfect good would be destroyed totally and consequently evil would be destroyed. Therefore only then can evil be when, with respect to certain goods, there is an evil by which it is opposed, but from other goods it is distinguished as good from good. For it is not possible that some things are opposed to themselves in all respects, since at least it is necessary that they come together in esse. Thus therefore since evil is not totally deprived of the good, but of some particular good, it remains that evil itself is not something existing through itself. (153-177)

IV - 19

<But neither in existents is evil etc.> After Dionysius shows that evil is not something existing through itself, here he begins to show that evil is not something in existents as a part or accident, as color in a body. And first he shows this in general; second in particular, <And neither two etc.> (1-4)

But that evil is not in existents as something inhering he thus proves by a common reason: all existents are caused by the Good, as is patent from the foregoing; but an effect is similar to its cause; therefore the Good is found in all existents whatsoever. But all that in which the Good is found is contained under it, as all in which animal is found is contained under animal. Therefore everything subsisting is contained under the Good as good existing. Therefore either it is necessary that evil is not something in some existing thing or it is necessary that it is in the Good; but this is impossible; therefore it is impossible that evil is in an existing thing. But that evil is not in the Good he proves in two ways. First thus: nothing of a contrary is in its contrary, as cold is not in fire; but if evil is something it is necessary that it is contrary to the good; therefore to become evil can not befit the Good, since the Good also produces good from evil. Second he proves it thus: if evil is something in the good as in a subject, since every accident is caused either from the subject or from something else extrinsic, it will be necessary that evil is caused from the good itself or from some other cause. But it is unfitting and impossible that evil be caused from the good by a natural efflux, as natural accidents are caused by their own subjects since, as it is said in Matt. 7 "a good tree can not produce evil fruit", nor conversely. but if it be said that evil which is posited as an accident of the good is not caused from that good, it is clear that it is necessary for it to be caused from some other principle and cause; for every accident, since it is not from the essence of the subject, is caused from some cause in the subject. But similarly it is necessary for the good, which is posited as the subject of evil, to be caused, since it is good through participation but not through essence. It is necessary therefore to posit one of three alternatives: one of which is that evil is from the good; the second is that good is from evil; or, if those two are impossible, as is patent through the cited authority, it is necessary to posit a third, namely that both good and evil are caused from a certain principle and cause of the good. For a fourth can not be posited, namely that neither good nor evil is caused, since a binary can not be a principle; but the principle of every binary is unity; and thus it is necessary that every two either is so disposed that one is the cause of the other or both are caused from one cause. But just as two firsts are impossible, thus also a third: for it is unfitting that from one and the same principle some things are and proceed which are totally contrary, as good and evil. And since someone might say that the same thing in diverse respects produces contraries, in order to exclude this he adds that it is impossible to say that the first principle itself is not simple and singular, i.e., uniform, but divisible, biform and contrary to itself and variated from itself. For

it is necessary, if something the same should cause contraries according to one thing and another, that it be composed from contraries, and thus it will not be the first principle, which must be simple. Therefore it is patent that evil is not in an existing thing. (5-33)

Then when he says <And neither two etc.>, he shows through singulars that evil is not something in existing things, and first that it can not be in God. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows that evil is not some first principle contrary to God; second that evil is not in God, <And concerning friendship etc.>; third that evil is not from God, <But neither from God etc.> (33-37)

The first he shows by two reasons, the first of which is such: if evil is some first principle contrary to God, which is to posit two principles of existents that are contrary and totally adverse to each other, since all that to which its contrary can be adverse can be injured and molested by it, it would follow that God, who is Good itself, would not be without injury and molestation. But this is impossible; for God would not be the highest Good nor most blessed, if God were to be injured and molested. Therefore there are not two first contrary principles of good and evil. The second reason is such: effects follow the condition of causes and principles. If therefore first principles are contraries and adverse to each other, it would follow that all things in effects would war against each other and one would not be ordained to another, which is impossible and against what appears from the order in the universe. Therefore there are not two contrary first principles. (37-45)

Then when he says <And concerning friendship etc.>, he shows that evil is not in God. And this clearly appears from the fact that God is the Good itself and evil can not be in the Good itself, just as cold cannot be in fire. But since this reason was touched upon above, he shows this by another reason taken from effects; for the Good itself, which is God, is praised as peace, Eph. 2 "He is our peace", and as the giver of peace, according to I Cor. 14 "for he is not a God of dissension, but of Peace", in so far as God gives from friendship with all beings. And from this it follows consequently that all goods are friends to each other and come together, as germinated things from one first living principle. And again, just as they proceed from one first principle, thus they are ordained to one ultimate good. And although they disagree in terms of some property, nevertheless in the order to that one good they are disposed to each other in all quietness and without impediment and all things are made similar in this and help each other. But this peace and suitability would not be in things by God and through comparison with God, if there was in God some

contrariety of good and evil. Whence it is clear that evil is not something in God; and further also, evil is not something which is added to divine motion, since all which are moved by God come together in one end, at least ultimately, as was said. (46-58)

Then when he says <But neither from God etc.>, he shows that evil is not from God: and first that it is not from God simply; second that it is not from God according to some time, <And not sometimes etc.> He shows the first in this way. The Good is not productive of evil, as is patent from what has been said; therefore it is necessary either to say that God is not good or that God makes and produces good things and not evil things. (58-62)

Then when he says <And not sometimes etc.>, he shows that God does not produce evil according to some time. And he says that it cannot be said that God sometimes also produces certain evils, but sometimes does not, and not all, since, while evil can not be produced from the good, if God sometimes produces evil, it would follow that God would be transmuted from God's own goodness and would be variated with respect to Godself. This is clearly impossible in two ways: first since that which is most divine, i.e., the highest, and the cause of all goodness cannot be changed from goodness, just as neither can fire be changed from heat. Second since God is good either through God's essence or through participation. But if through essence, it will be the same to God to recede from goodness and to recede from essence and to be made totally non existing; but if God is good participatively, it is necessary that God have a cause of God's goodness and in this way God will be able to be sometimes good and sometimes not good. But this is against what we understand through this name 'God', some first good and cause of all goodness. Thus therefore it is patent that evil is neither in God simply nor from God nor according to some time. (62-72)

IV - 20

<But evil is neither in angels etc.> After Dionysius shows that evil is not in God, he begins here to show that evil is not something in creatures. And first he shows concerning the good angels that evil is in no way in them. And concerning this he does two things: first he expounds the truth; second he excludes an objection <But those who punish etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he posits an exposition of angelic names; second from that exposition he accepts a definition of angel, <A pure mirror etc.> (1-6)

Concerning the first it must be known that angel is interpreted as messenger. It is said therefore that being conformed to the divine goodness is to announce the divine goodness, in so far as it exists in angels secondarily through participation, which first is enunciated from God, not according to participation but according to cause, just as if I should say that illuminated air announces the brightness of the sun, in so far as secondarily and participatively there is in the air what first and causally is in the sun. And since that which participatively and secondarily has something is the image of that which primarily and causally has it, and the act of an image is that it manifest that of which it is the image, consequently he concludes a certain notification of a good angel, the manifestation of the divine light which is hidden to us because of its excellence and simplicity. But this notification he shows in what follows. And first he shows how an angel is the image of God; second how it is a manifestation of hidden light, <And making the world resplendent etc.> (6-15)

But that an angel is an image of God he shows through a certain sensible example. For we see sensibly that the image of the seer is represented in a mirror. But there is in a mirror two things to consider: first the substance of the mirror itself; whence through a certain similitude he calls an angel a mirror according to its own nature. But there is required in a mirror a certain suitability to receiving the image of something, which suitability is found in an angel: which is called a pure mirror because of the simplicity and immateriality of its nature; and brightest because of the most perfect participation of the intellectual light; and uncontaminated in so far as there is nothing in an angel repugnant to the rectitude of its will which pertains to sanctity. For properly holy things are said to be contaminated; but it is called 'undefiled' in so far as nothing is in an angel repugnant to the purity of its nature; and 'immaculate' in so far as nothing is in it repugnant to the brightness of the intellect. (16-24)

But having thus described the suitability of this mirror, he expounds the reception of the similitude according to which it is called an image. And he says that it receives the entire beauty of the good-like deity, i.e., of the similitude to the goodness of God, since if it is optimally disposed, it is necessary that it perfectly receive the aforementioned similitude. But it must be considered that he does not say that it receives the entire beauty of deity, but of deiformity, since it is impossible that the entire beauty of God be received in some created mirror; but in some created mirror, because of its purity and brightness, there is received perfectly the entire beauty which is

possible to be in a creature through assimilation to God. And since the deiformity of the creature is always partial and not complete, because of this he tempers it, adding 'if it is fitting to say'. (25-32)

Therefore having shown how an angel is an image, he shows how it manifests the divine light. And he says that from the fact that it perfectly receives the similitude of the divine beauty it consequently follows that in itself there shines in some way, as is possible to a creature, the goodness of silence which is in the hidden places, i.e., of God, which can not be expressed because it is hidden from created intellect. But he says 'making' not actively, but dispositively, as if I should say that a mirror makes to shine in itself the image of some body because it is disposed to receiving its similitude. Since therefore an angel is such a perfect image of the divine goodness, but the divine goodness allows nothing evil, it follows that neither is evil in the angels. (32-39)

Then when he says <But those which punish etc.>, he excludes an objection. And first he poses it; for someone can say that, due to the fact that the angels punish sinners, they are evil. And that they punish sinners is expressly stated in Matt. 13, that the angels cast out all stumbling blocks from the kingdom. There is therefore a question: whether those who punish are evil. Second he shows that they cannot be called evil because of this, since for the same reason also those who chastise evil ones by punishing them would be evil, as judges and magistrates; and similarly it would follow that some of the priests who exclude the impure, i.e., sinners, from the divine mysteries by excommunicating them would be evil, which is against the Apostle who prescribes this in I Cor. 5. (40-46)

But since to multiply inconsistencies is not to solve, for this reason thirdly he solves all the foregoing. And he says that to be punished is not evil, namely simply and in itself, but it is in itself good, since it is just; but it is evil with respect to something in so far as it deprives some good of something. But to become worthy of punishment, this is evil simply. And for this reason the one who punishes a sinner is not evil, but the one who sins is. And for the same reason it is not evil in itself to be excluded from the saints according to justice, but it is evil in itself that someone is defiled through sin and departs from sanctity, and through this he becomes unsuitable to divine things, which are in themselves uncontaminated. And for this reason the one who excommunicates does not sin, but the one who perpetrates something, whence he is worthy of excommunication. (47-54)

IV - 21

<But neither the demons etc.> After Dionysius shows that evil is not in angels, here he shows that it is not in demons. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows that demons are not naturally evil; second he shows how they are evil, <How they are made by God etc.> (1-4)

Concerning the first he posits four reasons, the first of which is such: something is not caused from the good naturally evil; but all which are in the world are caused by God, who is Good itself, among which are the demons; therefore demons are not naturally evil. The second reason is such: it was shown that evil is neither existing nor is in existents; if therefore the demons were naturally evil, they would not be among the number of existents. The third reason is such: that which naturally befits something always befits it; if therefore demons were naturally evil, they always would have been evil and they would not have been transmuted from the good to evil, as the catholic faith confesses. The fourth reason is such: that if the demons are naturally evil, they are either naturally evil to themselves or to others. If to themselves, since it belongs to the notion of evil that it harms and corrupts, it follows that they would corrupt themselves; which is impossible; for nothing is corruptive of itself according to nature. But if they are naturally evil to others, therefore they naturally corrupt others. (4-14)

Therefore it is asked what they naturally corrupt or how they corrupt, whether substance or virtue or operation, which three things are found in all things. If it is granted that they are naturally evil since they corrupt the substance of something, he objects against this by three reasons, the first of which is such: nothing that is corruptive of another according to the order of nature is evil naturally, since to conserve the order of nature is the good of nature. But if evil corrupts substance, it does not do this in addition to the order of nature; for it does not corrupt incorruptible things, but those which are susceptible to corruption. Therefore it will not be evil according to nature. The second reason is such: that which is naturally such simply and in every respect is such, just as that which is naturally hot simply and in every respect is hot. Therefore if something is naturally evil, it will be evil simply and in every respect, even in respect to itself; which is impossible, as was said. The third reason is such: nothing of existents is corrupted through evil as far as the substance itself or the nature of a thing which is called evil. Just as the substance and nature of a human being remains in an evil human being, but something is called evil in that the ratio, i.e., proportion, of harmony and

commensuration which is according to nature is debilitated through some defect of order, nevertheless thus that it is not totally destroyed, but remains in some way. But that infirmity, by which such proportion is debilitated, is not perfect, since if it were perfect it would destroy the subject itself and consequently the corruption which is in the subject and thus such corruption would corrupt itself. This therefore which is infirm, not simply but with respect to something, is not naturally evil, but a good with defect, since that which is entirely without the good can not be found among existents. The same reason applies to the corruption of natural virtue, since it remains in the thing which is called evil or is corrupted through evil. Therefore it remains that nothing is evil according to nature. (14-33)

The when he says <How they are made by God etc.>, he shows how evil is in demons. And first he proposes a question; second he solves it, <And they are called etc.> Therefore he asks first how demons, since they are made by God, are evil. For it belongs to the Good to produce and conserve good things. (34-36)

The when he says <And they are called etc.>, he solves the proposed question. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows that demons are called evil, not according to some nature, but according to the defect of good; second he shows that the defect of good in them is not from a variation of the good itself, but from their will, <And it is not varied etc.> (37-40)

But that the demons are not evil naturally, but in so far as they lack some good, he shows in three ways: first through the authority of sacred scripture. And he says that thus someone ought to say that the demons are called evil, not in so far as they are, since their <u>esse</u> is caused from the Good, namely God, and from it they obtain a good essence, but they are called evil in so far as they are not, namely as they are infirm to comply with their own principle, as the expressions of holy scripture say. And this is taken from the canonical Jude, where it is said "the angels which do not keep their own principate" etc. But they are said not to comply with their principle either since they do not preserve their innocence in which they are established by a principle, or since they are turned away from God, who is their principle. And what is added is consonant with this exposition: for we do not say that demons are made evil except in that they lack the habit and operation through which they ought to be ordained toward the divine goods. (40-49)

Second when he says <And otherwise if the nature of evil etc.>, he shows the same through reason. And concerning this

he does three things: first he shows that demons are not naturally evil, but through defect of some good; second that they do not lack the good totally, <And not entirely etc.>; third he shows what good is defective in them, <But evils are said to be etc.> (49-52)

Concerning the first he posits this reason: if the demons were naturally evil, they would always be evil, since what is in something naturally is always in it. But if they are always evil they are not naturally evil, which he proves thus: to be unstable is a certain evil and to be always is a property of the good; whence we see that all things desire sempiternity as far as is possible. And thus it appears that, if they are always disposed in the same way, they are not naturally evil; therefore from the first to the last, if they are naturally evil, they are not naturally evil; which is impossible. Thus therefore it is patent that if they are not always evil, since this is a property of the good, they were not naturally evil, but through defect of some goods which are due to angels. (52-59)

Then when he says <And not entirely etc.>, he shows that they are not totally deprived of the good. And he says that they are not entirely without the good; for they participate the good in so far as they are and live and understand and in so far as there is in them some motion of desire, which only intends a true or apparent good. (59-62)

Then when he says <But they re said to be evil etc.>, he shows according to the defect of what good they are called evil. And he says that they are called evil because they are disposed defectively in the operation which befits their nature. And by what order this happens, he shows consequently saying: therefore there is an evil aversion in them. (62-65)

Now it must be considered that all that is naturally subject to something has its own good what it is subject to, just as the good of the sensitive appetite in human beings is that it be regulated by reason. But every will both of an angel and of a human being is naturally subject to God. Therefore the good of the angelic and human will is that it be regulated by the divine will. Therefore aversion from the rule of the divine will is evil in demons. But every appetite defecting from its rule tends toward its own object beyond what is right, just as the concupiscible tends toward the delectable according to sense more than is due, when it is not regulated by reason. Thus therefore the will of demons, averse from the rule of the divine will, tends toward the appetite of its own good more than is due. And this is what he adds 'and of the fittingness to their excesses' etc., namely since they desired for themselves

some good which exceeded their condition. But all to which it is natural to attain some end through a determinate mode, if it recedes from that mode, it cannot attain the end. But the mode in which it is natural to the angels to attain the ultimate end of their will is through a will moderated according to the divine rule. If therefore they exceed that mode, they do not attain the end. And this is what he adds 'and not acquiring'. But all which does not attain its perfection remains imperfect; whence is added 'and imperfection'. But every imperfect thing in so far as it is of this kind is impotent; whence is added 'and impotency'. And since virtue is the perfection of potency, there follows around virtue, which could preserve their perfection, infirmity and flight and falling. And he posits these three according to what occurs among human beings; for if someone is infirm to resist something or to attain something, he flees from it and, fleeing because of infirmity, he falls. And similarly the infirm demons concerning the acquisition of the divine end flee from it and fall, precipitated into sin. (65-82)

Then when he says <And otherwise what is in demons etc.>, he shows in the third mode that demons are not called evil according to nature, but according to a defect of some good, and this according to the opinion of others. For some posited demons to be animals, in body ethereal, in mind rational, in soul passive, in time eternal, as Apulegius says and Augustine introduces, De civitate Dei VIII. Therefore according to their opinion there is in demons a sensible power and a passive appetite, which is sensitive and divided through the irascible and concupiscible. But this opinion was not Dionysius', which is clear from the fact that above he said the angels were immaterial and incorporeal. But here he says demons are evil through a defect of angelic goods. Whence it is clear that it is not opined that demons are corporeal and consequently sensitive or with a passive soul. But since he intends to show that demons are not naturally evil, after this he showed according to a particular opinion, namely if demons are of an angelic nature, he shows consequently that the same thing follows if it is posited that there is in them a sensitive nature; for then there will be the same judgement concerning the evil of demons and the evil of human beings. (82-93)

But evil is in us in that the sensitive part is not regulated by reason; and this with respect to three things: namely as far as the irascible which, while it is not regulated by reason, it irrationally rages, [or is angry]; and as far as the concupiscible which, while it is not compelled by reason, it desires foolishly; and as far as fantasy or the imaginative which, while it is not regulated by reason, perverts the truth. Therefore according to the

aforementioned opinion evil in demons is nothing other than an irrational furor and a demented concupiscence and a perverted fantasy. But he says 'demented concupiscence' and 'irrational furor', since by concupiscence nothing looks toward reason, but furor looks towards it, but imperfectly, as was said above. (94-100)

If therefore these three are in demons according to the opinion of others, they are in them nevertheless not entirely, since they do not pervert against all truth whatsoever; nor is all of their concupiscence demented: for they naturally desire the good and the highest; nor is it also in all demons in the same way; nor also those, namely furor and concupiscence and fantasy, are evil in themselves, but in so far as they are deprived of the order of reason. Whence we see that in irrational animals to have these is not evil, but the removal of them is the corruption of the animal and evil; but to have these produces and preserves their animal nature. But if Dionysius speaks here according to a particular opinion, it must also be said that he speaks metaphorically: for thus passions of the soul of this kind are attributed to the angels in scripture, as Augustine says in IX De civitate Dei. Thus therefore he concludes that the race of demons is not evil according to what is in its nature, but according to what is not, i.e., in that it is deprived of some good. (100-110)

Then when he says <And not varied etc.>, he shows whence comes a defect of good in demons. For someone could believe that, just as defect or infirmity of natural operation occurs in humans from the same variation of nature which when grown old is deteriorated and thus the natural operations are debilitated, thus also from the transmutation of some good the defect of good operation occurs in demons. But this he excludes both as far as the universal Good, which is God, from which they are averted, and as far as the participated goods which are natural goods given to the angels. He says therefore that the universal Good, namely the divine, which is given to them in so far as they somehow are made partakers of it, is not varied in some mode. Whence they are not made evil because of a variation of that Good, but since they depart from the universal good given to them. And similarly the angelic gifts, i.e., things pertaining to the angelic nature, which in principle are given to them, we in no wise say that they are changed, so that they are made evil from their mutation, but they remain permanently integral, i.e., apart from corruption of nature, and most splendid, i.e., apart from the diminution of natural intellectual light. But that they do not see, this happens because they through free will close their powers that look towards the Good, i.e., they avert voluntarily their intellect, not from a true consideration, but from looking

to the good in so far as it is good, namely since they do not will to follow it. Whence it is patent that, in so far as they are and have a good cause, they both are good according to their nature and desire the good, namely to be, to live and to understand; but in so far as they are deprived of this through a voluntary departure, by which infirm recession they depart from the goods which befitted them according to the order of their nature, they are called and are evil in so far as they are not, i.e., in so far as something good in them goes away; and similarly since they desire evil, they desire non existing. For they are said to desire evil in so far as they desire some good with a defect of a due mode and order. (110-128)

IV - 22

<But some call souls evil etc.> After Dionysius shows how evil is in demons, here he shows how it is in souls. And first he excludes a false mode; second he posits a true mode, <But if to be made evil etc.>; third he concludes the proposition, <Not therefore neither in demons etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore that perhaps someone will say that human souls are evil, which indeed is true concerning some; but it must be inquired how they are called evil. But if someone should say that they are called evil because they defend evils for which they provide and which they intend to preserve, just as some good person cohabits with evil people in order to save them or even as the soul itself coexists with the corruption of the body and with the inordinate passions of the soul and intends to reduce these to order, this is not evil, but is good and is derived from the good, by the virtue of which even evils are made good, either in so far as evils are transmuted and become goods or in so far as goods are elicited from evils by divine ordination. (4-11)

Then when he says <But if evils etc.> he posits the true mode. And he says that, if we say that souls are made evil, we can not do this except in so far as they defect from the good, both as far as habit and as far as act, and thus infirm from defect of the good they can not attain the end, but they fall down to something contrary to the end, just as the air above us we say to be darkened through defect and absence of light. But the light is what also enlightens the darkness, i.e., those which were formerly darkness were made luminous; and thus the good makes good from evil. (11-16)

Then when he says <Not therefore neither in demons etc.>, he concludes what was proposed, namely that evil is neither in demons nor in humans something existing positively, but as a defect and a certain desertion of the perfection of proper

goods. Thus therefore he intends to show that evil is not in existing things, since in some there is evil in no way, as in God and in the angels, but in some there is evil, but as privation, not as something existing. (17-21)

Then when he says <But neither in animals etc.>, he shows that evil is not naturally in irrational animals. And he excludes two things according to which it could seem that evil is in them naturally, namely the passions and the defect of reason. For someone seeing in brute animals naturally furor and concupiscence, which are called evil in humans, could esteem animals of this kind to be naturally evil. But this he excludes saying that, if you remove from animals of this kind furor and concupiscence and other passions of this kind, which are called evil by some and nevertheless are not evil simply from their nature; if, I say, these are removed, their nature is destroyed. When a lion will destroy animosity and pride, it will not be a lion; and similarly a dog, when it will destroy furor, in every way made gentle, it will not be a dog. And this appears from the utility which it produces in human things, in which the office of a dog is to protect the house or other things of this kind; and this it does by drawing near to the household. But it is clear that those things through which nature is preserved lest it be corrupted are not evil, but the corruption of nature itself and any other defect of natural habits and virtues and operations is infirmity and this is evil, as was said above. Whence it is patent that the aforementioned passions, which when destroyed the nature of brute animals is destroyed, are not evils in them, but goods. (21-34)

But someone could say that because they are imperfect by reason of lack according to their nature, animals of this kind are naturally evil. But this he excludes: for whatever things are generated do not come to their perfection except after a determinate time; from which it is patent that to be imperfect before that time is natural and according to nature; from which it is patent that not every imperfection is beyond nature, but only that imperfection is evil, through which the perfection due according to that time is destroyed. (35-39)

IV - 23

<But neither in all of nature etc.> After Dionysius shows that evil is not something existing in those which act through cognition, he shows the same in natural things. And first in nature itself; second in a natural body, <But neither in a body etc.>; third in matter, <But neither many vulgar etc.>; fourth he shows how privation is related to evil, <But neither this which we say etc.> Concerning the

first he does two things: first he shows that evil is not in universal nature; second how evil is in particular nature, <But particulars etc.> (1-7)

Concerning the first it must be known that universal nature is called the universal cause of all those things which come to be naturally. But God is the universal cause of all which come to be naturally; whence some call God nature naturing. But it is better that universal nature be understood as the universal cause of those which come to be naturally in the genus of natural things. Some therefore posited universal nature to be something separated, commonly disposed to all natural things, just as separated human being, according to the Platonists, commonly is disposed to singular human beings. But since the species of things are not separated, but the forms themselves existing in matter are the principle of action, as is proved in VII Metaphysics, it is better to say that universal nature is called the active power of the first body, which is the first in the genus of natural causes. Therefore in this universal nature there can be no evil; for evil in any nature is a recession from the order of that nature, as the eye is ill when it is not in its natural disposition. But although something could be beyond the order of some particular nature, nevertheless nothing can be contrary to universal nature: for it is not removed from the order of some nature except by something acting in a contrary way, for instance from the order of health, which is naturally the good of the human body, is removed through the action of heat or cold. But all natural reasons which are active virtues in nature depend on universal nature and nothing thus can act contrarily to all of universal nature. Whence it is patent that in universal nature there can be no evil. (7-21)

Then when he says <But particulars etc.>, he shows how evil is in particular nature; and he calls particular nature the principle of motion of some determinate thing. Therefore he says that to some particular nature there is something according to nature and something not according to nature, just as to be moved upward is according to the nature of fire, but to be moved downward is not according to its nature. Nor is it the same to all things beyond nature; but one and the same thing can be to one thing according to nature and to another beyond nature, just as to be moved downward is beyond the nature of fire and according to the nature of earth. But nothing is evil to something of nature than to be beyond nature, which is to be deprived by something natural. From this it is patent that nature itself is not evil; rather this is the evil of nature: not to be able to attain to those things which pertain to the perfection of its proper nature. (22-29)

Then when he says <But neither in a body etc.>, he shows how evil is in a body. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows what is called the evil of a body; second he excludes a certain objection, <But since neither malice etc.>; third universally he gathers together what evil is in all things which are called evil, <For this is etc.> (30-33)

He says therefore first that, as it was said that evil is not something existing in demons and in souls, thus neither is evil something existing in a body. For the evil of a body is said to be some turpitude or infirmity and both of these are a defect of some form or a privation of some order. For there are required for beauty both brightness as form and commensuration which pertains to order; but when both are deprived turpitude follows. Nevertheless evil is not in a body such that form and order are entirely deprived, since if all form and all order be totally destroyed and consequently all that is in beauty, neither the body itself could remain and consequently neither the turpitude of the body. Whence it is patent that what is called a base thing is not totally evil, retaining nothing of the good, but is a good diminished from a due perfection. (33-41)

Then when he says <But since etc.>, he excludes a certain objection. For someone could say: this body is evil from this fact, that it is the cause of malice of the soul. But he excludes this, saying that the cause of malice of the soul is not the body. For the cause being removed absolutely the effect is removed; but when the body is removed malice is not removed from the spiritual nature, as is patent in demons who are incorporeal and nevertheless evil. It remains therefore that the cause of the malice of the soul is not the body. But in actual sin it is clear that the malice of the soul is from free will, in that it uses corporeal things for evil. But in original sin the infection itself of the body, according to which it infects the soul united to itself, is first from the soul of the first parents. (41-48)

Then when he says <For this is also to minds etc.>, he gathers together universally what is evil in all things which are called evil. And he says that as in the minds of demons so in souls so also in bodies evil is not something existing; rather it is to have infirmly and in a debilitated way the proper goods which are appropriate to them or to totally fall from having them; this is called evil in singular things. (48-51)

Then when he says <But neither many vulgar etc.>, he shows how evil is attributed to matter: and first he displays the truth; second he excludes an objection, <But if they should call it etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first

he proposes the truth; second he proves it, <For also the same ornate etc.> (52-54)

Concerning the first it must be known that among many of the ancients it was said vulgarly that matter is in itself evil, and this is because they did not distinguish between privation and matter; but privation is non being and evil. Whence, as Plato said matter to be non being, thus some said matter to be in itself evil. But Aristotle in the first chapter of the Physics says that matter is not non being and is evil only accidentally, i.e., by reason of the privation that accedes to it. And this is also what Dionysius here says, that matter is not evil in so far as it is matter; and he proves this by three reasons, the first of which is taken through comparison to form, which is such: Matter can be considered in two ways: in one way as existing under form and thus it has participation of form as far as substantial esse and of beauty as far as commensuration and decorum, to which intrinsic accidents are also produced, and also ornament as far as the exterior things which encircle it. In another way matter can be understood absolutely, besides what was said before, as if lacking quality and all form. And if someone should say that matter thus understood is the first evil, this can not be, since they say that the first evil produces all evils. But matter in itself existing without quality and form cannot produce anything, since the principle of acting is form through which something is in act. Similarly also neither can it suffer in itself in that it suffers in casting away something from substance, as a contrary is said to suffer by a contrary; but in that it is said to passively receive simply, thus it befits matter to suffer in itself. Therefore it is clear that matter is not in itself evil as the first evil. (55-72)

Second he posits a reason, <And otherwise: how is it etc.>, which is taken from comparison to cause, which is such: either matter in no way is or in some way is. If it is not, it is neither in some place nor in some mode; but what is not is neither good nor evil; it follows that matter is neither good nor evil. But if matter is, since all existents are from the Good, it follows that matter is from the Good. But what is from the Good is not in itself evil; therefore matter is not evil in itself. (72-77)

But to show this he introduces a fivefold division of clauses; for concerning the causality of things it is necessary to speak of one of these five things, the first of which is that the Good is the cause of evil, of permanent evil; the second clause is that evil is good because it proceeds from the Good; the third clause is that conversely evil is effective of good, of permanent good; the fourth clause is that the Good, because it proceeds from evil, is

evil. And these four are impossible, since to say that the good is effective of evil or evil of good is to posit that one opposite is the cause of the other; but to say that evil is good, or conversely, is to say that opposites are the same. The fifth clause is that there are two principles, good and evil, but it is necessary to say that those two, which in themselves are distinct, proceed from one first principle, since before all multitude is unity. But it is necessary for that first principle to be good or evil, and thus again the four first incongruities will return. If it be said that good is something and evil is something, it is therefore necessary to say that the first is good, and all which is something existing is good as caused from a good principle. And thus prime matter, if it is existing, is in itself good as caused from the good. (77-88)

He posits the third reason, <But if a necessary etc.>, which is taken from the usefulness of matter. And this reason has three media according to three uses of matter, the first of which is that matter is the complement of the universe; for the universe of beings would not be complete, if being in potency were destroyed. And he touches upon this medium, saying that if some concede that matter is necessary to the completion of the entire world, how can it be that matter is in itself evil? For a necessary thing is different from evil: for something is called necessary in that it has an order to the Good and from this fact it has the notion of the good. The second utility of matter is with respect to particular beings which are generated from matter. And he touches on this medium, saying: how does the Good, namely God, lead certain beings to generation from evil? This seems unfitting: for just as heat does not produce something from coldness itself, thus neither does the Good make something from evil itself, and nevertheless this would follow if matter were in itself evil. Or again: how can what is necessary to the generation of the good be evil? For this pertains to the notion of evil, that it flees the nature of the good and does not lead to it. But he says that certain ones are lead to generation from matter because of the immaterial substances which do not have matter. The third use of matter is that it nourishes by sustaining form; whence Plato compared matter to a nurse. And he touches upon this when he says: how can matter, if it is evil in itself, beget and nourish the nature of a generated thing, by receiving and keeping its form? For evil, in this way, is not generative or nutritive of something or, as we speak more universally, is not effective or preservative of something. For the effective contains under itself the generative as the less common and similarly the preservative contains under itself the nutritive. But to effect and to preserve pertains to the notion of the good; whence they do not befit evil, as far as this mode. (89-107)

Then when he says <But if they should say etc.>, he removes a certain objection. For he said above that the body can not be called evil as if it were the cause of malice of the soul itself. But someone could say that, although corporeal matter does not cause malice in the soul, nevertheless corporeal matter draws souls to malice, by attracting them. But he says that this is not true. For if matter is the cause that attracts souls to malice, it would follow that it does this from necessity; for a cause having been posited the effect follows from necessity unless something impedes it. But we see this to be false; for many souls look toward the Good, which could not be if matter totally draws them to evil. Whence it is clear that evil in souls is not from matter, but from the inordinate motion of the free will, which is sin itself. But if someone imputes this to corporeal matter, in so far as existing exteriorly it attracts in some way, and conjoined to the soul it influences it, although not from necessity, this does not exclude that matter is good in itself, since something can be the occasion of the evil of something, which nevertheless is in itself good. Therefore this is what he says that, if some say that the soul is moved to evil from matter, it is in no way necessary to say that matter, although it is instable, nevertheless is entirely consequential, i.e., having consequence and order in the universe, and is necessary to forms, which can not be established in themselves. But how can evil be necessary or that which is necessary be evil in itself? And it must be noted that significantly he says 'instable matter', since to be inclined toward matter in itself seems to be evil, in so far as when the unchangeable good is deserted it adheres to a changeable good. But the principle of mutability is matter in so far as it is in potency to diverse things. Nevertheless neither the fact that it is in potency to diverse things shows it to be evil; rather through this it has an order to diverse goods, i.e., to diverse forms, which are established in it. (107-126)

Then when he says <But neither this which we say etc.>, he shows how privation is related to the notion of evil. And he says that neither privation itself is adverse to the good by acting against it according to its proper virtue, but according to the virtue of the good: since, if it is perfect privation, i.e., which removes everything entirely, it excludes all potency and thus it is not able to act against the good. But if it is a particular privation, excluding one form and not another, it has a virtue of acting not from the fact that it is a privation, but from the fact that it is not a perfect privation, i.e., from a conjoined form, which is not deprived. But if a good is particularly deprived, it is still not totally evil; and if the particular privation recedes, either because something is not deprived or because

it is totally removed, it follows that the nature of evil omits it. (126-133)

IV - 24

<But it is to say collecting etc.> Having touched upon the principle questions which he had proposed above concerning evil, namely whether evil is something and whence is evil and in what things is evil, here he pursues other adjoining questions. And first when it is asked whether evil is caused from the Good or from some other cause; second when it is asked how providence is compatible with evil, <How totally they are by providence existing etc.>; the third question when it is asked how some existents desire evil, <Evil is therefore non existing etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he sets forth certain considerations concerning the cause of evil through which the aforementioned question is solved; second he explains it, <All which is according to nature etc.> (1-8)

He posits therefore first three considerations, the first of which is that from all things it can be gathered that the good proceeds from a single and perfect cause, but evil proceeds from many particular defects. And this appears as much in natural things as in moral things. For health and beauty are result from the body being well proportioned in all parts, but it is sufficient for turpitude or illness that due proportion departs in some part. And for this reason to be sick and base happens in many ways, but to be healthy and beautiful in one way. Similarly to the act of virtue it is required that it be commensurate according to all due circumstances, of which when any one is destroyed a vitious act is produced. And for this reason the Philosopher says in II Ethics that the good occurs in one way, but evil in many ways. (9-16)

Then when he says <God sees the good etc.>, he posits a second consideration, which is such: whatever is in the world, whether good or evil, is seen by God; but all that is seen, in so far as it is seen, is in the seer; and since there occurs in God the most noble mode of seeing, which is to see something through a cause, it is clear that in God, who sees good and evil things, are the causes of both goods and evils. The causes of evils, which are with God, are the virtues themselves which produce good; for it is the same virtue which makes good in so far as it is perfect and which makes evil in so far as it is deficient, as is patent from the free will which is the cause of good and evil, and universally all which is the cause of evil is also the cause of some good. (16-23)

Then when he says <But if evil etc.>, he posits a third consideration, which is against the assertion that evil is not a first principle: since if evil is from eternity not caused, but rather creates others and has power of making something and has existence and has causality, while it makes some things, it remains to be asked whence it has this. Whenever some one thing occurs to many things, it is necessary that there is some one cause of that one thing, since a cause is not more multiple than the effects, namely as the effect is one and the causes are multiple. If therefore eternity and creation and potency and esse and to make commonly befit the good and evil, it is necessary that this proceed from one cause. Therefore either evil has this from the good or good from evil or both from some prior cause; and that the truer of these is the last will be shown. (23-30)

Then when he says <All which is according to nature etc.>, he explains clearly the three foregoing considerations. And first the first; second the second, <Of all and to evils etc.>; third the third, <Just as totally it can etc.> The first consideration, namely that evil is not from some determinate cause, he proves by three reasons. (31-34)

The first is such: for we see that all that has a determinate cause either is by nature or is by art; for all that is according to nature is generated from some determinate cause, and similarly what is according to art. But evil is not according to nature nor according to art, since all that is according to nature is in some way in nature, as effects are in their causes, and all that is according to art has some notion in art. But evil in natural things is to be against nature and in artificial things evil is to be inartificial. But it cannot be said that what is against nature is in nature nor that its notion, which is inartificial, is in art. And thus evil is not by nature nor by art. From this it follows that evil is without cause and is indeterminate as not coming from some determinate cause. (34-42)

But he posits the second reason, <Whether the soul of evil etc.> For it seems best that the soul through free will is the cause of evil. Whence if the soul is not in itself the cause of evil, it seems that nothing else is in itself the cause of evil. Therefore he asks whether the soul is in itself the cause of evils such that it fills with badness all things to which it is adjoined, just as fire heats all which it approaches, since it is in itself the cause of heating. And to the solution of this question he proposes two things: the first of which is that the nature of the soul is good; the second is that the soul according to its own operations is sometimes good and sometimes evil. The

first of these he proves thus: for if it is granted that the nature of the soul is evil and its esse is evil, this seems impossible since the soul does not have its own esse except from a creative cause of all which must be good, since to produce pertains to the notion of the good. But whatever things are created from a good cause are goods. Therefore in no way can it be that the soul according to its own substance and nature is evil. But if the second member be granted, namely that the soul is evil because of its operation, this is not as if an evil operation comes from the soul from necessity and intransmutably, as if the soul in itself is the cause of evil operation; for there could not be in the soul virtues and virtuous acts unless the soul itself were conformed to the good. Thus therefore the soul is not in itself a determinate cause of evil. Whence it remains that evil is more from a certain debilitating cause and defect of good. (42-56)

He posits the third reason, <The cause of goods is etc.>, which is such: the cause of goods is one; but, just as evil is opposed to the good, thus also multitude is opposed to the one; therefore the causes of evil are many and indeterminate. Not such that evils are effected through some reasons and virtues -- and he says reasons as far as those which become through art and virtues as far as those which are through nature -- but the cause of evils is a total defect, by which reason it is called impotency or debility of potency, which is called infirmity, or also that something dissimilar is adjoined to another without due commensuration, just as if heat is adjoined to cold without due commensuration, illness follows. But that some things immobily and in the same way persevere occurs from the fortitude of the impressing and conserving cause. Since therefore evils arise from a subtraction of potency and its debility, it follows that they are not immobile nor always disposed in the same way, but that they have infinite varieties and that they are endless, since what comes from a debility of cause sometimes occurs thus and sometimes otherwise, because a debilitated cause can not conserve the same order in causing. And since they are certain debilities, it is necessary that they be carried into other things, i.e., they are sustained as privations in a subject, and that they have an indeterminate subject as they have indeterminate causes. (56-69)

Then when he says <And of all evils etc.>, he explains the second consideration, namely that the causes of evils are virtues producing good. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows that good is the principle of evil; second he shows through what mode, <To evil to be posited etc.> (69-71)

But that good is the principle of evil he shows thus: the end always corresponds to an active principle; for everything performs what is fitting to its own nature, just as fire acts for the generation of fire; but the end of all evils is the Good; therefore also the principle of all evils is the Good. But that the end of evils is the Good, he proves thus: for that is the end of something because of which that thing is; but whoever does something, whether good or evil, does it because of the Good. And he shows this in those who do evil things which seem less; for we do not do evils except from the desire of some good; for no one does that which he does looking intentionally to evil: just as the one who commits adultery is not attracted by the inordinateness because of which adultery is evil, but by the enjoyment, which is some good. Therefore the end of evils is the good; and thus it follows that the Good is also the principle of evils. But all which has some substance has a principle and end befitting its substance; which can not be said concerning evil, as was shown. Therefore it remains that evil does not have substance, since it is produced thanks to the good and no thanks of its own, as was shown. But if the one who does evil intends the good, as is said here, it seems that he does not sin, since sin depends principally from the intention. But it must be said that if that evil conjoined to the good is unknown, in so far as it is adjoined to it, rarely and in few cases the intention which is borne into the good would not be evil. But when the evil adjoined is not latent, in so far as it is always conjoined to this good in which the intention is borne, in some way it is borne also into evil, although not principally. For from the fact that it does not refuse that good because of the adjoining evil, it follows that it wills more that evil than to lack the good and that it wills less the greater good, which is deprived through that evil, than the lesser good to which evil is conjoined. (72-89)

Then when he says <To evil <u>esse</u> is to be posited etc.>, he shows how the Good is the principle of evil. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows the proposition; second he infers a conclusion from what was said, <Therefore privation is evil etc.> (90-92)

Therefore since he had shown above that good is the principle of evil, lest someone should believe that it is absolutely its principle, to exclude this he says that esse is to be assigned to evil accidentally and because of another and not as from a proper and per se principle. This he proves thus: whenever something is done and something else desired, that which is has a cause accidentally: just as, if someone digging a grave finds gold, we say the finding of gold to have arisen accidentally. But when someone does evil, it is one thing that is and another that

is desired or intended, since that which is appears to be good; which is necessary for this reason, since all that is is due to the good, as was shown; but according to the truth of the thing it is not good, since it happens that someone judges that to be good which is not good. Therefore it remains that evil does not have a principle except accidentally. (92-100)

And thence he further concludes that evil is beyond mode, since the motion which is a mode in a being is not terminated through itself to evil; and again it is beyond the intention of the mover, since every intention of an agent is borne into the good; and again it is beyond nature, since it does not proceed from an agent in a way befitting its nature, since every agent acts by virtue of the good; and further it is also beyond cause, since it does not have a cause per se but only accidentally, whether by cause is understood an effective principle or a final cause. And as it is beyond nature, thus also it is beyond art; for it is beyond definition of reason which directs in the works of art and beyond will which moves towards them. And similarly it is beyond subsistence, since it does not have a form through which it subsists, but is the privation of form. (100-107)

But if someone objects that if what someone does who is sinning appears to them to be good and thus all sinners seem to sin from ignorance and thus are excused from sin, it must be said that an error of this kind, because of which what is not good is judged to be good, is according to ignorance of choice by which what is known universally is unknown in particular. For the one who knows universally that adultery is evil now judges adultery in a particular case to be good, in so far as the pleasurable good outweighs in his will the justified good, to which is opposed the evil adjoined to the pleasure. Whence ignorance of this kind is more from the disordering of the will than that it is the cause of the disordering of the will. And because of this the Philosopher says in III <u>Ethics</u> that one sins unknowing, but not from ignorance. Whence he is not excused in whole or in part. (108-115)

Then when he says <Therefore privation is evil etc.>, he infers a conclusion from what was said, in which he multiplies the modes of evil. But since evil is a privation of good, evil can vary in two ways, either from the part of privation, since it happens that something is deprived in many ways, or from the part of the good, since in many ways the good happens to be deprived. Therefore he concludes that, since evil does not have subsistence, which is a privation depriving totally some particular good, as blindness is evil since it privates vision totally; and

again evil is a defect, namely when something is not totally destroyed, but is possessed deficiently, as is clear in those who see obscurely; and it is also infirmity, namely when it does not possess the good firmly even if it has it intensely: as if someone sees acutely and nevertheless does not have firm vision, but its vision is easily dispersed. These three therefore are understood on the part of privation. (116-124)

But on the part of that which is deprived through evil there must first be understood the notion of the good in common, to which three things pertain, namely the commensuration of the things from which something is composed, as health is the commensuration of humors, and beauty the commensuration of members, and oppositely evil is incommensuration, as illness and baseness. Second it pertains to the notion of the good that an act attains to its due end, and on the opposite side he says that evil is sin: for sin is said to be in nature and in art and in the will, when an act does not attain to its due end: just as when nature produces a monstrous birth and when a scribe does not produce good script and when the will does not make a virtuous act. It is also from the notion of the good that it is intended, since the good is what all things desire, and from the opposite side he says that evil is without intention. And these three can be reduced to mode, species, and order, which Augustine posits: for incommensuration is through privation of mode, sin through privation of species; but when he says 'without intention' he signifies the privation of order. (124-134)

Then he posits those things which follow upon the common notion of the good. And first he says 'without beauty', since the beautiful is convertible with the good, as was said above. And afterwards he posits certain particular goods, which are deprived through evil, as he says that evil is without life and without mind, i.e., without intellect, and without reason, and is imperfect: for perfection pertains to the notion of the good; and it is not collocated, i.e., not established in something: for to be established in something is from the notion of the good; and it is without cause: for order to a cause is a certain good; and it is undefined, as not proceeding from a proper cause; and it is without seed, as if not having a proper and per se effect; and it is a vacuum, i.e., without plenitude; and it is not operating, since even operation itself is a certain good as well as the perfection of operation; and it is inordinate, since also order pertains to the notion of the good; and it is dissimilar, since similitude is also a certain order and pertains to the notion of the good; and it is infinite, since an end is the good and perfection of everything; and it is obscure, i.e., without brightness; and briefly it is without all substance and not existing in some

mode nor in some time nor is evil something in so far as it is evil. (134-145)

Then when he says <Just as totally it can etc.>, he proceeds to explain the third consideration posited above, namely that evil is not eternal and creating as some first principle. And this he proves in two ways. The first is thus: for evil, in that way in which something is able to make something, can do this through the good adjoined to it, since that which is entirely without the good neither is something nor is capable of anything. And this he proves thus: for if it is the case, that to exist and to desire through the will and to be potent and to be effective pertains to the notion of the good, how is that which is contrary to the good, namely evil, which is apart from substance and operation and will, as was said above, capable of something by its own proper virtue, i.e., as if to say: in no way. If therefore evil is capable of nothing through itself, but only by virtue of the good, it is clear that evil is not a first creative principle. (145-153)

Second, <Not all etc.>, he proves the same thus: We see that not all things are in every way evil, nor the same things entirely are evil in all things in the same respect; for the evil of any thing is opposed to its proper good: for evil of a demon is to be beyond an intellect conformed to the divine goodness and evil of the soul is to be beyond reason and evil of a body is to be beyond natural disposition. Therefore there is not some evil which is the same evil in all things. But this would be necessary, if there were some first evil creative of all evils, just as the first creative good of all goods is the good in all things. Therefore it is patent that evil is not a first creative principle. (154-159)

IV - 25

<How totally evils are when providence exists etc.> Having solved the first question concerning the cause of evil, here he solves the second concerning providence, namely how evils can be when divine providence exists. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows that evil does not fall under providence as if caused from providence; second he shows that evil falls under providence as if ordained by providence, <But also made etc.>; third that evil ought not be totally impeded through providence, <And properly everything etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore that evil in so far as it is evil is not existing nor is in existents, as was proved above, and since nothing of existents is without providence, i.e., not caused from divine providence, evil is not intended nor caused from

divine providence. But that all existents are caused from divine providence and no evil is, he proves thus: for there is nothing of existents that does not participate the good in some way; but it is from the notion of evil that it is a defect of good. But nothing of existents universally is deprived or defects from the good; but the proper effect of providence seems to be the good; for whoever provides intends that by its own providence it constitute in a good state those things for which it provides. It remains therefore that divine providence is extended to all existents and nothing of existents is not provided for by God; but evil, to the extent that it is not caused through the divine providence, is non existing. (6-14)

Then when he says <But also by evils made etc.>, he shows how evils fall under providence, as ordered by providence. And he says that divine providence uses evils well: sometimes for the utility of those in whom the evils are, just as when corporeal infirmities or even spiritual, God performing it, occur for the utility of those who suffer them; but sometimes for the utility of others, and this in two ways: sometimes for the proper utility of something, as when from the pain of one another is made better; but sometimes for the common utility, as when the pain of a malefactor is ordered to the peace of a city. (15-20)

Then when he says <And properly everything etc.>, he shows that evil ought not be totally impeded through divine providence. And he says that divine providence provides to each one of existents properly, i.e., according to the property and condition of its nature. And for this reason the vain objection of many must not be received, who say that divine providence ought also induce us unwillingly to virtue. For it does not pertain to providence that it corrupt the nature of things, but that it preserve it; whence in that way in which providence is conservative of the nature of each thing, thus it provides those things which through their own nature are mobile as if mobile through themselves, i.e., withdrawing from them without them being able to be moved through themselves; and similarly those which are whole, i.e., universal or perfect, and those which are particular it provides for along with the natural property of the whole and of each particular: and this in so far as their nature for which God provides receives proportionally to itself given goodnesses from the most abundant providence of the universal God. And since rational created nature according to its nature is defectable and is able to defect through free will, it does not pertain to divine providence that it impede its mobility; and similarly it does not pertain to the providence of God that it attribute such goodness to one particular being it does to the entire universe nor to a thing which is in an inferior

grade what belongs to a thing which is in a superior grade. (21-34)

BOOK FIVE

V - 1

<But it must be passed over now etc.> After Dionysius treated the Good in the fourth chapter, here in the fifth he explains the meaning of being, which he determines after the Good, since the Good in some ways extends itself to more things, as the Platonists said: for even non-existing in act, which is being in potency, from the fact that it has an order to the Good has the notion of the Good, but it participates the causality of being when it is being in act. And since some posited a thing to become in act according to some exemplar of some preexisting form, for this reason in the chapter on being he also explains the meaning of exemplars to which beings become, as is clear from the title. But this chapter is divided into two parts: in the first he sets forth certain things which are necessary to the proposed intention; in the second he proceeds with the causality of first being, <But since we also spoke of these etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he states his intention; second he excludes an error, <But he does not say another to be good etc.>; third he responds to a certain objection, <And someone might say etc.> (1-11)

He says therefore first that from the consideration of the Good we must pass over now to the true praise of God in so far as God is named by the holy theologians as truly existing. But it is necessary to know this beforehand, that it is not the intention in the present discourse that the supersubstantial substance itself of God in so far as it supersubstantially exists in itself be manifested, i.e., that the essence of God be known. It can not be explicated by this discourse nor be received by our cognition; for whatever our intellect apprehends is less than the essence of God and whatever our language expresses is less than the divine esse. Nor can the divine essence be perfectly manifested to any created intellect whatsoever so that it should comprehend it, but it exceeds the union itself of the intellects of the blessed, who see the essence of God through union of their intellect to the essence of God itself; for although they see that which God is, nevertheless there is not such perfection of vision as there

is perfection of the divine esse itself and as there is perfection of vision by which God sees Godself. Therefore it is not the present intention that the essence of God itself be manifested in so far as it is in itself, but that the procession of being from the divine principle into all existents, through which all things are substantified, be praised. For by any divine name there is made manifest some procession of some perfection from God into being, as the name of Good shows every universal procession of the cause of things and extends itself to existents as well as to non-existents in so far as non-existents have something of the Good as they are in potency to esse. But the name of 'being' designates the procession of being from God into all beings and in so far as it is said of God, God is above all existents. But the name of life is extended to all living things and in so far as it is said of God, God is above all living things. But the name of wisdom signifies the procession which is extended to all intellectual and rational and sensible things, since even sense itself, in so far as it is a certain cognition, is a certain participation of the divine wisdom; nevertheless divine wisdom is above all of these. (11-31)

For this purpose therefore this discourse attempts to expound the names of God in so far as they are manifestive of divine providence through which perfections are attributed to things. For this discourse does not promise that it narrate the supersubstantial goodness itself and substance and life and wisdom of God in so far as it exists supersubstantially in itself above all things which are found in creatures; whence of the wisdom of God it is said in Job 28, that "it is hidden from the eyes of all living things". But the intention of the present discourse is to praise God by the name of the 'Good' in that God is the cause of all goods, and the name of 'existing' in that God makes every substance, and by the name of 'life' in that God vivifies all things, and by the name of 'wisdom' in that God gives wisdom. (31-38)

Then when he says <But not another etc.>, he excludes an error of certain Platonists who reduced universal effects into universal causes. And since they saw the effect of the Good to be the most universal, they said its own cause to be the Good itself which pours out goodness into all things, and under it they placed another cause which gives esse to all things, and afterwards another which gives life and thus concerning the others, and principles of this kind they called gods. He therefore excludes this, saying that the present discourse does not suggest that one principle is the Good itself and another existing itself and another life and another wisdom. Nor does the present discourse suggest that there are many causes and diverse deities productive of

diverse things, of which some are higher and some lower. But every procession of perfections into creatures and all names which are expounded here, the present discourse maintains to be of one principle, and one name to be that which shows the entire providence of God universally, namely the name of 'Good'; but certain names show the divine providence as far as some determinate effects, whether more universal or more particular, as being, living, wise, and others of this kind. (38-49)

Then when he says <And someone might say etc.>, he solves a certain objection. And first he states it, which is such: since esse itself exceeds life and life exceeds wisdom, whence is it that living things are supereminent to existents and sentient things to living things and rational things to sentient ones and minds, i.e., angelic intellects, to rational creatures, i.e., human beings, and they are closer to God as if more assimilated to God and they draw nearer to God according to the dignity of their nature, while it is nevertheless necessary for those which participate greater gifts from God to be better and to be supereminent to others which participate lesser gifts? (50-55)

Second, <But of non subsisting things etc.>, he solves the foregoing objection. And he says that the word of the aforesaid objection would be correct, if someone should suppose that those which are intellectual are not existing or not living; for then, just as esse is preeminent to life and life to wisdom, thus existing things would be preeminent to living things and living things to wise things. But the divine minds of the angels do not lack esse; rather they have it more excellently above other created existents and they have life above other living things and they understand and know above the cognition of animal sense and human reason. And as far the order to the Good, they desire the Beautiful and the Good above all other existents; and not only do they desire it more as if more perfectly ordained to it, but they participate more in it, having a more perfect goodness in act. For in these two modes the Good is found in creatures: either according to actual participation of the Good or according to an order to the Good, as was said above in the fourth chapter that the Good extends itself even to non-being in act. Whence rationally the angelic substances are closer to the divine Good through a certain nearness to it as if participating in the divine Good itself more abundantly, and as if possessing from it more and greater goods than others: more, since they have intellect, which many do not have; but greater, since esse itself and life which others have is possessed by the angels more perfectly. (55-69)

And similarly also rational things, namely human beings, are supereminent to sensible things, i.e., to the brute animals, since they pre-abound them in reason, which they possess before them; and some, as the brute animals, supersede others, as the plants, in sense; and others, namely plants, supersede inanimate bodies in life. And universally this can be said truly, that that which more participates the One itself, which is God, infinitely giving since God gives to all affluently, as is said in James 1, are more near to God and more similar to God than those remaining, i.e., those which they exceed. (69-74)

V - 2

<But since we also spoke of these things etc.> Certain things having been set forth which were necessary to the present intention, here Dionysius approaches expounding the name of being in so far as it is said of God. And since, as he already said, it is not his intention to manifest the ineffable essence of God in so far as it is in itself, but in so far as the name of being spoken of God shows the procession of being from God into creatures, for this reason he first shows the procession of being universally from God in all things; second he shows that from the divine esse there flow out also singulars in specific things, <And from the same cause of all etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows all existents to be universally from God; second he shows all things to be in God, <And it is from him and in him etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows the divine to be the universal causality with respect to all existents; second he shows that God is more properly denominated from esse itself, <And before other participations of him etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he states his intention; second he follows up the proposition, <What the esse of all etc.>; third he summarizes, <Resuming therefore we say etc.> (1-12)

He says therefore first that, since it was said of the foregoing, the knowledge of which was presupposed to the present intention, we ought to praise the Good itself, which is God, as truly existing in itself and as it makes the substance of all existents. (13-15)

Then when he says <Which the esse of all etc.>, he follows up the proposition. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows that God is the cause of all things which pertain to esse; second that all things in some way befit God, <For also God etc.>; third that all things are removed from God, <And neither was etc.> (15-17)

He says therefore first that the Good itself, which is God, according to God's supereminent virtue is the productive cause of all substances and the creator of all existents, namely since God does not produce substances from something preexisting, but simply every existing thing comes from God's virtue. (18-20)

Then he enumerates those things which seem to pertain to esse. And first he posits two universals, namely existing and mind, i.e., intellect; for mind is comprehensive of all esse. But since mind, i.e., intellect, is not understanding in act except through participation of the intelligible which is existing itself, the Platonists posited that existing itself, which they posited as separate, is above the first created intellect, just as the intelligible is before intellect and the participated before the participant. And because of this Dionysius here says that God is both the cause of existing itself and the cause of mind itself. (21-26)

Then he posits those things which pertain specifically to the substances themselves of existents, in which three things can be considered: namely of which one is the singular itself, which in itself in act embraces both universal and individual principles, as Socrates or Plato, and regarding this he says 'persons'. But second is species or genus, as human being or animal, in which are comprehended universal principles in act, but singulars in potency: for something is called a human being which has humanity apart from the precision of individual principles, and regarding this he says 'substances'. But the third is the essence itself of genus or species: as is signified by the name of humanity, in which name the sole principles of the species are comprehended: for nothing of individual principles pertains to the notion of humanity, since humanity precisely signifies this, that a human being is human. But no individual principle is of this kind; whence in the name of humanity there is not included, either in act or in potency, some individual principle, and regarding this he says 'natures'. (26-36)

But to the notion of being pertains first the substance of a thing, which was already said; but secondly the measure itself of the duration of a thing, and regarding this he adds that God is the principle and measure of the ages. But an age is called the measure of the duration of every thing. Whence one age is called the time in which one generation of people can last or in which the common memory of human events customarily lasts; whence the space of a thousand years is called an age by some. But it is clear that the measure of each thing by God is prefixed, and for this reason he says that God is the principle of the ages. But

the first principle in any genus is the measure of those which are in that genus, as unity of numbers and tone in melodies. Therefore the divine esse itself is the measure of all ages, not adequately, but exceedingly. And consequently he expounds in specific cases how God is the principle of the ages. For in two ways particular existents have duration: for the esse of some is subject to mutation, and the duration of these is measured by time, and regarding this he says 'and that God makes times to be'. But the esse of others is not subject to mutation, and the duration of these is measured by eternity, and regarding this he says 'and God makes to be the eternity of existents'. For just as time is related to motion, thus is eternity related to esse itself; and for this reason he adds that God causally is the time of those which become and God is the esse causally to all existents in any mode; by which he excludes the opinion of the Platonists who posited both time and esse itself as subsisting separated under God. Third, to the notion of being pertains generation, which is mutation toward esse; and for this reason he adds that God is causally generation to all generated things in any mode, since God attributes generation to all, as is said in Is. 66. And thus it is clear that from the first existing thing itself, which is God, is caused both eternity, which is the measure of being, and substance, which is existing through itself, and every existing thing in any mode. And again from God is caused the measure of motion and generation itself and that which is generated; and not only existents themselves are caused by God, but also whatever things are in existents, as parts and natural properties, and those things which in any way either inhere, as accidents, or subsist, as substances. (37-58)

Then when he says <For also God etc.>, he shows that all things in some way befit God. For the evidence of which it must be considered that every form received in something is limited and bounded according to the capacity of the recipient; whence this white body does not have total whiteness according to the total possibility of whiteness; but if it was separated whiteness, nothing would be absent from it which pertains to the virtue of whiteness. But all other things, as was said in superior things, have esse received and participated and for this reason they do not have esse according to the total virtue of esse, but only God, who is esse itself subsisting, has esse according to the total virtue of esse. And this is what he says, that for this reason God can be the cause of being to all things, since God is not existing in some mode, i.e., according to some finite and limited mode, but God universally and infinitely receives in Godself esse entire and prepossesses it, since it preexists in God as in a cause and is derived to others from God. And for this reason God is called in I Tim. 1 the King of the ages, since God has in Godself esse

entire and every substance and all existents and again they are around God in so far as they are derived from God. (58-69)

Then when he says <And neither was etc.>, he shows that all things are removed from God, as far as the mode in which they befit creatures. And he says that God was not, as if something from God's esse perished in the past, nor will God be, as if something of God's esse is expected in the future; and this is because God was not made, but esse is variated through past and future only of those to whom it is proper to be made; nor also does it befit God that God be generated in the present or in the future in the mode of temporal generation; and what is more, God neither is, namely in so far as present time is signified, since God's esse is not measured by time, but God is esse to existents, not indeed such that Godself is the formal esse itself of existents, but he uses that mode of speaking which the Platonists used who called separated esse the esse of existents in so far as composites are participated through participation of abstractions. And that it must be understood causally is apparent from what he adds, that not only are existents from God, but also the esse itself of existents is from God, who is before the ages; and God is said to be before the ages since God is the eternity of eternities, i.e., the measure of all durations. (69-80)

Then when he says <Therefore resuming etc.>, he brings together those things which were said. And he says by resuming that all existents and measures of being have esse from the first being, and every eternity and time, which are durations, are from God, and God is the effective principle and final cause of every age and time and of every existent in any mode. And again all things participate God as the first exemplary form; and not only is God the cause as far as the making of things, but also as far as total esse and duration, which he shows when he says 'and he recedes from nothing of existents'; for when the builder departs the house remains, since he is the cause of the house as far as its becoming and not as far as its esse; but if God should subtract God's operation nothing would remain, since God is the cause of its esse. And since the cause is preeminent to its effects, God is before all things and all things consist in God, just as effects preexist in a cause by virtue; and universally whatever is in any mode preexists in the first being, namely God, both as far as the esse which it has in its nature and as far as the esse which it has in intellect and as far as the conservation of its esse. (80-90)

<And before other participations of it etc.> After he shows that being when said of God signifies the procession of existents from God, here he shows that this name, namely being, or qui est, is most fittingly said of God. But he shows this by two reasons: of which he begins the second at <For also pre-esse and super-esse etc.> (1-4)

The first reason is such: if some cause is named from its effect, it is most fittingly named from the principal and most worthy of its effects. But esse itself among the other effects of God is the most principal and worthy. Therefore God, who can not be named by us except through God's effects, is most fittingly named by the name of being. This is therefore what he says, that esse itself is proposed to creatures to be participated before other participations of God. For whatever perfection the creature has, it is through this in the participation of God, who, so to speak, is proposed and offered to all to be participated, but first God is participated with respect to esse itself, then with respect to any other perfection: and esse itself per se is older, i.e., prior, and more worthy than that which is to be life per se and that which is to be wisdom per se and that which is to be the divine similitude. (4-12)

But here it occurs to be considered, what is here called esse per se and life per se and things like these. For the evidence of which it must be known that the Platonists, whom Dionysius imitates in this work in many things, before all composed participants posited separated existences per se, which are participated by the composites, just as before singular humans who participate humanity, they posited separated human being existing without matter, by the participation of which singular humans are called humans. And similarly they said that before these living composites there was a certain separated life, by the participation of which these living things live, which they called life per se; and similarly wisdom per se and esse per se. But they posited these separated principles to be diverse from each other and from the first principle which they named the Good per se or the One per se. But Dionysius in some things consents to them and in some things dissents: he consents with them in this that he posits separated life existing through itself and similarly wisdom and esse and others of this kind; but he dissents from them in that he does not say these separated principles to be diverse, but one principle, which is God, as he said above. Therefore since it is called life per se according to the statement of Dionysius, this can be understood in two ways: in one way in so far as per se implies a real discretion or separation, and thus life per se is Godself; in another way in so far as it implies discretion or separation according to reason alone, and thus life per se is life itself which inheres in living things,

which is not distinguished according to the thing but simply according to reason from living things. And the same reason applies concerning wisdom per se and the others; and this twofold exposition he posits below in the eleventh chapter. But there life per se is understood for life which inheres in living things: for he speaks here of participations; but life existing per se is not a participation. (12-30)

But that esse per se is prior and more worthy than life itself and wisdom itself he shows in two ways: first in that whatever participates in other participations first participates esse itself; for something is understood first as being rather than living or wise. Second since esse itself is compared to life and to others of this kind as participated to participating; for life itself is also a certain being and thus esse is prior and simpler than life and others of this kind and is compared to them as their act. And for this reason he says that not only those which participate in other participations first participate esse itself, but what is more, all things which are named according to themselves, as life per se, wisdom per se and others of this kind in which existents participate, participate esse per se itself, since nothing is existing of which esse per se itself is not the substance nd eternity, i.e., the participated form for subsisting and enduring. Whence since life is a certain existing thing, life also participates esse itself. From this therefore he concludes the principal proposition, namely that God fittingly and more principally before all other names is praised as existing, as if from the more worthy of God's gifts. And that he should be praised more principally in this way, is clear from Ex. 3, where it is said "The one who is sent me to you". (30-42)

Then when he says <For also pre-esse etc.>, he states the second reason, which is such: if some cause be named from its effects, it is necessary that it be named principally from the first effect through which it makes all others; but esse is of this kind; therefore God is named principally through esse itself. This therefore is what he says, that Godself prepossesses and super-possesses pre-esse and super-esse. (42-46)

Now it must be considered that in two ways one thing can be preferred to another, namely with respect to what is possessed and with respect to the mode of possessing it, just as one person who has greater knowledge than another is preferred to the other as far as the quantity of the knowledge possessed. But an angel is preferred to a human being in wisdom, not only as far as the quantity of wisdom, but also as far as the mode of having it, since a human being has it rationally, but an angel intellectually. Or it

exceeds in both ways, namely as far as that which it has and as far as the mode of having it. But as far as that which it has, it exceeds in two ways, namely according to order, since it has esse first and because of this he says 'pre-esse', and as far as dignity, since it has esse more excellently, and because of this he says 'superesse'. And similarly as far as the mode of having the notion of order and dignity can be understood, and for this reason he says 'pre-having and super-having'. Thus therefore God, more eminently having esse from Godself, through a certain similitude among other effects first makes to be what is, i.e., esse itself according to itself, and through esse itself God makes to subsist all things which are in any mode: for through this everything is caused by God, that its esse is from God. And not only other caused existents participate esse, but also the principles themselves of existents participate esse in so far as they are and are principles. And first it befits them to be according to themselves and afterwards that they are principles of others. (46-59)

Also if someone wants to say, according to the opinion of the Platonists, that life per se, i.e., a certain life separated under God, is the principle of living things in so far as they are living, and of similar things similitude per se, and similarly of all other participations, whatever participate this or that or both or many, always you will find that things of this kind, although they are participated by others, nevertheless themselves also participate esse itself, and first they are understood as participating esse, then that they are principles of others, in that they are participated by others. But this also can be understood in that life per se is understood to be the life itself which inheres in living things, which is the formal principle to living things, and similarly of the others. If therefore those which are principles of others are not except through participation of being, much more so those which participate them are not except through participation of esse itself. And this is clear that God through esse itself causes all things. From which he concludes the principal intention and says that God, who is goodness per se, proposing first, i.e., granting, to created things this gift which is esse per se, is praised by this name 'Qui est' as if by the more worthy and first of God's participations. (60-71)

V - 4

<And it is from him and in him etc.> After Dionysius shows that all existents are universally from God, here he intends to show that all things universally are in God. And concerning this he does two things: first he proposes what

he intends; second he shows the proposition, <For also in unity etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore first that not only from the goodness of God itself, but also in it is esse itself per se, which is a participation of God, and all principles of existents and all existents, both substances as well as accidents, and all things in any mode are contained under esse, even imperfect beings, as being in potency and motion and others of this kind. And lest someone should believe that these things in this mode are in God as they are in themselves, he consequently excludes this. For in themselves all creatures are finite; but in God they are infinite, since in God they are the divine essence itself; and for this reason he says 'and this incomprehensibly'. Again in themselves they have opposition and diversity; but in God they are conjoined simultaneously; and for this reason he says 'and conjoined'. Again in themselves they have multitude; but in God they are one; and for this reason he adds 'and singularly', i.e., unitedly. (4-12)

Then when he says <For also in unity etc.>, he proves the proposition. And first through examples; second through reason, <For the principle of existents is etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he states the examples; second he argues from the examples, <Therefore nothing is unfitting etc.> (12-15)

Concerning the first he states four examples, the first of which is from unity and number. And he says that every number uniformly preexists in unity, since unity is virtually every number, as Boethius says in the Arithmetica. But he says 'uniformly', since everything which is in another is in it through the mode of that in which it is; whence also number existing in unity is in it through the mode of unity; and this is what he says 'uniformly'. Again unity has in itself every number, since all properties of all numbers in some mode are found in unity: for whether we take squared numbers or cubed numbers or any other figures of numbers, in whatever disposition of numbers unity is found first. And again it must be considered that every number is one in unity itself, but as much as it further recedes from unity the more it is distinguished and is drawn into multitude. (15-24)

He cites a second example from a center. And he says that all lines which are drawn to the circumference simultaneously exist in the center as in a common principle; and that sign, i.e., point, which is called the center, has in itself uniformly all lines conjoined, both in each other and in the principle from which they proceed, namely that from one principle they are produced into multitude; thus

their multitude is terminated at the center as at a terminus. And it must be considered that lines which are united perfectly in the center itself, equally receding from the center are equally distant from each other. And this must be said simply, that in so far as they are nearer to the center they are thus more united both to the center itself and to each other; but the more distant they are from the center the more distant they also are from each other, as it is also the case with number, that the more it recedes from unity the more it is multiplied. (24-32)

He cites a third example from universal nature, which according to Plato is some separated substance, but according to Aristotle is some virtue of the first natural body. But in whatever way universal nature is understood, it is clear that in the universal nature of all natures the notions of every particular nature are united, not through a mode of confusion, as stones are united in a heap, but through the mode of a certain union: just as if we should say that the notions of generables virtually exist in the sun and all notions of members virtually exist in the seed. (32-38)

He cites a fourth example from the soul, which is the cause of the body, both as efficient cause and as form and as end, as is said in II De anima; and thus in the soul as in a cause all virtues of the parts of animals commonly preexist, by which it is provided to the whole body. For all virtues are based in the soul as in a common basis. (38-41)

Therefore from these examples he concludes further that we can from the foregoing, as from certain obscure similitudes, i.e., deficient from the divine representation, ascend to the universal cause of all through the similitude of particular causes, so that in this way, with the eyes of the mind transcending all mundane things, we might contemplate all things to be simply in God, who is the cause of all, and that those things which are contrary to each other, as they are in their natures, preexist in God uniformly and unitedly. For the proportion of a particular cause to its effects is the same as the proportion of a universal cause to all things. (41-46)

Then when he says <For the principle etc.>, he proves the same through reason, through which the aforementioned proof is confirmed. For all multiplicities which are from one principle preexist unitedly in the first principle. Thus therefore it is clear that all things are in God unitedly, since God is the principle of all. But in this causality of God he first posits those things which pertain to esse itself. And he says that from God is the esse itself of things and all existents which are in any mode. But to esse

pertains also the principle of being and the end, since it is found in all existents; and for this reason he says that from God is every principle and every end. Second he states those things which pertain to life. And he says that from God is all life and immortality, which is an indeficiency of life. Third he states those things which pertain to wisdom. And he says that from God is all wisdom. And since it pertains to wisdom to ordain, he adds 'and every order and all harmony', which is befitting to order. Fourth he states those things which pertain to virtue. And he says that from God is every virtue. But it pertains to virtue that something is preserved from injury, and regarding this he says 'all guarding'; and that it be established in those things which befit it, and regarding this he says 'every collocation'; and that it diffuse those things which something has, and regarding this he says 'every distribution'. Fifth he states those things which pertain specifically to cognition; whence he says 'every intellect' regarding the angels; 'all speech', i.e., reason, regarding humans; 'all sense' regarding animals; 'every habit' in which is perfected the cognitive or appetitive reason. Sixth he posits those things which pertain to bodies; and he says 'every station', i.e., rest, and 'every motion'. Seventh he posits those things which pertain to the one; and he says 'every union' universally; 'every concretion' regarding corporeal union; 'all friendship' regarding affective union; 'all concord' regarding the union of conceptions and statements. Finally he posits those things which pertain to the multitude; and he says 'every discretion', i.e., distinction; and 'every definition', i.e., determination, of each one: for whatever is determined in itself is so through the fact that it is distinct from others. And not only are these things from God, but also whatever other things pertain to esse by which beings are informed. (47-68)

V - 5

<And from the same cause of all etc.> After Dionysius shows God to be the universal cause of all being, here he shows that God is the cause of all particular beings as they are in their proper natures. And it is divided into three parts: in the first he shows the proposition; in the second he explains the meaning of exemplars, <But exemplars etc.>, in the third he recapitulates, <Therefore all existents etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows that the proper natures of things are from God; second he infers a corollary from what was said, <And because of this from the expressions etc.>; third he shows it through an example, <For if our sun etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he states that every grade of beings is from God; second that even common esse itself is from God, <And certain dignities etc.> Concerning the first he does

three things: first he distinguishes the grades of beings, saying that they are from God; second he subdistinguishes the grades of the supreme beings, <And the most holy and most advanced etc.>; third he distinguishes the grades of inferior beings, <And souls and all others etc.> (1-12)

He says therefore first that from the universal cause of all, which is God, the substances of angels are similar to God, which are intelligibles in so far as they are immaterial and are intellectual in so far as they have virtue of understanding themselves and others. And this is the first grade of substances, which are neither bodies nor are united to bodies. The second grade is of substances which are not bodies, but are united to bodies, and regarding this he says 'and of souls'. The third grade is of corporeal substances, and regarding this he says 'and of every mundane nature'. In the fourth grade of beings are accidents which are in nine genera. The fifth grade is of those which are not in the nature of things but in thought alone, which are called beings of reason, as genus, species, opposition, and things like these. And regarding these two grades he says that from God there are some things in whatever mode which are said to be in others, as accidents, or to be according to thought, as beings of reason. (12-21)

Then when he says <And the most holy etc.>, he distinguishes the grades of the supreme beings, i.e. , of the angels, who are distinguished in three hierarchies. Therefore regarding the angels of the supreme hierarchy, he says that both from and in the same universal cause of all the virtues of the supreme angelic hierarchy have both esse and conformity to God, which are most holy because of perfect conjunction to God and most advanced because of the altitude by which they are supereminent to others, and are collocated as it were in the vestibules of the supersubstantial divine Trinity. For it is the statement of Dionysius, as is clear in the thirteenth chapter of the Angelic Hierarchy, that the angels of the supreme hierarchy are not sent out to exterior things, and thus constituted in the hiddenness of the highest divine contemplation they are said to always assist, in the similitude of ministers who always remain with the king, keeping watch in his houses. But regarding the angels of the second hierarchy he says that the virtues of the middle angelic hierarchy, which are subjected to the aforementioned virtues, subjectedly, i.e., in an inferior mode, have esse from God. But regarding the angels of the lowest hierarchy he says that the angelic virtues have esse from God extremely, i.e., in the lowest mode. But extreme and low are said in angels in comparison to superiors, but in comparison to us they are supermundane, and above the mode of mundane things they participate the goodness of God. (21-34)

Then when he says <And souls etc.>, he distinguishes certain grades in inferiors things, namely in souls and in corporeal substances. And he does this in two ways: first according to the order which is between esse and well being. And this is what he says, that souls and all other existents below souls have esse and well being and are denominated existents and good existents in so far as they have esse and well being from the first being, and in so far as they are in the first being both beings and good beings; and this is for the same reason according to which this was said of the angels. Second he shows the grade in these as far as the progress of being; for things of this kind begin to be from the first being itself as from a first principle; and in the first principle itself they are kept, i.e., preserved, as in a first principle which is the cause not only makes esse but preserves in esse, and to the same first being are terminated all things as to an ultimate end. But grades of this kind are attributed to inferior substances in so far as they are subjected to change, through which they begin to be and are improved according to the procession from esse into well being. (35-45)

Then when he says <And certain dignities etc.>, he shows that God is the cause of common esse itself. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows that esse itself is common to all things; second he shows how common esse itself is related to God, <But also esse itself etc.> (45-48)

He says therefore first that God distributes to superior substances certain more noble properties of being because of which superior substances are called eternal, as if always existing, according to the Psalm "Lift up you eternal gates". But they are called eternal since they participate some eternity, not because they always were, but because from the time they began to be they never cease to be. And although dignities of these kinds of being befit superior substances as such, nevertheless to be itself is not removed from all existents, since nothing can be called existing unless it has esse. (48-54)

Then when he says <But also esse itself etc.>, he shows how common esse is related to God. And he says that common esse itself is from the first being, which is God. And from this it follows that common esse is otherwise related to God than to other existents in three respects. First in that other existents depend on common esse, but not God; rather common esse depends from God; and this is what he says, that common esse itself is of Godself as far as depending from God, and Godself is not of being, i.e., of common esse itself, as far as depending from it. Second in that all existents are contained under common esse itself, but not God; rather common esse is contained under God's virtue, since the

divine virtue is extended more than created esse itself; and this is what he says, that common esse is in Godself as contained in a container and conversely God is not in that which is esse. Third in that all other existents participate that which is esse, but not God; rather created esse itself is a certain participation of God and God's similitude; and this is what he says, that common esse has God, namely God, as participating God's similitude, but God does not have esse as if participating esse itself. And from this it is clear that Godself is the eternity of created esse itself, i.e., its duration, (this is the notion of duration), and God is also its principle and measure, nevertheless thus that Godself is existing before all substance and before all being and before all eternity; and not only is God before duration and order, but also causality, since God is the substantifier of all things as the cause of subsisting to all things, and God is the principle of being to all things and the middle, in that duration and procession of all things is from God, and God is also the end to which all things tend. (54-71)

Then when he says <And because of this from the expressions etc.>, he infers a conclusion from what was said. And he says that because of this, that God is the principle of all, in holy scripture Godself, who truly preexists to all things, is multiply praised according to every notion of existents. For it is said of God that God was and is and will be, Apoc. 1, through which is understood what was made, i.e., the past, and what is, i.e., the present, and what will become, i.e., the future. This must not be understood as if it should subject the divine esse to time, but through this is signified to those who are able to understand divine things, as it befits God, that every esse according to every notion of being supersubstantially exists in God as in one who is the cause of all existents. God's esse is not finite through some nature determined to genus and species, so that it could be said that it is this and not that, as even spiritual substances are determinate; nor also through place, so that it could be said that God is here and not there, as is the case with corporeal things; but God is all things as the cause of all, i.e., God prepossesses the esse of all things in Godself, and in God are comprehended and prepossessed the principles and ends of all beings, nevertheless not in the same mode as in the things themselves; rather God is above all things as existing supereminently before all things. And since all things are in God in some way, as if comprehending in Godself all things, simultaneously all things are predicated of God and at the same time all things are removed from God, since God is nothing of all things, but above all things, as it is said that God is of every figure in so far as all things preexist in God and nevertheless God is without figure,

since God does not have esse in the mode of figured things; and for the same reason God is of every beauty and nevertheless without beauty, namely in so far as God in Godself incomprehensibly and excellently pre-receives principles, media, and ends, not according to some composition, but in that God according to a single unity infuses esse into all things, by shining upon them, apart from any stain, for God is not altered by altering as occurs in corporeal things. (71-90)

Then when he says <For if our sun etc.>, he exhibits what he had said through a sensible example. And he says that our sensible sun, existing as a single and uniform light, by infusing into all things renovates all sensible things, both substances and qualities, generating some anew from the corruption of others, as appears in plants; and it nourishes all living things; and it keeps, i.e., preserves, universally all things, living as well as non living; and it perfects them, i.e., leads them to their due perfection; and it discerns, i.e., it distinguishes the diversity of sensibles; and it unites them, constituting one from many; and it makes plants dried out through cold to bloom again, and makes them to germinate; and plants and animals are generated by its virtue; and it changes those things which are changed in the nature of things; and it collocates, i.e., makes firm, everything in its place or even in its principles; again from plants it makes fruit and seeds and other plants to be produced; and it moves upward the elements from the roots of the plants to their highest points; and it vivifies all that live; and every one of all natural bodies according to its properties participates the virtue of one and the same sun. (90-102)

From this it is clear that one and the same sun in itself causally pre-receives uniformly, i.e., according to its virtue, those things which are participated by diverse things; for effects would not participate a cause unless the cause should prepossess in itself causally those things which belong to the effects. The proportion of a particular cause to its particular effects and of a universal cause to its effects is the same; rather a universal cause flows into its effects more than a particular cause. If therefore in the sun according to its one virtue all its effects preexist uniformly, much more so must it be conceded that in God, who is the cause both of the sun itself and of all existents, the exemplary reasons of all beings preexist according to a supersubstantial unity, namely which exceeds the unities of all substances. For thus all things preexist in God as God is productive of all; but God produces all substances according to a virtue by which God exceeds all substances; whence it follows that all things preexist in God according to one virtue supersubstantially. (102-112)

V - 6

<But we say exemplars to be etc.> After Dionysius shows God to be the cause of all beings according to their proper natures, here he explains the meaning of exemplars of things according to which all things seem to be produced in their proper natures. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows that there are exemplars of things; second he excludes an error, <But if Clement the philosopher etc.> (1-5)

Concerning the first it must be considered that the Platonists, positing God to be the cause of all esse, since they believed that the same thing could not be the cause of a plurality of things in terms of their properties by which they differed, but only in terms of what is common to all, posited certain secondary causes through which things are determined to their proper natures which commonly receive esse from God, and these causes they called the exemplars of things, just as they said the exemplar of human being to be a certain separated Human Being, which is the cause of humanity to all singular human beings; and similarly concerning others. But Dionysius, just as he said that God is the cause of all common esse, he thus said that God is the cause of the properties of each one; whence it follows that in Godself are the exemplars of all beings. This must be understood in this way: for God, even if God is one in God's essence, nevertheless by understanding God's own unity and virtue knows whatever exists in God virtually. Thus therefore God knows things of diverse properties are able to proceed from Godself; therefore the things of this kind which God knows to be able to be produced from Godself are called rationes of the intellect. But not all rationes of this kind can be called exemplars: for an exemplar is that for the imitation of which another is; but not all things which God knows to be able to be produced from Godself does God will to produce in the nature of things; therefore only those rationes of the intellect in God can be called exemplars, for the imitation of which God wills to produce things in esse, just as an artist produces artifacts for the imitation of forms of art which he conceives in his mind, which also can be called examples of artificial things. This is therefore what he says, that we say exemplars are not things outside of God, but in the divine intellect itself certain intellectual rationes of existents, which are productive of substances and preexist in God singularly, i.e., unitedly and not according to some diversity. And rationes of this kind holy scripture calls predefinitions, or predestinations, according to Rom. 8 "Those God predestinated, these are the ones God called"; and it calls them also good volitions, according to the Psalm "Great are the works of the Lord, exquisite in all his volitions".

These predefinitions and volitions are distinctive of beings and effective of them, since according to rationes of this kind the supersubstantial essence of God predetermined and produced all things. (5-27)

Then when he says <But if Clement the philosopher etc.>, he excludes the contrary error of those who posit the exemplars of things to be certain supreme separated beings, and he imputes this error to a certain Clement the philosopher. And he says that, if that philosopher approved the opinion that in some respect those things which are more principal in existents are called exemplars of inferiors, reason does not proceed in it through proper names both perfect and simple. For an exemplar is that to which another is, and thus an exemplar is imitated; but things were not made so that they should imitate some superior beings, but so there is fulfilled in them what the divine wisdom ordained; whence the exemplars of things are not properly speaking any of the principals of things. Similarly also they are not perfect exemplars, since even they need other exemplars. But they are not even simplicities, since they are simultaneously exemplars and exemplified. But even if it be conceded that one could rightly say that superiors are the exemplars of inferiors in so far as inferiors imitate superiors as far as they can, nevertheless the statement of holy scripture must be remembered which says: I will not show to you those things, namely superior beings, so that you might be after them, but so that by knowing them according to our proportion we might be elevated, as we are able, to knowing the cause of all. Thus therefore it can be conceded that they are exemplars, not that we might finally be conformed to them, but so that through consideration of them we might tend toward God to whom we ought to be conformed. But that statement of holy scripture is taken from what is said in Deut. 4 "Lest perhaps', it says, "your eyes being elevated to heaven, you might see the sun and moon and all the stars of heaven, and deceived by error you might reverence and adore them". (27-42)

Then when he says <Therefore all existents etc.>, he concludes the things said above, showing how God has a universal relation to all things. He concludes therefore first from the foregoing that all things are to be attributed to God, not according to some composition, but according to some separated unity. And this is because God begins to communicate God's perfection to others from the procession of being itself, through which things are substantified, and from the procession of goodness itself; for these are found first among those things which proceed from God into creatures, esse and the good; for posterior to these are life and wisdom. And the procession of this kind of esse and goodness goes through all beings, since all are

beings and goods, but not all are living and wise; and thus all things are filled from the participation of God's essence and thus in all existents God exults through a certain exuberance. Since therefore thus the divine essence bestows esse to all things, it prepossesses all things in itself, not according to some composition, but according to the most simple unity, refuting all plurality. Thus therefore the first universal relation is that the divine essence prepossesses all things in itself. The second is that it contains and preserves all things in esse according to its own simple infinite unity. The third universal relation is that, existing singular and one, it is participated by all things, just as one voice existing the same is participated by many hearers; for it is one voice according to principle but multiple according to diffusion. But from these he concludes the fourth universal relation, namely that the divine essence is the principle and end of all existents; not that it is generated through existents, as health is generated through medicine, but as that which preexists in existents: a principle is of all things as the productive cause of things, but an end as that by whose grace all things come to be. And it is the terminus of all things; for the termination of any motion is in the divine essence, and from its infinity is derived every infinity and every end, as from an exceeding cause which produces opposites, since the limits of neither are appropriated as if to one of them. (43-63)

The reason why it can be the cause of all is this: since it prepossesses all existents in its unity and since anything causes something in its own similitude, it follows that that which has all things in itself makes all things to subsist, and it is present to all things and everywhere, not according to its diverse parts, but according to one and the same respect, and according to the same it is all things in so far as all things virtually preexist in its simple essence; and similarly according to the same it proceeds to all things in a causal way and nevertheless remains in itself, existing immutably in the act of causing; and thus also it is standing in so far as it is not changed, and motion in so far as it diffuses its similitude to all things. And all these things which we have affirmed of God can also be negated from God, since they do not befit God in the way they are found in created things and as they are understood and signified by us. Whence, although God is said to be the principle and end of all, nevertheless God has neither principle nor medium nor end. And although God is said to be present to all and everywhere, nevertheless God is not in something of existents in the way in which one effect is in another. And although God is said to be every existent, nevertheless God is not something existing of the number of created existents. And universally nothing of the

number of created things befit God, neither eternal existents, i.e., above time, nor also temporal subsistences; rather God is separated through a certain eminence both from time which measures motion and changeable things and from eternity which measures esse itself and those things which exist immutably, and also God is separated from those which are in eternity and time through a certain eminence. And for this reason eternity itself and those which are and any other measures of beings and those which are measured by a measure of this kind are through God as if having the similitude of the first exemplar and from God as from the first active principle. (63-79)

BOOK SIX

VI - 1

<But of these etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of being, here he explains the meaning of life, since the procession of life is less common than the procession of esse itself. And concerning this he does two things: first he proposes how the causality of all life is manifested in God by the name of life; second he shows the causality of divine life, <And of immortals etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore first that these things which pertain to being were said more diffusely and diligently in other books; for he made many books which we do not have. But now God is to be praised through in that God is called eternal life, according to I John, last chapter "This is the true God and life eternal", as that from which is life itself per se, i.e., common life itself, and every particular life; and from the divine life itself "to live" is disseminated, i.e., distributed, to all things which participate life in any mode according to the property of each one, as if he should say that God is called eternal life in so far as God is the cause of both common and particular life and of all living things. (5-10)

Then when he says <And of the immortal angels etc.>, he exhibits the causality of the divine life. And concerning this he does three things: first he exhibits the universal causality of God with respect to life; second he shows God's causality with respect to every property of living, <And he gives first of life per se etc.>; third he shows what is the relation of any life to the first life, <And whether you say intellectual etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows the causality of God with respect to the highest life, which is that of the angels; second with respect to common life, <And as in existing etc.>; third with respect to lower life, <From it also souls etc.> (11-17)

Concerning the first it must be considered that those are properly called living in corporeal things which have motion from themselves, and are not moved by something extrinsic, as animals and plants. And since every operation is in some

way motion, whatever has operation from itself, not acted upon by other exterior things or moved in order to be acted upon, these are called living. And since the operation of a thing follows upon its essence, two things are understood in the name of life, namely the esse itself of living things, as that by which it is that it befits it to operate through itself, and because of this the operation or motion of a living thing which is in it is through itself. Therefore regarding the first of these, he says that from the divine life itself as from the first active principle and because of it as because of an end, the life and immortality of the angels and of those that live immortally not only have esse but also to subsist. But regarding the second, he says that from the divine life is the incorruptibility itself of the sempiternal angelic motion, i.e., of the operation of the angels lasting perpetually. And since esse is always in them and it can operate, they can be called immortal, since the fact that they are immortal and live perpetually they do not have from themselves, but from the first cause which is effective and preservative of all life. But that is properly and truly immortal, which does not need something extrinsic in order that it might live always, but it always has "to live" from itself, and thus only God is called immortal, according to Tim. 1 "To the king of the ages, immortal, invisible, God alone". (17-30)

Then when he says <And as in existing etc.>, he shows the divine causality with respect to common life. And he says that, as was said above, that the first being itself is eternity, i.e., its measure and cause which is esse per se, i.e., common esse itself, thus here it must be said that the divine life, which is supereminently living, is the productive and preserving cause of life per se itself, i.e., of common life; and consequently every particular life and every vital motion and every principle of any life proceeds from the divine life, which is above all life. (31-36)

Then when he says <From it also souls etc.>, he shows the divine causality with respect to inferior life. And he says that from the divine life also human souls have to live incorruptibly; from the divine life are all animals which live by sensitive life and all plants which have life according to an ultimate resonance, i.e., according to an extreme and lower participation of life, since life does not proceed beyond plants. But when participated life is destroyed in creatures all life is destroyed according to the doctrine of scripture, where it is said "You take away their spirits and they fall away and they are reverted into their dust". But in so far as those which also through infirmity of nature fall away from participation of life are once more converted to life, as animals again come to be or any other kind of living things, as is clear in plants and

in animals generated from putrefaction; and because of this it is added in the Psalm "Send forth your spirit and they will be created and you will renovate the face of the earth". (36-45)

Then when he says <And he gives first etc.>, he shows the causality of divine life as far as the properties of any kind of life; and he does this because of some who said that God is the common cause of life, while nevertheless the particular properties of living are from proper causes, through which an effect of a common cause is determined to its proper species. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows the causality of divine life as far as the properties of living, which are in the highest living things, namely the angels; second as far as the properties of living which are in human beings, <But giving also to humans etc.>; third as far as the properties of living which are in lower living things, namely animals and plants. (45-51)

He says therefore first that God not only gives to common life that it is life, but God also gives to every particular life that there is properly that which befits it according to nature, just as to the celestial lives of the angels, as far as the esse of living things, God gives immortal life: first it is immaterial since they do not have life adjoined to matter; second it is deiform life since they are conformed to the divine life from the fact that they live apart from matter; third it follows that they have invariable life since the subject of variation and motion is matter. Also regarding the operation of life, he posits three things which are contrary to what is in us. First of all intellectual operation is weak in us for the comprehension of the truth, and against this he says that they have strong motion, i.e., intellectual operation; second intellectual operation in us can be perverted in false opinion, and against this he says that they have indeclinable motion; third intellectual operation in us can not be continuous since we can not always and continuously meditate, and against this he says that they have sempiternal motion. And since these properties clearly appear in the blessed angels, lest someone should want to exclude the life of demons from the causality of divine life, he adds that divine life is superextended through the mode of influence and causality, and an abundance of God's goodness, even to the life of demons, which could not be from another cause except from the divine life, from which it has it that it is life and that it is permanently preserved in esse. (52-66)

<But giving also to human beings etc.> Here he shows the divine causality as far as the properties of human life. And first as far as the life of nature; second as far as the life of grace, when he says <And by superemanation etc.>; third as far as the life of glory, which will be in the resurrected ones, <And what is more divine etc.> (1-4)

But natural life in humans is conformed in some way to angelic life in that it is intellectual, and in some way it differs from it in so ar as it is a life conjoined with matter. And for this reason he says that the divine life gives to human beings, as if commixed from spiritual and corporeal nature, life in the similitude of the angels, not perfectly, but as far as it is fitting. (5-8)

Then as far as the life of grace he says that the divine life, through a superemanation of its goodness, even while we are receding from it through sin, converts and recalls to itself, according to Lam. 4 "Convert us to yourself O Lord and we will be converted". (8-10)

But regarding the life of glory of the resurrected he adds that the divine life assures that it will transfer us totally, i.e., souls and the same bodies which now are conjoined to our souls, to perfect life, i.e., blessed and immortal; and this he says is more divine, since it is more significant of divine virtue. And these things to the ancients commonly appeared beyond nature, namely that dead bodies would rise up; but to me and to you, i.e., to all the faithful, according to the truth of the faith there appears something divine and above nature, namely what is known by us in these particular things, but not beyond the omnipotent nature of the divine life, since to the divine life, which is naturally the principle of all lives and maximally of the divine lives of which it is the immediate principle, no life is beyond nature or above nature, since by its virtue it submits to give life to whom it wills. Whence the most stupid words of Simon, who spoke against the resurrection, by far are to be repelled from the divine church and from your holy soul, namely lest in some way you might acquiesce in them. For although he was reputed to be wise in these sensible and natural things, nevertheless it was concealed to him, that it is not necessary for one who has knowledge of these sensibles to use reason, which is taken from things apparent according to sense, in order to impugn the universal cause of all, which is hidden because of its excellence, since the virtue of a universal cause can not be comprehended or measured through those things which appear in the senses. And it must be said of Simon that when something is said to be against nature this is understood, namely that it is against the most manifest reason of the senses, but to the hidden and universal cause of all itself

nothing can be contrary, since all things whatsoever that are are derived from it. (10-26)

Then when he says <From him they are vivified etc.>, he shows the causality of the divine life with respect to inferior living things, namely animals and plants. And he says that from the divine life both all animals and also plants are vivified interiorly, and exteriorly they bloom. For whatever appears in them exteriorly pertaining to the beauty of life, is derived wholly from the divine life. (27-30)

Then when he says <And whether intellectual etc.>, he shows the relation of the divine life to all lives. And first he posits two relations of the divine life to all lives, of which the first is that it is the cause of every life; and this is what he says, that whether you should say intellectual life as is in the angels, or rational as is in human beings, or sensible as is in animals, and augmentative as is in plants, or any kind of life whatsoever, even if there should be other modes of living; and not only every life, but also every principle of life and every substance having life from the divine life, which is above every life, living substances have that they might live and principles of life have that they might vivify. The second relation is that every life preexists in the divine life; and this is what he says, that all the aforementioned lives preexist causally in the divine life itself, not according to some composition, but uniformly according to the unity and simplicity of the divine life. (30-40)

Secondly, <For also superliving etc.>, he illustrates the aforementioned two relations. And he says, in order to show the first relation, that the divine life, which is above every life and which rules every life, is the cause of every life as far as the first origin of life, and is generative of life, since that one living thing can be generated from another living thing is from the divine life; and it fulfills life, since that a living thing is lead from the imperfect to the perfect is from the divine life; and it is divisive of life, since the diversities of living things proceed from the virtue of the divine life. But to exhibit the second relation, namely that every life preexists in it, he adds that the divine life is praised by every life because of its fecundity by which it produces all lives. And this befits the divine life in so far as it is most plentiful, as if not contracted to some species of life, but having an amplitude comprehensive of every life; and thence it is that it is comprehended and praised by the contemplation of every life. (40-49)

Third, <And as not needing etc.>, he states the conditions of divine life through which it differs from others. And first there is our life, needing many things for the conservation of life, as nourishment and other things of this kind; and in order to remove this he says that the divine life is not in need, but more so is superabundantly full. But second that which lives in these inferior things does not live through itself, but the body lives through the soul. But the divine life is living per se (since there is not in God something vivifying), and supereminently living or however else someone might praise the divine life with human words, supereminently living and ineffable. (49-55)

BOOK SEVEN

VII - 1

<But act if it seems etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of being and life, here he explains the meaning of wisdom and those things pertaining to cognition which are adjoined to wisdom. And concerning this he does three things: first he explains the meaning of wisdom and mind; second, reason, <But God is praised as reason etc.>; third, truth and faith, <This reason is simple etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows how wisdom is to be understood in God; second he explains what he had said, <For not God as such etc.> (1-6)

But it must be considered that prior things are always preserved in posterior things. But the Good, according to what was said before, is prior to being with respect to causality, since the Good extends its causality even to non-being; but being is extended to more things than life and life than wisdom, since there are some things which do not live and some live that do not know. And this Dionysius subtly insinuates; for divine life, since it presupposes the Good according to intellect, he names Good; but since it presupposes immutable esse, he names it eternal. But since wisdom is not absent from the divine life, he praises it with wisdom, and this in three ways: first, since the divine live is wise; and so that one should not understand that it is wise participatively, he adds that it is wisdom per se itself; second that the divine life is the cause producing in esse all wisdom;. and third, since the divine life is above all wisdom, which pertains to speculation, and above all prudence, which pertains to action. (6-16)

Then when he says <For not God as such etc.>, he explains the three things already mentioned. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows that the divine wisdom is above every wisdom; second that it is the cause of every wisdom, <Therefore this irrational etc.>; third he shows how God is wise by knowing others, <But thus God who is superwise etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows the excess of the divine wisdom; second he shows how we should dispose ourselves toward the divine

exceeding wisdom, <But what in other places I said etc.> (17-22)

Concerning the first he does three things: first he proposes what he intends, namely that God is not simply called superabundantly full of all wisdom and that God has infinite prudence, but God is also said to be established above all that seems to pertain to cognition, namely above reason and above mind, i.e., intellect, and above wisdom which is the perfection of the intellect. Second, <And this supernaturally etc.>, he proves the excess of the divine wisdom through authority. And he says that this excess of the divine wisdom Paul, while understanding in a supernatural mode, who was a divine man by participation of divine wisdom and was the sun, i.e., the illustrious leader both of Dionysius as well as of his leader, i.e., Hierotheus, who was his teacher, says in I Cor. 1 that "the foolishness of God is wiser than humans". Third, <Not only since etc.>, he expounds the cited authority. (22-30)

Now it must be considered that there is found in scripture a twofold mode to signify the excellence of divine things. For since those things which pertain to privation and defect in created things are attributed by comparison to the divine excellence, as if we should say that every justice of human being is impurity in comparison to the justice of God, thus similarly we can say that every human deliberation and cognition is reputed to be a certain error in comparison to the stability and permanence of divine and perfect cognition, which he names plurally because of knowing plurality. In another mode it is customary in divine scripture that those things which are said privatively are attributed to God because of God's excess: just as God who is brightest light is called invisible; and the one who is laudable and nameable by all is called ineffable and unnameable; and the one who is present to all things is called incomprehensible as if absent from all things; and the one who can be found by all things is called non-investigable; and this is entirely because of this excess. Thus therefore also the Apostle praises foolishness in God because of that which appears in God is in the wisdom of God beyond our reason and seems to us unfitting, while we can not comprehend the wisdom of God; and through this he elevates us to the divine truth, which is ineffable to us, since it exceeds all our reason. (30-43)

Then when he says <But what I said in other places etc.>, he says how we should dispose ourselves toward the excellence of the divine wisdom. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows how we might be deceived in the contemplation of divine wisdom. And he says that, as he said in his other books, while we desire to receive divine things

which are above us according to our mode, and while we rely on our reason which is fed by the senses from a principle, namely by collecting the truth from the senses, and while we want to compare divine things to the things which are known by us, by this we are deceived, wanting to scrutinize reason divine and ineffable to us according to that which appears to us through reason and sense. (43-50)

Second, <But it is necessary etc.>, he shows how we might avoid this deception. And he says that it is necessary to consider that our mind possesses two things in order to know: first it possesses natural intellective virtue through which it can look to intelligible things proportionate to it; but second it possesses a certain union to divine things through grace, which exceeds the nature of our mind, through which union human beings are conjoined through faith or some other cognition to those things which are above the natural virtue of mind. Therefore it is necessary that we understand divine things according to this union of grace, not by drawing divine things to those things which pertain to us, but rather by wholly standing outside ourselves in God, so that thus through the aforementioned union we might be totally deified. (50-57)

And since someone might say that this would be injurious to us, if we should desert ourselves, he thirdly excludes this, <For better etc.> And he says that, since God is better than us, it is better for us that we be of God through the union of grace and that we not be of ourselves, relying on our natural powers, than that we should be of ourselves. For in this way when we are made with God, i.e., we are united with God, the divine gifts which we cannot perceive would adhere to us, which would not occur if we neglected the union of God by inhering in ourselves. (57-62)

VII - 2

<Therefore this irrational and amental etc.> After he shows the excess of divine wisdom, here he shows its causality. And first in general; second in specific cases, <From it intelligibles etc.> (1-3)

He recollects therefore first the excess of the divine wisdom, saying that divine wisdom is praised excellently as irrational in so far as it exceeds reason, and as amental in so far as it exceeds mind or intellect, and as foolish in so far as it exceeds the habit of mind, namely wisdom. And he adjoins the causality of the divine wisdom, positing three conditions of this cause: first its causality, saying that the divine wisdom is a cause through some participation of its similitude of potencies both practical and cognoscitive, namely of mind, i.e., intellect; and of reason, which is of

intellects and habits practical and cognoscitive; namely of wisdom, which is the contemplative habit of mind, and prudence, which is right reason in acting. The second condition of this cause is that effects are predicated of it; for it is every consideration and nevertheless every cognition and prudence is from it. The third condition of this cause is that effects exist in it; for in the wisdom of God itself, which is Christ, "are all the treasures of wisdom and hidden knowledge", as the Apostle says in Col. 2. And these three conditions are the cause of a second: for this reason God is named from God's effects, since effects supereminently preexist in God. Whence regarding the abundance of wisdom and cognition in God he uses the name 'treasures'; but regarding the eminence of divine cognition, as it exceeds our intellect, he attributes to a treasure of this kind hiddenness. And this universal causality of divine wisdom he exhibits through the similitude of the foregoing, namely of goodness, essence, and life. And he says that, as was said in the foregoing, consequently here also it must be said that God, who is the supereminently and abundantly wise cause, as having all wisdom, is the cause that gives even esse by wisdom per se itself, as it is understood as a certain form, whether it be understood universally or particularly, as wisdom is said of this thing or that. (3-22)

Then when he says <From it intelligibles etc.>, he shows the causality of the divine wisdom in particular with respect to singulars. And first as far as the angels; second as far as the rational soul, <Because of the divine wisdom etc.>; third as far as sense, <But also someone would not sin etc.>; fourth as far as demons, in which is the depravity of a certain cognition, <And also demons etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he posits the procession of angelic cognition from God. And he says that from the divine wisdom itself the virtues of angelic minds, which also are intelligibles in act in so far as they are immaterial and they are intellectual in so far as they can understand, according to a certain participation of the divine similitude they have simple intellections according to the property of their knowledge and blessed intellections according to union with God. (22-31)

Second, <Not in divisible things etc.>, he shows the simplicity of the angelic intellect through remotion of those things which introduce composition in our intellect. But it must be considered that the composition of intellect in us is twofold: one pertains to the discovery of truth, the other pertains to judgement. In discovery, as if gathering together we proceed from many things to one, whether the many are called diverse sensibles through the experience of which we receive universal cognition, or the

many are called diverse signs from which by reasoning we come to the truth as such. But not only do we proceed from many and divisible things of this kind to one intelligible truth when we acquire first knowledge, but also, already having knowledge, we consider in the many and divisible things themselves what we hold in universal cognition through a certain application. But in judgement we proceed from some common principle to the aforementioned many and divisible things whether they be particulars or effects and signs. But excluding both of these from the angels, he says that the intellectual virtues of the angels do not gather together, as we do, the divine cognition, by considering divisible things which they know already or acquiring knowledge from divisible things of this kind: by divisibles, I say, or the senses, as far as sensibles, or by diffuse words, i.e., reasons, as another translation has it; for 'logos' in Greek signifies both reason and speech; and reason is called diffuse because of the procession from one into another. Nor also do the aforementioned intellectual virtues act similarly to us by moving from something common to the many and divisibility, but since they are pure from all materiality, through which they differ from sense and sensibles, and multitude, through which they differ from diffused reasons, they understand the intelligibles of divine things not sensibly or rationally, but intellectually; i.e., immaterially in contrast to sense, and uniformly in contrast to reason. (32-50)

Third, <And it is intellectual virtue itself etc.>, he designates the cause of excelling cognition in the angels: and first from the part of their nature. And he says that in the angels themselves there is a virtue and intellectual operation that is resplendent according to a purity pure and immaculate: pure through the removal of interior impurity; immaculate through the removal of exterior defilement. And this purity comes to them from two things: first from a certain natural simplicity and immateriality. And this befits the angelic intellects themselves, which he calls divine, because of nearness and likeness to God; and from this simplicity and immateriality they are rendered conspicuous, i.e., acutely intelligent. But secondly purity shines in them from the gift divinely given to them through which they are united to God, through which gift is given them their capability for the divine, i.e., to this which God is, and to the divine mind and reason, which exceeds all wisdom. Therefore purity and splendor of intellect are in them both from their simplicity and also from the gift of divine grace. (50-61)

Then when he says <Because of the divine wisdom etc.>, he shows how the rationality of souls is derived from the divine wisdom. And he says that because of the divine wisdom

also human souls have that they are rational. And to explain why they are called rational souls, he adds that they encircle around the truth of existents diffusively and circularly. For the truth of existents basically consists in the apprehension of the quiddity of things, which rational souls can not apprehend immediately through themselves, but they diffuse themselves through the properties and effects which encircle the essence of a thing, so that from these they might enter to pure truth. But they effect these things in a certain circle, while from the properties and effects they find the causes and from the causes they judge concerning effects. And since angelic minds according to a united and simple consideration see the truth of things, souls fall short of them in so far as through division and multitude of various things they are diffused in the cognition of the truth. But nevertheless since many things can roll together in one, just as when from many effects and properties they come to know the single essence of a thing, to the degree that souls are disposed worthily they have intellection in some way equal to the angels, namely according to the property and ability of souls. For the inquiry of reason is terminated at the simple understanding of the truth, as it begins from the simple understanding of the truth which is considered in first principles; and for this reason in the process of reason there is a certain convolution or circle, while reason beginning from one proceeding through many is terminated at one. (61-76)

Then when he says, <But also someone would not sin etc.>, he states that even sensitive cognition is derived from the divine wisdom. And he says that someone will not sin, as if diverting from the proposed intention according to which we intend to designate the procession of divine wisdom, if someone should say that the senses themselves are a certain resonance of the divine wisdom. For the lowest point of any procession is named a resonance in the similitude of what can be sensed internally from sound because of distance; for just as the lowest point of life is in plants, thus the lowest point of cognition is in sense. Now the divine wisdom is above all cognition: of which the first effect is the cognition of angelic intellect, which wholly consists in uniformity; the second effect is the cognition of reason, which rolls together many things into one; but the third effect is sensitive cognition, which is diffused around many things, but is not able to rise up to uniformity. (76-85)

Then when he says <And also the mind of demons etc.>, he shows that even the cognition of demons is derived from the divine wisdom. And he posits the cognition of demons in the last place, since it is depraved cognition, although according to the order of nature it is higher than the cognition of reason and sense. He says therefore that the

mind of demons, in so far as it retains the nature and virtue of mind, proceeds from the divine wisdom; but in so far as it has depraved cognition through an evil will, while the highest Good which it naturally desires it neither knows how to attain nor wills in a way that is necessary, in this regard it falls away from the divine wisdom; since this situation is not in them from God, but from free will. (85-91)

Finally he recapitulates what he had said. And he says what was said, that the divine wisdom is the principle from which the entire emanation of cognition begins and the cause itself pouring forth and substantifying, in so far as it makes wisdom to be in everything, and perfection, in so far as cognition leads to the perfect, and custodian, i.e., preservation, and end, since in this is terminated every cognition, i.e., that God is known. Therefore the divine wisdom is both the principle and cause of wisdom itself understood according to itself in common, and of every mind, i.e., intellect, as far as the angels, and of every reason as far as humans, and of every sense as far as animals. (91-97)

VII - 3

<But thus God who is superwise etc.> After Dionysius showed the eminence and causality of the divine wisdom, here he shows how God knows through the divine wisdom. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows how God knows; second how God is known, <Therefore it is necessary to inquire etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he proposes a doubt; second he solves it, <But what I said often etc.>; third from the posited solution he infers a certain conclusion, <Therefore the divine wisdom etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that, while God is above all wisdom, nevertheless God is praised as wisdom and as mind and as reason and as knower. But there is a doubt: how can God understand intelligibles, since God does not have intellectual operations; or how can God know sensibles, since God does not have sense, but is above sense, while nevertheless the holy expressions hand down that God knows all things and that nothing flees the divine cognition, according to Heb. 4 "everything is bare and open to his eyes and no creature is not in his vision". (7-12)

Then when he says <But what I said often etc.>, he solves the proposed doubt. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows how sense and intellect are removed from God; second how cognition befits God, <Why the divine

mind etc.>; third he proves it through authority, <And this I think to hand down etc.> (12-15)

He says therefore first that, as was often said, it is fitting that divine things be understood in so far as they befit God. For when it is said that God is without intellect and without sense, this not be understood according to defect, as if God is more deficient than those which have sense or intellect; rather it must be understood according to excess, namely since God exceeds all intelligible things: just as we also attribute to God irrationality, in so far as God is above reason, and we attribute to God imperfection, in so far as God is perfect above all and before all, and we attribute to God impalpable and invisible heat, in so far as God is light inaccessible, exceeding every light which can be seen by us either through sense or through intellect. (15-22)

Then when he says <Why the divine mind etc.>, he concludes from the premises that the divine mind by knowing all things contains them through a cognition separate from all things, namely since God's cognition is also above the cognition of intellect and above the cognition of sense in so far as it knows all things through the first cause of all things itself, first having in itself all knowledge, that all things have esse: just as it first had the knowledge of the angels, that the angels would come to be and also before, inwardly in God's own disposition God produced angels and everything else which would come to be in their proper natures, as if knowing all things, so that thus I might say, from the primordial principle of things itself; and through God's knowledge God leads all things to this that they subsist. (22-28)

Then when he says <And this I judge etc.>, he proves what he had said thought the authority of scripture. And he says that what was said is signified in holy scripture, when it is said that God knows all things before they become, and Eccl. 23 can be understood, where it is said "To the Lord our God, before they were created, all things are known". And he expounds this, saying that this is said because the divine mind knows all things, not because God acquires knowledge of things from things themselves, but from Godself and in Godself God prepossesses through the mode of a cause all knowledge and cognition and substance. And he says substance, since, as was said above in the chapter on being, in the divine esse itself all esse preexists: for otherwise God could not know all things through God's essence unless all things were in God causally. And since God knows all things through God's essence, it follows that God knows all things and contains them by knowing, not that God sends Godself out separately by seeing singulars as we separately

apply our intellect to diverse things, but through one containing of a cause, namely since by knowing one cause containing all things God knows all things: just as also light, if it were cognoscitive, would know darkness through itself, not receiving the cognition of darkness from something other than itself. But God is compared to creatures as a light to darkness, because of the deficiency of creatures from the divine light. (29-41)

Then when he says <Therefore the divine wisdom itself etc.>, he infers from the premises three conclusions. For it is clear that every cognition is according to the mode of that in which something is known, as every operation is according to the mode of the form by which something is operated. Therefore since the divine wisdom knows all things by knowing itself, as was said, and it is immaterial and indivisible and one, it follows that it knows material things immaterially and divisible things indivisibly and many things unitively, namely in so far as it knows all things and produces them through one thing which is its essence. For if effects can be known through a cause, it follows that, if God hands down esse to all things according to one cause which is God's essence, God would also know all things according to the same cause, just as what had proceeded from God and what preexisted in Godself beforehand would be in their proper natures. And thus it is clear that God does not take cognition of things from things themselves; rather to the knowers themselves God grants that they can know themselves and that some are known by others. (42-51)

He infers a second conclusion, <Therefore not God etc.> For if God by knowing Godself knows all things, it follows that there is not in God one cognition by which God knows Godself and another by which God commonly comprehends all things. For if it were the case that by knowing Godself God would not know all things, it would follow that even God's causality would be absent in some instances, namely thus that there would be some things not caused by God. Therefore as it is impossible that something be not caused by God, thus is it impossible that it not be known by God. (52-56)

He infers the third conclusion, <Thus therefore God etc.> For if the mode of cognition follows the principle of cognition, from which God does not receive the cognition of things from things themselves, it follows that God does not know existents through a cognition which is in the mode of existents, but through a cognition which is in a mode of God's own. Scripture even says this of the angels, that they know what things are in the earth, not such that they know sensibles through sense, but through their proper virtue and nature of their mind as they are assimilated to God. And

also through God's essence God knows all things, not only universals, but also singulars. For the virtue of the superior nature is greater and can through one thing know what the inferior knows through many. Therefore God, and even an angel through assimilation to God, knows through the mind not only universals, but also singulars, although a human being knows universals in intellect, but singulars by sense. (57-65)

VII - 4

<Afterwards it is necessary to inquire etc.> After Dionysius shows how God knows, here he shows how God is known. And concerning this he does three things: first he proposes a doubt; second he solves it, <Therefore is it true etc.>; third he infers a conclusion from what was said, <Because of which also in all things God etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore first that, since it was said that God knows all things through God's essence which is above intellect and sense and above all existents, it remains to be asked how we can know God, since God is not intelligible, but above intelligibles; nor is God sensible, but above sensibles; nor is God something of the number of existents, but above all existents. But all of our cognition is through intellect or sense, nor do we know anything except existents. (4-9)

Then when he says <Therefore is it true etc.>, he solves the proposed doubt. And since the question is lofty, he infers the solution under interrogation. The solution is therefore that we do not know God, not through God's nature, as if seeing God's essence itself -- for God's essence is unknown to every creature and exceeds not only sense, but also all human reason and also every angelic mind as far as the natural virtue of reason and mind -- whence it can not befit someone except by a gift of grace. Therefore we do not know God, seeing God's essence, but we know God from the order of the whole universe. For the universe of creatures itself is proposed to us by God that through it we might know God in so far as the ordained universe has certain images and similitudes, although imperfect ones, of divine things which are compared to it as principle exemplars, in the order we ascend through intellect according to our virtue to God, who is above all things. And this occurs in three modes: first and principally in the ablation of all things, namely in so far as nothing of these which we see in the order of creatures do we esteem to be God or something befitting God; but secondarily through excess, for we do not remove the perfections of creatures, as life, wisdom and things like these, from God because of some defect of God, but because God exceeds every perfection of the creature; for example we

remove from God wisdom, since God exceeds all wisdom; third according to the causality of all things, while we consider that whatever is in creatures proceeds from God as from a cause. Therefore thus our cognition is disposed in a mode contrary to the cognition of God: for God knows creatures through God's nature, but we know God through creatures. (9-25)

Then when he says <Because of which also in all things etc.>, he infers a conclusion from what was said. And concerning this he does three things: first he infers the conclusion; second he shows how the conclusion follows from the premises, <For also these rightly etc.>; third he clarifies something which he had supposed, <And also from all things etc.> (26-28)

He says therefore first that, since we ascend from creatures into God in the ablation of all things and in excess and in the cause of all, therefore God is known in all things as in effects and without all things, as removed from all things and exceeding all things; and because of this God is also known through our cognition, since whatever occurs in our cognition we receive as deduced from God; and again God is known through our ignorance, namely in so far as to know God is to know that we ourselves are ignorant of what God is. (29-34)

And what he had said in general concerning cognition, he explains through parts, adding that there are intellect and speech (or better, reason, as another translation has it), of Godself, and knowledge, which is the conjunction of intellect and reason. And regarding sensitive cognition, he adds 'and touch', which is the sense common to all animals; and he adds that it is common, when he adds 'and sense'. And regarding these which imply a deficient cognition, he adds 'and opinion', which falls short of science, 'and fantasy', which falls short of the certitude of sense. And he adds those things which pertain to the manifestation of cognition, when he says 'and name', which is the sign of intellect, and all other things which pertain to cognition or signification. And on the contrary God is neither understood nor sensed nor spoken nor named. And how all of these is true, he shows adding: God is not something of existents, but above all existents, and since existents are known through intellect and the other things already mentioned, God is known by none of the aforementioned things through the cognition of some existents. On the other hand God is all in all causally, though God is nevertheless none of those things which are in things essentially; and since whatever exists in things is known either by intellect or sense or any of the aforementioned things, in all of those

known things God is somehow known as a cause, while nevertheless from nothing is God known as God is. (34-47)

Then when he says <For also these rightly etc.>, he shows how the introduced conclusion follows from the premisses. And he says that we rightly say that God is known and not known: for from all beings God is known and praised in that they have a proportion to God, as God is their cause. But on the other hand the most perfect cognition of God is through remotion, namely in that we know God through ignorance by a certain union to the divine above the nature of mind, when our mind, receding from all others and afterwards even leaving itself, is united to the supersplendent rays of deity, namely in so far as it knows God to be not only above all things which are below it, but also above itself and above all things which can be comprehended by it. And thus knowing God in such a state of cognition, it is illuminated by the profundity of the divine wisdom, which we can not scrutinize. For that we understand God not only to be above all things which are, but also above all that we can apprehend, comes to us from the incomprehensible light of divine wisdom. (47-57)

Then when he says <And also from all things etc.>, he explains what he had said, namely that God is known from all things. And he says that this is because the divine wisdom itself is the effective cause of all in so far as it produces things in esse, and not only does it give esse to things, but it also is the cause of concord and order in things in so far as things help each other in an order to the ultimate end; and further God is the cause of the indissolubility of this concord and of this order, which always remains however things change. But the mode of this order he subjoins, since the ends of the first things, i.e., the lowest of the highest things, always conjoin to the principles of the secondary things, i.e., the highest of the lower things, in that mode in which the highest of corporeal creatures, namely the human body, is united to the lowest of intellectual natures, namely the rational soul; and similarly it is seen in others. And thus is effected the beauty of the universe through one conspiracy, i.e., concord, and harmony, i.e., due order and proportion, of all things. (58-67)

VII - 5

<But God is praised as reason etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of wisdom, here he explains the meaning of those things which are adjoined to wisdom. And first concerning reason; second concerning truth and faith, <And reason is simple and to existents etc.> (1-3)

He says therefore first that God is praised in holy scripture as reason, which can best be understood from scripture where God is called Word, according to John 1 "And God was the Word". For 'logos' in Greek, as Augustine says, signifies both reason and word. But from the name of reason four things are understood: first that reason is said to be a certain cognoscitive virtue; and thus God is praised as reason causally in so far as God is the giver of all cognition, namely of reason and mind and wisdom and all things of this kind. In another way it is posited for a cause, as when we say: by what reason have you done this? i.e., for what cause? And thus God is called reason, not only since God is the cause of all, but since also all secondary causes God potentially pre-receives in Godself, though not in the mode of composition, but through the mode of uniformity and simplicity. In a third way reason is called computation, as it is found in Matt. 18 that the king took a reckoning of his servants. And thus God is called reason, since God is the highest disposition of things which stretching out goes through all things, as it is said in Wis. 7, " . . . unto the end of all things . . ." In a fourth way reason is said to be something simple abstracted from many, as the reason of human being that which through consideration is abstracted from singulars and pertains to the nature of human beings.

And regarding this he says that above all these things God is more properly reason, since the divine reason is more simple above all simplicity and is absolute, i.e., separated or abstracted, from all things in so far as it is above all things according to its supersubstantiality. (4-19)

Then when he says <And reason is simple etc.>, he discusses truth and falsehood. And first he proposes what he intends; second he explains the proposition, <For if cognition is unitive etc.> (19-21)

He says therefore first that, just as some faith is caused from human reason, thus the divine reason is a certain simple truth of the entirety of being, around which reason, or truth, as the pure and non-erroneous cognition of all things, the divine faith consists. This faith is a certain permanent collocation of those who believe, namely in so far as it firmly places them in the truth and the truth in them, as while believing they have a simple cognition of truth apart from doubt and inquiry according to a certain intransmutable identity, namely since they remain in the truth in the same way intransmutably. And because of this firmness of faith the Apostle said faith to be substance, as it were a certain firm foundation and collocation. (21-28)

Then when he says <For if cognition is etc.>, he proves the aforementioned firmness of faith in three ways: first through the notion of cognition: since cognition is unitive of those who cognize, not only because all those knowing the truth are united in one cognition of the truth, but also because the one who knows the truth always remains in the same mode in one and the same truth. But on the contrary, ignorance is the cause that the ignorant one is transmuted from himself, one opining in a way that divides him from others, since diverse things are opined by diverse ones of the ignorant. And for this reason, according to the word of holy scripture, nothing can remove from the true faith the one who believes in the truth of the divine faith, in which he has an immutable permanence: for the Apostle says, Rom. 8 "I am certain that neither death nor life nor anything else can separate me from the love of God". (28-36)

Second, <For he well knows etc.>, he proves the same thing from the judgement of believers. For the one who is united to the truth through faith knows well that it is well with him, by adhering to the truth of the faith; although many despise him as suffering ecstasy, i.e., as fatuous, and alienated from himself, nevertheless he hides those reprehending from their error, because he without doubt is suffering ecstasy in the truth through the true faith, as if placed outside common sense and conjoined to supernatural truth, since the one who believes knows himself and is not raving, as they say, but is free through the simple truth and is disposed always in the same way, lest he be carried around through instable and variable winds of diverse errors. (36-43)

Third, <Thus therefore by our wisdom etc.>, he proves the same by the example of the Apostles, who are princes and leaders of christian wisdom and were killed for the truth every day, contesting, as was fitting, not only in word but also in deed, and through the true cognition of God which is unitive of christians, that the cognition of God itself, in which christians are united, is more simple and more divine than any cognition of God which is had by humans in this world; rather, as we should say more truly, it alone is the true and one and simple cognition of God. For whatever other cognitions of God are discordant from the common cognition of christians, which is called the catholic faith, are more to be called error than cognition of God. (43-50)

BOOK EIGHT

VIII - 1

<But since the divine truth etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the wisdom of God, here he explains the meaning of virtue and justice. For as the procession of wisdom extends itself less than the procession of life in that not all living things have cognition, thus the procession of virtue and justice falls short from the procession of wisdom. Concerning this therefore he does two things: first he states his intention; second he accomplishes what was proposed, <And that the thearchy etc.> (1-5)

He says therefore first that, since the divine truth and wisdom, existing above all wisdom, is praised in holy scripture both as virtue and as justice and as salvation and as liberation, i.e., as the cause of salvation and liberation, we should expound these names of God as we are able. (6-8)

Then when he says <And that etc.>, he carries out the proposition. And first he explains the meaning of virtue; second, justice, which is a species of virtue, <But justice is praised on the other hand etc.>; third, salvation, liberation and inequality, which are the effects of justice, <Therefore the divine justice itself etc.> The first part is divided in two: in the first he explains the meaning of the virtue of God; in the second he solves a certain objection against the weakness of the divine virtue, <And Elimas the great says etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he proposes a question: how virtue should be said of God; second he answers the question, <Therefore we say that virtue etc.> (9-15)

He says therefore first that no one who has had experience in holy scripture is ignorant that the principal deity is separated from all virtue which exists or can be thought in things in any mode. But it is separated from all virtue, not as if defecting from it, but existing above and exceeding it; whence also holy scripture was handed down which attributed to God also the domination of celestial virtues, according to the Psalm "The Lord of virtues, he is the king of glory", and in many places God is called 'The Lord of armies', from which it is given to be understood that, if

God exceeds the celestial virtues, much more so others. Therefore how did those who edited holy scripture praise God as virtue, and again: how do we, who expound holy scripture, understand in deity the name of virtue? (15-23)

Then when he says <Therefore we say that virtue is God etc.>, he solves the proposed question. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows how virtue should be understood in God; second he shows the procession of virtue from God into singulars, <From it are the deiform etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows how virtue is attributed to God; second why the virtue of God is called infinite, <And as infinite etc.> (24-27)

He says therefore first that virtue is attributed to God because of three things: first because the virtues of all things exist in God primordially and supereminently, as was said of both life and wisdom; but second because God is the cause of all virtue; but third because God operates by producing all things according to an indeclinable, i.e., which can not be lessened or fatigued, and uncircumscribed virtue: just as also wisdom is attributed to God in so far as in God preexists all wisdom and in so far as God is the cause of wisdom and in so far as God has the act of wisdom by knowing; and not only is God the cause of virtue as bestowing virtue, but since God causes virtue itself whether we understand universal virtue or some particular virtue. (28-36)

Then when he says <And as of infinite virtue etc.>, since he had said that God produces all things according to an infinite virtue, he shows how the virtue of God is called infinite. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows why the virtue of God is called infinite; second he exhibits the infinity of the divine virtue through an example, <Which because of the abundance etc.> (36-39)

But it must be considered that the infinite in God is not said through extension as in a continuous quantity, but through negation, namely since God is not ended or determined to something. Thus therefore the virtue of God is called infinite: first since it is not determined to some effect, but produces all virtue; second, not only for this reason, but also in that it is not terminated through commensuration of some virtue, but is above all particular virtue and ultimately above virtue itself per se, since what is understood by the name of common virtue is less than divine virtue; third since it is not named through those things which are, but it can in infinite modes also produce infinite other virtues besides those which are; God's superinfinite action, which is factive of all virtue, is not weakened or debilitated because of this; and thus also it is

clear that neither is God made finite by God's action in that action is terminated in effects; fourth it is called infinite in that it is not terminated in intellect: for it is ineffable and unknown and what can not be thought, the divine virtue exceeding all. (39-50)

Then when he says: <Which because of the abundance etc.>, he shows the infinity of the divine virtue through signs and examples. And he says that the divine virtue through an abundance of possibilities, i.e., power, even preserves those that are infirm firmly, containing and powerfully holding also those things in which there is the remotest resonance of virtue, i.e., which participate a minimum of virtue, which is a sign of infinite virtue: just as we see in the powers of sensibles that lights which are intense can seem splendid even by those who have weak vision and great sounds come to weak hearers, who do not easily receive sounds; and beyond this the virtue of light and sound can not extend itself, since what entirely does not have hearing can not hear however great the sound, and what totally does not see can not see however splendid the light. Thus therefore he concludes that the distribution of the divine virtue because of its infinity proceeds to all existents and nothing is existing which does not have some virtue; but it is necessary that it should have either intellectual virtue as the angels, or rational as humans, or sensible as animals, or living as plants, or substantial as other things; and not only existents, but even esse itself has the virtue to be from the supersubstantial virtue of God. And he says 'if it is lawful to say' since esse is not properly said to be, but that through esse something is. (51-64)

VIII - 2

<From it are deiform etc.> After Dionysius shows in common the procession of divine virtue to beings, here he shows it in specific instances, first by distinguishing things into which the effects of the divine virtue come; second by distinguishing those things which are found in things by the divine virtue, <And he establishes united etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows the procession of the divine virtue to superior creatures, namely the angels; second to inferiors, <But they proceed etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that from the divine virtue proceed all the virtues of the angelic ornaments, which are conformed to God. But virtue appears in angels with respect to three things: first as far as esse itself; and regarding this he says that from the divine virtue they have intransmutable esse. Second as far as to understand; and regarding this he says that from the divine virtue they have sempiternal and immortal intellectual motions, namely since

they always understand in act. Third as far as to desire; and regarding this he says that they received from the virtue of infinite Good fortitude itself, through which they desire the Good without the diminution of such desire. They have all these things from the divine virtue in so far as the divine virtue sends into them both esse and power with respect to these, and that they should desire without weariness, having those things which always are present in them; and that they are always able to desire is in them from God. (6-14)

Then when he says <But they proceed etc.>, he shows the procession of the divine virtue to inferior creatures. And he says that the effects of the unfailing virtue of God proceed also to humans and to animals and to plants and to all natural things. (15-17)

Then when he says <And he establishes united etc.>, he shows what might be found in things from the divine virtue. And first as far as those things which are common to all, the first of which is unity: and regarding this he says that the divine virtue confirms all things which are united in a certain friendship and communion of their own. The second is discretion: and regarding this he says that the divine virtue establishes those things which are discreet to each other, so that singulars according to their proper notion and definition are preserved unconfused and unmixed with each other. The third is order: and regarding this he says that the divine virtue preserves the orders of all things in that things are ordained to each other, and again everything is directed in an order to an end which is the proper good of a thing. (17-23)

Then he posits those things which pertain to singulars. And first regarding angels he says that the divine virtue keeps immaculate, i.e., without corruption, the immortal lives of the angelic unities, i.e., of their simple substances. Second regarding the celestial bodies he says that God keeps invariably the substance and orders of the celestial bodies and luminaries, namely the sun and the moon and the stars. Third regarding eternity, which measures the essence of heaven, he says that the divine virtue makes it that it can be eternity, which is the simple measure of being; and regarding time, which is the measure of motion, he adds that divine virtue discerns the circumrevolutions of time by processions and gathers them together by restitutions. But he attributes to time circumrevolution in that it follows the circular revolution of heaven. But there is in the motion of heaven two things to consider: first that in the motion of heaven there is always renovation of place according to the passing from place to place; but second that heaven returns to the same place according to circular

motion. Thus even it is also in time, since according to the procession of motion time succeeds time, as hours succeed hours and days succeed days. And regarding this he says that time is discerned by processions; but according to the return of some celestial bodies to the same place even time is restored in that which it has passed, and thus what was future in some way is gathered together into the past: for example, since the day, beginning from the morning, comes to an end, and again it returns to morning; and the same appears in months and years. (24-38)

Fourth he shows the effects of divine virtue in the elements. And he says that divine virtue makes the virtues of fire inextinguishable; for although fire in matter can be extinguished, nevertheless fire universally is inextinguishable. Also it makes unfailing flowings of water, which he says because of the perpetuity of the flowing of rivers and the commotions of the sea, which appear in the waves of the sea ebbing and flowing. And also it terminates the effusion of air. But he says this since the property of humidity optimally befits air, and it is not properly terminated in a proper terminus; and for this reason, as far as it concerns air itself, it has an omnimodal effusion, but by the divine virtue it is terminated below the limits of its natural place. Also the divine virtue collocates the earth in nothing, namely since through the divine virtue it is collocated in the middle of the world and there is nothing that sustains it. Also the divine virtue preserves the generative parts of the earth itself, namely plants and others which are born from the earth, indifferently, i.e., uniformly, remaining in their nature, namely while similar plants are born from the earth by mandated seeds. And not only does the divine virtue produce those things which pertain to singular elements, but also things which pertain to the mixture of elements with each other, in which commixture three things are found: for it is necessary for there to be first a certain proportion of elements to each other, which Dionysius here names harmony; second it is required that the proper virtue of any element should remain uncorrupted, otherwise it would not be a mixture, but corruption; and regarding this he says 'and an unconfused concretion'; third it is required that elements be concrete and at the same time remain together and not immediately separated from each other; and regarding this he says 'and it preserves them indivisibly'. (38-54)

But fifth he posits the effects of virtue in animate things. And universally he says that the divine virtue holds in one the conjunction of soul and body; and specifically of plants he adds that it moves upward the nutritive and augmentative virtues of plants: nutritive, in so far as the nourishment drawn through the roots from the earth is lifted to the top

of the plant; but augmentative, in so far as the body itself of the plant proceeding from the earth is produced little by little. (54-58)

Then regarding all things universally he adds that the divine virtue intensely keeps the substantial and natural virtues of all things and it establishes an indissoluble dwelling place of everything, namely in so far as all things preserve their own grade prefixed by God. (59-61)

But further he shows the effect of virtue in those things which pertain to grace. And he says that the divine virtue gives deification itself, i.e., the participation of deity, which is through grace. And lest someone should believe that one could acquire this participation by his own virtue, he adds that God grants virtue so that some might be deified in the aforementioned mode. (61-64)

But finally he concludes universally that there is nothing universal in beings which is segregated and not contained by the containing of the divine virtue which gives stability to things through its own omnipotence. For just as nothing can be separated from the divine life except that which lacks life, thus from the divine virtue nothing can be separated except that which lacks virtue. But what universally has no virtue entirely is not nor has any position, i.e., order, or stability in the universe. (64-69)

VIII - 3

<And Elimas the great says etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of divine virtue, here he excludes a certain objection. And concerning this he does three things: first he states the objection; second he solves it, <But adding etc.>; third, having excluded the doubt, he asserts the truth, <But we etc.> (1-4)

Therefore first he states the objection which Elimas the great, of whom it is read in Acts, objects against Paul, saying in II Tim 11 that God "can not deny Godself", which seems contrary to God's omnipotence. (4-6)

Then when he says <But adding this etc.>, he solves the proposed doubt. And concerning this he does three things: first he excuses himself for intending to solve such a weak objection; second he states the solution, <For also of his own etc>; third he condemns the presumption of the objection, <Which wise not understanding etc.> (7-10)

He says therefore that beyond the foregoing objection he adds this, that he fears much lest he be derided for foolishness, just as someone who tries to destroy houses

made by dissolute boys, which have neither a firm foundation because they are built upon sand and are in themselves weak because they were bound without cement, and thus it could seem that, since he intends to speak against the deliberation concerning divine things which the aforementioned Elimas had concerning the proposed word, he himself hurls darts, as it were, an impossible position. For the position is manifestly impossible and is intrinsically weak, since it is not confirmed by the truth and it depends on a frivolous reason, as on a weak foundation. (10-17)

Then when he says <For also of his own etc.>, he solves the proposed question. And he says that, since God is truth itself, for God to deny Godself is nothing else than for God to fall from the truth. But since the truth is the same as being, it follows that to depart from the truth is the same as to depart from esse. Therefore to say "it is not possible for God to deny Godself" is the same as to say ~It is not possible for God to defect from being". But to not defect from being is the same as if it were said that God is not non being, by which is more signified esse itself; and just as if it were said that God can not not be able, it is not shown that God is impotent, but that God is most powerful; and similarly if it were said that God does not know Godself not to know so that God should be deprived of knowledge, this is to have perfect knowledge. Therefore through the fact that God can not deny Godself, nothing is detracted from God by the impossibility; it is the same as if it were said that God can not not be true and being and powerful. (17-26)

Then when he says <Which the wise not understanding etc.>, he condemns the presumption of the objection. And he says that Elimas, who reputed himself to be wise, not understanding the reason of the aforementioned solution, was similar to amateur fighters who frequently supposed the adversaries against whom they would fight were weak in there estimation and, while they are absent, they audaciously throw down a blow against them, pretending to fight, and without fear they strike the air with useless blows and thus judge themselves to have conquered their adversaries and praise themselves for this, although they never know the power of their adversaries. For thus it is also regarding those who, while making weak objections when there is no one to resist them, completely regard themselves to have prevailed. (27-34)

Then when he says <But we etc.>, having excluded the objection he commends the divine omnipotence according to the statement of the Apostle, saying that we, when considering the things said by the Apostle according to our ability, praise God, who exceeds all power, as omnipotent,

in so far as God's power extends itself to all things; just as the Good, in so far it has the plenitude of all good while needing nothing; and as only powerful from Godself: for all other powers are not powerful from themselves, but from God; and as ruling eternity through God's own power: for other ruling things rule those which are in eternity or in time, but God rules all eternity. And again we praise God as in no way falling from existents, since nothing which is in God can recede from God. But creatures, even if there be some which do not depart from esse simply, can nevertheless fall from something in so far as they are mutable; but God, who is in every way immutable, in no way can fall from esse. And these words are taken from what the Apostle says in I Tim.: "which he will show in his own times, the blessed and only powerful, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality" which he indicates when he says 'in no way falling from existing things'. (34-46)

And not only do these things befit God, but God has them excellently. Whence he adds that we can yet more fully praise God as supereminently having and as first having all existents, i.e., whatever is in things, not indeed in the same mode which is in things, but according to a supersubstantial virtue, i.e., as effects are virtually in a cause according to the mode of a cause exceeding every substance. And not only do these things befit God supereminently, but also causally. Whence he adds that God gives to all existents determinate power and esse. And this befits God from the abundance of God's exceeding virtue which God gives to all by pouring out goodnesses copiously. For God gives to all abundantly, as is said in James 1. (46-53)

VIII - 4

<But God is again praised as justice etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the virtue of God, here he explains the meaning of God's justice; for justice is a species of virtue. But it must be considered that among the moral virtues only justice can properly be attributed to God; for other moral virtues pertain to the passions, which have no place in God, as temperance pertains to concupiscence, and fortitude pertains to fears and rashness. But justice is concerned with actions, for example distributions or retributions, which can befit God. (1-6)

But this part is divided into two: in the first he explains the meaning of the justice of God; in the second the effects of divine justice, <Therefore the divine justice itself and the salvation of all etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows what pertains to the notion of divine justice; second he solves the objections of certain ones

against the divine justice, <And if we say this rightly etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows with respect to what actions justice befits God; second he illustrates what he had said, <For all divine justice etc.> But justice befits God with respect to three acts: the first is to distribute. Now commutative justice has no place in God, as it is between buyers and sellers since, as is said in Rom. 11 ". . . who first has given to him and they give back to him?" But to God is attributed distributive justice, which does not observe equality of quantity, so that God gives equally to all, but equality of proportion, so that God gives to each one in so far as it is worthy. And for this reason he says that justice is praised in God in so far as God distributes to all according to their dignity. But Godself is the distributor of goods. But the good, as Augustine says, consists in mode and species and order; and mode prefixes to each one its proper measure, as he says. Therefore so that he might signify God to be the distributor of all good, he says regarding mode 'commensuration'; but regarding species 'pulchritude', or 'form', according to another translation; but regarding order he says 'both a good ordering and decoration', or disposition, according to another translation. And he here understands decoration for decency of order. (7-21)

But not only does it pertain to justice that it distributes diverse things to diverse things according to their dignity, but also that it preserve diversity of this kind unconfused, namely lest one should presume to usurp for itself that which is of another. And regarding this second act of justice he says that the divine justice distinguishes to each one all distributions and orders according to a certain determination, which truly is justice, namely so that one does not violate what belongs to another. (21-25)

But the third act of justice is that each one works what is fitting to itself; because of which also in one way justice is called all virtue. And regarding this third act he adds that the divine justice is the cause of the proper operation of all. (26-28)

Then when he says <For all divine justice etc.>, he illustrates what he had said, designating the reason of the aforesaid things. For this reason the foregoing pertains to the divine justice, since the property of justice is that it establishes order in things, and that to each thing it prefixes a terminus beyond which it does not progress, and that it preserves ordinations and terminations of this kind without confusion, and that further, things thus having been ordered and terminated, it gives to each from the supervening gifts according to its proper dignity prescribed to it by God. (28-33)

Then when he says <And if we say this rightly etc.>, he solves two doubts concerning the divine justice. Concerning the first of them he does three things: first he shows from the foregoing that those who endeavor to condemn the divine justice show themselves to be ignorant of what was said. And this is what he says that, if the foregoing were said with reason, namely that it pertains to justice to give to each according to its dignity, whoever wants to argue against the divine justice which does this, they are ignorant that, while they want to condemn the divine justice, they show their own injustice. (33-38)

Second, <For they say etc.>, he states their objection. For they say that, while God is the highest and thus it befits God to make everything best, God ought to give immortality to those which are mortal, so that humans and animals should never die, and to imperfect things God should give perfection, so that humans should be born immediately perfect, and to things mobile through themselves God should give the necessity of being moved through another, so that it would befit humans themselves that be able to be moved through themselves to both good and evil. And they want that God should give to humans or other rational creatures that they are not able to sin, which would be to have the necessity that they always be moved from another: for otherwise it would not happen that they would not be able to be deflected toward evil except they be moved by others with a certain force. But it befits the perfect from perfection itself that they can not defect, as is clear in the blessed who are confirmed in the good. They also say that identity ought to indwell variable things, namely so that all things should always be disposed in the same mode and that to the weak there should be perfect power and that temporal things should be eternal and that those things which are moved according to their nature should be immutable and that pleasures that are temporal should be eternal. And according to their own justice they universally attribute to some what belongs to others, i.e., to inferiors those things which belong to superior beings. (38-51)

Third, <But it is necessary to see etc.>, he excludes their perverse justice. And he says that it is necessary to consider regarding the divine justice that justice truly consists in this, that it gives to all according to their proper dignity and that it preserves the nature of each one in its proper order and virtue, namely thus that in those which are immortal according to their nature it preserves immortality and in mortals mortality; and thus concerning others which were mentioned on above. (51-55)

He states the second objection, <But someone might say etc.>. And concerning this he does two things: first he

states the objection. For someone could object that it is not just that God permits holy people to be crucified by depraved human beings and that God does not give to them help that they be not crucified. (56-58)

Second, <To which it must be said etc.>, he solves the stated objection. And he says that, if those who are called holy love those things which are on the earth, for which things people are jealous while inhering in material things, they have entirely fallen from the divine love (which must be understood thus if they so love those things which constitute an end in them and because of which they despise spiritual goods). And this is what he adds, that he does not know how they should to be called holy, those who do injury to divine things, which are truly lovable, so that they reject those things against the owed debt of religion because of temporal goods, which should not be loved principally nor should there be zeal for them. But if they love spiritual goods which truly are existents since they are sempiternal, they ought to rejoice, if they desire them, when they can attain the things they desire. But they attain them when, suffering afflictions in temporal things, by a certain fervor of love they inhere more in spiritual things. For then they more closely approach the angelic virtues through a similitude, in which there is no affliction of material things, when human beings according to their ability recede from the affliction of material things from the desire of divine things. And this they do when for the good, i.e., for the love of God, and for justice and truth they wrestle manfully in existing adversities. And just as if truly the holy ones of the ages attain what they desire in adversities, namely by despising temporal goods in order to adhere to spiritual ones, what happens to them is not evil, but good. Whence truly it can be said that it is proper to the divine justice that it does not destroy courageous virtue or soften it through a collation of prosperity, but if someone should strive to do this, namely fight for the truth, God does not dismiss such without assistance, but establishes them in a beautiful and firm station of spiritual goods through which they are consoled in adversities, and further God rewards such in the future according to their proper dignity of merit. (58-76)

VIII - 5

<Therefore the divine justice itself etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the divine justice, here he explains the meaning of the effects of the divine justice. And first salvation; second liberation, <Because of which also liberation etc.>; third the inequality which in some way justice produces, but which in a certain way it removes, <But of these and of justice etc.> Concerning the first he

does three things: first he states the proper notion of salvation; second he posits another notion of salvation designated by others, <But if someone etc.>; third he shows that these two notions are related to each other, <And this first salvation etc.> (1-7)

He says therefore first that the divine justice is praised as the salvation of all, namely since it saves all things, in so far as it keeps and preserves in everything three things: first conserving the substance of each one both proper, i.e., in the property of its nature, and pure, i.e., apart from an extraneous mixture; second similarly it preserves the order of each proper and pure; but third it is the cause in all things of proper and pure operation. And thus the notion of salvation consists in that things are preserved in those things which befit them according to their property. (7-13)

Then when he says <But if someone etc.>, he posits a second notion of salvation. And he says that, if someone wants to say that the notion of salvation consists in this that God entirely removes one from evil, he ought not be repudiated in this, but we ought to understand him who thus praises in a broad sense the divine salvation, not only in terms of preservation in the good, but also in terms of separation from evil. (13-16)

Then when he says <And this first salvation etc.>, he compares these two notions to each other. And he says that he requests humbly, by persuading him who designates the second notion of salvation, that he might define this that the first notion of salvation consists in conservation in the good, which preservation in the good is multiple. For some things are preserved in the good by God who constitutes them intransmutable in themselves, as the celestial bodies which are far from corruption and the blessed who cannot sin. Second, as some which are transmutable are preserved so that they do not have something withstanding them, as sometimes God, seeing some to be weak, does not permit them to be tempted and thus saves them, by preserving them in the good. Third God permits some to be assailed, but gives to them fortitude so that they can resist against the assailant, as the strong against the worse, i.e., against the weak. And thus God keeps and saves all things, since God makes them not fighting or warring, as fighting refers to actual opposition, but war to habitual. And this is fitting that they do not have opposition, as singulars are ornamented, i.e., firmly disposed, in those things which pertain to their proper notions. (16-28)

And not only does God make some things non fighting, but God also exterminates, i.e., destroys, from all things every

inequality and alien operation, as inequality refers to what is extraneous in essence or virtue, but alien to what is extraneous in operation. The preserving divine justice also constitutes the proportions of each thing, not availing to fall to unfittingness nor to pass over in any way whatsoever. For the passage of superiors to inferiors can be called a fall; but the passage of inferiors to superiors is not called a fall, but a passage simply. But one should not wonder that he says all things are kept from fighting and without inequality and apart from passage to contraries, although in many things there is found fighting and an admixture of the extraneous and passage to contraries, since in all transmutable things something always remains that is not transitive and unmixed and unopposed, as a subject does not pass away when it is changed according to form. (29-38)

And these three things which he states in the second place respond to three things posited first, but not in the same order. For that which among these second things he states last when he says 'and the proportions of each one' etc., responds to that which among the first he stated when he said 'intransmutable in themselves'. But what is second among the last, namely 'and every inequality' etc., responds to that which he had said above last 'and it saves the stronger against the worst'. But what he says first among the last 'and he keeps all things', etc., responds to that which first in the middle he stated 'and non fighting'. Thus therefore since the notion of salvation consists in this first and principally that something is preserved in the good, it will not be far from the intention of holy scripture if someone wants to praise the salvation of God in so far as Godself saves all things through proper goodness by freeing from evil what is fallen from its proper goods. And this I say according to how the nature of those who are said to be saved suffers: for those who fall according to free will are restored otherwise than those who fall according to natural corruption. (38-48)

Then when he says <Because of which also the liberation etc.>, he explains the meaning of the effect of liberation. And he says that the holy doctors name the divine justice liberation, i.e., the cause of liberation, in so far as it saves from evil, and this in many ways: first in so far as it does not permit those which are truly beings to fall from a their subjects so that they become nothing, for something of the subjects always remains. Second, if something truly existing sinks down to some sin in action and to some inordination by inclination of appetite and to some defect of proper operation, God frees that which thus falls from the passion which induces to sin, and from the weakness by which something does not maintain due order, and from the privation which pertains to the lessening of perfection. And

thus these three respond to the first three. And so that he might show how God liberates from these three, he adds another three responding to the three set out first: for God liberates from privation in so far as God he fills what was lacking; but God liberates from infirmity in so far as God supports our weakness with paternal and merciful affection; but God frees from passion raising up, i.e., recalling, us from evil, and what is more, by firmly establishing us in the good; and that good which was smitten, i.e., lessened and debilitated, God fills by restoring; and what was inordinate God orders and what had fallen down to sin God causes to stand, i.e., establishes, and ornaments, i.e., arranges with a certain decency. And thus God leads every inordination and indisposition to integrity and God absolves from all stain of sins. (49-64)

Then when he says <But from these etc.>, he explains the meaning of inequality. And first he shows what kind of inequality justice excludes; second what kind of inequality it establishes, <For also inequality etc.> For distributive justice excludes inequality of proportion, but it causes inequality of quantity in that it gives more or less according to the proportion of dignity of each one. (64-68)

He says therefore first that regarding these, namely salvation and liberation, and regarding justice it was said, according to which equality of proportion which is in all things is measured and determined, and that there is exterminated, i.e., excluded, every inequality, which is said according to the privation of equality of proportion, which is in singular things; for it pertains to justice that it give to each according to its proportion and thus equality of proportion is determined according to justice. But since the capacity of all is not the same, thence it is that it distributes diverse things to diverse things, and thus by causing equality of proportion it causes inequality of quantity. And for this reason he adds that, if someone wants to understand inequality according to the differences between all things which are in the universe, through which differences one thing is better than another according to some perfection, justice preserves this kind of inequality while it does not permit disorder or confusion to occur in things by all things being mixed with each other; and thus justice preserves all existents according to their species as the nature of each one requires. (68-79)

BOOK NINE

IX - 1

<But since both great and small etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the divine names which are understood according to the processions of perfections befitting to creatures absolutely, as is the Good, esse, life, wisdom and virtue, here he explains the meaning of the names of God which are taken according to processions in which there is implied a relation of one thing to another: as are great and small, which imply excess and defect according to quantity; the same and other, which imply fittingness and difference according to substance; and like and unlike which imply fittingness and difference according to quality; and station and motion, of which the notion of station consists in this that something is similarly disposed both now and formerly, but the notion of motion consists in this that something does is not similarly disposed both now and formerly; and a note concerning equality which implies fittingness according to quantity and is the mean between great and small. Therefore it is divided into three parts: in the first he states his intention; in the second he shows what singulars of the aforementioned are said of God, <But God etc.>; in the third he shows why they are said of God, <But great etc.> (1-13)

He says therefore first that, since to God, who is the cause of all, are attributed both great and small and other aforementioned things, it is necessary to consider whatever can be shown to us from these signs by which God is named. (14-15)

Then when he says <Therefore God etc.>, he shows that the foregoing are said of God; for God is praised in holy scripture as great and existing in magnitude, according to the Psalm "Great is the Lord and laudable beyond measure and of his magnitude there is no end". And since smallness is a certain subtlety, small is attributed to God in scripture, where it is said in III Kings 19 that God appeared in a fine hissing of air, which fineness, or subtlety, manifests the divine smallness. For sometimes in scripture God is called the same, according to the Psalm "But you are the same". Otherness is also attributed to God in so far as diverse figures and diverse species of things are circumposed on God in holy scripture, just as God is sometimes designated in

figures or species of human being or sheep or lions or stones. But God is called similar in scripture in so far as God makes some things similar to Godself and is the cause of the similitude itself, according to Gen. 1 "Let us make human being in our image and likeness". God is also called dissimilar to all things, where scripture says that nothing is like God, according to the Psalm "God, who is like you" and " there is none like you among the gods, O Lord"? But God is described in scripture as standing, according to Amos 7 "Behold God standing on the covered wall". God is described as immobile, according to Malachi 3 "I am the Lord and I do not change"; and sitting in the ages, according to Is. 9 "on the throne of David . . will you sit . . . from now unto eternity". But God is described as motion as walking, or proceeding, to all things, according to Gen.3 "when they heard the voice of the Lord walking in paradise". And in Wis. 7 it is said that "wisdom is more mobile than all mobile things; but it reaches everywhere because of its purity". And many other things equally rich with these are said of God in scripture. (16-33)

Then when he says <Therefore God is great etc.>, he shows why the aforesaid things are said of God: and first concerning great and small; second of the same and other, <But the same is etc.>; third of the like and unlike, <But God is like etc.>, fourth of station and session and motion, <But what also concerning the divine station etc.>; fifth on equality, <But if someone in the expressions etc.> Concerning the first he first explains the meaning of great; second the meaning of small, <But small etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he attributes great to God according to the notion of causality; second through the notion of a certain similitude, <And outside every magnitude etc.>; third according to dissimilarity, <This magnitude is infinite etc.> (34-41)

He says therefore first that God is called great in that God's magnitude, which befits God essentially, God eternally hands down to all great things, just as God is also called wise in so far as God hands down wisdom to all wise things. Or it can otherwise be read that God hands down God's magnitude to all things which are eternally great, i.e., from the beginning of creation unto sempiternity. (41-44)

Then when he says <And outside every magnitude etc.>, he attributes great to God according to a certain notion of similitude: and first with respect to God's substance; second with respect to God's effects, <And according to a superfull etc.> (45-47)

But it is clear that great is attributed to creatures according to the notion of excess; for those things are

called great which are found to exceed others. Now excess in things created is perceived in many ways: in one way according to the dimension of longitude, latitude and depth; and according to this something is called great with respect to another in so far as it superexceeds its quantity; and thus God is called great simply in so far as God's magnitude is superfused and superextended outside every magnitude; and it is called superfused in the similitude of humid things, as air and water, but superextended in the similitude of dry and solid bodies. In another way excess is perceived in created things according to place, and thus a place is said to be greater which is contains more things. Whence God is also called simply great in so far as God contains every place. Third excess is found in things according to number; and thus also God is called great simply in so far as God proceeds beyond every number, since every number proceeds from the divine wisdom as it distinguishes things, in whose power it is to produce many differences of things. But the infinite in things seems maximally to be what exceeds all things. But, as is found in created things, something is called infinite in one way but is finite in another way: for example if something which is infinite according to quantity is finite according to species. Whence God, who is infinite to all things, exceeds every infinity. (47-60)

Then when he says <And according to the superfull etc.>, he attributes great to God according to the notion of excess which is considered on the part of effects. Now three things must be considered in God's effects: first that the effusion of effects proceeds from the plenitude of the cause, just as what is not full of heat can not effuse heat, or just as according to the similitude of a dish we say that unless it is full of water it can not pour out water. Second since, if there is a great plenitude, there is a great effusion. Third that to the extent that the effusion is prior, that which is poured out first is received in that in which it is poured out: for a humor infused in the earth first is received by it. And these three must be considered in divine effects: for first on the part of God there is found a superabundant plenitude of goodness; second from this abundant plenitude it follows that it produces great things; third since it is the primordial cause it follows that its gifts are fountanal, i.e., primordial; for whatever is received from any cause presupposes that which is received from God. Thus therefore: according to God's superfullness regarding the first; and magnificent regarding the second; and God's fountanal gifts regarding the third; in so far as the gifts themselves are participated by all according to the effusion of the gift which is infinite on the part of the giver, gifts of this kind are not in any way lessened, but always have the same superabundant plenitude and are never lessened in so far as they are participated; rather in so far as they

are more participated, the more they remain above: since to the degree that something receives more of the divine gifts, the more it is rendered fit for receiving them; and on the part of the one flowing because its influence is of infinite virtue it can not be lessened. (61-77)

Then when he says <This magnitude etc.>, he expounds the divine magnitude through its difference to other magnitudes. And he says that the divine magnitude is infinite, which befits no created magnitude; and it is also without quantity, since God is not in the genus of quantity, but the magnitude of God is God's substance; and it is also without number, i.e., without measure: for number has the first notion of measure, since through it also continuous quantities are measured; but when he says 'without number' it refers to discrete quantity. And thus through the divine magnitude is perceived the excess of the divine causality according to which God pours out universally and superabundantly God's infinite magnitude, which is not received by creatures in its infinity, but according to their capacity they receive it in a finite mode. (77-85)

Then when he says <But small etc.>, he shows how small is said of God. And concerning this he does three things: first he states the notions of small; second he attributes them to God, <Thus therefore etc.>; third he shows the difference of this small to other smalls, <This small etc.> (85-87)

Concerning the first it must be considered that subtlety is a certain smallness, whether subtlety is understood as a certain quality according to which subtle bodies are called thin as they have too little quantity under the same dimensions, or whether subtlety is understood as a certain difference concerning quantity; for as long and short are related to a line, but wide and narrow to a surface, thus subtle and gross are related to the depth of a body. Whence subtlety signifies a certain smallness. (88-92)

He posits therefore three properties of small, or subtle. Of which the first is that it exceeds all weight and all distance. And he says weight in that what is thin is called subtle: for such optimally is found light; but he says distance in that subtle is opposed to thick, in which such distance, namely great profundity, is small in subtle things. But that excess, by which small and subtle exceeds all depth and all distance, is not perceived according to majority of quantity which is opposed to smallness, but as unity exceeds number, since it measures it and is not measured by it. He states the second property of small, that it goes through all without prohibition; for it is of the notion of the subtle that it is penetrative. He states the third property, that the small is the cause of all. And he

introduces the proof of this, that nothing is found which does not participate the form of small: for small is found in the great, but great is not found in the small; but the participated seems to be the cause of the participant, whence also the principles in all genera are small in quantity, but great in virtue. (92-102)

Then when he says <Thus therefore in God etc.>, he designates the aforementioned notions of the small in God, and in particular the second. And he says that in God the small is understood in so far as it goes to all things without impediment, by filling them both with God's effects and God's presence, since God is in all things and again works through all things as through a proper instrument. And in order to prove this he introduces the authority of the Apostle at Heb. 4, who first and specifically shows that God penetrates to all things which pertain to human nature; in which is first found the composition of soul and body, the distinction of which and the mode of union the divine wisdom both knows and brings about; and for this reason he says that it attains even to the division of souls and body. Second in human being there is composition of parts of the body, which also is known to God, and for this reason he adds 'and of joints' regarding the juncture of members, 'and of marrows' regarding those things which are contained between joints. Third he adds those things which pertain to the soul, among which the intentions of the heart are hidden most of all and nevertheless are known to God; and for this reason he adds 'and of the intentions of the heart'. And since those are most hidden, much more so does God attain through God's knowledge to universal being, for no creature is hidden, or invisible, in God's sight, as is said in Heb. 4. (103-114)

Then when he says <This small etc.>, he shows the divine smallness through difference to other smalls. And first it must be considered that small is in the genus of quantity, but the small that is said of God is without quantity; for just as great is without quantity, thus is small without quantity. Second it must be considered that every small can be measured with facility, but the small which is said of God is without number; for it can not be comprehended by some measure. Third it must be considered that something small is easily detained, either that it is impeded from its course or that it is easily held, but the divine smallness can be held in neither mode, since its virtue cannot be impeded nor can someone perfectly lay hold of God. Fourth it must be considered that some things are small in that they are quickly terminated by a terminus of quantity or they are defined by a definition of substance which comprehends substance, but the divine small is without terminus or definition. Fifth it must be considered that those which are

small can comprehend little, but they are comprehended easily by others; but the divine smallness is comprehensive of all things, but is incomprehensible by all things. (115-126)

IX - 2

<But the same is supersubstantially etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of great and small, here he explains the meaning of the same and other. And first he shows how the same is attributed to God; second how other is attributed to God, <But other etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he proposes by way of summary the modes in which the same is attributed to God; second he explains them, <And he according to himself etc.> (1-5)

Now the same is attributed to God according to God's immutability, as it is read in the Psalm "But you are the same". But the immutability of God is first perceived in that God is not transmuted according to esse and non-esse as are generable and corruptible things, and for this reason he says that God is the same in so far as God is supersubstantially eternal; but since some have a certain eternity in so far as they do not defect completely into non being, but are converted into some other things, in order to exclude this consequently he says 'inconvertibly'. Second he excludes local motion when he says 'remaining in Godself'; for God is contained in Godself as in a place. Third he excludes the motion of alteration and augment and diminution, when he says that God always has Godself in the same way, namely since God is not changed from form to form, as from white to black, or from quantity into quantity, as from small to great, since nothing in God is increased or lessened; for what is more white is disposed according to the same, but not in the same mode. Fourth he excludes the motion which is according to a relation to things. And he says that God, as far as it is on God's part, is always in the same way present to all things, but that all things are not always disposed in the same way to God comes about from the variation which occurs in things. (5-17)

Then when he says <And he according to himself etc.>, he expounds those things which he had touched upon summarily, and first when he had said 'remaining in Godself'. And he excludes those things through which the dwelling of something in another can be impeded, which are five: for first anything remains in a place which befits it per se and according to its nature, but it is easily removed from the place which befits it accidentally; and regarding this he says that God is collocated in Godself according to Godself, i.e., per se and not accidentally. Second something remains where it is established, whence some things are affixed with

keys that they might remain permanently; and he thus adds 'firmly'; for God is established in Godself according to the infinity of God's own virtue. Third it happens that something established in something else can not remain in it, since corruption or putrefaction happens to that which had established it, just as stones do not remain in a wall when the cement has corrupted; and in order to exclude this from God he adds 'and uncontaminated'. Fourth something is prohibited from remaining since it is not optimally collocated, but can be lead to a better condition; and in order to exclude this he says 'in the highest ends', i.e., summits. Fifth something is prohibited from remaining because of the diversity of those which come together for the institution of a thing, of which one draws this way and another one that way; and regarding this he says 'of an abundance of identity', since in God there is the most perfect identity excluding all diversity. (18-30)

Then when he says <Intransmutable etc.>, he expounds what he had said 'always having according to the same and in the same mode', and first regarding alteration. And he says that God is intransmutable in so far as God cannot be variated according to more or less, and God is not able to fall into an opposite in so far as God is not changed from one form into an opposite form. Then he expounds the cause of the things said; for that something is not transmuted or does not fall into a contrary, one cause can be that it has a firm active virtue to resist, as is clear in fire; and regarding this he says 'firmly'. Another cause can be that it does not have in itself the principle of mutability; and regarding this he says 'invariably'. But this principle of variability sometimes is a mixture with something extraneous; and in order to exclude this he says 'clean', or 'pure', according to another translation; for what is unmixed with something extraneous is called pure or clean. But sometimes the principle of variability is the potency of matter in that which is variated, because of which it is reduced by an agent into another disposition; and to exclude this he says 'immaterially'. But sometimes the principle of variability is the composition of something from diverse things, just as mixed bodies are variables, not only since they are material things, but also since they are composed of contraries; and to exclude this he says 'most simple'. But sometimes the notion of variation is its need to be variated; for what is imperfect naturally tends toward its perfection; and to exclude this he says 'not needing'. (31-45)

Then to exclude the motion of augment he adds 'non augmentably'; and to exclude the motion of decrement he adds 'not diminishable'; and to exclude the transmutation of generation he adds 'ingenerate', i.e., not generated. Now

this is said in many ways. For sometimes not generated is said, since it has not yet received esse through generation, as those things which will be generated in the future; and to exclude this mode he adds 'not as not yet generated'. But sometimes something is said not to be generated, since its generation was begun, but is not yet consummated; and to exclude this he says 'or imperfect'. But sometimes something is called not generated, not simply but in some respect, just as if we should say that this human is not generated from that one or if we should say this is not a generated human, but a generated animal; and to exclude this he says 'or as not made by this', i.e., from some determinate generator, 'or that' as far as a certain terminus of generation. But sometimes that is called not generated or not made, which is impossible to be, as a human to be an ass; and to exclude this, he adds 'nor as nowhere', i.e., in no place, or 'never', i.e., in no time, and 'in no mode existing'. (45-56)

Then he adds how ingenerate is said of God through an opposition to the foregoing, saying that God is called ingenerate as all things, i.e., since God in some way is all things in so far as all things preexist in God; and this is opposed to that which he had said 'nor as nowhere in no way existing'. God is also called ingenerate, not in some respect but absolutely, against what which he had said 'or as from this' etc. God is also called ingenerate, not as not yet generated, but as always existing. God is also called ingenerate, not as imperfect, but as existing perfect through Godself. Thus therefore he shows the difference of God to those things which are called not generated. Whence consequently he shows the difference of God to those things which are called generated; for every generation is a transmutation from this whole into that whole, from which it follows that it is not always the same; and to exclude this he says 'and existing the same'. But that a generated thing is not always the same occurs from two factors: first since it is determined to a specific esse, not the whole itself per se, but through some part of it, namely through form, and because of this it is corrupted and generated in that one form is separated from matter and another enters; but what is form simply is determined according to itself entirely to its specific esse. Second since a generated thing is determined to its esse, not by itself, but from the action of a generator; and for this reason in order to exclude this from God he says that God exists the same as determined to this that God uniformly possesses Godself and according to the form of identity, not according to another or from another, but according to Godself and from Godself. (57-71)

Then when he says <And the same from the same etc.>, he shows how they have another identity through God, and this in two ways: in one way in that God grants to existing things identity in their proper nature. And he says that this same, which is God, shines above all things so that they participate God's identity according to the suitability of each one; for to one God grants that it is the same simply; and to those which are diverse according to themselves God grants identity of order in that one is coordinated to the others. In another way in that things, which in their proper natures are diverse, are the same as far as they are in God; and regarding this he says that it is because of the abundance of God's identity and because God is the cause of all identity. And God prepossesses contraries in Godself not in a diverse mode, but in the same mode, just as diverse effects are uniformly in the one who is the one and singular cause of all identity through excess. (72-80)

Then when he says <But other etc.>, he shows how otherness is attributed to God. And he posits two modes, the first of which is that otherness is attributed to God in so far as God is present to all things, as to those who participate God through a certain similitude according to the perfections which they receive through God's providence. And this is because the preservation and good of all is all in all, namely in so far as no perfection is in things which is not some similitude of God, so that thus God can always be called, through the participation of God's similitude, Wisdom in the wise, Justice in the just, Life in the living, and thus of the others. And lest someone should understand badly that God is all in all, he excludes from God the modes in which one creature is in another, which occurs in two ways: in one way through transmutation of the one which is said to become in another, as fire is in a mixed body through some transmutation of it and food is in a nourished body in that it is converted into body; whence to exclude this he says 'remaining in Godself'. In another mode something is in another in that by its action it changes that thing into a similitude of it, just as generating fire is in some way in generated fire. And this in some way approaches the mode in which he had said God to be in things, but it falls short in many ways: first since those things which in natural things generate things similar to themselves do not always remain the same, and since they preserve themselves according to the similitude of a species, they generate things similar to themselves; and to exclude this he says 'and by proper identity'. Second since the action of an agent by which it makes something similar to itself is something that goes out from the agent into the patient, which has no place in God, since God's action is God's substance; whence to exclude this he says 'and

inegressibly'. Third since a created agent produces itself in diverse things according to diverse operations, which does not befit God; and for this reason he adds 'according to one operation'. Fourth since the action of an agent making something similar to itself is not continuous and sempiternal as is the action of God; and for this reason he adds 'and without cease'. Fifth since a natural agent simultaneously both suffers and is moved; and to exclude this from God, he says 'standing'. Sixth since the virtue of a natural agent is debilitated in its action because it suffers at the same time; and to exclude this he says that God by an indeclinable virtue gives Godself through a certain participation of Godself for the deification of those converted, i.e., that God might assimilate to Godself those which God converts to Godself. (80-103)

Then when he says <And alterity etc.>, he states the second mode in which otherness is attributed to God. And first he states the mode; second he shows that it does not pertain to the proposed intention, <But lest we should be concealed etc.> (104-106)

He says therefore first that there is also attributed to God the alterity of diverse figures according to the multiple visions of the prophets, in which sometimes God was seen as a lion, sometimes as a lamb, sometimes as a man, which are diverse figures. Others signify certain things beyond those which appear on the surface. And he shows this through an example in the soul: for if someone wants to describe the soul in the mode of a body, although the former is simple, we should understand the corporeal parts attributed to its simplicity otherwise than they are in the body. For through the head we should understand the mind which presides over all parts of the soul, as the head is over all parts of the body; but through the neck we should understand opinion, which is disposed in a middle way between reason, knowledge, truth and the irrational parts of the soul, lacking knowledge of the truth; but through the breast we should understand furor, i.e., the irascible, because of the fortitude of the breast; but through the belly the concupiscible because of the softness of the belly or since concupiscence arises from the belly, just as the irascible has a seat in the heart which is in the breast; but through the legs and feet we would say to be signified the natural powers of the nutritive soul, through which life is sustained. And thus we would use the names of corporeal parts, as if certain signs of the potencies of the soul, according to a certain similitude. Whence much more so the diversity of forms and figures in God, who is above all things, ought to be purged from corporeal fantasies through holy and mystical expositions befitting to God, namely since they understand the hidden from the manifest. Whence also if

someone wants to attribute to God, who is impalpable and infigurable, the three dimensions of bodies, as the Apostle does in Eph. 3, it must be said that the width of God is nothing other than the procession of the divine providence, which is borne above all things, as if containing all things; but the length of God should be called the virtue which is extended above the whole, penetrating all things from the highest to the lowest; but the depth of God should be called the hidden and unknown essence of God, which is incomprehensible to all existents. (106-125)

Then when he says <But lest we should be concealed etc.>, he shows that the aforementioned alterity does not pertain to the proposition. And he says that we ought not to deceive ourselves by expounding alterity which is according to forms and figures, since by this means we would mix together that doctrine of the Symbolic Theology, which is concerned with expounding the corporeal nominations of God, which are understood through sensible signs. But it pertains to the present proposition that we should not take the alterity attributed to God to be some variation of God who has supereminent and unchangeable, i.e., intransmutable, identity, but through this we should understand the formation by which God gives multiple forms and that God reduces all things into one order, and conversely the uniformity of the many processions of the divine fecundity to all things, all of which pertain to the first mode of alterity designated above. (125-133)

IX - 3

<But similar God etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the same and diverse, here he explains the meaning of similar and dissimilar; and first, similar; second, dissimilar, <And what must concerning that etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows how similitude is attributed to God; second how God is the cause of similitude, <But to all by similitude etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he attributes similitude to God in that God is called similar to Godself; second through comparison to others, <But theologians existing etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that, if anyone wants to say that God is similar to Godself, such an exposition of the divine similitude should not be condemned. But he excludes two things from God through which something can be dissimilar to itself: for something can be called dissimilar to itself in one way, since it does not always remain the same, but is changed from form to form or from disposition to disposition; and in order to exclude this he says 'as the same'. Second something can be called dissimilar to itself, since it is composed of contraries or from dissimilar parts;

and to exclude this he says 'the whole through the whole God similar to itself'. And since it is customary to call the whole what is divided in parts or subjects as the universal whole, or integral units as the integral whole, in order to exclude the notion of the universal whole he says 'singularly'; but to exclude the notion of the integral whole he says 'indivisibly'. (7-14)

Then when he says <But theologians etc.>, he treats the similitude of God through comparison to others. And he says that those who deal with divine things say that nothing is similar to God, who exists above all things in so far as God is considered in God's own esse, but they say that God gives God's similitude to things which are converted, i.e., that draw near, to God according to a certain imitation possible to them according to their virtue, not such that they can perfectly imitate God, since God is above all definition, i.e., above the termini of any nature, and above all reason, i.e., above all apprehension. And the virtue of this similitude to God which is given to things by God appears in this, that all things which come from God as effects from a cause are converted through desire to God as to a proper cause; which would not occur unless all things had some similitude to God; for everything loves and desires what is similar to itself. Therefore since all things are converted through desire into God, it is fitting to say that all things are similar to God, not according to equality, but through a certain assimilation and imitation from which the notion of an image is taken. And that such is the similitude of things to God appears from this, since we do not say that God is similar to other things, since neither is a human being said to be similar to its image. For in those things which are of one order it can be said that some things mutually are similar to each other, thus that the similitude is converted toward both, so that we could say this to be similar to that and that to this; for both can be called similar to each other, because they are called similar in that they participate one form, which preexists in a common cause, to which both of the coordinates have a similar relation. But in causes and effects a conversion of similitude ought not be understood; for an effect and what is brought forth from another can be called similar to a cause from which it was brought forth, as the image of a human being; and this is because the cause does not depend on the effect, so that it gives its similitude only to these or to those, but the effect depends on the cause, from which alone it participates the notion of similitude. And this dependence is designated when an effect is said to be similar to its cause. But when it is said that coordinates are similar to each other, the dependence of both on one cause is designated. Thus therefore it is clear that God,

who is the cause of all, can not be called similar to others, but others are said to be similar to God. (15-37)

Then when he says <But to all etc.>, he shows how God is the cause of similitude in things. And he says that all things that participate similitude have this from God as from a cause, that they are similar; for some things are called similar in that they come together in some form; but every form is from God. And not only is God the cause of similar things, but God is also the cause of similitude itself, just as it was said above that not only is God the cause of living things, but of life itself. And whatever is called similar in any created thing is called similar by a certain vestige, i.e., by a certain representation, of the divine similitude, from which not only is similitude perfected, but also every union which is in things. (37-43)

Then when he says <And what is necessary to say concerning this etc.>, he explains the meaning of dissimilar. And he says that it is not necessary to speak more fully that God is not similar to things, but rather the cause of similitude, since sacred doctrine proclaims God to be dissimilar and not of the same order with other things, since God is diverse from all things: as is clear in Is. 40 "to whom will you liken God?" And what seems more doubtless, nothing is said to be similar to God, according to the Psalm "God, who is similar to you"? and again "There is none similar to you among the gods, O Lord". And nevertheless this is not contrary to what was said above about the assimilation of things to God; for the same things can be called similar and dissimilar to God: similar in that they imitate God, who is not perfectly imitable by a creature, in that it occurs, i.e., in so far as it is possible, to the creature; but dissimilar in that effects have less of perfection than a cause. Nevertheless lest someone should understand when he says 'less' some proportion, as occurs in things which are of one genus of which one is more perfect than the other, he adds that creatures fall short of God, not according to some determinate measure, but infinitely and incomparably; and for such reason they are called dissimilar to God. (43-55)

IX - 4

<But what also of the divine station etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of similar and dissimilar, here he explains the meaning of the divine station or session and motion. And first, station and session; second, motion, <But what also when on the other hand etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows how session or station is attributed to God; second he determines the causality of the

divine station or session, <And this supersubstantially etc.> (1-5)

Now he attributes to God session and station in three ways: first in so far as God exists in Godself. And this is what he says, that concerning the divine station and session, through which a certain immobility is designated, we can say nothing beyond this that God does not stand or sit as sustained in something other as we do, but God remains in Godself, not indeed mobily as a human being sits in a seat from which he can be removed, nor according to some diversity of Godself from Godself as a human being differs from the place in which he sits or stands, but according to an immobile identity; nor again in a common mode, as anything in some way is in itself in so far as it is contained under the terminus of its nature, but singularly God is fixed in Godself. For thus God depends on Godself that God depends on nothing else, and God is also collocated above all things. Second he attributes to God station and session with respect to operation. And this is what he says, that God always works according to the same, namely according to the same wisdom, virtue and goodness and things of this kind; and in the same respect as far as the object of God's operation: since God's operation is always around Godself in so far as by understanding and by loving Godself God works all things; and in the same mode according to the mode of operation as it is compared to the operator, for it is not debilitated or strengthened in acting. Third he attributes to God station and session through remotion of every passion or transmutation from God. And he says that station or session is attributed to God in that God does not have from Godself some cause of God's transmutation and in that God cannot be moved by something exterior into a contrary, but is totally immobile. (6-21)

Then when he says <And this supersubstantially etc.>, he treats of the causality of the divine station and session. And he says that those things which were said before are attributed to God supersubstantially, since God is the cause of all station and session which is found in created things in so far as God is above every session and station, and all things are stabilized in Godself who keeps them lest they be moved from station or permanence in their proper goods. (21-25)

Then when he says <But what also when on the other hand etc.>, he explains the meaning of the divine motion. And first he shows how motion is attributed to God; second how differences of motion are attributed to God, <And right to understand etc.> (25-27)

He says therefore first that when the teachers of holy scripture say that God, who is immobile, is moved and proceeds to all things, it must be understood as it befits God. For religiously, i.e., according to right faith, it must be judged that God is moved, not as those things which are carried by others or are in any mode changed through themselves or through alteration by which something is changed from quality to quality, or according to a modal motion by which something is moved from one mode of moving to another, as from less white to more white or from less quantity into a greater; or according to local motion, whether straight or circular or oblique composed from the two; nor also according to intelligible motion in that the created intellect is changed from one intelligible conception to another; nor according to animal motion according to which an animal is changed from one apprehension to another or from one affection to another; nor also according to natural motion according to which something is transmuted from one nature into another; but God is said to be moved in so far as God leads all things into being and in so far as God contains all things in God's esse; and not only does God bring forth substance and contain things in it, but in so far as God also universally provides for all things, giving to things both life and wisdom and things of this kind, and preserves things in them. (28-39)

But from these effects God is said to be moved for a twofold reason: first since by providing for all things God is present to all by a certain circuit which can not be measured, enclosing all things; for since God is the measure of all God is measured by none. And thus, while God exhibits God's presence around diverse things, a certain similitude of motion appears in God; for we can not be present to diverse things unless we are moved. For another reason because of the aforementioned effects God is said to be moved in so far as the operations and processions of gifts, which God confers to things from God's providence, come to all existents. And thus a certain similitude of motion appears in God, while first there is considered essence or wisdom or something of this kind in God as in the highest source of things and from there they are derived, as if through a certain outflowing, to other things. And not only do the theologians attribute motion to God, but it is also permitted to us that we might fittingly praise the motion of the immobile God. (40-48)

Then when he says <And straight etc.>, he shows how the differences of motion are attributed to God. And since that which is moved in a straight motion is moved uniformly from a certain principle to an end, he says that straight motion befits God in that God's operations proceed indeclinably and

inflexibly; for God's operation is not frustrated, but always proceeds in a direction according to the disposition of God. We can also through straight motion understand the production of all things from God; for thus God's causal operation proceeds in a direction through all media to the last. But oblique motion is composed of diverse things; and thus oblique motion is attributed to God in so far as in God's operation there is understood simultaneously procession and station: procession as far as the production of things, but station as far as the invariability of the divine operation. Thus therefore, since the procession of God is not without stability, it is called a stable procession; but since the station of God is not without the production of things, it is called a generative status. But in circular motion there are three things to consider: first that any designated point in a circle is the same both principle and end. Second that in the lines themselves of a circle there is to be considered concave and convex: and on the part of concavity it contains all things; but on the part of the convex it can be contained by others. Third, that which is moved circularly returns by its own circular motion to the principle from which it began to be moved. Thus therefore God is said to be moved according to a circle in so far as God contains in Godself all identity and all media and all extremes, in which he touches upon the first property; and in so far as God contains things that enclose which pertains to the notion of concavity and things that are enclosed which pertains to the notion of convexity, in which he touches upon the second property; and in so far as God contains conversion to Godself, as to an end, of those which had proceeded from God, as from a principle, in which he touches upon the third property. (48-66)

Then when he says <But if someone etc.>, he explains the meaning of equality. For above he had explained the meaning of inequality as the effect of justice is to exclude or to cause inequality; but now he explains the meaning of equality in itself. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows how equality is attributed to God as equality itself occurs in God; second how it is attributed to God as to a cause, <And just as of his equality per se etc.>; third how it is attributed to God as prepossessing every equality, <And according to this that he pre-receives etc.> (67-72)

He says therefore first that, if anyone in holy scripture wants to understand in the name of equality the nomination of the divine identity or the divine justice, this can be done fittingly; for equality is the unity of quantity. If therefore that unity is attributed to God according to Godself, God can be said to be equal by reason of the divine unity, which is perceived also according to God's

simplicity, since God is not composed from many things, and according to immobility, since God always possesses Godself in a single mode; and this is what he says, that God must be said to be equal as simple and indeclinable. But if the divine unity is considered in comparison to effects around which God uniformly works as far as it is on God's part, thus equality is attributed to God in so far as God proceeds by diffusing effects equally to all and through all: he says to all in that all things receive the influence of the divine operation; but he says through all he says in so far as the divine operation passes through all things from the principle to the end and again in so far as through one thing it passes to another, while one uses a thing as acting in another. Thus therefore the unity of simplicity and immobility pertains to the notion of the divine identity; but the unity of operation in effects pertains to the notion of justice; and for this reason he says that in equality is understood the nomination both of the same and of justice. (72-84)

Then when he says <And as of his etc.>, he shows how equality is attributed to God as to a cause. And he says that we say God to be equal as the substantifier, i.e., the cause, of equality itself per se, i.e., of equality itself considered in the abstract, causing which equality in things God makes things equal in two ways: first as far as the actions and passions or communications and receptions. And this is what he says, that God according to caused equality equally works in all things similarly that all things go about each other, namely while the action of one passes through into another, and God also effects the equal participation of those who receive, namely in so far as everything passive receives the effect of the agent. But the aforementioned similitude and equality of ambulation and reception must not be understood according to equality of quantity, since one thing is more active or receptive than another, but according to equality of proportion, since everything proportionally acts or is passive according to its mode; and this is what he says 'according to the opportunity of singulars'. In another way equality can be considered in things according to those things which are in things, as forms, qualities and quantities and others of this kind; and as far as this he says that God effects an equal donation distributed to all. This again must not be understood from the equality of quantity, since not all white things have equal whiteness nor all great things equal magnitude, but it must be understood of the equality of proportion, since everything has the divine gifts according to an equal proportion; and this is what he says 'according to dignity'. (85-100)

Then when he says <And according to this which all etc.>, he shows how equality is attributed in that God prepossesses all equality. And he says that we say God to be equal in that God pre-receives in Godself all equality, namely intelligible and intellectual as far as the angels, which are called intelligible in that they are understood and intellectual in that they understand; rational as far as human beings; sensible as far as animals; substantial as far as all things that are in any way; natural as far as those things which come to be naturally; voluntary as far as those things which come to be from a proposition. All this equality, he says, God pre-receives in Godself, not that God has it in that mode in which it is in singular things, but segregated, i.e., in a singular mode before others; nor according to some diversity, as in creatures intelligible equality differs from rational, but unitively, i.e., according to one respect, namely according to virtue, which is effective of all equality, which is also existing above all things; for all effects preexist virtually in their cause according to its virtue. (101-111)

BOOK TEN

X - 1

<But see by the word of many people etc.> After Dionysius expounded the divine names which signify the perfections inhering in things either absolutely or according to the comparison of one to the other, here he expounds certain names which are said of God according to the notion of the universal principle of <u>esse</u> and of the duration of things. For God is called omnipotent in so far as God is the universal principle of all <u>esse</u>; but God is called Ancient of Days in so far as God is the principle of all duration. And since the names of duration are eternity and time, consequently he also explains the meaning of eternity and time. And these are touched upon clearly in the title which is as follows: Concerning Omnipotent, Ancient of Days, which also includes eternity and time. But this chapter is divided into three parts: in the first he explains the meaning of omnipotent; in the second, the Ancient of Days, <But the Ancient of Days etc.>; in the third, eternity and time, <But it is necessary as I judge etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he states his intention. And he says that God, who is of many names, by the word of holy scripture is praised also as omnipotent, according to Gen. 17 "I am God omnipotent: walk before me" and as Ancient of Days, according to Dan. 7 "The Ancient of Days sits". Second, <But this is said etc.>, he expounds how God is called omnipotent. And concerning this he does two things: first he designates the notion of omnipotence; second he explains a certain thing which he had said, <And containing the same etc.> (1-15)

But he explains the notion of omnipotence according to four things in which the notion of potency is considered. First according to compass; for something is said to be a great power, whether in natural or in human things, which contains many things under it. And this is what he says, that God is called omnipotent because God is a certain omnipotent session, i.e., a certain stability, containing the whole, i.e., all things, in so far as all things are subject to God's power, and encircling, in so far as all things are under God's providence. (15-20)

But second as far as stability: for something is called a great power which both is in itself immobile and is able to hold others immobily; and regarding this he says 'and collocating' etc. And he touches upon four things according to the four modes by which something is established: for something is established in so far as it is in its place, whence all natural bodies rest in there places; and regarding this he says 'and collocating'. But some things are established over something which stands under them, as the foundation stands under the walls and the base under the columns; and regarding this he says 'and founding'. But certain things are established through some ligament, as is clear in casks which are established by circles; and regarding this he says 'and circumstricting'. And these three modes of establishment apply in the case where one thing is established through another: and location can apply universally in that inferior creatures are established in some way through superiors, which are the places of inferiors, just as celestial bodies of inferior bodies; but foundation applies in that forms are established in matter and accidents in substances; but circumstriction in that elements are established in a mixture, and universally all parts in the whole. But the fourth mode of establishment is that everything has establishment in its own nature; and this is what he says 'and firm in itself perfecting all things', or it can otherwise be said that God collocates and founds and circumstricts, the divine session establishing all things in itself, namely since Godself is both the place and foundation and bond connecting all things. (20-34)

But third he shows the notion of omnipotence according to production: for something is called a great power that can produce many things, just as a root which produces many sprouts is called a virtuous root; and regarding this he says that the divine session produces from its virtue all things from a certain all embracing root. (34-37)

Fourth he shows the notion of omnipotence according to the notion of attraction: for something is called a great power that can attract or convert something to itself, and regarding this he says that God converts to Godself all things as to a certain all embracing plantation: for in Godself all things are planted as in a first principle. (37-40)

Then when he says <And containing it etc.>, he explains something which he had said. And first how divinity is called containing; second how it is called all containing, <But it is called all containing etc.> (40-42)

He says therefore first that divinity is called containing in so far as it is the session, i.e., the establishment or

immobility of all, which founds under itself all existences, not as some principle which is from the essence of things, which is diversified in diverse things, but according to one common containing, which exceeds all things; and that containing is powerful, which not only gives establishment to things contained under it, but also does not permit those things which fall away from Godself to be entirely destitute and to be returned into nothing. And whatever things are removed from God's perfection are said to fall away from God, who is perfect essence: for neither are they returned into nothing. (42-48)

Then when he says <But God is called etc.>, he shows how divinity is called all containing. And he says that divinity is called all containing in so far as it holds all things in that mode in which that which rules over some things is said to hold those things: for something is said to hold a possession, which is under its care. But if someone rules over some things, as it were existing as one of their number, he holds them in so far as he is the ruler, but he is also held by them in so far as he is mixed with them and is included under their order. But God holds all things such that God is held by nothing, since God is not mixed with things, but is above all things; and this is what he says: 'ruling unmixed with the governed'. (48-54)

But it happens that something rules something in two ways: in one way through the mode of fear. And this mode of ruling is not efficacious to hold the subjects; for since those who serve in fear are subjected against their proper will, when opportunity is given they cast off the yoke of servitude. The other way is through the mode of love. And this mode of ruling is efficacious for holding subjects who are subjugated voluntarily. And this mode of ruling he attributes to God when he says 'and as desirable by all'; for all things desire God, as was said many times. But it happens that some particular good, although it is desired, does not efficaciously hold the one desiring since, while it is terminated and finite, it does not have in itself all things which can be desired, and for this reason what desires it because of some goodness found in it does not totally rest in it, but passes to another in which it finds a goodness which is absent from it. But God is so desirable that God is entirely interminable; whence from necessity God holds every desiring thing, while in any desired thing God is desired; for nothing is desirable except in so far as it has some participation of the highest Good. But again it could happen that someone ruling could be desirable in his person, but he might give heavy laws to the subjects, and for this reason the subjects would not be efficaciously held under him. But he excludes this from God, adding that God sends upon all voluntary laws: for the law of God is to any

dependent creature its natural inclination to doing that which befits it according to nature; and for this reason, as all things are kept by divine desire, thus they are kept by God's laws, according to the Psalm "he placed a precept that he will not perish", namely some creature. And because of this also it is said in Wis. 8 of the divine wisdom, that "it disposes all things pleasantly". But whence the divine laws are voluntary to dependent things, is shown through what is added: 'and sweet offspring' etc. (54-73)

Where it must be considered that from love and desire of an end there is originated the desire of that which is to the end. But the ultimate of every end is the divine goodness, to which as to an end all particular ends are ordained, toward which things are naturally inclined. Thus therefore the natural inclinations themselves of things toward their proper ends, which we say to be natural laws, are a certain birth, i.e., effect, that is sweet, i.e., consonant with natural appetite, an effect, I say, or a birth of love by which the divine goodness is loved. Which love is divine and is holding all things and is insoluble: whether this is understood of the love by which God loves God's own goodness, through which God holds all things, and it is insoluble since God loves Godself necessarily, or whether it is called divine love which is the divinity implanted in all things, through which all things are held by God and which can not be dissolved, since all things love God from necessity, at least in God's effects. (73-81)

X - 2

<But God is praised as Ancient of Days etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of omnipotent, here he explains the meaning of the Ancient of Days. And concerning this he does three things: first he shows why God is called Ancient of Days; second he expounds the designated reason, <And indeed both time and day etc.>; third he shows what he had said through the authority of scripture, <Because of which also in holy etc.> (1-5)

But it must be considered that among us something is called ancient for a dual reason: first since it possess much of time. But second since it precedes in time those things which are younger; for something is called ancient that is in the past, removed from the present, and this is prior in time. Thus therefore God is called Ancient of Days for a dual reason: first since God prepossesses all duration, both of eternity and of time, as through eternity is understood the duration by which God measures <u>esse</u> itself, but through time the duration which measures becoming or motion itself. Second since God is before all days and before eternity and before time. (5-11)

Then when he says <And indeed both time etc.>, he expounds the designated notions. And the first first; second the second, <And just as of eternity and time etc.> (11-12)

He says therefore first that, while we say that God is time or some part of time, as for example a day and a fourth of a year, and while we say that God is eternity, it is necessary for this to be understood in a mode which befits God, not such that God is something whose <u>esse</u> is something successive and divisible or adjoined to another, but God is called eternity, which is the measure of permanent <u>esse</u> in so far as God is intransmutable and entirely immobile according to every motion, namely since God is moved by no motion. But God is called time, which is the number of motion, because God is always moved in that mode which was described above in the ninth chapter concerning God's motion. Nevertheless God is not moved such that in God's motion there is some succession, which quality is in motion which is numbered through time, but God always is permanent in Godself. (12-20)

Then when he says <And as of eternity and time etc.>, he expounds the second reason. For God is said to be before days and eternity and time, not through the mode of passing away as those which are called ancient among us, but through the mode by which a cause is prior to an effect; for God is the cause both of eternity and of time and of days. (20-22)

Then when he says <Because of which in holy etc.>, he adduces authorities of scripture for the foregoing manifestation. And he says that because of the foregoing in the apparitions of the hidden visions of God, God is described as new and as aged: new according to Is. 62 "there will be called to you a new name"; but aged according to Is. 46 "unto the old I am he and unto the aged I will endure". But that God is called aged, or senior, God's antiquity is signified, namely that by the principle of eternity God always exists; but that God is called new, or junior, it is signified that God is ancient with old age, i.e., without some deficiency or even passing away since, as was said above, God is moved while remaining in Godself; either since old age or antiquity seems to pertain to a principle because of its priority, but youth to an end because of its posteriority, because both are attributed to God, we are taught that God proceeds through all things from the principle to the end. (23-33)

He posits the third exposition according to the statement of Hierotheus, whom he names his perfector, i.e., teacher, in divine things, who said that through both of the foregoing the priority of God is demonstrated and that God is the principle. For through this that God is called senior God's

priority in time is demonstrated; for we call those things senior which are prior in time. But through this that God is called junior priority or principality is designated, which is according to the notion of number; for that is called junior which proceeds less in time. But to the degree that something proceeds less in numbers, to such a degree it is prior; for unity and numbers near to unity are prior to the numbers which proceed further from unity. (33-39)

X - 3

<But it is necessary as I judge etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the Ancient of Days, here he explains the meaning of eternity and time. And first he states his intention; second he carries out the proposition, <For also not entirely etc.> (1-3)

He says therefore first that it is necessary to consider from holy scripture the nature of time and eternity; where it must be considered that aevum here is understood as eternity. (3-5)

Then when he says <For also not entirely etc.>, he explains the meaning of the nature of eternity and time. And concerning this he does two things: first he expounds the signification of eternity and of time; second how eternity and time apply to things, <Therefore it is necessary not simply etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows in how many ways eternity is said; second what properly is eternity and time, <In that also the property etc.>; third he shows how one sometimes is posited for another, <But it is when in expressions etc.> (5-10)

He posits therefore first four understandings of aevum or eternity: for first those things which are ingenerate are called truly and properly eternal, i.e., which do not have a cause, as those which are said of God. Nevertheless scripture does not everywhere thus understand eternity, but sometimes those things which are incorruptible, since they never depart from <u>esse</u>, and immortal, since they never cease to live, and invariable, since they are not changed from form to form or from quantity to quantity, and always existing in some mode, since they always have themselves in the same disposition, as are the angels, concerning which it is said in the Psalm "Lift up ye eternal gates" and "you are illuminating wondrously by the eternal mountains", and others of this kind. And this is the second mode. In the third mode there are signified by the name of aevum, or eternity, those things which are most ancient, although they are corruptible, as is in Deut. 33 "from the fruit of eternal hills". In the fourth mode the whole congeries of our time is called aevum or eternity, as in Rom. 16

"according to the revelation of the mystery hidden in eternal times". (10-20)

Then when he says <According to which also the property etc.>, he shows what properly is called eternity and time. And first what properly is eternity; second what properly is time, <But time etc.>; third he proves it through authorities of scripture, <Because of which we also etc.> (20-22)

He says therefore first that all of the foregoing are signified by the name eternity in that they participate something of the property of eternity; for properly speaking eternity is what is ancient, i.e., it does not begin to be recently, and what is invariable, since it is not the measure of motion but of intransmutable <u>esse</u> itself, and that it measures the whole according to the whole, through which it differs from time: for the whole of time does not measure the whole of motion according to itself entire, but according to diverse parts of it it measures diverse parts of motion; for it is the number of motion according to prior and posterior. But since the <u>esse</u> which eternity measures does not have prior and posterior, since it is abiding and invariable, and eternity is simple, not having prior and posterior, and thus whatever it measures it measures according to itself entire. (23-30)

Then when he says <But they call time etc.>, he shows what properly is time. And he says that time properly speaking is what according to itself is the measure of generation and corruption and of every variation and of every relation in diversity. (30-32)

Then when he says <Because of which we also etc.>, he confirms the stated difference of time and eternity through the authority of scripture, which says that we in this transmutable life are contained under time and that we will participate eternity, when we will attain incorruptible life and possess ourselves always in the same way, as is said in Mt. 25 that the just will be in life eternal, and the Apostle says in II Cor. 4 "those things which are seen are temporal, but those things which are not seen are eternal". (32-37)

Then when he says <But there is when in the expressions etc.>, he shows how in holy scripture one is posited for the other. And he says that in the holy expressions sometimes that which is temporal is praised by the name of aevum, or eternity, as was said above, just as the mountains or hills are called eternal because of their antiquity. Sometimes eternity itself is designated by a temporal name, according to the Psalm, "But you yourself are the same, and your years

do not pass away", although we know that those things which more properly exist immobily are described through eternity, but those which exist in generation and corruption through time. (37-42)

Then when he says <But it is necessary not simply etc.>, he shows how things are related to eternity and to time. And he says that those things which are called eternal in scripture are not necessarily to be judged to be simply and equally simultaneously eternal with God, who is before participated eternity, but by following the understanding of scripture it is necessary for some things to be understood to be eternal according to a certain mode, namely in so far as they exist immutably and without time, as are the blessed spirits. But those which are the medium between existing immobily and those which become, or are generated, and corrupted, in one way participate time and in another way eternity, as the celestial bodies are like superior spirits in so far as they are incorruptible according to substance, and in this way they participate eternity, but in so far as they are transmuted according to place they are like generable and corruptible things, and thus they participate time. But it is fitting to praise God commonly both through eternity and through time, since God is the cause both of temporal and eternal things and is above eternity and time as eternity is participated by the creature. And it is fitting to praise God as Ancient of Days as God is prior and superior to all time; and that God variates the four parts of a year and all times and nevertheless God exists immobily before all ages in so far as God is not only prior and superior to time but also to aevum, i.e., eternity, as it is participated by creatures; and thus God's reign is the reign of all ages whether temporal or eternal. (43-57)

BOOK ELEVEN

XI - 1

<Do therefore the divine and chief etc.> Above Dionysius expounded the divine names by which the perfections proceeding from God into creatures are signified. But each thing desires its own perfection, which it participates from God, and loves it; and when it has obtained it, its appetite rests, in which rest the notion of peace consists. And for this reason in this chapter Dionysius explains the meaning of the divine peace and also of the perfections themselves proceeding from God into creatures in so far as they are considered in the abstract: for <u>esse</u> considered in the abstract is called <u>esse per se</u> and similarly of the others. And these two things appear in the title. (1-7)

Therefore this chapter is divided into two parts; in the first he explains the meaning of the divine peace; in the second, the meaning of the perfections proceeding from God in so far as they are considered <u>per se</u> in the abstract, <But since you have questioned me through a letter in another place etc.> But the first part is divided into two: in the first he explains the meaning of peace in so far as it pertains to the divine nature; in the second in so far as it pertains to the incarnation of Christ, <What someone might say of the benignity etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he states his intention; second he executes it, <For it is unitive of all etc.> (7-13)

But it must be considered that something is properly said to have peace in itself when its appetite rests in its proper good when attained; which occurs when there is not something repugnant which impedes such rest, either within or without. Thus therefore something is said to have peace towards itself and towards others from a certain union by which everything repugnant is excluded, which union is here understood in the name of congregation, when he says that we ought to praise the divine peace, which is the principle cause of congregation. But since we are not able to praise the divine peace as it is in itself, it is necessary that we praise it with pacific hymns, i.e., with praises taken from the fact that God produces peace in things. (13-20)

Then when he says <For he is unitive of all etc.>, he carries out the proposition. And first he explains the truth; second he excludes objections, <But how someone might say they desire all peace etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows the causality of the divine peace in common; second he expounds it in specific cases, <Therefore from the divine peace itself etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows what the divine peace produces in things; second how he does this in diverse ways in diverse things, <By participation of the divine peace etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he shows the effective causality of the divine peace; second how it is a final cause, <Because of which also all things desire it etc.> (20-26)

But since the name of peace is more frequently used of rational creatures, in which the notion of peace is more clearly found, from them it must be considered what it is in which the notion of peace properly consists; for this is what the divine peace effectively produces in things. But some humans are said to have peace, when their wills agree together in one thing; for thus one will not be adverse toward the other. But that many agree together in one thing, occurs from the fact that they communicate in some one thing: for example those who communicate in one city agree together for the common good of the city; and similarly it is clear in other cases. Thus therefore for the notion of peace two things concur: first that some things are united; second that they agree together in one thing; and for this reason peace is also said to be in natural things. And this is why Dionysius says that the divine peace is unitive of all regarding the first, namely in so far as God makes all things communicate in one thing; and again, it is also generative as far as the first institution, and operative as far as the government, both of the consensus and the connaturality of the universe: as consensus refers to the concord of wills, but connaturality to the concord of natural appetite. Where it must be considered that, even if some things are at variance as far as their proper ends, nevertheless all agree together in the desire of the ultimate end. (27-38)

Then when he says <Because of which also all things desire it etc.>, he shows how the divine peace is the final cause of things. But it is natural to everything that it desire unity, as it does both <u>esse</u> and the good, since through division a thing is corrupted and the goodness of a thing is lessened. And since the divine peace causes unity in things, for this reason he concludes that all things in their own mode desire the divine peace in so far as this is unitive of all. And this is what he says 'the divisible multitude of them converting to the whole unity', namely since those

which are divided in themselves are united in the whole to a lesser degree in so far as they are parts of the universe; and similarly in so far as, as was said above, it is both generative and operative of consensus and connaturality, to which responds what is added here 'and the natural warfare of every thing uniting to a conformed cohabitation'; for those things which naturally war against each other because of the contrariety which they have in their proper natures harmonize in the universal order, according to which in some way they dwell together in the world; and this is from the participation of the divine peace which, in so far as it is desired by all, has the notion of an end. (39-49)

Then when he says <By participation of the divine peace etc.>, he shows how the aforementioned divine peace is effective in diverse things. And first in the highest creatures; second in inferiors, <And subjects unite etc.>; third commonly in all things, showing the mode of the aforementioned, <Which simply coming upon etc.> (49-52)

But it must be considered that, just as some of the perfections proceeding from God, some of the highest creatures participate them more abundantly so that through them they can in some way be derived to the lower ones. Therefore he says that the supreme creatures are more worthy of the number of the congregative virtues, namely since in such abundance they participate the congregation of the divine peace so that also they might be congregative of others. Therefore of these virtues each has a triple union through participation of the divine peace: one from itself, in that each one of them according to themselves is some one thing. But there is another union in that one is united to another in the order of one nature. But a third union is that according to which they are united to the one principle of peace of all things, i.e., to God. And, as they are triply united, thus triply they unite those which are subjected to them. And this is what he says 'and they unite subjects', namely each of them to themselves and those to each other and all things to the one cause and perfect principle of the peace of all things, namely God, to whom as to an ultimate end and first cause they lead back all things. (52-62)

Then when he says <Which simply etc.>, he shows what the divine peace produces commonly in all things. And he says that the first cause of peace comes upon all things simply since, although those things in which it operates are diverse, nevertheless on the part of the operator there is no diversity either in operation or in the mode of operating. But he shows that God supervenes upon things both in order to preserve the unity of peace and to institute it. But the unity of peace consists in the tranquility of order,

as Augustine says in De civitate Dei 19, for which tranquility of order three things are required: first that things are distinguished from each other: for there can not be an order except of distinct things; and for this reason he says that God defines all things. Second it is necessary for the tranquility of order that none of the distinct things departs from the limit of its nature; and this refers to when he says 'he terminates'. Third it is required that this distinction and termination is stabilized; and this refers to when he says 'and God grounds'; otherwise if the distinction and termination of things were not firm, but one thing, going out from its termination, should invade the ends of others, the order of things would be confounded and there would not be tranquility of order. But he says that God defines and terminates and grounds all things, as by certain enclosing bars of diverse things, using the similitude of sensible things. For it is customary, if many boards are erected according to some order, so that bars are inferred by which the erect boards are held up, thus the distinction and termination of things are established by the perfections and virtues implanted in things by God, as if by certain bars. (63-77)

But the mode of establishment, which pertains to the conservation of peace, he shows, adding 'and they are not divided' etc. And he says that God does not permit distinct things to flow out to interminability and infinity, namely that the operations and transmutations of things do not tend to some certain terminus and end, as if they were unordered and not collocated, i.e., established in some conserving principle. But that effusion into infinity would be opposed to the triple union of things, which he previously said came to be in things through participation of divine peace. For union to the first principle would be destroyed; and regarding this he says 'and made deserted from God'. Also the union of a thing to itself would be destroyed; and regarding this he says 'and going out from union of itself'. Also the ordained union of one thing to another would be destroyed; and regarding this he says 'and spattered in each other by every mixture', through a certain confusion of things with each other, if they were permitted to flow out to infinity. (77-86)

XI - 2

<Therefore of the divine peace etc.> After Dionysius shows the causality of the divine peace in common, here he proceeds with it specifically. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows what can be said of the divine peace determinately in special cases; second he makes clear the proposition, <And first this must be said etc.> (1-4)

He says therefore first that it is neither lawful nor possible, not only to some humans beings but also to any created existents, to say, to utter, and to think in the heart the divine peace itself in so far as it is in itself or the divine silence itself, which a certain saint by the name of 'Justus' called the ineffability of God, namely since we can neither utter God nor does God speak to us such that we can know God perfectly according to what God is. But he adjoins silence to peace, since the sign of perturbed peace is usually noise and clamor. He even also adjoins to peace the immobility of God in every procession which is known by us: for although God is said to proceed in so far as God's similitude is diffused in things, nevertheless Godself according to every procession of this kind remains in Godself immobile. But rest and the immobility of peace are conjoined as also is silence, since those which have peace from this fact seem to have a certain quiet. Therefore of the divine peace and silence and rest we are not able to say nor think, namely how God rests and is silent, as was said, and how completely and supereminently united in Godself and among Godself and toward Godself entire. For union, as was said above, pertains to the notion of peace. But some things are found which in themselves are diverse but are united in some one thing, as many humans are united in one house; but God is united in Godself. But there is something which in itself is one, but nevertheless is not one within itself, just as one human within itself is not one, since within itself are contained many and diverse things. But God is one within Godself, since no diversity is found in God. Also something is found which is one within itself, since it is not composed from dissimilar parts, but nevertheless the whole is not united to itself wholly, since one part of it is not one with another. But God entire is united to Godself entire, since in God there is no number of parts, but God is entirely simple; and such is God's union that, neither when God enters into Godself, namely by understanding and loving, nor when God multiplies Godself through impressing multiple similitudes of Godself in things, God does not God's proper union, but because of the excess of God's unity, which is above all unity, divinity proceeds to all things through its similitudes communicated to things, that nevertheless the whole remains within itself. (4-27)

Therefore these kinds of things, while they are ineffable and unknown to us, it is necessary to attribute to God alone who knows Godself perfectly, in that God exists above all of God's participations that can be understood or spoken by created intellect: for God is above every esse and above all life and above all things of this kind which are participated by creatures; and thus, while it is connatural to the created intellect that it understand and speak the

participations of God, Godself, who is above all things of this kind, it can neither perfectly understand nor perfectly speak. This therefore is what we intend to say of the divine peace, namely the participations of the divine peace itself, as it is possible for us who fall short in understanding divine things, not only by the angels, but also by good and perfect men. (28-35)

Then when he says <And first etc.>, he shows specifically the causality of the divine peace. And first as far as created peace itself considered in itself; second as far as those things in which peace is found, <And that all things to each other etc.>
(35-37)
He says therefore first that this must first be said, that God makes to be peace itself per se, considered in the abstract, considered universally and in particular. For to subsist here is taken commonly for esse: for there is not some created peace subsisting through itself. (37-40)

Then when he says <And that all things etc.>, he shows the causality of the divine peace as far as those things which participate peace. And first in common; second in specific cases, <Because of which divine minds etc.> (40-41)

He says therefore first that it must also be said that the divine peace makes all things concreted to each other: for there is nothing in things which does not have union with some other thing, whether through conformity in species or genus or in any other order. But since this union does not destroy the distinctions of things, for this reason he says that it is unconfused. And in order to expound this he adds that according to the aforementioned unconfused union all things are united indivisibly and without distance, namely since the union which God has imparted to things is not something which can depart either by dividing or increasing distance: for it is not possible that white and pallid be either divided according to genus or simply move apart as far as white and black. And although all things are united in this way, nevertheless singulars are preserved in the purity of their proper species, since a human being, although it be united to others in the aforementioned modes, nevertheless is in no other species other than the human. But to this purity of species there attains purity both of knowability and of virtue: for everything is known through its species. Therefore since everything remains in the purity of its proper species, it follows that the union of one thing to another through some conformity is not in it in a covering but rather it can be discerned from others. And this is what he says 'not veiled through concretion to opposites' as for example white has a concretion with black in so far as it comes together with it in genus,

nevertheless this conformity does not impede that white be known in its proper nature in that it is distant from black. Similarly also the proper virtue of everything follows upon its species; and for this reason with its purity of species preserved its proper virtue following its species is not blunted. And this is what he says 'nor some bluntness of unitive diligence and purity', namely since neither is the purity of a thing dulled through a diligent, i.e., perfect, union nor conversely: just as white, because it differs in species from black, according to the purity of its species is not impeded but rather is united to them according to genus and not conversely. (42-60)

From these things therefore he concludes that we ought to consider one certain simple nature, which through the mode of union produces peace in things, namely the divine nature, which unites all things to itself while it assimilates all things to itself through the influence of its gifts and orders them to itself as to an ultimate end and again unites universally things themselves, i.e., anything to itself. For everything is such in so far as it is united to itself and to each other, i.e., one thing to another, as one thing comes together with another, in any mode. Also this divine nature thus preserves all things according to a certain unconfused containing, i.e., not unordered, so that simultaneously they are both unmixed, i.e., not mixed, and nevertheless concreted: not mixed while everything remains in the purity of its species, and concrete in that they are coordinated to each other. (60-68)

Then when he says <Because of which the divine minds etc.>, he shows the causality of the divine peace as far as those which participate peace specifically. And first as far as the angels; second as far as rational souls, <Because of which souls etc.>; third as far as the whole universe, <Because of which one and indissoluble etc.> (68-71)

He says therefore first that because of the first and simple cause of pacific union the divine minds, i.e., the angels, are united in three ways: first each of them according to their proper intellect; second as some are united in a certain order to other united angels; third in that further they ascend so that they are conjoined to divine things, which are collocated above every mind; and this conjunction is unknown to us. (72-75)

Then when he says <Because of which souls etc.>, he shows the effect of divine peace in rational souls, namely as it is reduced to unity. In which reduction a triple gradation is considered: for first a soul is said to have a most abundant reason in so far as reason diffuses itself to diverse things from many acts or effects by investigating

the nature of a thing. Second an abundance of reason of this kind is reduced to unity of intellectual purity, or simplicity; for the investigation of reason would have no fruit unless it led to intelligible truth. Third by a certain order through immaterial intelligible truth of this kind the soul comes, according to the property of its virtue, so that it is united to God, who is above intellect, to whom the souls in this life can not thus be perfectly united, as the good angels are. (76-83)

Then when he says <Because of which one etc.>, he shows the effects of divine peace as far as the whole universe. And concerning this he does two things: first he shows what the divine peace perfects in the universe; second he shows through what mode this occurs, <For it passes perfectly etc.> (83-86)

He says therefore first that because of the aforementioned simple nature there is a certain single and indissoluble complex of all things, namely in that all things come together in one order of the universe which remains indissoluble, in that from God there is caused in the universe itself a certain harmony, i.e., proportionate concord. And this is what he expounds, adding 'and perfect consonance is harmonized'; for harmony is nothing other than consonant concord. But this consonant concord in things is caused according to consensus and connaturality: as consensus is referred to the concord of will in those things which have will, but connaturality to the concord of natural appetite. But this harmonic complex or consonant concord has both order and foundation; whence regarding order he says 'and congregated unconfusedly': for confusion destroys order; whence those are congregated unconfusedly which have a certain connection to each other according to order. But regarding foundation he adds 'and indissolubly contained': for there is an indissoluble foundation in the complex of things, not from the multitude of those congregated, but from the virtue of the one containing cause and in the unity of the one congregating. (86-96)

Then when he says <For it passes perfectly etc.>, he shows how the aforementioned harmonious concord is established in things from the divine peace. But this mode of connection he expounds in three ways: first as far as those things which are connected; second as far as the connection itself, <And making all consenting etc.>; third as far as the connecting cause, <Although the divine peace standing etc.> (97-100)

He says therefore first that for this reason it was said that because of the divine nature a single and indissoluble connection consists in all things, since the peace of the perfect totality, i.e., the peace which is from the perfect

universal cause, in that total causes are called universal causes, this, he says, peace passes over from the first cause to all existents in that the unifying virtue of the first cause, i.e., making unity in things, is present to all things simply, i.e., apart from some multiplication of itself, and unmixed, since it is unmixed with things, but according to its essence it is separated from things. This peace passes to all things, by uniting all things, because it reduces all things into a certain order: which order consists in this that certain extremes are conjoined to other extremes through a medium; for the highest flow into the lower through a medium and the lower are converted for the purpose of receiving from the highest through a medium; and thus all things are conjoined according to one connatural friendship. And not only does the divine peace conjoin extremes to extremes through a medium, but also further it conjoins all things to itself in so far as it gives to all that both the lowest creatures and whatever is lowest in any creature enjoys the divine peace in its own mode. And this is what he says 'and to the extreme termination of every thing'; for there is nothing so low in things that it does not participate some divine gift, from which participation it receives that it should have a connatural friendship to other creatures and that it be ordained to God as to an ultimate end, which is to enjoy God. (101-114)

Then when he says <And making all consenting etc.>, he shows the mode of the aforementioned connection as far as the connection itself. But the notion of connection is perfected in a certain unity, and for this reason according to the mode of unity the mode of connection is understood. (115-117)

But it must be considered that unity is attributed to things in many ways: for something is what it is simply and according to itself one, just as something simple is called one in itself and regarding this he says that God makes all consent in unities. But something is called simply one, not according to itself but through relation to something which is other, either in reason or in name simply, just as if we should call Mark the same as Tullio or clothing as garments; it is either other according to the thing, as if we should say that Sortes is the same in species as Plato and horse is the same in genus as cow: and regarding this he says 'by identities'; for one is said absolutely, but the same relatively. But there is something which is not one simply but as united from many things, as is every composite: and regarding this he says 'by unions'. But there is something which neither simply nor in itself is called one, but through relation to another, as the unity of things gathered together: and for this reason he adds 'by congregations';

for things congregated have less of the notion of unity than things united; for a unit can be called one absolutely, although it is not simple, but things congregated absolutely are many, but one in relationship to something. Therefore an indivisible consensus is instituted by the divine peace in things in that they attain unity either through the mode of simple unity or through the mode of identity or through the mode of union or through the mode of congregation. (117-130)

Then when he says <Although the divine peace etc.>, he shows the mode of the aforementioned connection from the part of the connecting cause. And he says that the aforementioned connection in things is established in that the divine peace first is considered as standing immobily in itself; but second it is considered as a single exemplar in which exemplarily all things which pertain to peace are demonstrated; third it is considered in that it hands down its similitude to all things. For in this way it is said to proceed through all things and nevertheless not to recede from its proper identity. For the divine peace itself proceeds to all things in that through its similitude it hands itself down to all things along with the property of each one; and nevertheless it remains above according to the abundance of its pacific fecundity, namely since there is more in God of virtue to make peace than there is in things to receive it; and for this reason the emanation of peace from God is beyond the susceptibility of things. Although the reception of peace is according to the property of things, and while the divine peace thus proceeds to all things according to the emanation of effects, nevertheless it remains immobile in itself, a whole supereminently united to the whole, since there is no diversity of parts there, which impedes the whole to be unified to the whole. For a whole line is not one with the whole, since thus it would be necessary that every part of the line be one with every other part; but in simplicities the whole is one with the whole. But he adds 'and according to itself whole', since it is not one participatively, but essentially; for a point, even though the whole is one with the whole, is nevertheless not according to itself whole, but according to the unity which it participates. But if unity itself should subsist separately, the whole would be one with the whole and according to itself whole. And thus it must be understood of God that the whole is united to the whole and in itself whole, in that it is simple and essentially one. (130-147)

XI - 3

<But how someone might say etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of peace, here he proposes a certain doubt concerning the things predetermined: for he had said above that all things desire peace. And concerning this he

proposes a question: therefore first he proposes a doubt; second he solves it, <And if saying etc.> (1-4)

He asks therefore first how it can be said that all things desire peace, while there are many which rejoice in the fact that they are other and discrete from others and do not freely wish to acquiesce in things proper to them, but they always desire to be moved. But while the notion of peace consists in unity and rest, these seem to be adverse to the dual notion of peace. (4-7)

Then when he says <And if saying etc.>, he solves the proposed doubt according to three understandings of the doubt proposed. Of which he first proceeds with the first; second the second, <But if according to chance etc.>; third the third, <But if he should call those etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: he first states the solution; second he explains it, <And it is also of singulars etc.> (7-11)

He says therefore first that, if the one who proposes the aforementioned doubt, while he says that many rejoice in alterity and discretion, understands alterity and discretion as that which befits each one according to its proper nature, through which it is distinguished from others, which nothing wishes to lose once it attains its proper nature, it is not necessary for us to speak against this understanding, but we might say that to desire such discretion is to desire peace: for in this way all things desire to have peace toward themselves and to be united to themselves, that they want their own things and what are theirs, i.e., their proper natures and whatever pertains to them, to remain immobily and without chance. But the fact that the property of each thing is preserved preserves both the peace and the unity of a thing to itself. Whence it follows that to desire the discretion which follows upon one's proper nature is to desire peace. (11-20)

Then when he says <And it is also clean etc.>, he makes evident the aforementioned solution through the efficiency of the divine peace: for to establish the aforementioned discretion in things pertains to the divine peace; whence it is not contrary to the desire of peace, if it should desire such discretion. This is therefore what he says, that perfect peace, namely divine, preserves the property, i.e., the proper nature, of singulars in its integrity and purity, not mixed with anything extraneous but discrete from it. And this pertains to the providence of God in that God gives peace to things, which providence he names in many ways because of the diverse participations of providence. And this appears in this way: for it pertains to the providence of God that it makes peace in things, so that God excludes

war from things which, is adverse to peace. But there would be war in things unless confusion should be taken away, since one thing would not be contained within its proper limits, but in some way it would invade alien ends. Thus therefore by the fact that the divine providence preserves all things not warring and unconfused, both everything to itself and diverse things to each other, God establishes peace in things. And this is what he adds, that according to a stable and indeclinable virtue God establishes all things in God's sole peace and immobility, i.e., as they remain immobily in their proper natures and thus have peace toward themselves. (20-32)

And since he had already solved the doubt regarding what had been said, that many things rejoice in alterity and discretion, consequently when he says <And if all moved etc.>, he solves the doubt in the same way regarding what was said that many things do not freely want to rest. And he says that those, in whose nature it is that they are moved, do not wish to rest but wish always to be moved with a proper motion; this desire also is the desire of peace which is from God in all derived things, through which all things are preserved in themselves, excluding that they should fall from what befits them according to their proper nature; and consequently through the divine peace the property of every mobile and motive thing is preserved. (32-38)

But first movers are immobile since, while in mobile things one can not proceed to infinity, it is necessary to come to some first of those which move immobily, as is proved in VIII Physics. Also the first immobile mover must be living, as is proved in IX Metaphysics: and for this reason significantly he says 'and an immobile moving life'. And thus the property of mobile things and the immobile life of motive things are preserved through the divine peace, so that they do not depart from their natural status. But in such the conservation of the property of mobile things and of motive things pertains to the divine peace, in so far as those which are moved thus have peace toward themselves and in the same mode have themselves in their mobility according to which those things which pertain to them are performed: for to be moved is the proper work of a mobile thing in so far as it is mobile. But what retains its proper operation has peace toward itself. Whence it is clear that, while those things which naturally are moved want always to be moved and not to rest, they desire peace. (39-47)

Then when he says <But if according to a fall etc.>, he solves the proposed doubt in terms of the second understanding of the doubt. And he says that if the one who proposes the doubt, when he said that many things rejoice in discretion and alterity, he did not understand it of natural

discretion and alterity, which pertain to the notion of peace, but he understood it of an alterity and discretion according to a fall from peace, i.e., in that something departs from the union in which consists the notion of peace, and thus he wants to prove that peace is not lovable by all, against this opponent thus it will be said that there is nothing which totally departs from every union, in which consists the notion of peace. And he proves this in this way: in no way can there be something existing per se or something in existents, as accidents or parts, which entirely falls from union. Which fall he discusses in four ways through four things: first as far as the fall itself, to which is opposed station, according to which something stands in a natural union; and regarding this he says 'unstable'. (47-57)

Then he touches upon those things from which a fall occurs: but something falls when those things through which it was standing are taken away. But something stands in natural union through three things: first through the terminus in which it is contained lest it flow out ; for even dry things are contained in their proper termini and moist things are contained in other termini, and form, through which every thing is contained in its esse, is called a terminus; and regarding this he says 'unterminated'. Second, something has station through something extrinsic containing it, as bodies are contained in a place; and according to this similitude every exterior thing that contains and conserves can be called a place; and regarding this he says 'uncollocable'. Third something has station in its proper operation from an end; for what has a determinate end of its operation regularly works according to the rule of an end; but what does not have a determinate end, but wanders around diverse ends, it is necessary that it be fluctuating and unstable around its proper operation; and regarding this he says 'indefinite'. Therefore if nothing totally departs from the union of peace, but everything desires and loves that which is conformed to itself, but avoids contrariety, it is impossible for there to be some being which totally flees from union and desires discretion, which is according to a fall from natural peace. (57-69)

Then when he says <But if he calls those etc.>, he solves the doubt according to the third understanding, as that which was said, (that there are many things which rejoice in alterity and discretion), is not referred to the natural appetite, as in the foregoing, but to the appetite of the will. And he says that if the one who proposes the doubt should say that those humans are hostile to peace and to its goods, who rejoice in exterior strife and interior commotions of the soul, which he calls furors, which two pertain to a division contrary to peace, and again they

rejoice in variations and instabilities which seem to be contrary to peace, and this applies to the second part of the proposed doubt, it must be said that even such humans are held by the desire of peace according to a certain obscure similitude. Which he shows thus: for such people are many times assailed by passions, by which they are stirred up, and thus through passions of this kind their interior peace is disturbed. Therefore from the desire of peace they want to pacify attacks of passions of this kind, not wisely, but foolishly. For they think that they can have interior peace by filling their superfluous and inordinate desires which are incited according to various passions, but in this way they are disturbed the more while they can not attain the enjoyments by which they are held; for it is impossible that a person, subjected to superfluous and inordinate desires, should be able to attain all things desired; and for this reason such people, desiring peace, stir up strife that they might fulfill their desires. And since they are subject to various desires, they rejoice in variations. But they would pacify this attack of passion wisely if, while restraining many desires, they would be converted truly to one desire of peace. (69-85)

Then when he says <Which someone might say etc.>, he explains the meaning of the peace made through the incarnation of Christ, asking, can someone sufficiently speak of the piety of God which pours out peace to the world through Christ? According to which peace we, already liberated from sin, learn the teaching, both by the example of Christ and the interior inspiration of the Holy Spirit, not to make war by sinning either against ourselves or by discording from the holy angels, but through this peace according to our ability we work those things which are of God simultaneously with the holy angels; and this is according to the providence and grace of Jesus Christ who works all things in all and who makes that ineffable peace which is preordained from eternity, through which peace we are reconciled to Christ himself in the Holy Spirit, who is the spirit of love and peace; and through Christ himself and in Christ himself simultaneously we are reconciled to God the Father. (85-93)

But these supernatural gifts pertaining to the peace made through Christ were dealt with sufficiently in the book On theological characteristics, according to the testimony of scripture inspired by God; and for this reason here we pass over these things briefly. (93-95)

XI - 4

<But since also in another place through an epistle etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of peace which is

constituted in things through the divine gifts, here he explains the meaning of the divine gifts themselves in so far as they are considered in the abstract. And concerning this he does three things: first he proposes a doubt; second he solves it, <And first as not multiply etc.>; third he confirms the solution through the sayings of others, <And what must be said concerning this etc.> (1-5)

Therefore concerning the first it must be known that Timothy in a certain epistle written to Dionysius asked two things of him: first what is esse per se, life per se and wisdom per se: for Dionysius uses such expressions frequently, as is clear in the preceding; second Timothy in the same epistle said that he had doubted how Dionysius sometimes said that God was life per se, but sometimes that God was the cause of life per se. And for this reason Dionysius wanted to free Timothy from this doubt as far as he was able. (6-11)

Then when he says <And first etc.>, he solves the proposed doubt: and first the second, showing how God is life per se and the cause of life per se; second he solves the first, showing what is esse per se and life per se, <But you say what totally etc.> (11-13)

He says therefore first that he does not now want to assume the things said as if they were said simply; and for this reason, since life per se is not said simply but in many ways, it is not contrary that we should call God life per se or virtue per se and again that we should call God the substantifier, i.e., the cause, of life per se or peace per se or virtue per se. But it would be contrary, if those things were not said in many ways. For when we call God the substantifier of life per se and of this kind of thing, we praise God as the cause of all existents from those existents which exist maximally and first. For it is evident that life per se is prior to a living thing, and thus concerning the others. Whence, if God is the cause of these first things, God is the cause of all. But when we call God virtue per se or life per se, God is praised as existing above all, even above those things which are first among all. For God is called life per se through a certain excess. (13-22)

Then when he says <But you say etc.>, he solves the first doubt, namely what is life per se. And first he repeats the question; second he excludes a false understanding, <But we say this etc.>; third he determines the truth, <But through esse etc.> (22-24)

Therefore he proposes first from the person of Timothy what is signified when esse per se or life per se is said and

when any others of this kind are signified absolutely, i.e., abstractly, and principally, i.e., as principles of others; for life per se signifies the principle of living things. (25-27)

Then when he says <But we says this etc.>, he excludes an erroneous understanding. For the evidence of which it must be known that the Platonists, positing separated ideas of things, posited all things which are said in the abstract also to subsist in the abstract as a cause according to a certain order; namely thus that they called the first principle of things goodness per se and unity per se, and this first principle, which is essentially good and one, they said to be the highest God. But under the good they posited esse, as was said above, and under esse they posited life, and thus concerning the others. And for this reason they said that there was under the highest God a certain divine substance which is called esse per se and under this another which is called life per se. Therefore intending to exclude this, he says that what he had said above, that esse per se and life per se subsist first from God, is not something erroneous, but has a right and plain manifestation: for we do not call esse per se some divine or angelic substance, which is the cause of being in all things; (but he adds the angelic, since what the Platonists called second gods we call angels). For only the divine supersubstantial esse itself is the principle and substance and cause that all existents are: so that when he says principle, it refers to the order of nature in that the divine esse precedes all beings; but substance implies the notion of an exemplar: for that of which its substance is its own esse is the exemplar of all existents; but that it is called cause means that God gives esse to existents. Similarly also when we say life per se, we do not understand a certain deity that causes life, which is another besides the life of the highest God, who is the cause of all that live and also of life per se itself. And as we collect all things in the highest, we do not say that there is some essence and separated hypostases which are the principles of things and their creators, which the Platonists said to be the gods and creators of existents, as if working through themselves for the production of things. But if we wish to speak truly and properly of gods of this kind, they do not exist in things. Nor did those who posited such gods discover this through some certitude of science, neither they nor their fathers, since neither the first Platonists nor the later ones were able to receive knowledge of this through a certain and firm science, but they were deceived to posit this through certain human conjectures. (27-49)

Then when he says <But esse per se and life per se etc.>, having excluded the error, he solves it according to the

truth. And he says that esse per se and life per se and things of this kind are said in two ways: for in one way they are said of God who is the one supersubstantial principle and cause of all; and God is called life per se or esse per se, since God does not live by participation of some life nor does God exist through participation of some esse, but God is God's own 'to live' and God's life, both exceeding all esse and all life which is participated by creatures and existing as the principle of living and being to all. But in another way esse per se and life per se are called certain virtues or perfections given to creatures to be participated according to the providence of one impartible God. For although God, who is the principle of these virtues, remains impartible in Godself and consequently is not participated, nevertheless God's gifts are divided in creatures and are partially received, whence they are said to be participated by creatures; and because they are participated according to the properties of each of the participants, the participants both are and are called existents in so far as they participate esse, and living things in so far as they participate life, and divinities in so far as they participate deity; and similarly regarding the others. And since the unparticipated principle is the cause both of the participations and of the participants, for this reason God is the substantifier of both the participations and the participants. (50-63)

But the participations themselves can be considered in three ways: in one way in themselves as they are abstracted both from universality and particularity, as is signified when one says 'life per se'; in another way they are considered in the universal, as when one says total or universal life; in another way in the particular as when one refers to the life of this or that thing. Similarly the participants can be considered in two ways: in one way in the universal, as if one should say living universally or totally; in another way in the particular, as if one should say this or that living thing. And God is the cause of all of these. And this is what he says, that the Good, i.e., God, is first said to be the substantifier of these, namely of life per se and esse per se and things like these, as they are considered per se and absolutely: after that of the whole of them, i.e., of universal esse and universal life and similar things; after that of particulars of them, as particular esse and particular life; after that totally of participants themselves, as of universal being and universal living; after that particularly of participants themselves, as of this or that being or living thing. (63-73)

Then when he says <And what must be said of these things etc.>, he confirms the stated solution through the sayings of others. And he says that it is not necessary to doubt the

foregoing, since some of the doctors of the divine and christian religion, as Hierotheus and other disciples of the apostles, said this same thing, namely that goodness and deity coming upon all things is the cause of deity per se and goodness itself, naming goodness per se a certain gift coming forth from God through which beings become good and deity per se a certain gift of God through which some become gods participatively. And similarly they name beauty per se the effusion itself of beauty through which is caused both universal and particular beauty in things and through which some things become universally and particularly beautiful. And it is similar with all others whatsoever that are said in the same mode, by which are demonstrated the divine gifts provided and the goodnesses participated by created beings, which proceed by a copious effusion and remain above in God, who is inparticipable, since God does not become a part of something, so that God, who is the cause of all, perfectly is above all things, and Godself, who is supersubstantial and supernatural, exceeds all substance and nature in so far as God neither participates nor is participated, but remains in God's own purity simple and undivided. (74-86)

BOOK TWELVE

XII - 1

<But since also of those etc.> After Dionysius expounded the divine names through which the emanation of perfections from God into creatures is signified, here he expounds the names of God which designate the government of things. In which government four things must be observed: first the providence of divine cognition, to which pertains the name of deity; second the power of executing the ordination of the divine wisdom, to which pertains the name of domination; third the execution itself of government, to which pertains the name of king; fourth the effect of government, which is purity from all disorder, and to this pertains the name of sanctity; whence in this chapter he treats of the Holy of holies, King of kings, Lord of lords, God of gods, as is clear from the title. Also at the same time, from the same mode of speaking which says Holy of holies or King of kings, a certain presidency of government is designated. Concerning this therefore he does two things: first he states his intention; second he carries out the proposition, <Therefore sanctity etc.> (1-10)

He says therefore first that, since according to his own will those things which he had to say concerning the foregoing were led to a fitting end, it is fitting that now we praise God, who can be named in infinite modes, as Holy of holies, according to Dan. 9, according to another translation, when he venerated the Holy of holies etc., as King of kings, according to Apoc. 19 "he has in his garment and in his thigh written: King of kings and Lord of lords", and Ruler of the ages, according to the Psalm "You are king, O Lord, king of all the ages", both in the age and beyond, according to Ex. 15 "The Lord will reign in eternity and beyond", and as Lord of lords, as it was introduced from the Apocalypse, and God of gods, according to the Psalm "The Lord God of gods has spoken". For he intends to expound these divine praises stated in scripture in this chapter. But concerning the exposition of these he intends to proceed in this way, that first he might say what is sanctity per se, and what is reign and domination and deity; then what the scriptures intend to demonstrate through the duplication of names of this kind, when they say Holy of holies and God of gods. (11-21)

Then when he says <Therefore sanctity etc.>, he carries out the foregoing. And first he explains the first, namely what is to be understood through each of the aforementioned; second he explains the second, namely the cause of the aforementioned replication in scripture, <But since he is superfull to all etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he explains what each of the foregoing is considered in themselves; second how they are attributed to God, <Therefore these in a cause etc.> (21-26)

Concerning the first he first expounds what sanctity is. And he says that, according to our understanding, through sanctity there is understood purity, which is free from all impurity, both perfect and entirely immaculate. In which words three grades of sanctity are designated which are required for sanctity. Of which the first is freedom from every impurity; now liberty is opposed to servitude; but a slave to impurity is one who totally is conquered by impurity and is subjected to it; therefore the first grade of purity is that someone be liberated from this kind of servitude to impurity. The second grade is that it is perfect purity; for something is perfect to which nothing is absent. But it happens sometimes that even if someone is not subject to impurity, nevertheless there is absent from him some aspect of purity, in so far as he is disquieted by passions of impurity, which when they are removed, there is perfect purity. The third grade of purity is that it is entirely immaculate; for something is said to be stained which is polluted, not intrinsically but extrinsically; therefore there will be entirely immaculate purity, when someone not only has purity in themselves, but there is nothing exterior which can draw them to impurity. And in these three grades of purity the notion of sanctity consists. (26-38)

Then when he says <But the reign etc.>, he explains what reign is. But the name of reign is taken from ruling. But in every direction there must first be considered the end to which the one directing intends to lead. Second there must be considered the faculty of coming to an end. Third there must be considered the rule through which something directed is led to the end, which rule in human acts is called law. But fourth there must be considered the proportion of what is lead to the end itself; for it is not natural for everything whatsoever to attain every end. But since through the name of reign it is given to be understood not the direction of one simply, but of the whole human multitude, which is not uniform but has many varieties according to the diverse conditions of human beings and diverse offices which are required for the good status of the multitude, although there be one common end of the whole multitude, nevertheless there are many and different particular ends of diverse

things, for example to medicine, health, to the military, victory, to merchants, wealth, and thus also for others. But in order to attain diverse ends it is necessary for people to have diverse faculties from the diverse goods with which they are ornamented and to be regulated by diverse laws; for some laws are to be imposed on the military, others on the buyers and sellers, and thus concerning the others. Similarly also diverse orders of people are to be instituted to diverse ends; for it is not fitting for the same people to be soldiers and negotiators lest the offices be impeded through confusion. Therefore since the king is the one who has care for ruling the multitude, to him it pertains first to distribute ends so that nothing be absent of the things necessary for the multitude; it also pertains to him to distribute the ornaments of goods and to distribute laws, namely so that singulars be regulated by proper laws; it also pertains to him to distribute the orders of offices. And this is what he says, that reign is the distribution of every end and ornament and law and order. (38-54)

Then when he says <But domination etc.>, he explains what domination is, for which three things are required: first superiority of grade. But it would be unfitting for something to be in a superior grade unless it also abound with more powerful goods, and for this reason there is required secondly an abundance of goods. Which also would not suffice unless, third, there was present the power of containing and coercing subjects, otherwise an excess in terms of an abundance of goods would make one more powerful or better, but not a lord. This is therefore what he says, that domination is not simply to exceed those worse, i.e., inferiors, which pertains to the grade of sublimity, but it is also the perfect and omnimodal possession both of beauties and of goods. But he says of beauties and of goods; it is not only necessary for him who dominates to abound in goods, but so that he might be held in reverence, it is necessary for those goods to be conspicuous, which pertains to the notion of the beautiful. But he says every perfect and omnimodal possession, so that he might have all goods, and every one of those which he has might be perfect and that he might have them fully and not in a debilitated way. But regarding the third he says 'and true fortitude not availing to fall'; which can be expounded either of the fortitude of interior virtue, which is true fortitude in those things which are of human beings and can not fall when supported by divine grace, or it can refer also to exterior fortitude, which is true and not fictitious, as occurs in some who vainly show themselves to be more powerful than they are and to not be able to fall, namely easily because of the sufficiency of their help. And that this pertains to the notion of domination he proves through the derivation of the name, since what signifies "to produce dominion" in

Greek, from which is derived both domination and lord and ruling, signifies the things mentioned before. (54-70)

Then when he says <But deity etc.>, he explains what deity is. And since, as the Damascene says, this name 'Theos', which in Greek signifies God, comes from 'theaste', i.e., from considering all things, for this reason Dionysius here expounds the name of deity according to the notion of providence. But in the name of providence is understood cognition, not through the mode of speculation as such, but in so far as it is directive and inclining to the government of things. Thus therefore in the name of deity there is first understood the divine view toward all things; second the containing by which all things are contained under God by certain firmly determined rules and measures; third the communication of the divine goodness to creatures which are contained under God. And this is what he says, that deity is what sees all things; for it comes from 'theaste' which is to see, as was said. But of what quality is that vision of all things, which is understood in the name of deity, he expounds through what is added, that God is also looking out for and containing all things and filling it, by communicating God's goodness, and this according to providence and perfect goodness. But lest someone should esteem divine providence and probity to be obligated to that course and order which appears in things from the divine government, in order to exclude this he adds that deity exceeds all things which use God's providence, namely since God's wisdom and virtue and goodness are not limited to this course of things but they superabound in infinity. (71-84)

Then when he says <These therefore etc.>, he shows how the aforementioned things are attributed to God. And he says that in God, who is the cause exceeding all things, the aforementioned things can be praised absolutely, so that it might be said that in God there is sanctity, reign, domination and deity. But still we can add something pertaining to excess, as when we say that the first cause itself is sanctity and exceeding domination and is reign supreme and most simple deity, since deity does not occur in the first cause through participation, but through essence. (84-89)

But he designates consequently the reason of the foregoing. And first regarding sanctity, which he had said was a certain purity. And he says that every purity of all existents whatsoever preexists in the one which is the first cause, not dividedly, but collectively, namely as those things which are multiplied in effects are found simply in the cause, and from the first cause itself cleanness and purity are distributed to all existents in so far as it befits each one. But it is to be noted that he adjoins two

things to purity, namely diligence and clarity: of which one, namely diligence, is operative of purity; for by diligent study purity must be preserved; but the other, namely clarity, is attained from purity; for those things which are allotted are in themselves more evident and more perfectly can receive splendor from another. (89-96)

Then as far as the notion of reign he says that similarly in the first cause there subsists and from it are distributed ordination and ornament, which are included in the notion of reign, through which there is exterminated, i.e., taken away, incongruity and inequality and incommensuration, which are opposed to justice, which should be constituted through reign: so that incongruity is perceived through the comparison of a person to his action, when he does what is unfitting, but inequality through the comparison of one person to another, when the equality of justice is not preserved among people, but incommensuration through comparison of a person to those things which he has, namely when many things are given to some beyond their measure. For all of this ought to be excluded through the ordination of reign. Nor does it suffice to exclude vices, unless also those who are governed through reign are directed to their due end; whence he says that the ordination of the divine reign exults, i.e., it elevates with a certain joy, those things which are held to be worthy of its participation, and by impelling them it encircles them with certain well ordered identity, i.e., so that they might come together in the same optimum order, and direction, i.e., as they receive a due rectitude. For this is the end of reign, that all be contained and directed under one good order. (97-108)

Then regarding domination he says that also in the One, which is the cause of all, there collectively subsists and is distributed every perfect possession of every beautiful thing, which pertains to the notion of domination, as was said. (108-110)

But regarding deity he adds that in the same One there subsists and from it is distributed every good providence of God which is considers and contains those to whom it provides, which are contained under God's order in so far as from God's benignity God hands down Godself through a certain participation, so that God might deify those who are converted to God; God might deify, I say, i.e., make gods through the participation of a similitude, not through the property of nature. (110-114)

Then when he says <But since he is superfull etc.>, he responds to the second question, namely what the expressions mean through the duplication of names. And first he shows how God is called Holy of holies, King of kings etc.; second

he shows who those holy ones and kings are of whom God is said to be Holy and King etc., <But holies and kings etc.> (114-118)

He says therefore first that since God, who is the cause of all, supereminently to all things, has a plenitude of goodness above all others, in order to designate this excess, by which God exceeds all, God is called in scripture Holy of holies and the rest, i.e., King of kings, Lord of lords and God of gods; for there is designated in the same mode of speaking a certain emanation from a superior cause, so that it might be understood, when God is called Holy of holies, that from God emanates the sanctity in all holy things, and thus concerning the others. There is also designated a certain excess according to which God is segregated from all things, as if existing superior to all things, as is the sense of 'holy of holies', i.e., exceeding all holy things; for as those which are holy and divine and dominical and regal exceed those which are not such, and again as participations exceed the participants, as sanctity a holy thing, thus the one who is superior to all existents is collocated above all existents because God is a certain unparticipable cause of all participants and participations: for a cause exceeds effects. (118-128)

Then when he says <But holies and kings etc.>, he shows who are called holies and kings to whom God is compared. And he says that the holy expressions name holies and kings and lords and gods the more principle ornaments in singulars, i.e., those which receive the first grades in singular orders, as among angels the supreme angels and among humans the supreme humans; and this is because the highest in singular orders receive the gifts of God in greater simplicity, since they are more assimilated to God, in whom is simple and uniform goodness. And thus through the more principal ones the inferiors receive the gifts of God which the superiors distribute to them through their simplicity, and gifts of God of this kind are multiplied in inferiors according to their differences. And again according to ordination to an end the first and superiors gather together the variety coming to inferiors through a certain reduction to the similitude of their unity through a certain deiform providence. For thus also God, by diffusing God's gifts, multiplies them, and on the other hand, through the work of providence, God reduces a multiplicity of things into the order of a single end. (128-139)

BOOK THIRTEEN

XIII - 1

<Such also of those etc.> After Dionysius expounded the divine names which pertain to the notion of providence, here he expounds the divine names which pertain to the end of providence. For the end of providence is that singulars attain their proper perfection and further that all things might be reduced into a single end. And for this reason he her explains the meaning of the perfect and the one, as is clear from the title. But this chapter is divided into three parts: in the first he states his intention; in the second he carries it out, <Therefore the perfect etc.>; in the third he gives an epilogue on those things which were said in the entire book, <These intelligibles we etc.> (1-7)

He says therefore first that it suffices to have said so much regarding the foregoing. But it seems to remain that we should pass over to that which is most brief in speech, since holy scripture not only predicates all things of God, who is the cause of all, but also predicates all things of God simultaneously. But many things are found in a single creature, but not simultaneously: either they come together in it, but not at the same time, as a body is both white and black, but not at once, or they come together in it, but not according to the same part, as some body is in one part white and in another part black; thus it has many things indeed, but not simultaneously. But God has in Godself all things neither successively according to time nor divisively according to parts, but simultaneously; and for this reason since thus God has all things simultaneously, God is praised as perfect and as one. For that which has many things, not simultaneously but successively, is imperfect since it is mutable, and motion is the act of the imperfect; but that which has many things, not simultaneously but dividedly according to diverse parts, is composite and not truly one. Thus therefore in the most brief speech all things which were said of God above are comprehended in the names of Perfect and One. (7-17)

Then when he says <Therefore the perfect etc.>, he carries out the proposition. And first he explains the meaning of the perfect; second, the One, <But one since all things etc.>; Concerning the first he does two things: first he

shows how perfect is attributed to God; second what is of the notion of the perfect according to which it is attributed to God, <And every infinity etc.> (18-21)

Concerning the first he states the modes of the divine perfection by distinguishing them from those things which are called perfect in creatures. For first some things are said to be perfect in creatures not per se, but through the advent of something extrinsic, as air through light received from the sun and a human being through grace which it has from God; but God is called perfect as perfect per se. Second something is called perfect per se, through its proper natural form, but not according to itself, since it is not its form, but is composed from form and matter, as if we should call a stone perfect or any material thing; for nothing of this kind is perfect according to its whole self, but according to some part of it. Third something is found to be perfect according to itself, since it is also a certain subsisting form, as any immaterial substance; nevertheless it is not perfect from itself, since it does not have esse from itself, but from another. And for this reason in order to exclude this he attributes to God perfect per se and according to himself, by himself uniformly segregated, namely from all others; and he states in a perfect place 'segregated from others', since everything in so far as it is in act and has perfection is segregated from others. Fourth it must be considered in the perfection of any creature that, while any creature is in some mode composed and in any composite there is something more perfect than another, no creature is wholly most perfect according to its whole self, but according to some part of it, just as the most perfect in a human being is the soul and in the soul the intellect. And in order to remove this from God he says that God is wholly through the whole most perfect. And not only in the aforementioned modes is the perfect attributed to God, but God is also called perfect as superperfect, in so far as God exceeds the perfection of all things. (21-37)

Then when he says <And every infinity etc.>, he shows what is of the notion of the perfect according to which God is called perfect. And first he excludes from God certain things which pertain to the notion of the perfection of a creature; second he states those things which pertain to the notion of divine perfection, <But extending himself to all things simultaneously etc.> (37-40)

But three things must be considered in the perfection of the creature which are excluded from God. Of which the first is that the perfect is opposed to the infinite, since, as is said in III Physics, the infinite is that of which to those receiving quantity there is always something further to

receive; but the perfect and the whole is that beyond which there is nothing; thus therefore a perfect creature is opposed to infinity. But God by God's perfection terminates every infinity, since everything infinite compared to the divine perfection is finite and terminated: for example, if there were a body infinite according to quantity, it would be terminated according to genus and species, which termination would be assigned by participation of the divine perfection. Second it must be considered that any creature is called perfect when it attains to the terminus of its nature, as we call a human being perfect in quantity when it attains to the terminus of due quantity. But God is called perfect, not as if having a terminus, but as extended, as he says, above every terminus, since every termination is derived from him. Third it must be considered that any creature is called perfect when it is contained under certain sure limits; but God is thus called perfect, that nevertheless is God enclosed or comprehended by nothing. (41-52)

Then when he says <But extending himself etc.>, he states four things which pertain to the notion of the divine perfection. For first it must be considered that something is called imperfect whose the virtue does not extend itself to completing all its proper works, just as a king would be imperfect if his virtue did not be extend to governing all his subjects. And for this reason by way of contrast he says of God that God extends Godself to all things, not successively so that by attaining one God departs from another, but simultaneously, nor through a certain drawing near to things, but as existing above all things. God extends Godself, he says, to all things by unfailing immissions in so far as God unfailingly communicates God's goods to things, and by interminable operations in so far as God works interminably in all things. Second something is called imperfect since it tends toward perfection, just as a boy while it is in a state of growth, or since it recedes from perfection, as an old man while he is in the state of decline, or also since it does not have perfection always remaining, as all mutable things are called imperfect. And for this reason by way of contrast he says of God that God is called perfect as inaugmentable and always perfect and as unable to decrease. Third something is called imperfect since it lacks something of those things which it ought to have, just as a human being would be called imperfect if he did not have a hand or foot or knowledge or virtue. But whatever has all things which it ought to have according to its nature is called perfect, not simply, but according to its nature. But God is called perfect simply since simply God prepossesses all things in Godself, as effects preexist in a cause, as it was said above many times. Fourth something is called imperfect that can not make something

similar to itself; but everything is perfect, when it can produce things similar to itself, as is said in IV Meteors. And for this reason he says of God that God is called perfect in so far as God's perfection flows from above to all creatures, not according to diverse bestowals on the part of Godself bestowing, but according to one bestowal. Which bestowal does not fail, but is incessant and remains the same. Nor again is it lessened, but while God gives to all affluently, as is said in James 1, God's bestowal is superfull, which never can be lessened through copious effusion, according to which bestowal God perfects all perfect things in so far as God fills them with the similitude of God's own perfection. (53-75)

XIII - 2

<But one since all etc.> After Dionysius explained the meaning of the perfect, here he explains the meaning of the One. And first he shows the causality of the One in common; second how the One is attributed to God, <Thus therefore theology etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he proposes what he intends; second he proves the proposition, <For nothing of existents etc.> (1-5)

He says therefore first that One is attributed to God for two reasons. First since God is all things unitively according to the excess of God's singular unity, as it was said many times above that effects are in a cause not as many, but as one according to the one virtue of the cause, as if we should say that all lines going out from the center are one in it. Second, One is attributed to God since one, according to its considered notion, is the cause of all inegressibly; for from the One diverse things are caused, such that nevertheless the One does not go out from its unity. (5-10)

Then when he says <For nothing of existents etc.>, he explains the proposition by five reasons. Of which the first is as follows: that in which some things participate is the cause of the participants, just as white is the cause of white things; but there is nothing of existents which does not participate the One; therefore the One is the cause of all existents. (10-13)

But he proves the minor, <But as every number etc.> And first he proves the proposition; second he excludes an objection, <And there is not, which of all things etc.> (13-15)

But that all things participate the One he proves through what seems less, namely through number, which in some way is opposed to the One as the divided to the undivided; for

every number participates the One whether number is understood according to itself, as is signified when one says binary or ternary, or whether number is understood in so far as it denominates some part, as when we say a half or a third. And this is clear through in that one in both modes is predicated of number; for we call the binary or ternary or tenth one and again we call the half or third or tenth one. Therefore just as number participates the One, thus all wholes and the parts of all participate the One. And thus it follows that through that which is One all existents have esse as participants through the participated. (15-22)

Then when he says <And it is not, that it is the cause of all etc.>, he excludes an objection. For someone could show that the One is not the cause of all nor of a multitude nor of number, since it is a certain part of a multitude. But he responds that the One which is the cause of all is not that one which is the part of many, since the latter is partial and participated, but the former is before every particular one and before every multitude, not only in the order of time or nature, but in the order of a cause, since it determines every particular one and every multitude through the mode in which a participant is determined to the form through that which it participates. For there is no multitude which does not participate the One, since all multitudes are one in some respect to something: just as those which are many in parts are one in the whole, and those things which are many in accidents, as white and musical, are one in subject, and those things which are many in number are one in species, just as many individuals, as Sortes and Plato, are one in the species of human being. But he adds 'or in virtues', since in one individual of the same species there are also many virtues, following upon one and the same species, whether in diverse individuals there are diverse virtues in so far as they are disposed in diverse ways to carrying out the act of the species; for the power or virtue of every human being to understand is not the same. And those which are many in species are one in genus, just as human and horse differ in species, but they come together in one genus of animal. And further those which are many in processions come together in one principle, as esse and to live and to understand and things like these are diverse processions proceeding from one principle, which is God, as is clear from the foregoing. (22-38)

And thus it is clear that, while all things in whatever mode are many, nevertheless they come together in some one. For there is nothing in beings which does not participate the One itself in some respect, which according to its notion is in every way singular, i.e., undivided in itself. For many individuals are undivided according to species; and similarly concerning other things. But all which is in

something is in it through the mode of that in which it is, and all effects are in a principle. But all participated things are compared to that which they participate as to a principle. Whence it remains that the One, in so far as it is singularly participated in all things, singularly, i.e., indivisibly, coreceives in itself, as in one principle, all existents and all wholes, as universal genera, and opposites, as these are differences in which the whole genus is divided. (38-46)

Then when he says <And without one etc.>, he states the second reason, which is as follows: that from which something attaining being is not converted is naturally prior and in some way a principle. But there is a One of this kind since without the One there would be no multitude; but there is some One apart from every multitude. Therefore the One is prior to every multitude and its principle, the sign of which appears in numbers, since unity is before every number, howsoever it may be multiplied. (46-50)

Then when he says <And if to all things all etc.>, he states the third reason, which proceeds from a certain supposition, namely that all are united to all. For this is denied only by those who do not posit one principle of all, as those who say that good and evil are first principles and that evils are not coordinated to the goods. But since from the things said above it is clear that there is one principle of all that is the Good, it is necessary for all things to be coordinated and united to all things, at least according to an order to a single principle. But whatever are united to each other are disposed as parts of one whole which is constituted through their union. Thus therefore, if all things are united to all, it is necessary that all things come together in one whole; and thus all will participate in one thing as parts participate the form of the whole. Therefore there will be one principle of all. (51-58)

Then when he says <And otherwise etc.>, he posits the fourth reason proceeding from the same supposition: for those which are united to each other not only come together in one form of the whole, but also are said to be united according to some one preconceived species, as parts of a house which are united in one form of a house are also united through one form of a house preconceived by an artificer. Thus therefore, if all things are united to all, they not only come together in one form of the whole, but also they come together in so far as they all are united according to one form conceived by the One who is the author of the universe. For the unity itself of the universe proceeds from the unity of the divine mind as the form of a house which is in matter comes from the form of the house in the mind of the artificer. (58-65)

Then when he says <And there is one element of all etc.>, he states the fifth reason. And he says that there is one element of all. But an element is that from which something is composed first and is in it and is not divided according to form. But it is clear that in every composite there is some multitude of components; but every element of a multitude is one, while one is indivisible and one is in a multitude as that from which the multitude is first composed. Therefore it remains that the One is as the elementary principle of all elements. (65-70)

Therefore it is clear from the foregoing that the One has the notion of a principle in five ways: in one way, as the participated of participants; in another way, as the universal from which the ones attaining being are not converted. And these two modes proceed according to the opinion of Plato. In a third way, as the form of the whole and the formal principle of those from which the whole is composed. In a fourth way, as the form preconceived by the artificer is the principle of those which produce an effect. In a fifth way, as an element is a principle. And thus having proved in many ways that the One is the principle of all, as if by concluding he adds that if the One be removed there will remain neither whole nor part nor any existents, since the One in itself pre-receives all things as the principle of all. (70-77)

XIII - 3

<Thus therefore theology etc.> After Dionysius shows that the One according to its proper notion is the principle of all, here he shows how the One is attributed to God. And it is divided into two parts: in the first he shows how the One is attributed to God; in the second he shows the difference of this One, which is God, to every other one, <And it is necessary also that we etc.> Concerning the first he does two things: first he designates the reason why One is attributed to God; second he explains the designated reason, <Because of which also all etc.> (1-6)

But it must be observed that he had said three things above concerning the One, namely that it is the cause of all, that it is singular, or simple and undivided, and that it pre-receives all things in itself. Whence attributing unity to God according to these three, from the foregoing he concludes that holy scripture praises the entire thearchy, i.e., the principal deity of the whole Trinity, as the cause of all, in so far as it names it One; for the Apostle says in I Cor. 8 "One God the Father . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ", and at I Cor. 12 he says "One and the same Spirit works all these things". And thus he attributes unity to the singular persons because of the excelling divine simplicity.

In which simple unity all things, as in a cause, are congregated and supereminently united singularly, i.e., indivisibly, and all things preexist in it, not in their proper mode, but through the mode of Godself, namely supersubstantially. (6-14)

Then when he says <Because of which also all things etc.>, he explains the reason stated concerning the causality of the divine unity: and first through the authority of scripture; second through the experience of human reason, <And you do not find something etc.> (15-17)

He says therefore first that, since God is praised as One as the cause of all and as prepossessing all things in Godself, because of this in holy scripture justly, i.e., rationally, all things are remitted to deity itself, i.e., are reduced, as effects to the cause from which they proceed. But he adds 'and are preserved', in so far as effects preexist in a cause; for it is said in Rom 11: "from whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things", to which three Dionysius adds two, namely by whom and to whom, which also are not far from the tradition of scripture. To which five relations he posits five correspondences, so that it should be understood that by God are all things as by a principle which pours esse into all things. But from God all things are ordained in so far as in Godself the order of things is taken from the notion itself of the divine goodness; through God all things remain as through a conserving cause; in God all things are contained as effects in a cause; and to God all things are converted as to an end and filled, i.e., perfected; for the ultimate perfection of a thing is that it attains its proper end. (17-27)

Then when he says <And you will not find etc.>, he shows the same through the experience of human reason. And he says that, if someone should diligently consider, he will not be able to find anything which does not have both esse and perfection and health, i.e., preservation, through the One, according to which the deity of the Trinity is supersubstantially named the One. (27-30)

Then when he says <And it is necessary also for us etc.,>, he shows the difference of the One that is said of God from others to which one is attributed. And concerning this he does three things: first he states the order of this One to the others; second he designates the notion of the order, <Since existing as one etc.>; third he concludes the difference, <Because of which also praised as unity etc.> (30-33)

He says therefore first that it is necessary for us to praise the entire and single deity of the Trinity unitively,

i.e., according to the notion of the One, so that we might be converted from many created things which participate the One to that which truly is One, namely God. And this conversion is in us by the virtue of the divine unity; for while we consider that the divine unity is more virtuous than every unity, relinquishing all things we are converted into it. And since he had said that it is necessary to praise the single deity unitively, what this implies he expounds, adding 'namely the cause of all'. For causality is from the notion of the One, as was said above, similarly also priority; whence he adds 'the One, which is before every' created 'one and' before every 'multitude and' before every 'part and whole', concerning which it was said above that they participate the One. And again it is before every definition and its opposite, infinity, and terminus and its opposite, interminability; for end and terminus seem to pertain to the notion of the One, since everything, in so far as it is finite and terminated, has unity in act. But the One which is God is before every end and terminus and their opposites and is the cause of the termination of all and not only of existents, but also of esse itself. For created esse itself is not finite if compared to creatures, since it extends itself to all things; nevertheless if compared to uncreated esse, it is found deficient and from the precognition of the divine mind, having the determination of its proper notion. (34-47)

And the divine One itself is the cause of all, not only of particular beings, but also of all wholes, i.e., of universal beings; and is simultaneously with all things and before all things, namely since by its eternity it contains and exceeds the durations of all things; and it is also above all things by the sublimity of its nature and singularly by its own loftiness existing separated from all things. And since it is supersubstantially One, it is existing above one itself, i.e., above created one, which is found in created existents; and it terminates existing one itself, i.e., it gives the termination of its proper notion to a created one, which is not superexisting but existing, as if contained within the genus of existents. (47-53)

Then when he says <Since existing as one etc.>, he designates the reason of the foregoing order, namely why the One, which is God, is before created one itself and before all others. And he says that this is because existing one, which is in the genus of creatures, is numerable, i.e., a certain part of number; for every thing which is one in creatures is connumerated with another with which it occurs, either in species or genus or in some order. But number participates essence, since it is a certain species of being; whence consequently the one which is in created things participates essence. But supersubstantial One, which

is God, is not connumerated with another nor does it participate essence, but gives the termination of its proper notion both to created one and to number in so far as it is the principle and cause and number and order of created one and of number and universally of every being. But esse is called the principle of every being as it is before all; it is called the cause in that from it all things succeed; but number in that it is the measure of all, establishing for each one its proper mode; but it is the order of all in so far as from it is taken the notion of the order of all in so far as it ordains all things by its wisdom. (54-64)

Then when he says <Because of which also praised as unity etc.>, he concludes from the foregoing the difference of the One which is attributed to God from the one which is in creatures. And he says that since the One which is God is above every created one and above every number, and since in the deity, which is above all, is praised unity and trinity, it must not be understood that this unity or trinity is such as that which is cognized by us or by any existents according to natural cognition, since neither the angels themselves are able to attain to knowing the divine unity and trinity as it is in itself through their natural abilities. But nevertheless through grace, not only the angels but we also can attain to seeing the essence of the one eternal God, but not to comprehending it. And although the unity and trinity itself of God is not such as it is known by us, nevertheless God, who exists superessentially to all existents and who is above all that is named, we name by the name of divine unity and Trinity, so that through these two names we might praise God's superunity, i.e., the excellence of God's unity, which is above every one, and so that truly we might praise God's god-generation, i.e., so that by the name of Trinity the divine procession might be hinted to us, as the Son is generated by the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son; for the Trinity of persons is not distinguished except through the relations of origin, by which is designated the procession of one person from another. (65-77)

And although we might intend to praise in God God's superunity and god-generation by the name of unity and trinity, nevertheless this must be maintained, that no monad, i.e., unity, nor trinity nor universally any number whatsoever nor any unity nor any fecundity nor any other thing that is, which is naturally known from all created beings, manifests and perfectly expresses that hiddenness of superexcelling deity, which superexists supersubstantially to all things. Which hiddenness I say not because of its defect, but since it exists above all human reason and angelic mind. And since by a sound those things which are grasped by reason or mind are expressed, for this reason he

adds that of that hiddenness, which is above mind and reason, there can be neither a simple name nor composite speech expressing it as it is in itself, but it is segregated in an impenetrable place. And he speaks in the similitude of sensible things, in which those things are hidden to human beings which are placed outside the ways through which human beings travel. Thus also the essence of deity is hidden, since it is beyond all ways which reason or created mind is able to think. (78-88)

But it must be considered that the Platonists posited the highest God to be above being and above life and above intellect, but not above the Good itself which they posited as the first principle. But in order to exclude this Dionysius adds that we do not even assert the name of goodness itself in divine predication as concordant to God, as if this name through a certain equiparity responds to God. But since it is desirable for us that we might understand and speak something of that nature of the ineffable God, however small, we consecrate to God first and principally the most worthy name, which is the Good. And in this we agree with the theologians, i.e., the apostles and the prophets, who edited the holy scriptures, who also attributed this name to God, but we fall short in many ways from the truth of things; for it is clear that this name 'good', when it is imposed by us, does not signify anything except what we grasp in our mind. Whence, since God is above our mind, he superexceeds this name. And since the theologians considered that every name imposed by us falls short of God, for this reason they, among all the ways in which we can ascend to God through the intellect, gave preeminence to the one which is through negations, through which by a certain order we ascend into God. For first our soul is, as it were, lifted up and rises from material things which are connatural to our soul: for example when we understand God not to be something sensible or material or corporeal; and thus our soul by denying proceeds through all divine intellects, i.e., through all orders of the angels, by which God is segregated from all things, who is above every name and reason and cognition. But finally our soul is conjoined to God by ascending through negations in the ultimates of the wholes, i.e., in the supreme ends of the more universal and more excellent creatures. And this conjunction is of the soul to God in so far as it is possible for us to be conjoined to God. For our intellect is not conjoined to God in the present so that it sees God's essence, but so that it might know concerning God what God is not. Whence this conjunction of ourselves to God, which is possible to us in this life, is perfected when we come to the point that we know God to be above the most excellent creatures. (88-108)

XIII - 4

<These intelligibles we etc.> After Dionysius expounded the divine names in this book, here he summarizes those things which were said in this book. And first he recapitulates those things which were said; second he joins himself to the following book, <But these etc.> Concerning the first he does three things: first he shows in what way he has expounded the divine names; second he induces his readers to return thanks to God for the things well said, <Why if rightly etc.>; third he asks to be corrected and directed, if there are those things which he had not said well, <But if those either not rightly etc.> (1-6)

He says therefore first that he had opened up in this book, i.e., had expounded, according to his ability the intelligible significations of the divine names, by gathering together and writing them in one work. But he says intelligible to distinguish them from those which are said symbolically or metaphorically of God, of which the significations are sensible. And lest someone should understand that he presumes himself to have sufficiently expounded the significations of the divine names, he adds that in expounding the aforementioned significations not only does he fall short from their diligence, i.e., from their perfect exposition, in so far as the matter requires, since this neither the angels are able to do since they do not comprehend the divine goodness and the divine esse and the divine life and others of this kind, concerning which things he had spoken, nor also does he only say that he had fallen short by praising the aforementioned significations as they are praised by the angels, since even the most excellent theologians who are among us fall short of the least of the angels, as it is said in Mt. 11, that the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist, nor also does he simply say that he had fallen short from praising the aforementioned significations as the theologians philosophizing of things divine, namely the prophets and apostles, or also their associates who edited the canonical scriptures, as Luke and Mark, but he asserts that he had spoken deficiently and in a low away in comparison to others who were of his grade and order. (6-20)

Then when he says <Why if rightly etc.>, he concludes that, from the fact that he thus recognizes himself as deficient in divine things, if those things which were said were correct, and if according to a deliberation proportionate to himself he truly touched upon the exposition of the divine names, this must be referred with thanksgiving to God who is the cause of all goods, who first gives to us the virtue of speaking and afterwards gives to us that by this virtue we use it well, by saying something well. And nevertheless if

something was neglected that is equally rich with these things which were said, it is necessary to understand this according to the same reasons and rules according to which the foregoing things were expounded. And he says this because perhaps some name spoken of God in scripture was not expounded, which nevertheless has equal value to some of the foregoing; or if some mode of expounding was omitted in some of the names spoken, it can be understood from the exposition of the other names. (20-28)

Then when he says <But if these etc.>, he asks to be corrected in the things not said well. And first he states the petition; second he designates the reason of the petition, <But lest you are lazy etc.> (29-30)

He says therefore first that, if those things which were said by him in the exposition of the divine names are themselves either not right or imperfect and if he erred from the truth either in whole or in part, he asks from Timothy that from his benignity he direct him since, if he erred in some matter, this was not from voluntary ignorance, and for this reason he wants to be directed, but those who are ignorant voluntarily do not wish to be directed. Therefore this is the first condition on his part why he asks to be directed, since he is not voluntarily ignorant. The second condition is that, according to his view of himself, he needs to learn, and for this reason there must be handed down to him the reasons by which he might be able to learn; but it seems unnecessary to hand down discipline to the one who does not repute himself to need discipline. The third condition is that the one who does not repute himself to have sufficient ability must be assisted. The fourth condition is that the cure of health must be imparted to the one who is unwillingly sick. (30-38)

But how he can direct him he shows, adding that he can hand down to him certain things for his direction which Timothy himself knows, but certain things he can find out by receiving from others; which, whether he knows them himself or received them from others, it is certain that they are received from the Good which is God and accepted from God in whatever way, he asks to be transferred to himself. (39-42)

Then when he says <But lest you be lazy etc.>, he designates the reason for the stated petition. And first on the part of friendship, since a person ought not to be slothful in helping a friend; but the maximum benefit is imparted to someone, if he be reduced from error to the truth. Second he designates the reason from his own example, namely since he has not kept to himself, i.e., retained to himself greedily, anything of the holy discourses handed down to him, but by running upward toward the imitation of God, those things

which were handed down to him he has already handed down and in the future he intends to hand them down both to Timothy and to other holy people, in so far as he is sufficient to speak and others are sufficient to hear. And in this he does no harm to the tradition of divine things, to which there would be injury while either the traditions were greedily retained or inconsiderately scattered. But thus those things which were handed down to himself he intends to hand down unless perhaps some things he is not capable either of understanding or of expounding to others. (42-51)

Then when he says <But these etc.>, he joins himself to the following book. And since he had said certain things pertaining to the future, namely that he might hand down to others those things which were handed down to him, for this reason he says that these things should thus be held and spoken as is amicable to God, i.e., as it pleases God, according to James 4 "for which you should say: if the Lord should will". And this is the end of the exposition of the intelligible divine names as far as he is concerned. But he intends further to pass over, with God leading, to the symbolic theology, in which he expounds names which are said symbolically of God, for example that God is called lion, stone, fire and others of this kind; which book we do not possess. (51-57)

And we, after the exposition of the sayings of the blessed Dionysius, falling far short from his understanding, request to be corrected concerning those things which were not said correctly. But if there were things said well, they must be referred to the grace of the Giver of all goods, who is the triune and one God, living and reigning through all ages of ages. Amen. (57-60)