

In librum Dionysii De divinis nominibus exposito

Thursday, October 26, 2006

Prologue A

For understanding of the books of blessed Dionysius it ought to be considered that the things which are contained in sacred Scripture regarding God are artificially divided into four parts: now in a certain book, which we do not have titled *On the Divine Hypostases and Characteristics*, he teaches the things of God which pertain to the unity of the Divine essence and the distinction of the persons. Regarding which unity and distinction sufficient similitude is not found in created things, but this mystery exceeds all faculty of natural reason. What things truly are said of God in the Scriptures, of which kind is every similitude with creatures, have themselves in two ways. Now a similitude of this kind is indeed attained in certain things following something in creatures derived from God. Thus from the first Good are all good things and from the first Life are all living things and thus of the other similitudes. And such things Dionysius goes through in the book *On Divine Names* which we have before our hands. In the other way, true similitude is attained following something translated from creatures to God. Thus God is called lion, rock, sun or something else of this kind; thus also God is named symbolically or metaphorically. And Dionysius goes through things of this kind in that book which is titled *Of Symbolic Theology*. But because all similitude of creatures to God is deficient and that which is God exceeds every thing which is found in creatures, whatever is known by us from creatures is removed from God, after the manner which it is in creatures; in whatever way, after everything thing which our intellect taught by creatures is able to conceive of God, that which is God Himself remains dark and unknown. For not only is God not a stone or sun, qualities apprehended by the senses, but neither is he that kind of life or essential quality able to be understood by us and thus what God is Himself, after exceeding all which is apprehended by us, remains unknown to us. Of this kind of remoteness

however the ways by which God remains unknown to us and made dark is another book which is titled *Regarding the Mystery Which Is Occult Theology*.

posted by Matthew N. Petersen at 6:28 PM

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