130 To Exult (*Exultare*)

To exult. Exultation is found to be double according to the double state of man, on the way and in the fatherland. According to the state of the way to this place is a double exultation of man. One is blameworthy and to be fled, the other is commendable and to be loved. The first is to be fled by reason of a fourfold cause.

First, it is by reason of an efficient cause. The sign of evil is when a man laughs in an acute fever, because he is then thought to be frenetic, so one laboring under mortal sin, if he exults he can be said to be insane, Habac. 3[:14]: “Their joy was like that of him that devours the poor man in secret.” Truly this is seen to be insanity, but one member devours another, 2 Kings 1[:20]: “Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice,” that is the souls of sinners, Eccle. 2[:2]: “Laughter I counted error: and to mirth I said,” etc.

Second, it is by reason of the material cause. For when there is naturally pain for the evil, joy for the good, it is blameworthy to rejoice concerning the evil. He is said to be very foolish who therefore makes joy for which one is killed or a snare by which one is caught, which the sinners do, Prov. [2;14]: “Who are glad when they have done evil, and rejoice in most wicked things.” Evil things as for as venial sins, worse things as far as mortal sins, the worst as far as the habit and the wickedness.

Third, it is by reason of the formal cause. The foolish man is a thief who demonstrates his theft, namely, also the woman who offers adultery. They do this who exult in worldly vanities, Jac. 4[:16]: “Now you rejoice in your arrogancies.”

Fourth, it is by reason of the final cause. For whose end is evil, he himself is total evil, in fact it receives its species from its end. Wherefore to catch a fish with a hook is evil for the fish, a grain in a snare is evil for a bird, so for a man glad in sin, Job 21[:11-13]: “Their children dance and play.” So, they who rejoice over a beautiful garment stretched over the bier of their father, “They take the timbrel, and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell.”

¶ Second, the rejoicing of the voyager is commendable and loveable, about which Psal. [32:1]: “Rejoice in the Lord, O you just”; and this arises out of four things. First, from the good of generation, because man was begotten from a prince, how much more he was made by God to his image, Psal. [91:5]: “you have given me, O Lord, a delight in your doings: and in the works of your hands I shall rejoice.” If man exults concerning such commonplace things, to be what he has in common with other matters, much more ought he to exult with the best, Psal. [2:11]: “Serve the Lord with fear: and rejoice unto him with trembling.” Second, concerning the benefit of recreation, just as one in need from the house of the rich man, Habac. 3[:18]: “I will joy in God my Jesus.” However, this recreation consists in four things.

First, in the incarnation of Christ, just as the poor of the noble bridegroom, Luke 1[:47, 44]: “My spirit has rejoiced in God.” And in the same place, “As soon as the voice of your salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.”

Second, concerning the nativity of Christ, just as the one incarcerated rejoices at the coming of his redeemer, the sick at the coming of the doctor, Zach. 9[:9]: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout for joy … behold your son and savior will come.” And Psal. [94:1]: “Come let us praise the Lord with joy: let us joyfully sing to God our savior.”

Third, concerning the apparition of Christ, just as the whale having seen the light, Matt. 2[:10]: “Seeing the star they rejoiced.”

Fourth, concerning the victorious passion, just as a man from a victorious fight, namely, Isai. 12[:5-6]: “Sing to the Lord, for he has done great things,” and it follows, “rejoice, and praise, O you habitation of Sion.” And in Psal. [70:23]: “My lips shall greatly rejoice, when I shall sing to you; and my soul which you have redeemed.” But there are many, just as the thief who did not love his redeemer, [Luke 23:39].

¶ The example of that little thief, who cut the purse of the rich man his redeemer.

Fifth, concerning the glorious resurrection, Psal. [117:24, 15-16]: “This is the day which the Lord has made: let us be glad.” Again in the same place, “The voice of rejoicing and of salvation is in the tabernacles of the just. The right hand of the Lord has wrought strength,” etc.

Sixth, concerning his admirable ascension, just as the foreign traveler returning to the fatherland, Isai. 9[:3]: “They shall rejoice before you, as they that rejoice in the harvest, as conquerors rejoice after taking a prey.”

¶ Seventh, concerning teaching and preaching, just as the voyager not knowing exalts for the good leader, the quiet for the good ruler, Joel. 2[:23]: “Children of Sion, rejoice, and be joyful in the Lord: because he has given you a teacher of justice, and he will make the early and the latter rain to come down to you.” Therefore concerning the gift of justification, Can. 1[:3]: “We will be glad and rejoice in you,” not one of you witnesses whereby there is hope in glory, Psal. [9:15-16]: “Daughter of Sion, I will rejoice in your salvation.” Matt. 5[:12]: “Be glad and rejoice, for your reward.”

¶ The exultation of man is in your fatherland and is eternal, therefore it is to be acquired. And first, through the austerity of penance, just as through the love of sweat and on the day it follows exultation for health, Psal. [125:5]: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.” Tob. 3[:22]: “After tears and weeping you pour in joyfulness.” Second, it is acquired through utility of teaching, so the sower exults in the harvest, Psal. [125:6-7]: “Going they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves.” Third, it is acquired through the strength of obedience, so the worker rejoices over the harvest having been finished for a great reward, Isai. 65[:22] and 1 Pet. 1[:8]: “Believing, you shall rejoice with joy unspeakable.”