319 Rest, To Repose (*Requies, Requiescere*)

Rest is double. One is apparent and not existing and therefore true. Concerning the first, note that neglectful pilgrims seem to rest when they are lethargic in sleep, Eccle. 4[:6]: “Better is a handful with rest, than both hands full with labor, and vexation of mind.” But truly there is no rest than affliction when one immediately purges, Prov. 6[:9-11]: “How long will you sleep, O sluggard? when will you rise out of your sleep? etc., up to, “as a man armed.”

Second, the voluptuous in delights seem to rest, just as a bird having its foot in the snare eats, Luke [12:19]: “Soul, you have much goods,” etc. But it is not how the sexual appetite torments, Prov. 7[:10-11]: “A woman talkative and wandering, not bearing to be quiet,” etc. The example of Delilah [16:4].

Third, those cupidinous in riches seem to rest, just like the one suffering from dropsy who from this was more in drink, Eccli. 11[:18-19]: “There is one that is enriched by living sparingly, and this is the portion of his reward. In that he says: I have found me rest.” But it is not rest rather cupidity worrying, Eccle. 2[:23]: “All his days are full of sorrows and miseries, even in the night he doth not rest in mind.”

Second, those proud in honors seem to rest, just as those seen climbing into trees for honey, being inflated fall in ruin, Isai. 7[:21]: “Syria has rested,” that is, above, “upon Ephraim,” that is, fruitful. But it is not rest that ends in ruin, just as neither dust profits in the deep sea, Isai. 13[:21]: “Wild beasts shall rest there, and their houses shall be filled with serpents.”

¶ Fifth, those in wrath, in revenge, seem to rest, just as those attacked by an asp[[1]](#endnote-1) seek to rest and thus they do not rise, Eccle. 7[:10]: “Anger rests in the bosom of a fool.” But it is not rest, rather fury keeps in motion, Isai. 57[:20]: “The wicked are like the raging sea, which cannot rest.”

Sixth, the slippery in filth seem to rest, as a pig in muck, fire in ashes and however it does not burn, Jer. 48[:11]: “Moab has been fruitful from his youth and has rested upon his excrement.” But it is not true rest as to be defiled in so much dung, Jer. 16[:13]: “You shall serve strange gods day and night, which shall not give you any rest.”

¶ True rest is found to be double: in the present and in the future. That of the present causes many things. First, cleanness of heart, Gen. 18[:4]: “Wash your feet, and rest under the tree” of Israel.

Second, modesty of the mouth, just as with the wind ceasing the sea grows quiet, Prov. 29[:9]: “If a wise man contends with a fool, he shall find no rest.” The woods are situated in a dangerous place, therefore the evil one is unquiet. On the other hand, James 3[:8]: “The tongue no man can tame.”

Third, innocence of work as virtue rests in the middle, Psal. [114:7]: “Turn, O my soul, into your rest.”

¶ Future rest is commended by five ways of which the contraries are unquiet. They are fear, work, need, uselessness of the evil, and society. For there is security without fear, 2 Kings. 19[:33]: “Come with me that you may rest secure with me in Jerusalem.”

Second, rest without labor, Apo. 14[:13]: “From henceforth now, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors.” Isai. 32[:18]: “My people shall sit in the beauty of peace, and in wealthy rest.”

Third, sufficiency without defect, Job 36[:16]: “The rest of your table shall be full of the fatness” of beauty.

Fourth, eternity without end, Psal. [131:14]: “This is my rest for ever and ever.”

Fifth, agreeable without anything harmful, Eccli. 24[:15]: “In the holy city likewise I rested.” Wherefore Augustine, book one, *Confessiones*,[[2]](#endnote-2) you have made us for yourself, O Lord. And Boethius, *De consolatione,* book 3, meter 9,[[3]](#endnote-3) to the blessed, you are clear serenity, and quiet rest, to see you is their goal. the figure, Gen. 8[:12] like the dove you will not find where you might rest your feet, namely, because of the floods he returned to the arch, Eccli. 24[:11]: “In all these I sought rest,” but because I found none, “I shall abide in the inheritance of the Lord.” But many now are like the children of Israel, who because of their murmuring along the way they lost the rest of the promised land. So now they wish to labor here for rest, Num. 11[:1] they murmured “for the labor” of the journey. Therefore, they lost the promised land. Where in the Psal. [94:10-11] the Lord gave, “Forty years long was I offended with that generation,” and it follows, “so they shall not enter into my rest,” as if saying, no. Wherefore Augustine, *Super Genesim,* book 4, c. 9,[[4]](#endnote-4) it is great for us to have rested in that. Wherefore he has sanctified the day not with work but rest.

Again, Ambrose in the *Hexameron*, the last chapter,[[5]](#endnote-5) I give thanks to my God that he made this work in which he rested. He made heaven and the lights, nor do I read that he rested there. But I read that he made man, and then he rested, having dismissed these their sins. And in which he rested, Matt. [11:29]: “Learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls.” He did not say for your bodies, because the bodies are not ordered here in quiet, but in labor. But the souls are quiet and rejoice in the Holy Spirit in hope according to Chrysostom, *Homilia* 59 at the end.[[6]](#endnote-6)

1. Cf. Lucan, *Pharsalia* 9.700-704 (LCL 200:556-557): Hic quae prima caput movit de pulvere tabes Aspida somniferam tumida cervice levavit. Plenior huc sanguis et crassi gutta veneni Decidit; in nulla plus est serpente coactum.

   In this land the blood, when it first stirred a head above the sand, sent up the asp whose swollen neck puts men to sleep; in no snake is more poison condensed; for more blood and a drop of clotted venom fell down here. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Augustine, *Confessiones* 1.1.1 (PL 32:661): Tu excitas, ut laudare te delectet; quia fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te. Da mihi, Domine, scire et intelligere utrum sit prius invocare te, an laudare te; et scire te prius sit, an invocare te. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, 3 metrum 9 (PL 63:763): Disjice terrenae nebulas et pondera molis,

   Atque tuo splendore mica: tu namque serenum,

   Tu requies tranquilla piis; te cernere finis,

   Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus idem.

   Disperse the clouding heaviness of this earthly mass And flash forth in your brightness. For, to the blessed, you Are clear serenity, and quiet rest: to see you is their goal, And you, alone and same, Are their beginning, driver, leader, pathway, end. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram* 4.16.27 (PL 34:306): Requies igitur Dei recte intelligentibus ea est, qua nullius indiget bono: et ideo certa et nobis in illo est, quia et nos beatificamur bono quod ipse est, non ipse bono quod nos sumus. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Ambrose, *Hexameron* 6.10.76 (PL 14:272): Gratias ergo Domino Deo nostro qui hujusmodi opus fecit in quo requiesceret. Fecit coelum, non lego quod requieverit; fecit terram, non lego quod requieverit; fecit solem, lunam et stellas, nec ibi lego quod requieverit: sed lego quod fecerit hominem, et tunc requievit, habens cui peccata [Col.0272D] dimitteret. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum* Homilia 28 ex ca. 11 (PG 56:780): Non dixit, Invenietis requiem, et tacuit, sed addidit, Animabus vestris, quoniam mandata Christi in hoc saeculo animarum requies sunt, non corporum, quoniam, etsi laborant et tristantur in corpore, animae eorum requiescunt, et gaudent in spiritu et in spe. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)