360 Time (*Tempus*)

Time is triple: present, past, and future.

About which see above, Chapter [350] To Stand Up (*Surgere*).

However, time properly taken is said to be a delay and movement of mutable things,[[1]](#endnote-1) but taken in large it is said a certain duration. Therefore, present time is to be observed on account of many things because it is useful for meriting, 2 Cor. 6[:2]: “Behold, now is the acceptable time.” The more valuable the time is, the more it is to be chosen.[[2]](#endnote-2) Now the works of penance are strong, but afterwards not. Just as medicinal remedies are strength for the sick now, but not after death, Rom. 13[:11]: “Knowing that it is now the hour for us to rise from sleep.” And Psal. [118:126]: “It is time, O Lord, to do.”

Second, because briefly from God that we do not have all the time unless one now, Job 14[:1]: “Man born of a woman, living for a short time.”

¶ He who has a long day’s journey to do and a brief time must hurry, otherwise he will not arrive. We however have a long journey to heaven and a brief time. Therefore, it is not to be insisted now for playing and leisure, but a right life, 1 Cor. 7[:29]: “Therefore I say, brethren; the time is short.” But alas because Job 24[:23] concerning man that “God has given him place for penance, and he abuses it unto pride.”

¶ Third, because a mutable foolish person will be a traveler having a beautiful morning if he expects an evening for traveling, so it is for a young man who expects to repent up to old age, because sickness always intervenes, nature is debilitated, the devil is more insidious, habit is conquered with more difficulty, the miserable one is provoked more, Eccli. 18[:26]: “From the morning until the evening the time shall be changed.” Therefore, Gal. 6[:10]: “While we have time, let us work good to all men.” The example of the priest summoned to the Roman curia who did not want to go, not in the winter on account of the cold, not in the spring on account of the planting, nor in the summer on account of the heat, nor in the autumn on account of collecting the harvest.

Fourth, because it is beyond recovery, if you lose your clothing or your health you can recover them, but not time, Wis. 2[:5]: “Our time is as the passing of a shadow.” Here note according to the Master in the *Libro sex principiorum*,[[3]](#endnote-3) that a shadow is one and the same, it is not moved continuously, but like to some movement of the body, when one shadow is lacking, and another begins. So, time is continually corrupted and generated. For time past does not return, we have no theft, the present passes, but alas because “man knows not” that time has passed and death approaches,” Eccle. 9[:1].

¶ Fifth, because it is necessary to render a reason concerning time. For if time is yours and it is lost, you can bear it more tolerably, but because you receive it mutually, it is necessary to think concerning that, Lam. 1[:5]: “He has called against me the time.” If that servant in the Gospel is condemned for returning to the Lord his money without profit, Matt. 25[:13-30], what will be said about him who does not know what he did with it. Therefore, Eccli. 4[:23]: “Son, observe the time, and fly from evil.” But alas because Eccli. [20:7]: “A babbler, and a fool, will regard no time.” And there is another time after the present time, but it is very evil because it is of the damned in hell, because it is to be put to flight.

First, because of the darkness, Eccle. 11[:8]: “If a man lives many years, and have rejoiced in them all, he must remember the darksome time.”

Second, because of the affliction because one is tortured in body and soul, Eccli. 5[:8]: “Delay not to be converted to the Lord,” through penance, nor “defer it not from day to day.” Lest perhaps you be like the knife in which it was inscribed,[[4]](#endnote-4) I will give tomorrow and not today, but on the morrow the very same thing is found written. For suddenly the wrath of that one will come and in the time vengeance he will destroy you.

¶ Third, because it is perpetual, Mich. 2[:3]: “You shall not walk haughtily, for this is a very evil time.” Evil in the loss of glory, worse in affliction, but worst in continuation, Eccle. 9[:12]: “Man knows not his own end: but as fishes are taken with the hook, so men are taken in the evil time.”

¶ Third, it is the time of good things in heaven because it is the highest thing to be sought for. First, because it is joyful on account of the absence of every evil, Eccle. 3[:4]: “A time to weep,” namely, in this life, “and a time to laugh,” in glory.

Second, because it is most abundant on account of the plenitude of every good, because God himself will be our very great reward, Eccli. last chapter [51:38]: “Be you humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in the time of visitation.”

Third, because it is perpetual on account of the lack of wearing out, Gal. last chapter [6:9]: “And in doing good, let us not fail. For in due time we shall reap.”

Again, and the reward both in sowing and reaping comes together in three ways and differs in three ways.

First, they come together in the root because the root of both is grace, Rom. 5[:15]: “The grace of God” is eternal life.

Second, in proportionality because “He who sows sparingly, shall also reap sparingly,” 2 Cor. 9[:6]. And Zach. 4[:7]: “He shall give equal grace to the grace thereof.”

Again, in quality because if good merits good and reward, Gal. last chapter [6:8]: “For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap.”

¶ However, they differ. First, in time because there is no time of meriting after the rewarding, Eccle. 3[:4]: “A time to weep, and a time to laugh.” Gal. last chapter [6:9]: “In due time we shall reap.”

Second, in place because on earth we merit, in heaven we are rewarded or in hell, Heb. 13[:14]: “We have not here a lasting city.”

Third, in a way that by weeping we merit rejoicing, Psal. [125:5]: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.”

¶ Again, the whole present time is a time of weeping because then “God shall wipe away all tears from the saints’ eyes,” Apo. 21[:4]. Similarly, the time of the Lord’s passion was a time of weeping, but the time more rarely was a time of laughing because of rejoicing together with the rejoicing, just as suffering together with the suffering, according to that of Rom. 12[:15]: “Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.” Similarly the time of struggle is a laborious time of weeping, then time of victory is a glorious time of laughing, because according to Augustine, book 19 *De civitate*, chapter 12,[[5]](#endnote-5) there is in all naturally the desire of having peace, because just as there is no one who does not want to rejoice. For they who want war, want nothing else than to conquer. And by the victory to live in peace. Therefore, just as Christ counsels, Luke 21[:36] in this present time we must watch and pray, for he says: “Watch, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy.” Who therefore is denied among us to live a long time, let us make something that shows we have lived. Wherefore Bernard,[[6]](#endnote-6) just as one hair shall not perish from our head, so neither a moment of time. For God values time much who created it in the beginning when he made the fiery heaven and the angelic nature, he made the sun and the moon for the service of this time, Gen. 1[:14]: “For signs, and for seasons. Chrysostom,[[7]](#endnote-7) if you have squandered a little gold you think it damnable, if you squander a process of time you do not care. And yet you can recoup gold but not time. Wherefore Seneca, to Lucilius, *Epistula* 37,[[8]](#endnote-8) who can give me anything equal to time. All other things belong to others, only time alone is ours. Wherefore Gregory, *Super Evangelia*, homily 12,[[9]](#endnote-9) narrates concerning Chrysaorius the worst for vices at the end of his life he was seized by the evil spirits toward hell. He cried for a truce until morning, but nothing worked. And Gregory concluded, therefore we should think carefully lest the times pass from us empty, and then we seek the space of time for living well when we are compelled to go from the body.

1. Cf. William of Conches, *Glosae super Platonem* 97, ed. Edouard Jeauneau (Paris, 1965), p. 180 (cited in “Discussions of the Eternity of the World during the First Half of the Twelfth Century” by Richard C. Dales, *Speculum* , Jul., 1982, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Jul., 1982), pp. 495-508 [503]): "Non enim ante tempus potuit esse quia ex quo fuit, fuit mora et motus rerum mutabilium, et ita tempus. Et illa mutabilium mora et ille motus sine mundo esse non potuit. Ergo nec tempus precessit mundum nec mundus tempus. Cum tempore ergo factus est mundus. Si ergo inveniatur "mundus non incepit unquam," ita intelligatur: non incepit unquam id est non incepit in tempore. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Albert the Great, *Summa de creaturis: De 4. coaeuis.*Tractatus II Quaestio V. Articulus VI (Lyon: Claudii Prost, et al, 1651), (19:40b): Et Aristoteles dicit in 3. topic. quod vnumquodque in quo tempore magis valet, ipsum magis est eligendum, vt temperantia in iuuentute, prudentia in senectute.... [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Master (Albert the Great), *Commentarium in Librum De sex principiis*, 2.5 (false Gilberto Porretano ascriptum) ed. Aug. Borgnet, *(Opera omnia*) 1:326b: Sic enim separari non possunt physicus motus et actio: nec motus generaliter sumptus ab actione generaliter sumpta: qui hoc modo modere est agere, et e converso. Hoc autem palam est in omnibus actionibus his in quibus aliquid agitur sive generatur ad formam agentis quia in omnibus his continuis processus vertutus activae et motivae in patiens et motum est actio, et motus est forma inducta post formam, ut dicit Averroes. Et sic est actio post actionem.

2.6 1:329a: Ejus autem quod est ubi, locus causa est: cum tamen locus sit quantitas, et ubi sit aliud genus praedicamenti. Ejus autem quod est quando causa est tempus: et haec sunt genera diversa. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. cf. Helinandi Frigidi Montis, *Sermo* 3 (PL 212:507): Ad primum invitamur, cum dicitur: Ne dicas amico tuo: Vade et revertere, et cras dabo tibi, cum statim possis dare (Prov. III). Ne tardes converti ad Dominum, et ne differas de die in diem. Qui non est hodie, cras minus aptus erit. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 19.12.1 (PL 41:637): Quod enim mecum quisquis res humanas naturamque communem utcumque intuetur agnoscit, sicut nemo est qui gaudere nolit, ita nemo est qui pacem habere nolit. Quandoquidem et ipsi qui bella volunt, nihil aliud quam vincere volunt: ad gloriosam ergo pacem bellando cupiunt pervenire. Nam quid est aliud victoria, nisi subjectio repugnantium? quod cum factum fuerit, pax erit. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Bernard, *Sermo* 8.2 (PL 183:211): Reposita est in sinu nostro beata spes, ex promissione utique Veri tatis, nec capillum quidem de capite periturum (Luc. XXI, 18). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Chrysostom, *In Joannem Homilia* 58.5 (PG 59:321): Et post haec omnia interrogas, quod sit damnum: neque intelligis, nichil parcius insumendum esse quam tempus. Aurum si impenderis, recuperare potersi; amissum tempus difficile recuperes. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Seneca, *Epistula* 1.3 (LCL 75:4-5): Omnia, Lucili, aliena sunt, tempus tantum nostrum est. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Gregory, *XL Homiliarum in Evangelia* 12.7 (PL 76:1122-1123): Quidam vir nobilis in Valeria provincia nomine Chrysaorius fuit, quem lingua rustica populus Chryserium vocabat: vir valde idoneus, sed tantum plenus vitiis, quantum rebus; superbia tumidus, carnis suae voluptatibus subditus, in acquirendis rebus avaritiae facibus accensus. Sed cum tot malis Dominus finem ponere decrevisset, sicut a religioso viro quodam, qui nunc superest, propinquo illius didici, corporis languore percussus est. Qui ad extremum veniens, eadem hora qua jam de corpore erat exiturus, apertis oculis vidit tetros et nigerrimos spiritus coram se assistere, et vehementer imminere, ut ad inferni [Col.1122C] claustra se raperent. Coepit tremere, pallescere, sudare, et magnis vocibus inducias petere, filiumque suum nomine Maximum, quem ipse jam monachus monachum vidi, nimiis et turbatis clamoribus vocare, dicens: Maxime curre, nunquam tibi aliquid mali feci, in fidem tuam me suscipe. Turbatus mox Maximus adfuit, lugens et perstrepens familia convenit. Eos autem quos ille insistentes sibi graviter tolerabat ipsi malignos spiritus videre non poterant, sed eorum praesentiam in confusione, in pallore ac tremore illius qui trahebatur videbant. Pavore autem tetrae eorum 1481 imaginis huc illucque vertebatur in lectulo, jacebat in sinistro latere, aspectum eorum ferre non poterat; vertebatur ad parietem, ibi aderant. Cumque constrictus nimis relaxari se [Col.1122D] jam posse desperaret, coepit magnis vocibus clamare, dicens: Inducias vel usque mane, inducias vel usque mane. Sed cum haec clamaret, in ipsis suis vocibus de habitaculo suae carnis evulsus est. De quo nimirum constat quia pro nobis ista, non pro se, viderit, ut ejus visio nobis proficiat, quos adhuc divina patientia longanimiter exspectat. Nam illi tetros spiritus [Col.1123A] ante mortem vidisse, et inducias petiisse, quid profuit, qui easdem inducias quas petiit, non accepit? Nos ergo, fratres charissimi, nunc sollicite ista cogitemus, ne nobis in vacuum tempora pereant, et tunc quaeramus ad bene agendum vivere, cum jam compellimur de corpore exire. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)