131 To Wait For (*Expectare*)

To wait for. Expectation is read to be triple: divine, diabolical, and human.

First, it is said that God waits for the winter so that man might repent, and if not, he will punish. So, the gardener waits for what has been planted so that they may bear fruit, and if not so that he may root them out. Just so it is treated concerning the fig tree, Luke 13[:6]. But, alas, because the Lord was overcome, Isai. 5[:4]: “He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.” And therefore, with merit he punished it, 2 Macc. 6[:14]: “For, not as with other nations, whom the Lord patiently expects, that he may punish them.”

Second, the devil awaits so that he may accuse and take them with him. So, the dog being dog-like expects his part of the slaughtered beast, so the devil the soul of the sinner, Lam. 2[:16]: “All your enemies have hissed,” and it follows, “We will swallow her up: lo, this is the day which we looked for.” The example of the rich man, Luke. 12[:16].

Third, man expects and this in a triple way.

First, the coming of God in the flesh so that he may be instructed concerning the truth, just as scholars expect the traveling teacher, Luke [1:79]. Job 29[:21]: “They that heard me, waited for my sentence.” And Gen. 49[:10]: “The scepter shall not be taken away from Juda,” and it follows, “and he shall be the expectation of nations.” Second, so that he may be redeemed from the obligation, just as one fallen into a ditch looks forward to his extraction, the one in prison to his liberation, Gen. 49[:18]: “I will look for your salvation.” Psal. [39:2]: “With expectation I have waited for the Lord, and he was attentive to me.” But, alas, because the Jews were expecting to this place the Messiah, just as the Britons their Arthur, but in vain and uselessly. Third, so that the door of heaven might be opened to him, so he expects him as his enemy, the stranger at the gate, until he arises and comes, who may open, Soph. 3[:8]: “Expect me, says the Lord, in the day of my resurrection that is to come.” In the passion of Christ, the door is broken open, in John [10:9]: “I am the door” of all things and he made to fly, I put on in vain the body, namely, in the sepulcher and the soul in freedom, and thus it is evident the entry into heaven, Isai. 25[:9]: “Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us.”

Second, man awaits the coming of God in his mind because it happens through the infusion of grace. And first, so that he may wash away sin, so a child in the cradle awaits his nurse that she may wash him, Psal. [38:8-9]: “And now what is my hope? is it not the Lord? … Deliver me from all my iniquities.” Isai. 8[:17]: “I will wait for the Lord, who has hidden his face” in grace from this people because of sins. Second, so that he might quicken in good works. So, the timid expects a leader or light for walking at night, Psal. [54:9]: “I waited for him that hath saved me.” Third, so that in continuing he nourishes, so the exile awaits food in the world so that he may continue his life, Psal. [103:27]: “All expect of you that you give them food in season,” etc.

¶ Third, man awaits the coming to judgment about which two things are to be noted, namely, the mode and the end. However, the mode is triple. Because it ought to be first, to urge and pray for a favorable verdict, Psal. [38:8]: “Now what is my hope? is it not the Lord?” etc. So Symeon and Anna awaited the Lord, Luke 2[:25, 36]. Therefore, I will be with the [Psal. 118:116-117]: “Let me not be confounded in my expectation. Help me.” Second, by being open to the operation of good, just as the mercenary against the coming of the Lord works manfully, Psal. [26:14]: “Expect the Lord, do manfully.” Luke 12[:35-36]: “Let your loins be girt,” and it follows, “and you yourselves like to men who wait for their lord. Third by resisting worldly temptation, just as one besieged in a castle manfully resists awaiting the help of his lord, Psal. [54:8]: “I have gone far off flying away,” and it follows, “I waited for him that has saved me.” And Tit. 2[:12-13]: “denying ungodliness,” and it follows, “Looking for the blessed hope.” But, alas, because many expect blamably, for others the opportunity of harming, just as thieves in their dens, Psal. [118:95]: “The wicked have waited for me to destroy me.” Others await foolishly as those living evilly, just as those planting thistles look for figs, Jer. 8[:15]: “We looked for peace and no good came: for a time of healing and behold fear.”

¶ Others expect dangerously for the end of life so that they may repent, who however the more they put it off, the less they are able, Isai. 28[:13]: “The word shall be to them.” This is do penance. “Command, command again; command, command again; expect, expect again; expect, expect again: a little there, a little there.” Four times he says Command, and four times Expect because of the thought of speaking and the operation of omission it happens to such ones, just as to the evil debtors who do not want to acquit themselves when the can but await a superfluity. Wherefore they are disinherited and incarcerated, they are punished, and it follows, “they may go, and fall backward,” etc., “and taken,” so they may not escape.

¶ The end of this expectation for judgment is triple. First, exultation of hearts in the society of grace, Prov. 10[:28]: “The expectation of the just is joy,” etc. Psal. [141:8]: “The just wait for me, until you reward me.” Second, the reformation of bodies in the newness of grace, Philip. 3[:20-21]: “We look for the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ. Who will reform.” Job 14[:14]: “All the days in which I am now in warfare, I expect.” Third, the continuation of the blessed in perpetual duration, Psal. 36:34]: “Expect the Lord and keep his way.” And Isai. [64:4]: But “the eye has not seen, O God, besides you, what things you have prepared for them that wait for you.”