Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

13 Of the Waters (*Aquarum*)

Of the waters some flow from the inside, as tears, and these designate penitence; some from above as rain and these designate teaching; some are from the bottom, as the fountains and rivers and these designate temporal fortune.

¶ Concerning the first it is said in Ezech. 36[:25]: “I will pour upon you clean water,” etc. These waters are abounding first in contrition and confession for their sins or inheritance. Much more for the loss of the soul and glory. Psal. 118:136]: “My eyes have sent forth springs of water,” etc. When a branch is cut, being full of water is a sign of life, thus when the penitent weeps, Psal. [103:10]: “You send forth springs in the vales.”

¶ Second are those abounding in prayer and compassion for the misfortunes of others, Lam. 3[:48]: “My eye has run down

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with streams of water, for the destruction.” This is much in relation to the merciful who will need water this way in the future.

¶ Concerning the second waters, it is said in Eccli. 15[:3]: “Give him the water of wholesome wisdom to drink.” These waters are pouring forth and dividing. Just as the moon receives light from the sun and causes it to flow back to earth. Thus, the water is first in the fountain, afterwards in the river, Prov. 5[:15]: “Drink water out of your own cistern,” that is, wisdom derived from the scriptures. [Prov. 5:16]: “Let your fountains be conveyed abroad, and in the streets divide your waters.” But, alas, because our superiors are like the clouds of the dogdays, having the appearance of rain, but not the substance, the canonical epistle of Jude [1:12]: “Clouds without water, trees of the autumn, unfruitful.”

¶ Concerning the third waters, which designate temporal fortune. Note that fortune is either prosperous or adverse. If prosperous to this extent it is designated through water. For prosperity as if water flows out and flows back and sometimes it is submerged. Just as the mighty Egyptians in following the poor (Israelites), were drowned, just like lead in waters extremely so, [Exod. 14:28]. And these waters thus flow because if they are detained at that time, with the obstacle broken they flow out more forcefully. Thus, at the death of the avaricious rich man, his temporal effects flow out to others, Psal. [104:41]: “He opened the rock,” and the rich, the grasping, and the hard, “and waters flowed.” As is evident in the rich man, Luke 12[:20]: “You fool, this night do they require your soul of you; and whose shall those things be which you have provided?”

¶ In the second place, the adversities of the world are called water because they judge the truth for the wise, Prov. 27[:19]: “As the faces of them that look therein, shine in the water,” etc. Thus, a large, wide-mouthed, globular jar is struck so that it may be known if it is used, if anything is inside. Therefore, he says well to the prudent, for the fools judge present misfortunes and penitential works would not be meritorious. Just as a stick, although it is straight in water, it is judged to be bent by the ignorant. Therefore, such ones follow the prosperous, Osee 2[:5]: “I will go after my lovers,” namely, the world, the flesh, and the devil, who give me bread and water. But in truth however much more they are in these waters, the more they become soiled, just as bloody thieves are not considering that it is necessary to enter the kingdom of God through many tribulations. For such ones, the water of celestial wisdom would be necessary, concerning which Eccli. 24[:41]: “Like a brook out of a river of a mighty water.” Water straining at its channel cleans away filth, nourishes the earth, floats wooden things. Thus, wisdom purges from evils, nourishes by good things, floats in the heavens.

¶ Therefore this water is to be

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procured on account of two matters because it is easy to have and beneficial to drink.

¶ Concerning the first, Apo. 21[:6]: “To him that thirsts, I will give of the fountain of the water of life, freely.” Eccli. 15[:17-18]: “He has set water and fire before you,” namely, the water of glory, the fire of hell, “stretch forth your hand to which you will. Before man is life and death.” But the Lord is sought for, Jer. 2[:13]: “They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have dug to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

¶ Concerning the second, that it was beneficial to drink because they make the reproach, John 4[:13]: “He that shall drink of the water that I will give him, shall not thirst for ever.” For only [God] himself can fulfill the desire of man.

¶ Concerning these two at the same time, Isaiah 55[:1]: “All you that thirst, come to the waters.”