Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

186 To Sin Because it happens (*Peccare Quia contingit*)

To Sin. Because it happens that man sins in three ways, through infirmity, ignorance, and fixed wickedness. Therefore, the Father to whom is attributed power sent angels to help man. The son to whom is attributed wisdom sent angels to instruct. The Holy Spirit to whom is attributed clemency sent angels to make strong.

¶ Therefore man sins through infirmity about which Wis. 9[:5]: “I am a weak man, and of short time.” On account of this he is easily conquered unless angelic help is sent, and this is what is said, Apo. 12[:7]: “There was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought

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with the dragon,” etc. Note here the whole because heaven is said before the Church, the fight before the daily temptation which is overcome by angelic virtue.

¶ Third is the habitations of the earthly, where demons are stored.

¶ Again man sins through ignorance. Therefore, he cries out, Psal. [24:7]: “The sins of my youth, and my ignorance do not remember.” Wherefore man needs to be made strong by angelic teaching. In the sign of which it is said, Apo. 14[:6-7]: “I saw the angel of God flying through the midst of heaven, having the eternal Gospel, to preach unto them that sit upon the earth,” and he said, “Fear the Lord and give him honor.”

¶ Again man sins out of a fixed wickedness as is signified, Jer. 22[:22]: “You shall be confounded and ashamed of all your wickedness.” On account of this the angelic reproof is necessary, Judges 2[1-2; 212]: “An angel of the Lord went up to the place of weepers, and said, I made you go out of Egypt, and have brought you into this land, and you would not hear my voice, why have you done this?” And when he spoke these words “they lifted up their voices and wept,” [Judges 21:2]: “And they sacrificed victims to the Lord,” etc. But note here that a double infirmity that is left today from sin, namely, the proneness to evil, the difficulty for good. Against which the angelic assistance is double, namely, for sustaining and lifting. Because there is in man a proneness to evil as is evident, Gen. 8[:21]: “For the imagination and thought of man’s heart are prone to evil from his youth.” Therefore, the angel was sent to assist lest he succumb, Zach. 4[:1]: “The angel of the Lord spoke in me came again, and he waked me, as a man that is wakened out of sleep,” which if figured, 3 Kings 19[:5]: “Elias cast himself down, and slept in the shadow of the juniper tree, and behold an angel of the Lord touched him,” etc. It is also difficulty in us for the good which is figured in Luke 13[:11]: “There was a woman bowed together, neither could she look upwards at all.” Because of this he was sent to lift up and elevate, Act. 12[:6-7]: “In that night,” etc. “And behold an angel of the Lord,” etc. “raised him up, saying, Arise quickly,” etc.

¶ As for the second, note that ignorance is double, namely, of those fleeing and those doing just as it is hinted at, Philip. 1[:22]: “What I shall choose I know not.” I abridge for it is double on account of this, the angel teaches what we ought to flee and what to do. He teaches, I say, what should be left behind, Judges 13[:13-14]: “The angel said to Manue, let her eat nothing that comes of the vine, nor eat any unclean thing.” Whether today the counsel of the angel is fulfilled, but more may be the diabolical one

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according to that, Isai. 22[:12-13]: “The Lord in that day shall call to the weeping,” etc., “and behold joy and gladness,” etc. He teaches again what ought to be done, Gen. 19[:15-17]: “The angels said to Lot, Arise and go lest you be also perish in the wickedness of the city,” up to “look not back.”

¶ From fixed evil man sins doubly either through himself or through another just as it is said in Rom. 1[:32]: “Who do such things, are worthy of death, but they also that consent to them that do them.” Because of this the angel was sent for two reasons, to prohibit and to impede. To prohibit, namely, demons from falling upon, Apo. 7[:2]: “I saw an angel of God ascending from the rising of the sun, and he cried with a loud voice,” etc. This is a signification of the impression of divine passion just as it is figured, Ezech. [9:6]: “Upon whomsoever you shall see the sign Thau, kill him not, and begin at my sanctuary.” Again, he was sent to impede the verbal sign and deed. Again, when Balaam proceeded to curse “the people of God” he was prohibited by the angel, Num. 22[:6, 22].