Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

21 Benediction (*Benedictio*)

Benediction is found to be threefold, namely, of man to man, of God to man, and of man to God.

The first is fourfold. For someone may be a flatterer, such as of actors or of an entourage to a lord, Psal. [9:24]: “The sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and the unjust man is blessed.”

Another is of the wool carders, as of an old woman over a boy, Mala. 2[:2]: “I will curse your blessings.”

The third is of the intercessors, as the poor, Eccli. 31[:28]: “The lips of many shall bless him that is liberal of his bread.”

¶ The fourth is of the governors just as of the bishops, Gen. 27[:33]: “I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed.”

¶ The second benediction, namely, of God to men is fourfold. Because the first is for multiplying in the goods of nature, as it is said concerning a fertile place because God has placed there his benediction, Gen. 9[:1]: “God blessed them, and he said to them: Increase and multiply.”

Second for enriching the goods of fortune, Psal. [106:38]: “He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly.”

Third, for gratifying in the goods of grace, Eccli. 39[:27]: “The blessing of the Lord has overflowed like a river.” When a river overflows it cleans places, it fertilizes the land, it elevates the woods. Thus, the benediction of the Lord loosens sins as if the sun had frozen them, Psal. [84:2]:

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“Lord, you have blessed your land, you have turned away the captivity of Jacob.”

¶ Again, he makes fruitful in the works of virtues, just like plants are made fruitful by moisture and heat, Psal. [83:8]: “For the lawgiver shall give a blessing, they shall go from virtue to virtue.” Just like a bee[[1]](#endnote-1) making honey from flower to flower, not like a frog leaping from the meadow into the mud.

¶ Again, the third, he elevates through desire for eternal parts, just as medicine expelling the disease excites the appetite, Jud. 1[:15], Axa said to her father: “Give me a blessing...and he gave her the upper watery ground.”

¶ Fourth, God blesses for rewarding in the goods of glory, Psal. [23:5]: “He shall receive a blessing from the Lord,” etc. This benediction is not given here and there to everyone, just as we see that the prudent head of a house gives thick bread and light wine to the serving men, he gives bran and water to the dogs, yet he gives precious things to the nobles and his friends. Thus, the Lord gives temporal things to sinners, eternal things to his worthy people, Psal. [3:9]: “Salvation is of the Lord: and your blessing is upon your people.” This benediction is given to the humble in heart. Thus, the bishop blesses those bowing their heads, the fruits hanging down in the garden, Matt. 19[:14], Jesus embracing the little ones and putting his hand upon them blessed them. Therefore, to the just in work, just like the good prince with the good administrator of justice, Prov. 10[:6]: “The blessing of the Lord is upon the head of the just.” Third, to the holy in mercy, Prov. [22:9]: “He that is inclined to mercy shall be blessed.” Fourth, to the upright in intention, like those who work for the honor of their lord, Psal. [111:2]: “The generation of the righteous shall be blessed.” The righteous is the middle of those who do not go to extremes. This benediction is glorious because it makes kings, Matt. 25[:34]: “Come, you blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom.” Which is both copious because it makes men wealthy, Prov. 10[:6]: *The blessing of the Lord is upon the head of the just*. And secure because it makes men of one mind, Psal. [28:10]: “The Lord will bless his people with peace.”

¶ The third benediction, namely, of man to God, is manifold. For the skillful creator is accustomed to being blessed, who freely makes works because of which it is said, Eccli. 39[:19]: “Bless the Lord in his works.”

¶ You bless the holy one who restores to you the member gone astray. But much more God ought to be blessed who gives everything, Eccli. 43[:12]: “Bless the Lord that made you.” But many who fight more against God.

Secondly, the useful messenger who always announces the truth is accustomed to being blessed. Therefore, Christ was blessed, Psal. [117:26]: “Blessed be he that comes in the name Lord.”

Thirdly, the teacher or faithful leader is greatly to be blessed

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who directs the wandering into the unknown fatherland, such a one is Christ, Psal. [15:7]: “I will bless the Lord, who has given me understanding,” namely, in the teaching of the faith.

Fourthly a strong friend liberating us from dangers, Luke [1:68]: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; because he has visited,” etc.

Fifthly, the doctor in general because he heals from every wound, Psal. [102:2]: “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” etc. But many are not healed because they do not wish to submit to the doctor, Psal. [33:2]: “I will bless the Lord at all times.”

Sixthly, the liberal rich man who gives freely all things necessary because of which Christ is blessed, Tob. 13[:10]: “Bless you the Lord, all his elect, keep days of joy,” etc. But they do not receive these things because they do not wish to extend the hand to those necessities, Psal. [108:18]: “He would not have blessing, and it shall be far from him.” Therefore, Christ was the skilled maker in creation, the useful messenger in the nativity, the strong friend in the passion, the general doctor in the justification, and the liberal rich man in the glorification.

Again, for the man of journeys, some are blessed in the entry upon it, but they are cursed in the going forth, so that they finally fall from the state of grace, Psal. [108:18]: “He would not have blessing, and it shall be far from him.” Others on the other hand are cursed in the entry upon it, but are blessed in the going forth, as they who are repentant in the end, as the thief and Paul, Zach. 8[:13]: “As you were a curse among the Gentiles,” thus you were blessed. Others are cursed in both just as if they never received grace, Deut. 28[:19]: “Cursed shall you be coming in and cursed going out.”

The fourth kind are blessed in both just as they who finally conserve the baptismal grace, Psal. [83:8]: “For the lawgiver shall give a blessing.”

¶ Again, some are blessed and are cursed because they are blessed by the world, not by God, Psal. [9:24]: “For the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul.” Some on the other hand in the Psal. [108:28]: “They will curse, and you will bless.”

¶ The third kind are cursed, and they have been cursed, because by God and by the world, Psal. 118:21: “You have rebuked the proud,” etc.

The fourth kind are blessed and have been blessed, Eccli. 44[:25]: “The Lord gave him the blessing of all nations.”

1. Isidore, *Etymologiae* 12.8.1 (PL 82:470): Hae sotertes in generandi mellis officio, assignatas incolunt sedes, domicilia inenarrabili arte componunt, ex variis floribus favum condunt, textisque ceris innumera prole castra replent, exercitum, et reges habent, praelia movent, fumum fugiunt, tumultu exasperantur.

Cf. Isidore, *The Etymologies* 12.8.1 (Barney p. 269b): These animals, skillful at the task of creating honey, live in allocated dwellings; they construct their homes with indescribable skill; they make their honeycombs from various flowers; they build wax cells, and replenish their fortress with innumerable offspring; they have armies and kings; they wage battle; they flee smoke; they are annoyed by disturbance. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)