Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

223 King (*Rex*)

A king is said to be a just man, [Prov. 29:4]. First on account of the eradication of evil, Prov. 20:8]: “The king, who sits on the throne of judgment, scatters away all evil with his look.” But many like Pharoah kill people, they reserve things for their delight, and this on account of indiscretion. Therefore they reject Psal. [2:10]: “And now, you kings, understand, receive instruction, you that judge the earth.” Wherefore King Solomon asked for wisdom alone. But many like boys do not approve unless what pleases them, Eccle. 10[:16]: “Woe to the land when your king is a child,” etc.

¶ Again he is said to be a king on account of the gathering of treasure, Matt. 2[:11]: “Opening their treasures, they offered him,” etc. But alas because many foolishly waste their treasure, John 4[:46]: “There was a certain ruler, whose son was sick at Capharnaum,” which is interpreted, field of fatness. And note that the three kings are owed fear on account of power, honor on account of dignity, and love on account of goodness. Concerning the first, Jer. 10[:7]: “Who shall fear you, O king?” as if saying there is no one who ought not to fear. Kings are accustomed to being feared when they serve justice well. But no one served justice more strictly than the king, God, in punishing the first angel and the first man by expelling them from their places of delight. If therefore he did not spare his entourage and attendants, how could he spare his enemies, Isai. 32[:1]: “Behold

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a king shall reign, and princes shall rule in judgment,” as if saying, there will not be any one of his who assents but well to his judgment. But it is another thing when in the courts of the kingdoms of the worlds where sometimes their counselors hold back and temper their service. But not so concerning our king, rather in judging he will be so terrifying that sinners wish to enter caves to avoid the stench just as pilgrims if they can avoid the lightning strike in the time of the tempest. Now he can appeal to the court of mercy, but then not, Prov. 20[:28]: “Mercy and truth preserve the king.” But not then because of Psal. [74:3]: “When I shall take a time, I will judge justices.”

¶ Second, a king is to be honored because of dignity. Because if earthly kings, who are moderately dignified, are commanded to be honored, [1] Pet. 2[:17]: “Honor the king.” However much more the king of kings, Apo. 19[:16]: “King of kings and Lord of lords.” This one, however, if we honor his laws, that is, we serve his precepts, because great is the penalty for those which are not served. Earthly men fear to infringe upon the statues of the kings, when a penalty is appointed for all the goods or the mutilation of a member. But the statues of Christ are paid little attention which have power over body and soul, Deut. 8[:11]: “Take heed, and beware lest at any time you forget the Lord,” etc. Dan. 6[:15]: “No decree which the king has made, may be altered.”

¶ Again, we honor our king by offering precious things, as is evident for the three Magi, Matt. 2[:1]. But some on the other hand give to God of their temporal substance something small or nothing, hardly slices of bread and cheese, from the spiritual substance they give the body to the world, the soul to the devil. Again, they give their youth to sin, the excrement of old age. Hardly do they give to God, their disabled sons they give to the monastery. They are silent when it is said, [1] Kings 9[:20]: “And for whom shall be all the best things of Israel? Shall they not be for you,” that is, King Saul.

¶ Again, third, the king is to be loved because of goodness, but the greatest goodness shines in Christ the king, who exercises forbearance when we are humiliated. Foolish is the thief to be judged, if he does not humiliate himself, if thus he can escape, [3] Kings 20[:31]: “We have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful: so, let us put sackcloth on our loins,” etc.