Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

245 To Rise up (*Surgere*)

The opportunity of time in which we now live, moves us to stand up, for since it is triple. There is time past which we do not have because it has passed irrevocably. For in Wis. 2[:5] it is said, “For our time is as the passing of a shadow.” For many in past time served the devil. Therefore, lest the devil allege against us the right to a long time, now the interruption through penance is to be made. Just as the Lord says to Jacob, Gen. 31[:13]:

¶ “Now therefore arise,” namely, from sin to that which you have inclined yourself through delight, you have sat down through consent, you have reclined through work, you are prostrated through habit, you have slept through continuation, and go out of this land, that is, from the dominion of the devil returning into the land of your nativity to that you were born, Rom. 6[:19]: “For as you have yielded your members to serve,” etc. Again, we do not have future time, nor are we certain if we will have. It will be an impediment of infirmity by which we cannot do penance, or of poverty because we cannot give alms, or business because we cannot have leisure for prayer.

¶ For all these matters, the nature of your world will be weaker for doing penance, custom will be more difficult for expelling the apathy, harder to cure, the devil more inclined to be served, God slower to forgive. Therefore, now is for repenting, 2 Cor. 6[:2]: “Behold, now is the acceptable time.” And truly because now is the time of mercy, but afterwards it will be the time of justice when the majesty of power shows the offense, the truth of wisdom brings forth the sentence, the equity of justice takes retribution, but now the piety of mercy offers peace, Rom. 11[:30]: “But now you have obtained mercy.” Second, the brevity of the time moves us to rise up, Rom. 13[:11]: “It is now the hour for us

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to rise from sleep.” Where it is suggested, there is one impediment to waging war when it is said about sleep, Prov. 6[:9]: “How long will you sleep, O sluggard? when will you rise out of your sleep?” And another is touched upon which is the approaching expedition when it is said, arise, that is, to excellent work, Eccli. 32[:15]: “At the time of rising be not slack,” etc. In this word rise is noted the affection of excitement. God does not want the beloved of his Lord to lie in the mud, Bar. 5[:5]: “Arise and stand on high.” Act. 12[:7]: “Arise quickly.” Arise therefore from fault to grace, from vice to virtue, when therefore it is said, rise. Man cannot do this unless God helps. And this because of his own debility and others’ tyranny, Lam. 1[:14]: “My strength is weakened: the Lord has delivered me into a handout of which I am not able to rise.”

¶ Note therefore that there are four kinds of men it can be said arise, to the sitting, the lying, the sleeping, and the dying. But the sinner is said to sit on account of propensity to evil. He is said to lie because of the difficulty to do good. He is said to sleep because of persistence in fault. He is said to die because of desperation for forgiveness. Therefore, God says to the sinner with respect to his sitting that he should arise from evil by withdrawing, with respect to the lying that he arises to the good by approaching, with respect to the sleeping that he arises by which he may be illuminated through forgiveness. Therefore, the sinner is said to sit because he is prone to evil. Therefore, it is figured by that blind man, Luke 18[:35]: “A certain blind man sat by the wayside,” etc. Where the many inconveniences of the sinner are touched upon, because he is blind through ignorance of the truth, etc. Just as it is treated in the word, [Apo. 10:13]: “Arise, Peter, kill and eat.” Therefore it can be said to such a sinner, arise, namely from the table of

worldly prosperity in which the bread is eaten with sorrow, Psal. [126:2]: “Rise after you have been sitting, you that eat,” etc.

¶ Second, the sinner ought to arise after being seated for fault to bewail, not to be wanton, just as the drunkard arises to the tavern and goes to the brothel, Exod. 32[:6]: “The people sat down to eat, and drink, and they rose up to play.”

¶ Third, the sinner ought to rise not that he may lie down as though commanded to the good, just as a man lying gets up with more difficulty than one sitting. This is designated by the paralytic, Matt. 9[:2]: “They brought to him one sick of the palsy lying in a bed,” that is, a sinner is destitute in the use of his members for doing any good. Whose bed on which he lay

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is sloth of idleness or the stench of carnal concupiscence in which the sinner is wrapped as if up to his chin in excrement or a hog in its wallow. And I fear that it will be thus for the lying, more or less.

¶ Because in that old men are lying, of which the example is the corruption of youth, just as little pigs at the example of the great hogs want to wallow in the mud, Lam. 2[:21]: “They lie without on the ground.” Num. 14[:298]: “In the wilderness shall your carcasses lie.” So, they lie it is said that he arises by coming to the good, just as the traveler having a long day’s journey for setting out, Judges 19[:27]: “In the morning the man arose, that he might end the journey.” But many are like the slothful traveler who under some shade on the way wants to rest, and thus loses his day’s journey. To whom it is said in Jos. 7[:10]: “Arise, why do you lie flat on the ground?” Certainly, it is dangerous to linger in the land of bandits. Therefore, it is said, Gen. 31[:13]: “Arise, and go out of this land and return into your native country.”