Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

246 Tent (*Tabernaculum*)

A tent was formerly called a church which in all particulars is one with churches. For a tent is the place of soldiers, pilgrims, and guards. Wherefore also in tents dwell soldiers, travelers, and shepherds. So, the Church performs military service in good ways for the laity and secular persons, it goes on pilgrimage in safe ways with clerics and religious, and it watches in good ways with pastors and prelates. Concerning the first, Can. 1[:4]: “I am black but beautiful, as the tents of Cedar.” Black because darkened by the outdoor work, but beautiful because changed by the purity of the divine image.

¶ Concerning the second, [2] Cor. 5[:4]: If we are “in this tabernacle, do groan, being burdened; because we would not be unclothed, but clothed upon, that that which is mortal may be swallowed up by life.” The pilgrim groans from the inconveniences of the way out of love for the fatherland bearing with him nothing but what is necessary for use. The cleric groans whose part of heredity is God alone. The religious person groans who has been cast down by the weight of earthly things feels in himself the contrary motions, when the flesh drags him down by corruption, the spirit tends upwards by devotion.

¶ Concerning the third, Job 39[:5-6]: “To whom I have given a house in the wilderness, and his dwellings in the barren land,” and in the mountain of solitude. This wild ass, that is, the prelate stays in the place of solitude

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out of singularity. In the barren land out of fervent charity, and on the mountain of solitude for the instruction of subordinates.

¶ Again we read about a certain material or historical tent which was made under Moses.[[1]](#endnote-1) Concerning a certain allegorical tent, namely, the Church militant. Concerning a certain tropological tent, namely, concerning the sojourning soul. Concerning a certain anagogical tent, namely, concerning the Church triumphant.

1. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*  Ia-Iiae q. 102 a. 4 ad 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)