Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

27 Heaven (*Celum*)

Heaven is high in sublimity, ample in immensity, luminous in serenity, splendid in beauty, ornate in variety. However, heaven is triple:[[1]](#endnote-1) the highest, which is the fiery empyrean, the middle, which is the icy crystalline, the lowest, which is the ethereal, the firmament to itself. The first[[2]](#endnote-2) is immoveable and uniform, because it is all luminous. The middle[[3]](#endnote-3) is mobile and uniform because it is all diaphanous. The lowest[[4]](#endnote-4) is mobile and differing in form, because somewhere it is diaphanous, somewhere it is luminous, for the fixed stars are luminous. Concerning the first, Gen. 1[:1]: “In the beginning God created heaven,” etc. Concerning the second, Dan. 3[:60]: “O all the waters that are above the heavens, bless the Lord.” Concerning the third, [2] Cor. 12[:2]: “I know a man caught up to the third heaven.”

¶ The just are compared to heaven. First, because of the beauty of the stars, that is, of the virtues, Job. 26[:13]: “The spirit of the Lord has adorned the heavens.”

¶ Second, because of the stability of motion, that is, of good works, Psal. [32:6]: “By the word of the Lord the heavens were established.” Job 37[:18]: “The heavens, which are most strong.”

¶ Third, because of the utility of influence, that is, of preaching and the introduction, Psal. [18:2]: “The heavens show forth the glory of God.”

¶ Again, the heavens will announce his justice. Again, the faithful and most powerful clerics ought to be heavens, because they are high through contemplation, concave through humility, clear through knowledge, starry through the variety of virtues, pure through poverty, luminous through external enjoyable conversation and the spreading of teaching, round through the rejection of earthly matters. For the bodily sphere in part touches the earthly plane, but, alas, because in Isai. 50[:3] it says, “I will clothe the heavens with darkness,” so that I may make “sackcloth their covering,” because hardly now does the light of any virtue appear in them.

¶ Again Eccli. 24[:8]: “I alone have compassed the circuit of heaven.” In the circuit of heaven is perpetuity from the remoteness of contrariety, beauty from the disposition of the stars, nobility from the height of the situation,

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utility from the efficacy and virtue. Thus the state of the saints have perpetuity from the tranquility of the state, beauty from order of the elect, nobility from the height of the site, utility from the divine fruition.

¶ Again heaven is sought on account of four reasons. First for the amenities, just as the time of spring and the picture of houses. O how great is the amenity where there are lilies of virgins, roses of martyrs, violets of confessors, the orchard of the apostles, the olives of prophets, the cedars of the patriarchs, the nightingales of the angels, Psal. [41:5]: “I shall go over into the place of the wonderful tabernacle.”

Second for the fertility, therefore the poor go to the doors of the rich, Judges 18[:10]: “The Lord will deliver the place to us, in which there is no want of anything.” Psal. [17:3]: “The Lord is my refuge,” etc.

Third for security, those who are not safe seek for themselves safe places.

¶ However we are here among enemies, Psal. [10:5]: “The Lord’s throne is in heaven.” Bar. 3[:14]: “Learn where wisdom is, where is” health, etc.

Fourth for perpetuity, men seek to have things more for heredity than for the hour, Bar. 3[:24]: “O Israel, how great is the house of God, and how vast is the place of his possession!”

1. Cf. Bartholomeus, *De proprietatibusw rerum* 8.3, 4, 5 (1505 pp. 171b-173a): De celo aquo siue crystallino; De celo empyreo; De Ethere. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Bartholomeus, *De proprietatibus rerum* 8.4 (1505 p. 172a-b): Celum empyreum est primum et summum celum, locus angelorum, regio et habitaculum hominum beatorum. Et dicitur empyreum: a pyr quod est ignis: quasi totum igneum. Sic dictum non ab ardore: sed potius a lumine et splendore vt dicit Isi. Istud enim celum summe est lucidus influens lucem et splendorem super celum crystallinum sibi propinquum et proximum.... [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. Bartholomeus, *De proprietatibusw rerum* 8.3 (1505 p. 171b-172b): Sextum celum est aqueum siue crystallinum: quod ex aquis positis super firmamentum diuinitatis potentia est formatum. ... [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. Bartholomeus, *De proprietatibusw rerum* 8.5 (1505 p. 172b-173b): Ether grece splendor dicitur latine, ether secundum Isidorum. Est superior regio supremi intersticii aeris et ignis: vbi est perpetuus splendor luminis siue lucis. ... [↑](#endnote-ref-4)