Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

66 Choice (*Electus*)

An elect or a prelate[[1]](#endnote-1) ought to surpass his underlings, as much as the head the members, as much as the shepherd the flock, [1] Kings 10[:23-24]: “Saul stood higher than any of the people from the shoulders and upward. And Samuel said, Certainly you see him, that there is none like him among all the people.” Therefore, in him ought to flourish the sense of discretion, which is demonstrated by four things: by faithfulness, by freedom, by truthfulness, and by unity. And in election there is not an esteem of persons, as for the first; nor a compulsion of souls, as for the second; but thus, a renown of the one to be chosen, as for the third; and an agreement of the electors, as for the fourth.

¶ It is necessary in this that there be fidelity, that is, without esteem of the persons. Therefore, it is said in 4 Kings 10[:3]: “Choose the best.” It is not said the richer, nor the more generous, but the best so that he may excel others in goodness just as he precedes in dignity,

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1 Kings 10[:24]: “You see him whom the Lord hath chosen.” From the head accordingly sense and movement ought to descend into the members, the sense of discretion and the movement of good works. The evil disposition of the head harms the members. Therefore, it is said in Job 34[:4]: “Let us choose to us judgment and let us see among ourselves what is the best.”

¶ Second, freedom is required so that there be no constraint of the voices, nor compulsion of the rewards, nor shaking of coins, nor offering of gifts, but that he be freely elected pleasing to God, not only to the world, or to men only, but many do things similar in this to the fool who would rather choose cheese because he loved to eat it, although it was not profitable for him, rather the contrary. Thus, whoever wish to choose for themselves one similar, such as the proud a proud man, the avaricious an avaricious man, the dissolute a dissolute man. Therefore, although the election ought to be free, however it ought to be discrete and not odious to God, Josh. 24[:15]: “You have your choice: choose this day that which pleases you, whom you would rather serve. But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord,” that is, that one who is more conformable to God.

¶ Third, in an election let there be truth so that there be renown of the one to be chosen, for, some would rather choose persons unknown than known. Therefore, it happens for some just as the frogs[[2]](#endnote-2) who for their importunity chose for themselves a stork as a king rather than a frog, and for the lark they would rather choose a buzzard than a lark. Therefore, it is said in Deut. 17[:15-17]: “You shall set him whom the Lord your God shall choose out of the number of your brethren,” etc., up to “immense sums.”

¶ Fourth, unity is required, Osee 1[:11]: “The children if Juda and the children of Israel shall be gathered together: and they shall appoint themselves one head.” Thus, one that has that head is not headless nor many headed because such a body would be monstrous. Again, those to be chosen ought not to be craftily wise, [1] Cor. 1[:26]: “not many wise,” lest perchance they fall into dishonesty with Juda, John 6[:71]: “Have not I chosen you twelve; and one of you is a devil?” Again, neither of their own accord thrusting themselves in, 1 Paral. 15[:11] it is said about Aminadab, brother of David, the Lord did not choose this one, lest perchance through disobedience he would fall in with Saul, who before was good, 1 Kings 9[:2].

¶ Again, neither ambitious nor unleavened, Psal. [77:67]: “He chose not the tribe of Ephraim,” lest by chance they would fall into pride, just as happens concerning many, Exod. 15[:4]: “His chosen captains are drowned in the Red Sea.”

1. Cf. Alcuin, *De divinis officiis liber* 36 (PL 101:1236): Sicut enim illa turris caeteras domos excellebat, sic episcoporum et presbyterorum vita debet excellere vitam subjectorum: et sicut ille speculator nuntiabat adventum hostis, ut se praeviderent cives, sic episcopi et presbyteri debent annuntiare populis sibi subjectis adventum nequissimi hostis diaboli, ut se praevideant, ne ejus laqueo capiantur. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Aesop’s Fables # 44: Ranae olim clamore magno regem petierunt a Iove. Ridet Pater Deorum atque magnum truncum e caelo in paludem deiicit. Subito motu aquarum sonoque perterritae, mergunt et latent in limo. Forte una profert e stagno caput et, explorato rege, cunctas evocat. Illae, timore posito, adnatant; mox petulans turba in truncum insilit. Alium regem postulant, quoniam inutilis esset qui fuerat datus. Tum Iuppiter misit ciconiam. Ea uno die magnum ranarum numerum dilacerat, iugulat, vivas alias devorat. Reliquae, mersae, lugent, flent, orant ut ab hac calamitate liberentur. Sed Deum non movent querelae ac lacrimae. “Benignum,” inquit, “et placidum regem non tulistis; iam ferum et barbarum fertote!”

https://fablesofaesop.com/the-frogs-pick-a-king.html [↑](#endnote-ref-2)