

## THE NAMES OF GOD

### Article One: Whether a Name Can Be Given to God?

I answer that: "According to the Philosopher (Peri Herm. I), words are signs of ideas, and ideas the similitude of things." If we can see God in a limited sense as far as we know God, then we can also name God to the same or similar degree. We name who we think we understand. "God can be named by us from creatures, yet not so the names which signifies God which expresses the divine essence in itself..."

### Article two: Whether Any Name Can Be Applied to God Substantially?

I answer that: From a negative stand point viewing the names applied to God do not signify God's substance in relation to creatures, but instead manifest distance of the creature from God. It may express God's relation to something else or visa versa. However in relation to the absolute and affirmative name of God such as "god", wise or similar words there are many thoughts. For some have said that such names although they applied to God in a positive way, they express something from God rather than something positive in God. This means God is not like inanimate things. The same applies to names. Names applied to God signify His relationship towards creatures; thus the words, God is Good means God causes good things.

The above two opinions appear to be untrue for the following three reasons:

- 1) Both opinions seem to not address the gradation of importance of some names of God over others.
- 2) The names applied to God by way of being are taken in a secondary sense like healthy is secondary to medicines.
- 3) Because it is against the intention of those who speak of God. When speaking of God by saying God lives they surely mean more to say that He causes each life or that He is different from incarnate bodies.

These names only signify God's divine substance. They fall short and are only imperfect names at best. "God is good does not mean He is the cause of all goodness. But rather the God that pre-exists in God is in a more excellent and higher way..."

Article four: Whether Names Applied to God Are Synonymous?

I answer that: "These names spoken of God are not synonymous." The different names for God are not synonymous because even though God is united in one nature His name expresses different aspects of His nature.

Article five: Whether what is said of God and of Creatures is Univocally Predicted of them.

On the Contrary: The important thing to remember about this question is that it addresses a comparison between God and His creatures and visa versa. The use of equivocal and univocal simply introduces the differences or similarities in the comparison. In this case, the comparison contrasts the predicate usage with different subjects. The things attributed to God do not attribute equally with God and His creatures and visa versa. Therefore, only equivocal predication can be applied when comparison with God is sought after. PK's note 95 on page 126 indicates if TA sides the univocal side God could be viewed as anthropomorphic and agnostic, if equivocal.

I answer that: "A term applied to man in some degree circumscribes and comprehends the thing signified." This does not apply to God. "No name is predicated univocally of God and creatures." This also can be said that terms applied to both are not wholly equivocal. There is a middle path that works partly in both the same and different. This term is in analogous sense.

Article Six: Whether Names Predicated of God Are Predicated Primarily Of Creatures?

On the Contrary: No, the names are primarily predicated to God rather than creatures.

I Answer That: “All names applied metaphorically to God, are applied to creatures primarily rather than to God, because when said of God, they mean only similarities to such creatures. “To names not applied to God in a metaphorical sense... as regards what the name signifies, these names are applied primarily to God rather than creatures. Because these perfections flow from God to creatures, but as regards to creatures they are primarily applied. They have a mode of signification which belongs to creatures.

Article Seven: Whether Names Which Imply Relation to Creatures Are Predicated of God Temporally?

I Answer That: The relationship is from the creature to God and not visa versa. Since God is outside the whole order of creation, God is not dependent on His creation for anything let alone to be named from the vantage of the point of view or situation. On this basis, God may temporarily predicate a concept from the side of His creation, not by God’s need, but the need of the created.

Article Nine: Whether This Name “God” Is Communicable? (Shareable)

On the contrary: In Wisdom 14:21, “They gave the incommunicable name to wood and stones in referring to the divine name. On this basis, God’s name is not sharable.

I Answer That: This name of God is only communicable in small case “g”. Qualities may be likened to creation, but not wholly equitable. Psalms 81:6 says, “I have said, You are gods.” “However the Tetragrammaton is not communicable. For instance, the sun when signifying this individual thing... and not other suns”

Article Eleven: Whether This Name, He Who Is, Is the Most Proper Name of God?

On the Contrary: Since Moses asked God what name shall he tell the Egyptians when they ask: What is the name of this God? And God told Moses, “You shall say to them, He who is hath sent me to you.” (EX 3:13, 14) Therefore this name properly belongs to God.

I Answer That: TA gives three reasons why “HE WHO IS” is the most properly applied name to God.

- 1) Because of its significance for the name is all about the existence of God and not about form.
- 2) On account of its universality. This name is the principal name of all names applied to God according to Damascene. "It contains existence itself as an infinite and indeterminable sea of substance." This name does what it says. Substance is not discernible by us completely and it describes no mode of being, but pure existence.
- 3) This name signifies present existence.

Article twelve: Whether Affirmative Propositions Can Be Formed about God?

Obj. Three: A false intellect understands something otherwise different than it is. God's existence, however, is without any comparison. On this basis, every affirmation intellectually understands something as a compound. Thus a true affirmative proposition cannot be made about God.

I Answer That: When the predicate and the subject signify the same thing in reality and different things in an idea we have, a true affirmative proposition. Nevertheless, although it understands Him under different conception, it knows that one and the same simple object corresponds to its conceptions. Therefore, the plurality of predicate and subject represent the plurality of idea, and the intellect represents the unity by composition.

Reply To Obj. 3: God is simple in opposition to a composite. Our idea about who God is may be a composite when speaking of God. It is false intellect understanding anything otherwise than itself is false.

### Questions and Answers For Chapter Thirteen

1. Can a name be given to God? We can name God only in a limited sense after all we know of God.

2. Can any name be applied to God substantially? A name applied to God may be predicated substantially although the name may fall short of a full representation of Him. The name may signify the divine substance.
3. Are names applied to God synonymously? No, even though the names given to God signify one thing, they may signify that under several different aspects.
4. Is what is said regarding God and of creatures univocally predicated of them? No name is predicated univocally of God and of creatures because names applied to man and God are not the same.
5. Are names applied to God in a purely equivocal sense? No, even though it may seem to follow if not univocally. Instead, they are applied to God in an analogous sense.
6. Are names predicated of God primarily of creatures? All names applied metaphorically to God because when said of God they mean only similitudes for such creatures.
7. Do names which imply relation to creatures show a predicate of God temporally? Yes, and not from eternity.
8. Is the name, "God," sharable? The name of God is incommunicable in reality since the divine nature cannot be multiplied.
9. What is the most proper name applied to God and why? The Tetragrammaton, YHWH, "I Am Who I AM" is most properly applied to God. This is because of its signification, universally, and from its consignification for it signifies present existence.
10. Can affirmative propositions be formed about God? True affirmative propositions can be formed about God.

## Of God's Knowledge

Article One: Whether There Is Knowledge (Scientia) of God?

On the Contrary: (Romans 22:33) says, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God."

I Answer That: Yes, knowledge of God can be categorical. "In God there exists the most perfect knowledge..."

Reply to Obj 2 "Whatever is divided and multiplied in creatures exists in God simple and unitedly. (Q. 13. A. 4) God knows all things by "one simple act of knowledge."

Article Four: Whether the Act of God's Intellect is His substance?

I Answer That: "It must be said that the act of God's intellect is His Substance. For the philosopher says that if His act of understanding were other than His substance, then something else would be the act and perfection of the divine substance. It is not possible with God and substance to be other than pure act."

Article Five: Whether God Knows Things Other Than Himself?

Obj. 2: If something else will be the perfection of God and be nobler than He; it would be impossible. For the object understood is the perfection of the one who understands.

Obj. 3: "If God understands anything other than Himself, then God Himself is specified (determined) by something else rather than by Himself alone: This cannot be. Therefore, God does not understand things other than Himself."

On the Contrary: Heb. 4:13 says, "All things are naked and open to His eyes."

I Answer That: God to be God must know things other than Himself. His existence couldn't be perfect if He didn't. Since His existence is His act of understanding.

Reply to Obj. 2: “The object understood is a perfection of the one understanding not by its substance, but by its image, which it is in the intellect, as its form and perfection, as it is said in De Anima iii.” “For a stone is not in the soul, but its image.”

Reply to obj. 3: God Himself is specified by God’s own divine essence in itself and doesn’t need any further help to do this than by Himself.

Article Six: Whether God Knows Things Other Than Himself by Proper Knowledge?

I Answer That: God knows Himself in general and in particular or He is not God because God has perfect knowledge.

Article Eight: Whether the Knowledge of God Is the Cause of Things?

On the Contrary: All things and all creatures exist only because God knows them for Augustine says, “Not because they are, does God know all creatures spiritual and temporal, but because He knows them. Therefore they are.”

I Answer that: “The Knowledge Of God Is the Cause Of Things”

Reply to Obj. 3: God’s knowledge is prior to our knowledge. Natural things are midway between knowledge of God and our knowledge. God is the cause and by His knowledge and prior to ours

Article Nine: Whether God Has Knowledge of things that are not?

I Answer That: God knows all actual and non-actual potentials.

Article Ten: Whether God Knows Evil Things?

I Answer That: Since God knows good things he also knows evil things. He has to distinguish all goodness from what is not.

Article Eleven: Whether God knows Singular Things?

I Answer That: God knows singular things. If it is known by creation, it is known by God.

Article Twelve: Whether God Can Know Infinite things?

I Answer That: Since God knows the actual and the non-actual, He knows all things infinite.

Article Thirteen: Whether the Knowledge Of God Is of Future Contingent Things?

On the Contrary: Since God honors human free will his knowledge is contingent on their decision.

I Answer That: Since it has been shown in A9 that God knows all possibilities, God knows future contingent things.

#### Questions and Answers For Chapter 14

1. What can we know of the knowledge of God that seems knowable? We can know that God orders much and has a plan for His creation.
2. Is the act of God's intellect His substance? Yes
3. Does God know things other than Himself? Yes
4. Does God know things other than Himself by proper knowledge? God knows things generally and specifically.
5. Is the knowledge of God the cause of things? Yes
6. Does God know all potentials? Yes
7. Does God know evil things? Yes
8. Does God know singular things? Yes, if known by creation, it is known by God.
9. Can God know infinite things? Yes, if God knows what is and what could be, then He can know infinite things.
10. Is the knowledge of God of future contingent things? Yes, as has been shown in A9. God knows all possibilities, and therefore all future contingent things.