

## Of the Distinction of Things in General

### Question # 47

Article One: Whether the Multitude and Distinction of Things come from God?

I answer that: The more the better! More creatures help to define God to know Him better and glorify Him further. "His goodness could not be adequately represented by one creature alone.

Article Two: Whether the Inequality of Things Is from God?

Objection 1: It seems like inequality of things is not from God because that would mean God shows that God plays favorites. One is not greater than another. God makes all things equal.

On the Contrary: Why does one day excel another or one season over another? "By the knowledge of the Lord they are distinguished."

I answer that: Origen asserted that in the beginning God created rational creatures equal, but some chose evil and so God cast those down to earth. If that were true, then how is it that God said after creating the rational creatures on earth that it was good? God created diversity in creatures. Each species is different and one is not best, but one may be better than the other. "The wisdom of God is the cause of the distinction of creatures to perfect them and better show God's glory to creation.

Reply to Objection 1: God made the universe to be best as a whole and not that any individual creature is best but that it might be better than another for the purpose of further glorifying God. "God saw all things that He made and that they were good."

Article Three: Whether There is Only One World?

Objection 1: The more worlds the better! Therefore God created many universes.

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I answer that: This is one world in that one universe. There is no need to have more than one universe.

“Whatever things come from God, have relation of order to each other, and to God Himself, as shown above (Q. 11, A.3; Q. 21, A. 1). Hence, it must be that all things should belong to one world. Therefore those only can assert that many worlds exist who do not acknowledge any ordaining wisdom, but rather believe in chance...” TA p. 207

## Q & A # 47

1. Does the multitude and distinctions of things come from God? Yes, God is better glorified by a vast variety and multitude of creation over one creature alone. Unity is good, but unity in diversity is better.
2. Is inequality from God? Yes, God created diversity in creatures.
3. Is there only one world? World is meant here to mean universe. Yes, God created only one universe. There is no need for a variety of universes. God said it all in one world. More than one world would be redundant.

## The Distinction of Things in Particular

### # 48

Article One: Whether Evil Is a Nature?

On the contrary: Dionysius says that evil is neither a being nor a good.

I answer that: Opposites are known through the other according to TA. It is shown that evil is not a being, but that evil is the absence of good. PK says that evil is relative to good, but good is not relative to evil. “St. Thomas does not see evil as illusory, but as negative, not as unreal, but as something other than a

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being, entity, essence, form, or nature. It is an absence—more exactly, a privation, or deprivation, of good.” Note 32 p. 208

Article two: Whether Evil Is Found in Things?

I answer that: “Yes, evil is found in things, as corruption also is found, for corruptions is itself an evil...”

Article three: Whether Evil Is in Good As in its Subject?

On the contrary: “Augustine says that evil only exists in good.”

I answer that: As said before evil indicates the absence of good. But not every absence of good is evil. TA says that good can be taken in the absence of something good and in a negative sense that everything would be evil through not having the good belonging to something else, for instance, a man would be evil who had not the swiftness of the roe or the strength of a lion.

Article four: Whether Evil Corrupts the Whole Good?

I answer that: Evil cannot wholly consume good. Pk says that St. Thomas bases his optimism (his confidence that good is stronger than evil) not on accidental and changeable factors like his feelings or his observations of how well things were going in his life or his society, but on the unchangeable essence of good and evil themselves.”

Article five: Whether Evil Is Adequately Divided Into Pain and Fault?

I answer that: Evil exists in the subtraction of good or the fact that the good does not exist or because it has not its due mode and order. The evil that comes about due to privation has the idea of pain involved because of loss of form and integrity of the thing. The very nature of pain is contrary of the due operation of the involuntary thing and is experienced as a fault. For this is imputed to anyone as a fault to fail as regards perfection action, of which someone may be master by the will. Therefore, every evil in voluntary things is to be looked upon (either) as a pain or a fault.

## Question # 48 Article six

Article six: Whether Pain Has the Nature of Evil More Than Fault Has?

On the contrary: Sometimes it becomes necessary to choose the greater good of two or more choices. "A wise workman chooses a less evil in order to prevent a greater." A surgeon may have to amputate a limb to save the rest of the person's life. "But divine wisdom inflicts pain to prevent fault. Therefore, fault is a greater evil than pain."

I answer that: "Fault has more evil in it than pain. This is because fault itself consists in the disordered act of the will, and the pain consists in the privation of something used by the will."

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1) Is evil a nature? No, for evil is not a person or a being to have a nature or form.

2) Is evil found in things? Yes, evil is found in things and in beings. Such as Cain was not acting evil until evil was found in him by shedding his brother's blood.

3) Is evil in good as its subject? Evil exists in good, but not every absence of evil is good. Just because someone lacks courage or some valuable quality it does not make the person evil. But rather, just lacking in a good feature to have in any given circumstances like an encouraging word to say to a friend who is hurting at the proper time and place.

4) Does evil corrupt the whole good? TA says, "No. evil cannot wholly consume good."

5) Is evil adequately divided into pain and fault? Yes, pain is the deprivation of good health which is normally thought of and experienced as a "good thing." After all, only the unhealthy want to be unhealthy. So there is also the existence of evil by choice. Both are found in the nature and expression of evil. For one

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there is the absence of some good and the other is that there is a denial or action of the whole goodness of something or being.

6) Does pain or fault have more of the nature of evil? Since sometimes pain must be inflicted to provide for a greater good to come out of it such as in surgery required to save a life the failure to do good by doing evil has more to do with fault than pain. (Although, both pain and fault may be involved in an evil act and also in evil may exist in the lack of a good act.)

## Question 49

### The Cause of Evil

Article One: Whether Good Can Be the Cause of Evil?

Obj. 1: The Scripture teaches in Mt. 7:18 that “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit...?”

On the Contrary: Augustine says that “There is no possible source of evil except good.”

I answer that: “Evil has a cause by way of an agent. As was shown in (Q. 48, A. 3) evil is not an agent but only the deprivation of good.” Therefore, good is the cause of evil by way of the material cause as shown in the above mentioned question 48. Evil just doesn’t happen on its own. It has to be caused. Only good can be a cause, because “nothing can be a cause except inasmuch as it is a being, and every being, as such, is good.” TA

Reply to Obj. 1: Creatures are ontologically good. An evil will is called by God as the evil tree and the good will a good tree. “Now, a good will does not produce a morally bad act, since it is from the good will itself that a moral act is judged to be good. “ However, the movement itself of an evil will is caused by the rational creature, which is good by nature for it came from God. And thus, good is the creator of evil since God saw all that He created and called it good.

## Question #49 cont.

Article Two: Whether the Supreme Good, God, Is the Cause of Evil?

Objection 1: Isaiah 45:7 says that God creates evil.

On the contrary: "God is not the cause of evil because God is not the cause of tending to not-being."

I answer that: Evil is caused by a defect in good. However, in God there is no defect and therefore could not be the originator of evil since doing evil is a demonstration of an evil will or some thing or someone who is not complete in and of itself like God is. If evil can be associated or connected to penalty and not to a fault in the one thought to have created evil, then in that sense God allows evil to exist to bring about only a greater good.

Reply Obj. 1: These passages refer to evil of penalty and not evil of fault.

Article Three: Whether there Be One Supreme Evil Which Is the Cause of Every Evil?

Objection 1: Contrary principles can have differing or contrary causes. As Sirach has said, that two things may be in juxtaposition one caused by good and the other evil. PM

On the contrary: No principle of evil can be opposed to the supreme good as the cause of evils since the cause of every being is as shown in (Q. 2, A. 3; Q. 6, A. 4)

I answer that: Two answers are given. One is that the first principle of good is essentially good as shown in (Q. 6, AA. 3, 4) As shown in (Q. 5 A. 3) that evil can exist only in good as in its subject (Q. 48, A. 3) Two is that evil if wholly evil would destroy itself. Instead evil cannot consume good and remove it. The failure to consider the universal cause and the focus upon the particulars as their effects fails to incriminate the first principle as the cause of evil. Such as one could say that fire is evil for it causes such devastation and destruction. However, fire is not an evil agent of rational existence. It is a tool of particular agents that are deficient in doing a particular good whether having being on non-being. As an

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example, in the effect of lightning starting wild fires as an example of non-being cause such terrible devastation and destruction to life and property. This does not mean that the Supreme Being, the first principle caused this evil. However, It is the first principle that is responsible for setting up the potential for this evil to exist, or to come about by an agent acting out an evil behavior.

Reply Obj. 1: One common first cause has to be distinct from the contrary particular causes because though contraries agree in one genus and they also agree in the nature of being. It does not necessarily follow that the first cause is directly linked to the action in question.

Reply Obj. 3: Evil by association is not able to link evil to making something worse, nor is trying to link something good to the supreme good can necessarily make the good any better, by access to the supreme good.

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1. Can good be the cause of evil? Yes, but only in the sense that evil is not a being but the absence of good. Therefore, since God created only that which is good, good can be the cause of evil if deprived of some wholly good action, being or thought.
2. Can God, who is the Supreme Being, be the cause of evil? Not entirely. The answer given by TA indicates that the Supreme Being can be the cause of evil only in the sense of penalty, but not in fault.
3. Can there be one Supreme Evil that is the cause of every evil? Nothing can be supremely evil. For it would destroy itself. For that is the end to evil. Evil can never consume the Supreme Good in the same way that light can never be consumed completely by darkness. Though darkness is experienced, the light always exists because God is light.