

Question 103

Of the Government of Things in General

Article One: Whether the World Is Governed by Anyone?

Obj. 1: It would seem that the world is not governed by anyone. It seems that the governing belongs to the ones governed. "But they do not move or work for an end; for they have no knowledge of their end. Therefore, the world is not governed."

Obj. 2: The things that are governed seem to move towards some object. But the world appears to be stable of itself and is not so moved. Therefore, it is not governed.

Obj. 3: Something of the world which is determined by its own nature to one particular thing in their actions and movements do not require to be governed.

On the Contrary: Wis 14:3 says "But Thou, O Father, governest all things by Thy Providence. And Goethius says (De Consol. 3) "Thou Who governest this universe by mandate eternal."

I Answer that: Divine goodness that brought this world to being would also bring it to its best end. Either the governing of the world is by chance or directed by the Creator of the world. It would seem to be that the chance of this governing happening on its own is impossible for at least two reasons. 1) By observation it seems that nearly all things happen for the best, which would not be the case unless some sort of providence directed nature towards good as an end; which is to govern. 2) Divine goodness helps a good end for what is made. God doesn't make junk just to discard it for no good purpose. Everything God makes is made for a purpose and leads to a good purpose available to all who seek Him. "Therefore it belongs to the Divine goodness, as it brought things into existence, so to lead them to their end: and this is to govern."

Reply to Obj. 1: A thing moves or operates for an end in two ways. 1) Man as a creature has a knowledge of his end, of the means to that end. 2) a thing is said to move or operate for an end like an archer sends an arrow toward a specific target. This shows a kind of movement that has a specific knowledge directed by someone knowing the target and the means to hit it with the arrow. So too the unvarying course of natural things which are without knowledge, shows clearly that the world is governed by some reason.

Reply to Obj. 2: The world appears to be stable on its own, but clearly its movement and operation would not continue to remain unless a stable governing agent was holding its stability.

Quest. 103 Reply to Obj. 3

Reply to Obj. 3: The natural necessity of things shows the government of Divine Providence as the intensity and movement of the arrow in a specific direction toward the targets shows the design of the archer in process. The arrow does not propel or direct itself. So too self-governing by things is not observed in the natural world except by design by a skillful Creator.

Article Two: Whether the End of the Government of the World Is Something outside the World?

On the contrary: Prov. 16:4 says that “The Lord hath made all things for Himself.” And God is outside his creation and so the end of all things is something extrinsic to the order of the entire universe.

I Answer that: It is not possible to not know the end of things if we know the beginning for they correspond to each other. Since the beginning of things was from something outside the universe, it only makes sense that the end of all things is God’s goodness since he is all good.

Article Three: Whether the World Is Governed by One?

Obj. One: The order of things governed in this universe can seem to be by necessity and or contingency as well as by cause and effect whereby we judge the cause by the effect. This often is done in many different ways. Therefore, the world is not governed by one.

Obj. Two: Things appear to act against one another and therefore could not be attributed to the One God. Therefore the world is not governed by one.

Obj. Three: In nature we find that two are better than one for God said, “It is better that two should be together than one. “Therefore the world is not governed by one, but by many.”

On the contrary: We believe in one God and one Lord, according to the words of the Apostle In 1 Cor 8:6 which says, “To us there is but one God, the Father...and one Lord”: and both of these pertain to government.

I Answer that: “We must of necessity say that the world is governed by one. For since the end of the government of the world is that which is essentially good, which is the greatest good; the government of the world must be the best kind of government.” A government by one is best for there are no contradictions between rulers and thereby unity and peace can be the byproduct. Singleness of governing bodies ensures clarity and is far best to multiple governors unless they are always in agreement toward the common and best good of all. “According to the Philosopher (Metaph. Xii, Did. Xi. 10) states: Things refuse to be ill governed ; and multiplicity of authorities is a bad thing. Therefore there should be one ruler.”

Question 103 Article Three Reply to Obj. One

Reply to Obj. One: A diversity of governors easily manifests a dissimilarity of movements caused by the diversity of the things moved. “Movement is the *act of a thing moved, caused by the mover*. Wherefore dissimilarity of movements is caused by diversity of things moved, which diversity is essential to the perfection of the universe.

Reply to Obj. Two: Contraries do not agree in the proximity of things, but only in the agreement in the ultimate end so far as included in the one order of the universe.

Reply to Obj. Three: An essential good needs no addition. If we look into the individual goods, “then two are better than one. But if we consider the essential good, then no addition is possible...”

Article Five: Whether All Things Are Subject to the Divine Government?

Objection Three: Rational creatures do not need to be governed for they can govern themselves. Therefore, all things are not subject to the Divine government.

On the contrary: All things created bear the mark of God’s creation according to Augustine (De Civ. Dei v.II). “Therefore, all things are subject to His government.”

I Answer that: “For the same reason is God the ruler of things as He is their cause, because the same gives existence as gives perfection; and this belongs to government.” Since God created all, He is the governor of all he created.

Reply to Obj. three: The rational creature governs itself as master of its own act, but since this creature has its own intellect and will, both of which require a creature to be governed and perfected by the Divine intellect and will. (PM)

Article Six: Whether All Things Are Immediately Governed by God?

I Answer that: In governing there are at least two things to consider; 1) The design of the government and 2) The execution of the design of government. God is the Divine creator of the government, but the execution of this designed government he leaves to others. This is out of God’s goodness that he does this. (PM)

Article Seven: Whether Anything Can Happen outside the Order of the Divine Government?

Obj. One: If nothing happened outside God’s Divine government, then according to Boethius (De Consol. Iii) no evil could exist. (PM)

Question 103 Article Seven Obj. Two

Obj. Two: If everything that is ordered by Divine government comes to pass then there is nothing fortuitous and casual possible. Any ruler could not rule by chance or choice and it would seem that everything is determined before it happens. (PM)

Obj. Three: If all governing was by Divine government then all that happens is divinely ordered to come to pass. Therefore there could be nothing contingent, but things would only happen by necessity, which is false. (PM)

On the contrary: In Esther 13:9 it says, "*O Lord, Lord, almighty King, all things are in Thy power, and there is none that can resist Thy will.*"

I Answer That: "It is possible for an effect to result outside the order of some particular cause; but not outside the order of the universal cause." Since God is the first cause it is impossible for anything to occur outside the order of given government; "but from the very fact that from one point of view something seems to evade the order of Divine providence considered in regard to one particular cause, it must necessarily come back to that order as regards to some other cause."

Reply to Obj. One: As shown earlier in (Q. 48, A.3) nothing is completely bad or evil in the universe. Therefore, some could insist that something is said to be evil by slipping by or going through or by reaping from the order of some particular good. But if it did leave from under the Divine government, it would no longer exist. (PM)

Reply to Obj. Two: According to the order of Divine providence, *nothing happens in the world happens by chance* per the claim of Augustine (QQ. 83, qu. 24).

Reply to Obj. Three: "Certain effects are said to be contingent as compared to their proximate cause, which may fail in their effects, and not as though anything could happen entirely outside the order of Divine government." If something happens outside the proximate cause it may be happening by another cause which is subject to the Divine government. (PM)

Q & A for Articles One through Seven (excluding Article 4)

1) Is the World Is Governed by Anyone? Divine goodness that brought this world to being would also bring it to its best end. Either the governing of the world is by chance or directed by the creator of the world. It would seem to be that the chance of this governing happening on its own is impossible for at least two reasons. 1) By observation it seems that nearly all things happen for the best, which would not be the case unless some sort of providence directed nature towards good as an end; which is to govern. 2) Divine goodness helps a good end for

Q & A for Articles One through Seven (excluding Article 4) cont.

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"Therefore it belongs to the Divine goodness, as it brought things into existence, so to lead them to their end: and this is to govern."

2) Is the End of the Government of the World Something outside the World? It is not possible to not know the end of things if we know the beginning for they correspond to each other. Since the beginning of things was from something outside the universe, it only makes sense that the end of all things is God's goodness since he is all good.

3) Is the World Governed by One? "We must of necessity say that the world is governed by one. For since the end of the government of the world is that which is essentially good, which is the greatest good; the government of the world must be the best kind of government." A government by one is best for there are no contradictions between rulers and thereby unity and peace can be the byproduct. Singleness of governing bodies ensures clarity and is far best to multiple governors unless they are always in agreement toward the common and best good of all. "According to the Philosopher (Metaph. Xii, Did. Xi. 10) states: Things refuse to be ill governed; and multiplicity of authorities is a bad thing. Therefore there should be one ruler."

5) Are All Things Subject to the Divine Government? "For the same reason is God the ruler of things as He is their cause, because the same gives existence as gives perfection; and this belongs to government." Since created all he is the governor of all he created.

6) Are All Things Governed Immediately by God? In governing there are at least two things to consider; 1) The design of the government and 2) The execution of the design of government. God is the Divine creator of the government, but the execution of this designed government he leaves to others. This is out of God's goodness that he does this. (PM)

7) Can Anything Happen outside the Order of the Divine Government? "It is possible for an effect to result outside the order of some particular cause; but not outside the order of the universal cause." Since God is the first cause it is impossible for anything to occur outside the order of given government; "but from the very fact that from one point of view something seems to evade the order of Divine providence considered in regard to one particular cause, it must necessarily come back to that order as regards some other cause."