

## Question 80

### Of the Appetitive Powers in General

Article one: Whether the Appetite Is a Special Power of the Soul?

“Natural form is followed by a natural inclination, which is called the natural appetite.” TA

According to PK appetite is in this sense a larger category than we understand in our world today. It almost seems that inanimate objects are viewed as having an appetite. It seems more like something that naturally flows from something. Like gravity has the natural nature to pull something to it or a plant has an appetite for carbon dioxide.

It seems that TA views that in animals the appetite is a special power of the soul. He claims that “forms exist in those things that have knowledge in a higher manner and above the manner of natural forms; so must there be in them an inclination surpassing the natural inclination, which is called the natural appetite. And this superior inclination belongs to the appetitive power of the soul, through which the animal is able to desire what it apprehends, and not only that to which it is inclined by its natural form. And so it is necessary to assign an appetitive power to the soul...”

### Q & A for Question 80

1. Is the appetite a special power of the soul? Yes, per TA. “Forms exist in those things that have knowledge in a higher manner and above the manner of natural forms; so must there be in them an inclination surpassing the natural inclination, which is called the natural appetite. And this superior inclination belongs to the appetitive power of the soul, through which the animal is able to desire what it apprehends, and not only that to which it is inclined by its natural form. And so it is necessary to assign an appetitive power to the soul...”

## Question 81

### Of the Power of Sensuality

Article two: Whether the Sensitive Appetite Is Divided into the Irascible and Concupiscible as Distinct Powers?

## Question 81 cont.

I answer that: “There needs to be in the sensitive part two appetitive powers—one through which the soul is simply inclined to seek what is suitable, according to the senses, and to fly from what is hurtful, and this is called the concupiscible: and another, whereby an animal resists these attacks that hinder what is suitable, and inflicts harm, and this is called the irascible.

The irascible is, according to TA, the champion and defender of the concupiscible, when it rises up against what hinders the acquisition of the suitable things which the concupiscible desires, or against what inflicts harm, from which the concupiscible flies. And for this reason all the passions of the irascible appetite rise from the passions of the concupiscible appetite and terminate in them.” For the animal and how they combat each other it is all about their concupiscible appetites such as food and sex. (PM)

Article three: Whether the Irascible and Concupiscible Appetites obey Reason?

I answer that: The two ways the irascible and concupiscible powers obey the higher part are in the intellect and that is 1) reason and 2) will.

PK gives further explanation by saying, “St. Thomas, like all pre-modern philosophers (except the Hedonists among the Sophists and Epicureans), disagrees with Freud’s “pleasure principle” of appetite-determinism. He also disagrees, at the other extreme, with Plato’s intellectual determinism, according to which appetites always follow the intellect (we always will the apparent good; evil is only ignorance). As usual, St. Thomas takes the commonsensical middle ground: appetites follow reason naturally, but not necessarily, and usually but not always.

Reply Obj. 2: “ The soul is said to rule the body by a despotic power, because the members of the body cannot in any way resist the sway of the soul, but at the soul’s command both hand and foot, and whatever member is naturally moved by voluntary movement, are moved at once. But the intellect or reason is said to rule the irascible and concupiscible by a politic power: because the sensitive appetite has something of its own, by virtue whereof it can resist the commands of reason.” In the animal the soul is ruled by a despotic power such as that of a master over a slave, such as a slave has no power over his own. Yet in man, the power is called politic and royal by which man rules over free subjects. In that they can resist the orders of the one in charge. “And so, the soul is said to rule the body by a despotic power, because the members of the body cannot in any way resist the sway of the soul, but at the soul’s command both hand and foot, and whatever member is naturally moved by voluntary movement, are moved at once. But the intellect or reason is said to rule the irascible and concupiscible by a politic power; because the sensitive appetite has something of its own, by virtue whereof it can resist the commands of reason.”

## Q & A Question 81

What are the powers of sensuality?

1. Is the sensitive appetite divided into the irascible and concupiscible as distinct powers? Yes, The sensitive appetite is one generic power, and is called sensuality, but it is divided into two powers, which are species of the sensitive appetite—the irascible and the concupiscible.
2. Do the irascible and concupiscible appetites obey reason? TA says in two ways the irascible and concupiscible powers obey the higher part, in which are the intellect or reason, and the will. PK gives further explanation by saying, “St. Thomas, like all pre-modern philosophers (except the Hedonists among the Sophists and Epicureans), disagrees with Freud’s “pleasure principle” of appetite-determinism. He also disagrees, at the other extreme, with Plato’s intellectual determinism, according to which appetites always follow the intellect (we always will the apparent good; evil is only ignorance). As usual, St. Thomas takes the commonsensical middle ground: appetites follow reason naturally, but not necessarily, and usually but not always.

## Question 82

Of the Will

Article One: Whether the Will Desires Something of Necessity:

On the contrary: Augustine says (De Trin. Xiii. 4) that *all desire happiness with one will*. Now if this were not necessary, but contingent, there would at least be a few exceptions. Therefore the will desires something of necessity.

I answer that: Yes, the will does desire something of necessity. It is impossible for a thing to be absolutely coerced or violent, and voluntary. But necessity of end is not repugnant to the will, when the end cannot be attained except in one way: thus from the will to cross the sea, arises in the will the necessity to wish for a ship. There is the sense of necessity by coercion, but this according to TA, necessity of coercion is altogether repugnant to the will... But the very movement of the will is an inclination to something. Therefore, as a thing is called natural because it is according to the inclination of nature, so a thing is called voluntary because it is according to the inclination of the will.

Article Two: Whether the Will Desires of Necessity, Whatever It Desires?

On the contrary: Augustine says (Retract, I, 9) that *it is the will by which we sin and live well*, and so the will extends to opposite things. Therefore it does not desire of necessity of things whatsoever it desires.

## Article Two Cont. I answer that

I answer that: TA is very clear that the will does not desire of necessity whatsoever it desires. And what does TA say that makes this clear as to why? TA says that the intellect does not assent of necessity. But there are some propositions which have a necessary connection with the first principles: such as demonstrable conclusions, a denial of which involves a denial of the first principles. And to these the intellect assents of necessity, when once it is aware of the necessary connection of these conclusions with the principles, but it does not assent of necessity until through the demonstration it recognizes the necessity of such connection. So what does the will have to do with the necessary connection with the conclusions of the principles? TA says that it is the same with the will. For there are certain individual goods which have not a necessary connection with happiness, because without them a man can be happy: and to such the will does not adhere of necessity. Per TA the will does not adhere to God of necessity, nor to those things which are of God. The distinction that TA is making here is that the will of the man who sees God in His essence of necessity adheres to God, just as now we desire of necessity to be happy. TA's conclusion is that the will has to desire of all things it desires. This just is not the case. Not all things are necessary. And something the will may desire is not necessary. But with God we will to adhere and this is necessary.

## Article Three: Whether the Will Is a Higher Power Than the Intellect?

Obj. one: The will is the first and highest power for the object of the will is good and the end. But the end is the first and highest cause.

Obj. two: The natural order of things appears to be from imperfect things to perfect. Now the will, in the natural order, follows the act of the intellect. Therefore the will is a more noble and perfect power than the intellect.

Obj. three: The will is a higher power than the intellect because in terms of perfections the habits of the intellect are not as perfect as the will to habitually act out of charity.

On the contrary: According to TA, the Philosopher holds the intellect to be the highest power of the soul (Ethic. X. &)

I answer that: TA summarizes superiority of one thing over another in two ways: *absolutely and relatively*. Now a thing is considered to be such absolutely which is considered such in itself, but relatively as it is such with regard to something else. If therefore the intellect and will be considered with regard to themselves, then the intellect is the higher power....Now the more simple and the more abstract {immaterial} a thing is, the nobler and higher it is in itself, and therefore the object of the intellect is higher it is in itself; and therefore the object of the intellect is higher than the object of the will. Therefore, since the proper nature of a power is in its order to its object, it follows that the intellect in itself and absolutely is higher and nobler than the will. But sometimes the will is higher than the intellect relatively by comparison...When, therefore, the thing in which there is good is nobler than the soul itself, it which is the idea understood; by comparison with such a thing, the will is higher than the intellect. But when the thing which is good is less noble than the knowledge of God, wherefore the love of God is better than the knowledge of God; but, on the contrary, the knowledge of corporeal things is better than the love. Absolutely the intellect is nobler than the will.

### Article Three Reply to Obj. one

Reply to Obj. one: Truth is something good; forasmuch as the intellect is a thing, and truth its end. And among other ends this is the most excellent; as also is the intellect among the other powers. PK says "Therefore St. Thomas elsewhere says that the greatest good one can do to his neighbor is to lead him to the truth."

Reply to Obj. two: What precedes something absolutely and in the order of nature is more perfect; for thus act precedes potentiality. And in this way the intellect precedes the will, as the motive power precedes the thing movable, and as the active precedes the passive, for good which is understood moves the will.

### Article Four: Whether the Will Moves the Intellect?

Obj. one: It would seem that the will does not move the intellect. For the mover excels the moved. But the intellect excels and precedes the will as seen in (A.3) Therefore the will does not move the intellect.

Obj. two: Also what moves is not moved by what is moved, except perhaps accidentally. But the intellect moves the will, because the good apprehended by the intellect moves without being moved. So the intellect is not moved by the will.

Obj. three: The will does not move the intellect for we can will nothing but what we understand. If therefore, in order to understand, the will moves by another act of the intellect, and this act of the intellect by another act of the will and this continues indefinitely and is not possible. Therefore the will does not move the intellect.

On the contrary: "Damascene says (D Fid. Orth. li. 26) *It is in our power to learn an art or not, as we list.* But a thing is in our power by the will, and we learn art by the intellect. Therefore the will moves the intellect."

I answer that: TA tells us that a thing is said to move in two ways" First as an end [final cause]' for instance, when we say that the end moves the agent. In this way the intellect moves the will, because the good understood is the object of the will, and moves it as an end. Secondly, a thing is said to move as an agent [efficient cause], as what alters moves what is altered, and what impels moves what is impelled. In this way the will moves the intellect, and all then powers of the soul, as Anselm says (Eadmer, De Similitudinibus). The reason is, because wherever we have order among a number of active powers, that power which regards the universal end moves the powers which regard particular ends...Therefore the will as an agent moves all the powers of the soul to their respective acts, except the natural powers of the vegetative part, which are not subject to our will.

## Article Four Reply to obj. one

Reply to obj. one: The intellect may be considered in two ways: Universal and particularly. If therefore, the intellect and will be compared with one another according to the universality of their respective objects, then, as we have said above (A.3), the intellect is simply higher and nobler than the will. If however, we take the intellect as regards the common nature of its object and the will as a determinate power, then again the intellect is higher and noble than the will, because under the notion of being and truth is contained both the will itself, and its act. and its object. The will is higher than the intellect, and can move it. From this we can easily understand why these powers include one another in their acts, because the intellect understands that the will wills, and the will wills the intellect to understand. In the same way good is contained in truth, inasmuch as it is an understood truth, and truth in good, inasmuch as it is a desired good.”

Reply to obj. two: “The intellect moves the will in one sense, and the will moves the intellect in another, as we have said above.

Reply to obj. three: At some point we need to stop the need to go on indefinitely. For the intellect does not need to precede all the rest. “For every movement of the will must be preceded by apprehension, whereas every apprehension is not preceded by an act of the will, but the principle of counseling and understanding is an intellectual principle higher than our intellect—namely, God.”— According to Aristotle (Eth. Eudemic, vii. 14) as also in this way he explains that there is no need to proceed indefinitely.

## Q & A Question 82 Of the Will

1. Does the will desire something of necessity? Yes, the will does desire something of necessity. It is impossible for a thing to be absolutely coerced or violent, and voluntary. But necessity of end is not repugnant to the will, when the end cannot be attained except in one way: thus from the will to cross the sea, arises in the will the necessity to wish for a ship. There is the sense of necessity by coercion, but this according to TA, necessity of coercion is altogether repugnant to the will... But the very movement of the will is an inclination to something. Therefore, as a thing is called natural because it is according to the inclination of nature, so a thing is called voluntary because it is according to the inclination of the will.

2. Does the will desire of necessity, whatever it desires? TA is very clear that the will does not desire of necessity whatsoever it desires.

And what does TA say that makes this clear as to why? TA says that the intellect does not assent of necessity. But there are some propositions which have a necessary connection with the first principles: such as demonstrable conclusions, a denial of which involves a denial of

## Q & A Question 2 for Question 82

the first principles. And to these the intellect assents of necessity, when once it is aware of the necessary connection of these conclusions with the principles, but it does not assent of necessity until through the demonstration it recognizes the necessity of such connection. So what does the will have to do with the necessary connection with the conclusions of the principles? TA says that it is the same with the will. For there are certain individual goods which have not a necessary connection with happiness, because without them a man can be happy: and to such the will does not adhere of necessity. Per TA the will does not adhere to God of necessity, nor to those things which are of God. The distinction that TA is making here is that the will of the man who sees God in His essence of necessity adheres to God, just as now we desire of necessity to be happy. TA's conclusion is that the will has to desire of all things it desires. This just is not the case. Not all things are necessary. And something the will may desire is not necessary. But with God we will to adhere and this is necessary.

3. Is the will a higher power than the intellect? TA summarizes superiority of one thing over another in two ways: absolutely and relatively. Now a thing is considered to be such absolutely which is considered such in itself, but relatively as it is such with regard to something else. If therefore the intellect and will be considered with regard to themselves, then the intellect is the higher power....Now the more simple and the more abstract {immaterial} a thing is, the nobler and higher it is in itself, and therefore the object of the intellect is higher it is in itself; and therefore the object of the intellect is higher than the object of the will. Therefore, since the proper nature of a power is in its order to its object, it follows that the intellect in itself and absolutely is higher and nobler than the will. But sometimes the will is higher than the intellect relatively by comparison...When, therefore, the thing in which there is good is nobler than the soul itself, it which is the idea understood; by comparison with such a thing, the will is higher than the intellect. But when the thing which is good is less noble than the knowledge of God, wherefore the love of God is better than the knowledge of God; but, on the contrary, the knowledge of corporeal things is better than the love. Absolutely the intellect is nobler than the will.

4. Does the will move the intellect? TA tells us that a thing is said to move in two ways" First as an end [final cause] for instance, when we say that the end moves the agent. In this way the intellect moves the will, because the good understood is the object of the will, and moves it as an end. Secondly, a thing is said to move as an agent [efficient cause], as what alters moves what is altered, and what impels moves what is impelled. In this way the will moves the intellect, and all then powers of the soul, as Anselm says (Eadmer, De Similitudinibus). The reason is, because wherever we have order among a number of active powers, that power which regards the universal end moves the powers which regard particular ends...Therefore the

## Q & A Question 4 for Question 82

will as an agent moves all the powers of the soul to their respective acts, except the natural powers of the vegetative part, which are not subject to our will.

A biblical example of the struggle of our will, intellect and our flesh:

Think of the Apostle Paul when he writes in Romans chapters 6-8. There he tells of what he knows he needs to do, but he cannot do it. He wants to do right, but he resists making the best choices in life. He has a battle going on inside of him where his members wage war against themselves. He describes it as an internal war between the flesh and the spirit. How does he overcome this war between his flesh and the spirit? He has to realize that God does not condemn him for having this battle within himself. But he needs God's help to overcome it for his reason is not able to always take control of his irascible and concupiscible appetites. TA takes the middle ground and that is where God comes into action. But we have to invite God to help with this intervention. When we do he helps our spirit to work with his to turn the tide in the battle and we overcome by God's grace what we cannot do on our own. Yes, our reason desires to do it by itself, but our reason needs help from God. We must call on God's Spirit to empower our irascible power to overcome the concupiscible power within us.

Six possible scenarios describing a different outcome of interaction between will and passions:

- 1) A passion that agrees with the will: Samson and the pulling down of the pillars
- 2) A passion that overrides the will: The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and evil
- 3) A movement of the will that overflows on the passions: An intense encounter with the Lord.
- 4) A passion that is deliberately sparked by the will: Peter using the sword on the servant
- 5) A passion that is controlled or redirected by the will: Romans 6 and 7 (see above)
- 6) When the will bypasses a group of passions: When King Saul threw his spear at David.