Question 83

Of-Free Will

Article One: Whether Man Has Free-Will?

Obj. 1: “It would seem that man has not free-will.” The Apostle Paul indicates in (Rom 7:19) that man does what he doesn’t want to do. Therefore, man could not have a free-will. (PM)

Obj. 2: “Whoever has free-will has in his power to will or not to will, to do or not to do. But this is not in man’s power: for it is written (Rom 9:16) It is not of him that willeth—namely, to will—*nor of him that runneth*—namely, to run. Therefore man has not free-will.”

Obj. 3: A free will must be truly free from forced action. The Apostle Paul tells us in (Phil 2:13) that *it is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish.* Therefore man has not free-will... (PM)

On the Contrary: “It is written (Sir 15:14):  *God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel;* and the gloss adds: *That is of his free-will.*”

I answer that: TA indicates that man has free-will: and he alludes to man’s capabilities through rational powers like counsels, exhortations, commands, prohibitions, rewards and punishments. Contrary to the brute animals reason is not present in them and therefore they really have no free-will. But man has rational powers and the ability to choose good or bad choices from a select few of available options. Therefore, man operates by free-will. (PM)

Article Three: Whether Free-Will is an Appetitive Power?

I answer that: (PK) tells us that TA solves the thorny issue of reconciling human free will with divine causality. God determine man to be a free-will agent and his grace establishes nature rather than removing it. (PM) TA tells us in (*Ethic,* iii, *loc. Cit.*) that Aristotle inclines to its being an intellectual appetite when he describes choice *as a desire proceeding from counsel*. “And the reason of this is because the proper object of choice is the means to the end: and this, as such, is in the nature of that good which is called useful: wherefore since good, as such, is the object of the appetite, it follows that choice is principally an act of the appetitive power. And thus free-will is an appetitive power...”

Article Four: Whether Free-Will Is a Power Distinct from the Will?

I answer that: TA states: “The appetitive powers must be proportionate to the apprehensive powers, as we have said above (Q. 64, A. 2). This is where God is equated with the cause of evil in things and in humans. But God is the cause of good and the order of justice belongs to the

Article Four Cont. I answer that:

order of the universe; and this requires that penalty should be dealt out to sinners. And so God is the author of the evil which is penalty, but not of the evil which is fault.” TA insists that free-will is nothing but the power of choice. “But to *choose* is to desire something for the sake of obtaining something else: wherefore, properly speaking it regards the means to the end. Now, in matters of knowledge, the assent on account of the principles: just as, in appetitive matters, the end is related to the means, which is desired on account of the end. Wherefore it is evident that as the intellect is to reason, so is the will to the power of choice, which is free-will. But it has been shown above (Q. 79, A. 8) that it belongs to the same power both to understand and to reason, even as it belongs to the same power to be at rest and to be in movement. Wherefore it belongs also to the same power to will and to choose: and on this account the will and the free-will are not two powers, but one.” See PK’s diagram supplied on p. 300 contrasting The appetitive and the cognitive (apprehensive), with the simple or immediate and the multiple or the mediate distinguishing powers of will and free will and intellect and reason and willing and understanding and choosing and reasoning. (PM)

Q & A

1. Does man really have free-will? TA indicates that man has free-will: and he alludes to man’s capabilities through rational powers like counsels, exhortations, commands, prohibitions, rewards and punishments. Contrary to the brute animals reason is not present in them and therefore they really have no free-will. But man has rational powers and the ability to choose good or bad choices from a select few of available options. Therefore, man operates by free-will. (PM)

2. Is free-will and appetitive power? (PK) tells us that TA solves the thorny issue of reconciling human free will with divine causality. God determine man to be a free-will agent and his grace establishes nature rather than removing it. (PM) TA tells us in (Ethic, iii, loc. Cit.) that Aristotle inclines to its being an intellectual appetite when he describes choice as a desire proceeding from counsel. “And the reason of this is because the proper object of choice is the means to the end: and this, as such, is in the nature of that good which is called useful: wherefore since good, as such, is the object of the appetite, it follows that choice is principally an act of the appetitive power. And thus free-will is an appetitive power...”

3. Is free-will a distinct power from the will itself? Wherefore it belongs also to the same power to will and to choose: and on this account the will and the free-will are not two powers, but one.” See PK’s diagram supplied on p. 300.