

WORKS OF SAINT BONAVENTURE

Edited by

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Saint Bonaventure's

ITINERARIUM MENTIS IN DEUM

With an Introduction,
Translation and Commentary

by

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SAINT BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY
SAINT BONAVENTURE, N. Y.

1956

REPRINTED 1990

3. Nam per senas alas illas recte intelligi possunt sex illuminationum suspensiones, quibus anima quasi quibusdam gradibus vel itineribus disponitur, ut transeat ad pacem per ecstaticos excessus sapientiae christianae. Via autem non est nisi per ardentissimum amorem Crucifixi, qui adeo Paulum ad *tertium caelum raptum* transformavit in Christum, ut diceret: *Christo confixus sum cruci, vivo autem, iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus*,⁴ qui etiam adeo mentem Francisci absorbit, quod mense in carne patuit, dum sacratissima passionis stigmata in corpore suo ante mortem per biennium deportavit. Effigies igitur sex alarum seraphicarum insinuat sex illuminationes scalares, quae a creaturis incipiunt et perducunt usque ad Deum, ad quem nemo intrat recte nisi per Crucifixum. Nam *qui non intrat per ostium, sed ascendit aliunde, ille fur et latro. Si quis vero per hoc ostium introierit, ingredietur et egredietur et pascua inveniet*.⁵ Propter quod dicit Ioannes in Apocalypsi: *Beati qui lavant vestimenta sua in sanguine Agni, ut sit potestas eorum in ligno vitae, et per portas ingrediantur civitatem*,⁶ quasi dicat, quod per contemplationem ingredi non potest Ierusalem supernam, nisi per sanguinem Agni intret tanquam per portam. Non enim dispositus est aliquo modo ad contemplationes divinas, quae ad mentales ducunt excessus, nisi cum Daniele sit *vir desideriorum*.⁷ Desideria autem in nobis inflammantur dupliciter, scilicet per *clamorem orationis*, quae rugire facit a *gemitu cordis*⁸ et per *fulgorem speculationis*, qua mens ad radios lucis directissime et intensissime se convertit.

4. Igitur ad gemitum orationis per Christum crucifixum, per cuius sanguinem purgamur a sordibus vitiorum⁹ primum quidem lectorem invito, ne forte credat, quod sibi sufficiat lectio sine unctione,¹⁰ speculatio sine devotione, investigatio sine admiratione, circumspectio sine exultatione, industria sine pietate, scientia sine caritate, intelligentia sine humilitate, studium absque divina gratia, speculum absque sapientia divinitus inspirata. — Praeventis igitur divina gratia, humilibus et piis, compunctis et devotis,

⁴ II Cor. 12, 2; Gal. 2, 20.

⁵ Ioan. 10, 1; *ibid.* 9.

⁶ Apoc. 22, 14.

⁷ Dan. 9, 23.

⁸ Ps. 37, 9.

⁹ Hebr. 1, 3.

¹⁰ Ioan. 2, 20 et 27.

3. The six wings of the seraph can be rightly understood as signifying the six uplifting⁴ illuminations by which the soul is disposed, as by certain grades or steps, to pass over⁵ to peace through the exstatic transports of Christian wisdom. The road to this peace is through nothing else than a most ardent love of the Crucified, the love which so transformed Paul into Christ when he was rapt to the third heaven that he declared: *With Christ I am nailed to the Cross. It is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me*. And this love so absorbed the soul of Francis too that his spirit shone through his flesh the last two years of his life, when he bore the most holy marks of the Passion in his body.⁶

The figure of the six wings of the Seraph, therefore, brings to mind the six steps of illumination which begin with creatures and lead up to God, Whom no one rightly enters save through the Crucified. For *he who enters not by the door, but climbs up another way, is a thief and a robber. But if anyone enter by this door, he shall go in and out, and shall find pastures*. For this reason Saint John writes in the *Apocalypse*: *Blessed are they who wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and that by the gates they may enter into the city*. That is to say, no one can enter by contemplation into the heavenly Jerusalem unless he enters through the blood of the Lamb as through a door. For no one is in any way disposed for divine contemplations that lead to spiritual transports⁷ unless, like the prophet Daniel, he is also a *man of desires*. Now such desires⁸ are enkindled in us in two ways: through the outcries of prayer, which makes us groan from anguish of heart, and through the refulgence of speculation by which our mind most directly and intently turns itself toward the rays of light.

4. Wherefore, it is to groans of prayer⁹ through Christ Crucified, in whose blood we are cleansed from the filth of vices, that I first of all invite the reader. Otherwise he may come to think that mere reading will suffice without unction, speculation¹⁰ without devotion, investigation without admiration, observation without exultation, industry without piety, knowledge without love, understanding without humility, study without divine grace, the mirror without divinely inspired wisdom.

To those, therefore, who are already disposed by divine grace, to the humble and pious, to the contrite and devout, to those who are anointed with the *oil of gladness*, to the lovers of divine wisdom and to those inflamed with a desire for it, to those who wish to give themselves to glorifying, admiring, and even savoring¹¹ God — to those I propose the following considerations. At the same time, I wish to warn them that the mirror of the external

INCIPIUNT CAPITULA

Primum capitulum, de gradibus ascensionis in Deum et de speculatione ipsius per vestigia eius in universo.

Secundum capitulum, de speculatione Dei in vestigiis suis in hoc sensibili mundo.

Tertium capitulum, de speculatione Dei per suam imaginem naturalibus potentiis insignitam.

Quartum capitulum, de speculatione Dei in sua imagine donis gratuitis reformata.

Quintum capitulum, de speculatione divinae unitatis per eius nomen primum, quod est *esse*.

Sextum capitulum, de speculatione beatissimae Trinitatis in eius nomine, quod est *bonum*.

Septimum capitulum, de excessu mentali et mystico, in quo requies datur intellectui, affectu in Deum per excessum totaliter transeunte.

Expliciunt capitula.

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INCIPIT SPECULATIO PAUPERIS IN DESERTO

CAP. I

*De gradibus ascensionis in Deum
et de speculatione ipsius per vestigia eius in universo*

1. *Beatus vir, cuius est auxilium abs te! ascensiones in corde suo disposuit in valle lacrymarum, in loco, quem posuit.*¹ Cum beatitudo nihil aliud sit, quam summi boni fruitio; et summum bonum sit supra nos: nullus potest effici beatus, nisi supra semetipsum ascendat, non ascensu corporali, sed cordiali. Sed supra nos levare non possumus nisi per virtutem superiorem nos elevantem. Quantumcumque enim gradus interiores disponantur, nihil fit, nisi divinum auxilium comitetur. Divinum autem auxilium comitatur eos qui petunt ex corde humiliter et devote; et hoc est ad ipsum suspirare in hac *lacrymarum valle*, quod fit per ferventem orationem. Oratio igitur est mater et origo sursum-actionis. Ideo Dionysius in libro de *Mystica Theologia*,² volens nos instruere ad excessus mentales, primo praemittit orationem. Oremus igitur et dicamus ad Dominum Deum nostrum: *Deduc me, Domine, in via tua, et ingrediar in veritate tua; laetetur cor meum, ut timeat nomen tuum.*³

2. In hac oratione orando illuminatur ad cognoscendum divinae ascensionis gradus. Cum enim secundum statum conditionis nostrae ipsa rerum universitas sit scala ad ascendendum in Deum; et in rebus quaedam sint *vestigium*, quaedam *imago*, quaedam *corporalia*, quaedam *spiritualia*, quaedam *temporalia*, quaedam *aeviterna*, ac per hoc quaedam *extra nos*, quaedam *intra nos*; ad hoc quod perveniamus ad primum principium considerandum, quod est *spiritualissimum* et *aeternum* et *supra nos*, oportet nos *transire per vestigium*, quod est *corporale* et *temporale* et *extra nos*, et hoc est *deduci in via Dei*; oportet, nos *intrare ad mentem*

¹ Ps. 83, 6 seq.

² Dionysius, *De Mystica Theologia*, 1, 1.

³ Ps. 85, 11.

HERE BEGINS THE SPECULATION OF THE POOR MAN IN THE DESERT

CHAPTER ONE

THE STEPS IN THE ASCENT TO GOD AND THE
CONSIDERATION OF HIM THROUGH HIS FOOTSTEPS
IN THE UNIVERSE

1. *Blessed is the man¹ whose help is from thee; in his heart he hath disposed to ascend by steps in the vale of tears, in the place which he hath set.* Since happiness is nothing else than the enjoyment of the Supreme Good and the Supreme Good is above us, no one can enjoy happiness unless he rise above himself, not, indeed by a bodily ascent, but by an ascent of the heart. But we cannot rise above ourselves unless a superior power raise us. However much, then, the steps of our interior progress may be well-ordered, we can do nothing unless divine aid support us. This divine aid is at hand for all who seek it with a truly humble and devout heart. To seek thus in this vale of tears is to sigh for divine aid in fervent prayer. Prayer, then, is the mother and origin of every upward striving of the soul. Thus Dionysius, in his book, *Mystical Theology*, wishing to instruct us in the transports of soul, opens first with a prayer. Let us, therefore, pray and say to the Lord, our God: *Conduct me, O Lord, in thy way and I will enter into thy truth; let my heart rejoice that it may fear thy name.*

2. By so praying, we are given light to discern the steps of the soul's ascent to God.² For we are so created that the material universe itself is a ladder by which we may ascend to God. And among things, some are vestiges, others, images;³ some corporeal, others, spiritual; some temporal, others, everlasting;⁴ some things are outside us, and some within. In order to arrive at the consideration of the First Principle, which is wholly spiritual and eternal and above us, we must pass through vestiges which are corporeal and temporal and outside us. Thus we are guided in the way of God. Next we must enter into our mind, which is the image of God — an image which is everlasting, spiritual, and within us. And this is to enter the truth of God. Finally, looking at the First Principle, we must go beyond to what is eternal, absolutely

nostram quae est *imago Dei aeterna, spiritualis et intra nos*, et hoc est *ingredi in veritate Dei*; oportet, nos *transcendere ad aeternum, spiritualissimum et supra nos*, aspiciendo ad primum principium, et hoc est *laetari in Dei notitia et reverentia Maiestatis*.

3. Haec est igitur via trium dierum in solitudine,⁴ haec est triplex illuminatio unius diei, et prima est sicut vespera, secunda sicut mane, tertia sicut meridies; haec respicit triplicem rerum existentiam, scilicet in materia, in intelligentia et in arte aeterna, secundum quam dictum est: *fiat, fecit, et factum est*,⁵ haec etiam respicit triplicem substantiam in Christo, qui est scala nostra, scilicet corporalem, spiritualement et divinam.

4. Secundum hunc triplicem progressum mens nostra tres habet aspectus principales. Unus est ad corporalia exteriora, secundum quem vocatur *animalitas* seu sensualitas; alius intra se et in se, secundum quem dicitur *spiritus*; tertius supra se, secundum quem dicitur *mens*. — Ex quibus omnibus disponere se debet ad conscendendum in Deum, ut ipsum diligat *ex tota mente, ex toto corde et ex tota anima*,⁶ in quo consistit perfecta Legis observatio et simul cum hoc sapientia christiana.

5. Quoniam autem quilibet praedictorum modorum gematur, secundum quod contingit considerare Deum ut *alpha et omega*,⁷ seu in quantum contingit videre Deum in unoquoque praedictorum modorum ut *per speculum* et ut *in speculo*, seu quia una istarum considerationum habet commisceri alteri sibi conjunctae et habet considerari in sua puritate: hinc est, quod necesse est, hos tres gradus principales ascendere ad senarium, ut, sicut Deus sex diebus perfecit *universum mundum* et in septimo requievit, sic *minor mundus* sex gradibus illuminationum sibi succedentium ad quietem contemplationis ordinatissime perducatur. — In cuius rei figura sex gradibus ascendebatur ad thronum Salomonis,⁸ Seraphim, quae vidit Isaias, senas alas habebant;⁹ post sex dies vocavit Dominus Moysen *de medio caliginis*,¹⁰ et Christus *post sex dies*, ut dicitur in Mattheo, *duxit discipulos in montem et transfiguratus est ante eos*.¹¹

6. Iuxta igitur sex gradus *ascensionis* in Deum sex sunt gradus *potentiarum* animae per quos ascendimus ab imis ad summa, ab exterioribus ad intima, a temporalibus conscendimus ad aeterna, scilicet *sensus, imaginatio, ratio, intellectus, intelligentia et apex*

4 Exod. 3, 18.

5 Gen. 1, 3.

6 Marc. 12, 30. Cf. Matth. 22, 37; Luc. 10, 27.

7 Apoc. 1, 8.

8 III Reg. 10, 19.

9 Isai. 6, 2.

10 Exod. 24, 16.

11 Matth. 17, 1 seqq.

spiritual, and above us. This is to rejoice in the knowledge of God and in the reverent fear of His Majesty.

3. This triple way of seeing, then, is the three days' journey in the wilderness;⁴ it is the threefold enlightenment of a single day: the first is like evening; the second, morning; and the third, noon day. It reflects the threefold existence of things: in matter, in the understanding, and in the eternal art,⁵ according to which it was said: *Let it be made, He made it, and it was made*.⁶ Finally, it reflects the threefold substance in Christ, Who is our ladder: the corporeal, the spiritual, and the divine substance.

4. In keeping with this threefold progression, our mind has three principal ways of perceiving.⁷ In the first way it looks at the corporeal things outside itself, and so acting, it is called animality or sensitivity. In the second, it looks within itself, and is then called spirit. In the third, it looks above itself, and is then called mind. All three ways should be employed to ascend to God, so that He may be loved *with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind*. Herein lies the perfect observance of the Law and at the same time, Christian wisdom.

5. Each of the foregoing ways of seeing may be subdivided according to whether we consider God as the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, or whether we consider Him in any one of the aforesaid ways as through and as in a mirror. Or we may consider each of these ways in conjunction with another that is related to it, and in itself.⁸ Therefore, these three principal steps of ascent must be increased to six in number. Thus, just as God completed the whole world in six days and on the seventh rested, so the lesser world is led in a most orderly fashion, through six progressive steps of enlightenment, to the quiet of contemplation. Symbolically, the ascent to the throne of Solomon rose by six steps; the Seraphim that Isaias saw had six wings; after six days the Lord called Moses out of the midst of the cloud; and as St. Matthew tells us, it was *after six days* that Christ led them up a high mountain by themselves, and was transfigured before them.

6. Corresponding, therefore, to the six steps in the ascent to God, there are six gradated powers of the soul, whereby we ascend from the lowest to the highest,⁹ from external things to those that are within, and from the temporal to the eternal. These six powers are the senses, the imagination, the reason, the understanding, the intelligence, and the summit of the mind or the spark of synderesis.¹⁰ We have these powers implanted within us by nature, deformed through sin, reformed through grace.

mentis seu synderesis scintilla. Hos gradus in nobis habemus plantatos per naturam, deformatos per culpam, reformatos per gratiam; purgandos per iustitiam, exercendos per scientiam, perficiendos per sapientiam.

7. Secundum enim primam naturae institutionem creatus fuit homo habilis ad contemplationis quietem, et ideo *posuit eum Deus in paradiso deliciarum*.¹² Sed avertens se a vero lumine ad commutabile bonum, incurvatus est ipse per culpam propriam, et totum genus suum per originale peccatum, quod dupliciter infecit humanam naturam, scilicet *ignorantia* mentem et *concupiscentia* carnem; ita quod *excaecatus* homo et *incurvatus* in tenebris sedet et caeli lumen non videt nisi succurrat gratia cum iustitia contra *concupiscentiam*, et scientia cum sapientia contra *ignorantiam*. Quod totum fit per Iesum Christum, *qui factus est nobis a Deo sapientia et iustitia et sanctificatio et redemptio*. Qui cum sit Dei virtus et Dei sapientia,¹³ sit Verbum incarnatum *plenum gratiae et veritatis*, gratiam et veritatem fecit,¹⁴ gratiam scilicet *caritatis* infudit, quae, cum sit *de corde puro et conscientia bona et fide non ficta*,¹⁵ totam animam rectificat secundum triplicem ipsius aspectum supradictum; *scientiam veritatis* edocuit secundum triplicem modum theologiae, scilicet *symbolicae*, *propriae* et *mysticae*, ut per *symbolicam* recte utamur sensibilibus, per *propriam* recte utamur intelligibilibus, per *mysticam* rapiamur ad supermentales excessus.

8. Qui igitur vult in Deum ascendere necesse est, ut, vitata culpa deformante naturam, naturales potentias supradictas exerceat ad *gratiam reformatam*, et hoc per orationem; ad *iustitiam purificantem*, et hoc in conversatione; ad *scientiam illuminantem*, et hoc in meditatione; ad *sapientiam perficientem* et hoc in contemplatione. Sicut igitur ad *sapientiam* nemo venit nisi per gratiam, iustitiam et scientiam, sic ad *contemplationem* non venit nisi per meditationem perspicuam, conversationem sanctam et orationem devotam. Sicut igitur gratia fundamentum est rectitudinis voluntatis et illustrationis perspicuae rationis; sic primo orandum est nobis, deinde sancte vivendum, tertio veritatis spectaculis intendendum et intendendo gradatim ascendendum, quousque veniatur ad *montem excelsum*, ubi videatur *Deus deorum in Sion*.¹⁶

¹² Gen. 2, 15.

¹³ 1 Cor. 1, 30; *ibid.* 24.

¹⁴ Ioan. 1, 14; *ibid.* 17.

¹⁵ 1 Tim. 1, 5.

¹⁶ Ps. 83, 8.

They must be cleansed by justice, trained by knowledge, and perfected by wisdom.

7. According to the original disposition of nature, man was created fit for the quiet of contemplation and thus *God placed him in the paradise of pleasure*. But turning away from the true light to a changeable good, he and all his descendants were by his fault bent over¹² by original sin, which infected human nature in a twofold manner: the mind with ignorance, and the flesh with concupiscence. The result is that man, blinded and bent over, sits in darkness and does not see the light of heaven, unless grace comes to his aid with justice against concupiscence, and with knowledge and wisdom against ignorance. These effects are brought about through Jesus Christ, *who has become for us God-given wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption*. For since He is the power of God, the wisdom of God, and the incarnate Word, *full of grace and of truth*, He made grace and truth. He infuses into us the grace of charity which, since it springs up *from a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned*, rectifies the whole soul in the threefold power of seeing mentioned above. He has taught the knowledge of truth in its threefold theological sense,¹³ so that through symbolic theology we may rightly use sensible things, through literal theology, we may rightly use intellectual things, and through mystical theology, we may be rapt to ecstatic experiences.

8. He, therefore, who wishes to ascend to God must first avoid sin, which deforms nature. He must bring the natural powers of the soul under the influence of grace, which reforms them, and this he does through prayer; under the influence of justice which purifies, and this, in daily acts; under the way of knowledge which enlightens, and this, in meditation; and finally, under the power of wisdom which perfects, and this in contemplation.¹⁴ For just as no one arrives at wisdom except through grace, justice, and knowledge, so it is that no one arrives at contemplation except through penetrating meditation, holy living, and devout prayer. And since grace is the foundation of righteousness of the will, and of penetrating enlightenment of reason, we must first of all pray; next, we must live holily; then we must gaze at the spectacles of truth, and by gazing at them, rise step by step until we reach the mountain height *where the God of gods is seen on Sion*.

9. Quoniam igitur prius est ascendere quam descendere in scala Iacob, *primum* gradum ascensionis collocemus in imo, ponendo totum istum mundum sensibilem nobis tanquam speculum, per quod transeamus ad Deum, opificem summum, ut simus veri Hebraei transeuntes de Aegypto ad terram Patribus repromissam,¹⁷ simus etiam Christiani cum Christo transeuntes *ex hoc mundo ad Patrem*,¹⁸ simus et sapientiae amatores, quae vocat et dicit: *Transite ad me omnes, qui concupiscitis me, et a generationibus meis adimplemini. A magnitudine namque speciei et creaturae cognoscibiliter poterit Creator horum videri.*¹⁹

X 10. Relucet autem Creatoris summa potentia et sapientia et benevolentia in rebus creatis secundum quod hoc tripliciter nuntiat sensus carnis sensui interiori. Sensus enim carnis aut deservit intellectui *rationabiliter investiganti*, aut *fideliter credenti*, aut *intellectualiter contemplanti*. *Contemplans* considerat rerum existentiam actualem, *credens* rerum decursum habitualementem, *rationans* rerum praecellentiam potentialem.

11. Primo modo aspectus *contemplantis*, res in seipsis considerans, videt in eis *pondus*, *numerum* et *mensuram*; *pondus* quoad situm, ubi inclinatur, *numerum*, quo distinguuntur, et *mensuram*, quam limitantur. Ac per hoc videt in eis *modum*, *speciem* et *ordinem*, nec non *substantiam*, *virtutem* et *operationem*. Ex quibus consurgere potest sicut ex *vestigio* ad intelligendum potentiam, sapientiam et bonitatem Creatoris immensam.

12. Secundo modo aspectus *fidelis*, considerans hunc mundum attendit *originem*, *decursum* et *terminum*. Nam *fide* credimus, *aptata esse saecula Verbo vitae*;²⁰ *fide* credimus, trium legum tempora, scilicet naturae, Scripturae et gratiae sibi succedere et ordinatissime decurrere; *fide* credimus, mundum per finale iudicium terminandum esse; in primo potentiam, in secundo providentiam, in tertio iustitiam summi principii advertentes.

13. Tertio modo aspectus *rationabiliter investigantis* videt, quaedam tantum *esse*, quaedam autem *esse et vivere*, quaedam vero *esse, vivere et discernere*; et prima quidem *esse* minora, secunda media, tertia meliora. — Videt iterum, quaedam *esse tantum corporalia*, quaedam *partim corporalia, partim spiritualia*; ex quo advertit, aliqua *esse mere spiritualia* tanquam utriusque meliora

¹⁷ Gen. 28. 12; Exod. 13. 3 seq.

¹⁸ Ioan. 13. 1.

¹⁹ Sap. 11. 21.

²⁰ Hebr. 11. 3.

9. Now since it is necessary to ascend before we can descend on Jacob's ladder, let us place our first step in the ascent at the bottom, setting the whole visible world before us as a mirror through which we may pass over to God, the Supreme Creative Artist. Thus we shall be as true Hebrews passing over from Egypt to the land promised to the fathers; we shall be Christians passing over with Christ from this world to the Father; we shall be lovers of the Wisdom Who calls to us and says: *Pass over to me all ye that desire me, and be filled with my fruits. For by the greatness and the beauty of the creature, the Creator of them may be seen so as to be known thereby.*

X 10. The supreme power, wisdom, and benevolence of the Creator shine forth in created things in so far as the bodily senses inform the interior senses. This is done in a threefold way.¹⁹ For the bodily senses serve the intellect when it investigates rationally, or believes faithfully, or contemplates intellectually. He who contemplates considers the actual existence of things; he who believes, the habitual course of things; he who investigates with his reason, the potential excellence of things.

11. In the first way of seeing, the observer considers things in themselves and sees in them weight, number, and measure:¹⁸ weight in respect to the place towards which things incline; number, by which things are distinguished; and measure, by which things are determined. Hence he sees in them mode, species,¹⁷ and order, as well as substance, power, and activity. From all these considerations the observer can rise, as from a vestige, to the knowledge of the immense power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator.

12. In the second way of seeing, the way of faith, the believer considers this world in its origin, development, and end.²⁰ For *by faith we understand that the world was fashioned by the word of God*; by faith we believe that the periods of the three laws of nature, of the Scriptures, and of grace followed one another and have flowed on in a most orderly way; by faith we believe that the world must come to an end in the final judgment. In the first of these beliefs we consider the power of the highest Principle; in the second, His Providence; and in the third, His Justice.

13. In the third way of seeing, he who investigates with his reason sees that some things merely exist, that others exist and live, that still others exist, live, and discern. He also sees that the first of these are the lesser ones, the second are intermediate, and the third are the better. Likewise, he sees that some things are merely corporeal, while others are partly corporeal and partly spiritual. From this observation he realizes that others are wholly spiritual, better and of more dignity than the first two modes of

CAP. II

De speculatione Dei in vestigiis suis in hoc sensibili mundo.

1. Sed quoniam circa speculum sensibilibus non solum contingit contemplari Deum *per ipsa* tanquam per vestigia, verum etiam *in ipsis*, in quantum est in eis *per essentiam, potentiam et praesentiam*; et hoc considerare est altius quam praecedens: ideo huiusmodi consideratio secundum tenet locum tanquam secundus contemplationis gradus, quo debemus manuduci ad contemplandum Deum in cunctis creaturis, quae ad mentem nostram intrant per corporales sensus.

2. Notandum igitur, quod iste mundus, qui dicitur *macrocosmus*, intrat ad animam nostram, quae dicitur *minor mundus*, per portas quinque sensuum, secundum ipsorum sensibilibus *apprehensionem, oblectationem et diiudicationem*. — Quod patet sic: quia in eo quaedam sunt *generantia*, quaedam *generata*, quaedam *gubernantia* haec et illa. *Generantia* sunt corpora simplicia, scilicet corpora caelestia et quatuor elementa. Nam ex elementis per virtutem lucis conciliantis contrarietatem elementorum in mixtis habent generari et produci quaecumque generantur et producuntur per operationem virtutis naturalis. — *Generata* vero sunt corpora ex elementis composita, sicut mineralia, vegetabilia, sensibilia et corpora humana. — *Regentia* haec et illa sunt substantiae spirituales sive *omnino coniunctae*, ut sunt animae brutales, sive *coniunctae separabiliter*, ut sunt spiritus rationales, sive *omnino separatae*, ut sunt spiritus caelestes, quos philosophi *Intelligentias*, nos *Angelos* appellamus. Quibus secundum philosophos competit movere corpora caelestia, ac per hoc eis attribuitur *administratio universi*, suscipiendo a prima causa, scilicet Deo, virtutis influentiam, quam refundunt secundum opus gubernationis, quod respicit rerum consistentiam naturalem. Secundum autem theologos attribuitur eisdem regimen universi secundum imperium summi Dei quantum ad *opera reparationis*, secundum quae dicuntur *administratorii spiritus, missi propter eos qui hereditatem capiunt salutis*.¹

¹ Hebr. 1, 14.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONSIDERATION OF GOD IN HIS FOOTSTEPS IN THIS VISIBLE WORLD

1. We may behold God in the mirror of visible creation, not only by considering creatures as vestiges of God, but also by seeing Him in them; for He is present in them by His essence, His power, and His presence. And because this is a higher way of considering than the preceding one, it follows as the second level of contemplation, on which we ought to be led to the contemplation of God in every creature that enters our mind through the bodily senses.

2. It should be noted that this world, which is called the *macrocosm*, enters our soul, the *microcosm*, through the portals of the five senses in so far as sense objects are apprehended, enjoyed, and judged. This may be illustrated in the following way. In the visible world there are some things that generate, others that are generated, and still others that govern them both. Those things that generate are simple bodies, such as the heavenly bodies and the four elements. For everything that is generated or produced by a natural agency must be generated and produced from these elements through the power of light¹ that harmonizes the contrariety of the elements in composite things. Those things that are generated are bodies composed of the elements, as are minerals, plants, animals, and human bodies. Those that govern both what generate and what are generated are spiritual substances, which may either be completely bound up with matter, as the souls of brutes, or separably linked with it, as rational spirits; or they may be altogether free from matter, as the celestial spirits, which the philosophers call *Intelligences*, and we, *angels*.² According to the philosophers, it is the function of these latter to move the heavenly bodies. Consequently, the administration of the universe is attributed to them, inasmuch as they receive from the first cause, God, an influx of power which they, in turn, dispense in the work of administration that has to do with the natural stability of things. According to the theologians, however, the ruling of the universe is attributed to the angels according to the command of the most high God with reference to the works of reparation. Accordingly they are called *ministering spirits, sent for service, for the sake of those who shall inherit salvation*.

3. Homo igitur, qui dicitur *minor mundus*, habet quinque sensus quasi quinque portas, per quas intrat cognitio omnium, quae sunt in mundo sensibili, in animam ipsius. Nam per *visum* intrant corpora sublimia et luminosa et cetera colorata, per *tactum* vero corpora solida et terrestria, per tres vero *sensus intermedios* intrant intermedia, ut per *gustum* aquea, per *auditum* aërea, per *odoratum vaporabilia*, quae aliquid habent de natura humida, aliquid de aërea, aliquid de ignea seu calida, sicut patet in fumo ex aromatibus resolutio.

Intrant igitur per has portas tam corpora simplicia quam etiam composita, ex his mixta. Quia vero sensu percipimus non solum haec *sensibilia particularia*, quae sunt lux, sonus, odor, sapor et quatuor *primariae qualitates*, quas apprehendit tactus; verum etiam *sensibilia communia*, quae sunt numerus, magnitudo, figura, quies et motus; et "omne, quod movetur, ab alio movetur," et quaedam a se ipsis moventur et quiescunt, ut sunt animalia;² dum per hos quinque sensus *motus* corporum apprehendimus, manuducimur ad cognitionem motorum spiritualium tanquam per effectum in cognitionem causarum.

X 4. Intrat igitur quantum ad tria rerum genera in animam humanam per *apprehensionem* totus iste sensibilis mundus. Haec autem sensibilia exteriora sunt quae primo ingrediuntur in animam per portas quinque sensuum; intrant, inquam, non per substantias, sed per similitudines suas primo generatas in medio et de medio in organo et de organo exteriori in interiori et de hoc in potentiam apprehensivam; et sic generatio speciei in medio et de medio in organo et conversio potentiae apprehensivae super illam facit *apprehensionem* omnium eorum quae exterius anima apprehendit.

X 5. Ad hanc apprehensionem, si sit rei convenientis, sequitur *oblectatio*. Delectatur autem sensus in obiectum per similitudinem abstractam percepto vel ratione *speciositatis*, sicut in visu, vel ratione *suavitatis*, sicut in odoratu et auditu, vel ratione *salubritatis*, sicut in gustu et tactu, appropriate loquendo. Omnis autem delectatio est ratione proportionalitatis. Sed quoniam species tenet rationem *formae*, *virtutis* et *operationis*, secundum quod habet respectum ad principium, a quo manat, ad medium, per quod transit, et ad terminum, in quem agit; ideo proportionalitas aut attenditur in similitudine, secundum quod tenet rationem *speciei seu formae*, et sic dicitur *speciositas*, quia "pulcritudo nihil

² Aristot., VII Phys., text. 1.

3. Man, therefore, who is called a smaller world, has five senses, which serve as five portals through which the knowledge of all things existing in the visible world enters his soul. For through sight enter sublime and luminous bodies, and all other colored things; through touch, solid and terrestrial bodies; through the three intermediate senses, intermediate things;³ the aqueous through taste, the aerial through hearing, the vaporous through smell. These last have in them something of the humid, something of the aerial, and something of the fiery or the hot, as is evidenced in the aroma from spices.

Through these portals, then, both simple bodies and composite bodies made up of simple ones enter the soul. We perceive by the senses not only particular sense objects, such as light, sound, smell, taste, and the four primary qualities⁴ which the sense of touch apprehends, but also common sense objects,⁵ such as number, size, form, rest, and motion. And since everything that is moved is moved by another, and since, also, certain things move and come to rest of themselves—animals, for instance—we are led, when we perceive bodily motion through the five senses, to the knowledge of spiritual motions, as through the effect to the knowledge of causes.

X 4. The whole of this visible world, then, in its three classes of things, enters the human soul through apprehension.⁶ These visible and external things are what first enter the soul through the doors of the five senses. Yet these enter, not through their substances, but through similitudes generated in the medium, and from the medium they pass into the organ. From the external organ they pass into the internal organ and thence into the apprehensive faculty. Thus the generation of the species in the medium, and from the medium in the organ, and the directing of the apprehensive faculty upon it leads to the apprehension of all those things which the soul apprehends outside itself.

X 5. From this apprehension, if it is of a suitable object, pleasure follows.⁷ The senses are delighted in an object, perceived through the abstracted similitude, either by reason of its beauty as in sight, or of its sweetness as in smell or hearing, or of its wholesomeness as in taste and touch, by way of appropriation. For all pleasure is founded in a proportionality. But the species holds the notion of form, power, and activity, according as it has reference to the principle from which it emanates, to the medium through which it passes, or to the object on which it acts. Consequently, proportion is observed in the similitude in so far as it has the character of the species or form, and then it is called beauty, because *beauty is nothing other than numbered equality, or a certain disposition of parts, together with a suavity of color*. Again, pro-

aliud est quam aequalitas numerosa," seu "quidam partium situs cum coloris suavitate."³ Aut attenditur proportionalitas, in quantum tenet rationem *potentiae seu virtutis*, et sic dicitur *suavitas*, cum virtus agens non improporționaliter excedit recipientem, quia sensus tristatur in extremis et in mediis delectatur. Aut attenditur, in quantum tenet rationem *efficaciae et impressionis*, quæ tunc est proportionalis, quando agens imprimendo replet indigentiam patientis, et hoc est *salvare et nutrire ipsum*, quod maxime apparet in gustu et tactu. Et sic per *oblectationem* delectabilia exteriora secundum triplicem rationem delectandi per similitudinem intrans in animam.

6. Post hanc apprehensionem et oblectationem fit *diiudicatio*, qua non solum diiudicatur, utrum hoc sit album vel nigrum, quia hoc pertinet ad sensum *particularem*; non solum, utrum sit salubre vel nocivum, quia hoc pertinet ad sensum *interiorem*; verum etiam, qua diiudicatur et ratio redditur, *quare* hoc delectat; et in hoc actu inquiritur de *ratione* delectationis, quæ in sensu percipitur ab objecto. Hoc est autem, cum quaeritur *ratio* pulcri, suavis et salubris: et invenitur, quod hæc est *proportio aequalitatis*. Ratio autem aequalitatis est eadem in magnis et parvis nec extenditur dimensionibus nec succedit seu transit cum transeuntibus nec motibus alteratur. Abstrahit igitur a loco, tempore et motu, ac per hoc est incommutabilis, incircumscribibilis, interminabilis et omnino spiritualis. *Diiudicatio* igitur est actio, quæ speciem sensibilem, sensibiliter per sensus acceptam, introire facit depurando et abstrahendo in potentiam intellectivam. Et sic totus iste mundus introire habet in animam humanam per portas sensuum secundum tres operationes prædictas.

7. Hæc autem omnia sunt vestigia, in quibus speculari possumus Deum nostrum. — Nam cum species *apprehensa* sit similitudo in medio genita et deinde ipsi organo impressa et per illam impressionem in suum principium, scilicet in obiectum cognoscendum, ducat; manifeste insinuat, quod illa lux æterna generat ex se similitudinem seu splendorem coequalem, consubstantialem et coeternalem; et quod ille qui est *imago invisibilis Dei et splendor gloriæ et figura substantiæ eius*,⁴ qui ubique est per primam sui generationem, sicut obiectum in toto medio suam generat similitudinem, per gratiam unionis unitur, sicut species corporali organo, individuo rationalis naturæ, ut per illam unionem

proportionality is observed in so far as it has the character of power or strength, and then it is called sweetness, when the acting power does not disproportionally exceed the recipient sense. For the senses are pained by extremes and delighted by moderation. Finally, proportionality is observed in so far as it has the character of an efficacious impression which is proportionate when the agent, by its impression, fulfills a need of the recipient. This the agent does by preserving and nourishing it, and this is most apparent in taste and touch. Thus through pleasure, external delights enter the soul by means of their similitudes, according to any of the three kinds of pleasure.

6. After this apprehension and delight, there follows judgment* by which one not only decides whether this thing is black or white, for this pertains to a particular sense, or whether it is wholesome or harmful, for this pertains to an internal sense, but rather it judges and gives an account why this object delights. In this act of judging, one inquires into the reason for the pleasure which the senses derive from the object. Now when we inquire into the reason why an object is beautiful, sweet, and wholesome, we find that it consists in a certain proportion of equality. But the nature of equality is the same in both large and small objects; it is not extended by dimensions nor does it change or pass away with transitory things nor is it changed by movement. It abstracts, therefore, from place and time and motion, and for this reason it cannot change, nor can it have any limits in space and time but is absolutely spiritual. Judgment, therefore, is an action which, by purifying and abstracting the sensory likeness received sentiently by the senses, causes it to enter into the intellectual faculty. And this whole external world must enter the human soul through the doors of the senses, according to the three aforementioned activities.

7. Yet these activities are vestiges in which we can see our God. For the perceived species is a similitude generated in the medium and then impressed on the organ itself, and through this impression it leads us to its starting point, that is, to the object to be known. Hence this process manifestly suggests that the Eternal Light begets of Himself a Likeness or a co-equal, consubstantial, and co-eternal Splendor; that He Who is the *image of the invisible God and the brightness of his glory and the image of his substance*, Who is everywhere by His first generation like an object that generates its similitude in the entire medium, is united by the grace of union to the individual of rational nature as the species is united with the bodily organ, so that through this union He may lead us back to the Father, as to the Fountain-head and Object. If, therefore, all knowable things must

³ August., VI de Musica, 13, 38; XXII de Civ. Dei, 19, 2.

⁴ Col. 1, 15; Hebr. 1, 3.

nos reduceret ad Patrem sicut ad fontale principium et obiectum. Siergo omnia cognoscibilia habent sui speciem generare, manifeste proclamant, quod in illis tanquam in speculis videri potest aeterna generatio Verbi, Imaginis et Filii a Deo Patre aeternaliter emanantis.

8. Secundum hunc modum species *delectans* ut *speciosa*, *suavis* et *salubris* insinuat, quod in illa prima specie est prima *speciositas*, *suavitas* et *salubritas*, in qua est summa *proportionalitas* et aequalitas ad generantem; in qua est *virtus*, non per phantasma, sed per veritatem apprehensionis illabens; in qua est *impressio* salvans et sufficiens et omnem apprehendentis indigentiam expellens. Si ergo "delectatio est coniunctio convenientis cum convenienti";⁵ et solius Dei similitudo tenet rationem summe speciosi, suavis et salubris; et unitur secundum *veritatem* et secundum *intimitatem* et secundum *plenitudinem* replentem omnem capacitatem: manifeste videri potest, quod in solo Deo est fontalis et vera *delectatio*, et quod ad ipsam ex omnibus delectationibus manuducimur requirendam.

9. Excellentiori autem modo et immediatiori *diuudicatio* ducit nos in aeternam veritatem certius speculandam. Si enim diuudicatio habet fieri per rationem *abstrahentem* a loco, tempore et mutabilitate ac per hoc a dimensione, successionem et transmutationem, per rationem *immutabilem* et *incircumscripibilem* et *interminabilem*; nihil autem est omnino *immutabile*, *incircumscripibile* et *interminabile*, nisi quod est aeternum: omne autem quod est aeternum, est Deus, vel in Deo; si ergo omnia, quaecumque certius diuudicamus, per huiusmodi rationem diuudicamus, patet, quod ipse est *ratio omnium rerum* et *regula infallibilis* et *lux veritatis*, in qua cuncta relucet infallibiliter, indelebiliter, indubitanter, irrefragabiliter, indiuudicabiliter, incommutabiliter, incoarctabiliter, interminabiliter, indivisibiliter et intellectualiter. Et ideo leges illae, per quas iudicamus certitudinaliter de omnibus sensibilibus, in nostram considerationem venientibus, cum sint infallibiles et indubitabiles *intellectui apprehendentis*, sint indelebiles a *memoria recolentis* tanquam semper praesentes, sint irrefragabiles et indiuudicabiles *intellectui iudicantis*, quia, ut dicit Augustinus,⁶ "nullus de eis iudicat, sed per illas:" necesse est, eas esse incommutabiles et incorruptibiles tanquam necessarias, incoarctabiles tanquam incircumsriptas, interminabiles tanquam aeternas, ac per hoc indivisibiles tanquam intellectuales et incorporeas, non factas, sed increatas, aeternaliter existentes in arte aeterna, a qua, per quam et secundum quam formantur formosa

generate a likeness of themselves, they manifestly proclaim that in them, as in mirrors, can be seen the eternal generation of the Word, the Image, and the Son, eternally emanating from God the Father.

8. Similarly the species which delights as beautiful, as sweet, as wholesome, leads one to realize that there exists a first beauty, sweetness, and wholesomeness in that first Species, in which there is the utmost proportionality to and equality with the One generating, and there is power, intimated, not by means of phantasms, but by the truth of apprehension, and also an impression that preserves, satisfies, and completely dispels the needs of the beholder. Therefore, if *delight is the union of the suitable with the suitable*,⁹ and if the Likeness of God alone has the character of that which is most beautiful, most sweet, and most wholesome, and if it is united in truth, intimacy, and a plenitude that fills every capacity, it can be seen clearly that in God alone is the fountain of true delight and that from all other delights we are led on to the seeking of Him.

9. Judgment, however, leads us in a still more excellent and more immediate way to a surer beholding of eternal truth.¹⁰ For judgment has to be made by reason that abstracts from place, time, and change, and hence it abstracts from dimension, succession, and transmutation by a reason which cannot change nor have any limits in time or space. But nothing is absolutely immutable and unlimited in time and space unless it is eternal, and everything that is eternal is either God or in God. If, therefore, everything which we judge in a more certain manner, we judge by such a reason, then the following is clear: He is for all things the reason and the infallible rule and the light of truth. All things shine forth in this light in a manner which is infallible and indelible, in a manner which does not admit of doubt or possibility of refutation or judgment on our part, or change or limit in space and time, and in a manner indivisible and intellectual. Therefore, those laws by which we judge with certainty about all sense objects that come to our knowledge, since they are infallible and indubitable to the intellect of him who apprehends, since they cannot be eradicated from the memory of him who recalls, for they are always present, since they do not admit of refutation or judgment by the intellect of him who judges, because, as St. Augustine says, *No one judges of them but by them*, these laws must be changeless and incorruptible, since they are necessary. They must be without limits in space because they are not circumscribed by any place. They must be without limits in time since they are eternal and, for this reason, they cannot be divided into parts since they are intellectual and incorporeal, not made but uncreated, existing

⁵ August., *de Vera Relig.*, 18, 35 seq.

⁶ August., *Lib. II de Lib. Arb.*, 14, 38.

CAP. III

De speculatione Dei per suam imaginem naturalibus potentiis insignitam.

1. Quoniam autem duo gradus praedicti, ducendo nos in Deum per vestigia sua, per quae in cunctis creaturis relucet, manuduxerunt nos usque ad hoc, ut ad nos reintraremus, in mentem scilicet nostram, in qua divina relucet *imago*; hinc est, quod iam tertio loco, ad nosmetipsos intrantes et quasi atrium forinsecus relinquentes, in *sanctis*,¹ scilicet *anteriori* parte tabernaculi, conari debemus per speculum videre Deum: ubi ad modum candelabri relucet lux veritatis in facie nostrae mentis,² in qua scilicet resplendet *imago* beatissimae Trinitatis.

Intra igitur ad te et vide, quoniam mens tua *amat* ferventissime semetipsam; nec se posset amare, nisi se *nosset*; nec se nosset, nisi sui *meminisset*, quia nihil capimus per intelligentiam, quod non sit praesens apud nostram memoriam; et ex hoc advertis, animam tuam triplicem habere potentiam, non oculo carnis, sed oculo rationis. Considera igitur harum trium potentialium *operationes* et *habitudines*, et videre poteris Deum per te tanquam per imaginem, quod est videre *per speculum in aenigmate*.

2. *Operatio* autem *memoriae* est retentio et repraesentatio non solum *praesentium*, *corporalium* et *temporalium*, verum etiam *succedentium*, *simplicium* et *sempiternalium*. — Retinet namque memoria *praeterita* per recordationem, *praesentia* per susceptionem, *futura* per praevisionem. — Retinet etiam *simplicia*, sicut principia quantitatum continuarum et discretarum, ut punctum, instans et unitatem, sine quibus impossibile est meminisse aut cogitare ea quae principiantur per haec. — Retinet nihilominus *scientiarum principia et dignitates* ut *sempiternalia* et *sempiternaliter*, quia nunquam potest sic oblivisci eorum, dum ratione utatur, quin ea audita approbet et eis assentiat, non tanquam de novo percipiat, sed tanquam sibi innata et familiaria recognoscat, sicut patet, si proponatur alicui: "De quolibet affirmatio, vel negatio"; vel: "Omne totum est maius sua parte," vel quaecumque alia dignitas, cui non est contradicere "ad interius rationem."³

¹ Cf. Exod. 26, 34—35.

² Ps. 4, 7.

³ Aristot., 1 Poster. 8.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONSIDERATION OF GOD THROUGH HIS IMAGE IMPRINTED ON OUR NATURAL POWERS

1. The first two steps, by leading us to God through vestiges through which He shines forth in all creatures, have thereby led us to re-enter¹ into ourselves, that is, into our mind, where the divine image shines forth. Here it is that, at the third place, entering into ourselves, and forsaking the inner atrium, we ought now to strive to see God through a mirror in the Holy of Holies, that is, in the place before the Tabernacle.² Here the light of Truth, as from a candelabra, will shine upon the face of our mind, in which the image³ of the most Blessed Trinity appears in splendor.

Enter into yourself, therefore, and observe that your soul loves itself most fervently; that it could not love itself unless it knew itself, nor know itself unless it summoned itself to conscious memory, for we do not grasp a thing with our understanding unless it is present in our memory. Hence you can observe, not with the bodily eye, but with the eye of the mind,⁴ that your soul has three powers. Consider, therefore, the activities of these three powers and their relationships, and you will be able to see God through yourself as through an image; and this indeed is to see *through a mirror in an obscure manner*.

2. The activity of the memory⁵ is to retain and represent not only present, corporeal, and temporal things, but also successive, simple, and everlasting things. It retains the past by remembrance, the present by reception, and the future by foresight. It retains also simple things which are the principles of continuous and discrete quantities, as the point, the instant, and unity, without which it is impossible to bring to our memory or to think of things which stem from them. It retains also in an enduring way the principles and axioms⁶ of the sciences as themselves enduring, for as long as one uses reason he can never forget them, so that on hearing them again, he would approve and give his assent to them, not as though he perceives them anew, but rather he recognizes them as innate and familiar. That this is so becomes clear when one proposes the following principle: "Everything is either affirmed or denied"; or "Every whole is greater than its part"; or any other axiom that may not be contradicted in the "interior discourse of the soul." In its first activity, the actual

Ex prima igitur retentione actuali omnium temporalium, praeteritorum scilicet, praesentium et futurorum, habet effigiem aeternitatis, cuius praesens indivisibile ad omnia tempora se extendit. — Ex secunda apparet, quod ipsa non solum habet ab exteriori formari per phantasmata, verum etiam a superiori suscipiendo et in se habendo simplices formas, quae non possunt introire per portas sensuum et sensibilibus phantasias. — Ex tertia habetur, quod ipsa habet lucem incommutabilem sibi praesentem, in qua meminit invariabilium veritatum. — Et sic per operationes memoriae apparet, quod ipsa anima est imago Dei et similitudo adeo sibi praesens et eum habens praesentem, quod eum actu capit et per potentiam "capax eius est et particeps esse potest."⁴

3. Operatio autem virtutis intellectivae est in perceptione intellectus terminorum, propositionum et illationum. — Capit autem intellectus terminorum significata, cum comprehendit, quid est unumquodque per definitionem. Sed definitio habet fieri per superiora, et illa per superiora definiri habent, usquequo veniatur ad suprema et generalissima, quibus ignoratis, non possunt intelligi definitive inferiora. Nisi igitur cognoscatur, quid est ens per se, non potest plene sciri definitio alicuius specialis substantiae. Nec ens per se cognosci potest, nisi cognoscatur cum suis conditionibus, quae sunt: unum, verum, bonum. Ens autem, cum possit cogitari ut diminutum et ut completum, ut imperfectum et ut perfectum, ut ens in potentia et ut ens in actu, ut ens secundum quid et ut ens simpliciter, ut ens in parte et ut ens totaliter, ut ens transiens et ut ens manens, ut ens per aliud et ut ens per se, ut ens permixtum non-enti et ut ens purum, ut ens dependens et ut ens absolutum, ut ens posterius et ut ens prius, ut ens mutabile et ut ens immutabile, ut ens simplex et ut ens compositum: cum "privationes et defectus nullatenus possint cognosci nisi per positiones,"⁵ non venit intellectus noster ut plene resolvens intellectum alicuius entium creatorum, nisi invelat ab intellectu entis purissimi, actualissimi, completissimi et absoluti, quod est ens simpliciter et aeternum, in quo sunt rationes omnium in sua puritate. Quomodo autem sciret intellectus, hoc esse ens defectivum et incompletum, si nullam haberet cognitionem entis absque omni defectu? Et sic de aliis conditionibus praelibatis.

Intellectum autem propositionum tunc intellectus dicitur veraciter comprehendere, cum certitudinaliter scit, illas veras

⁴ August., XIV de Trin., 8, 11.

⁵ Averroes, III de Anima, text. 25.

retention of all things in time — past, present, and future — the memory is an image of eternity, whose indivisible present extends itself to all times. From the second activity, it is evident that the memory is capable of being informed not only from the outside by phantasms but also from above, by receiving and having in itself simple forms that cannot enter through the doors of the senses, nor through sensible phantasms. From the third activity, we hold that the memory has present in itself a changeless light in which it recalls changeless truths. And thus it is clear from the activities of the memory that the soul itself is an image of God and a similitude so present to itself and having Him so present to it that it actually grasps Him and potentially "is capable of possessing Him" and of becoming a partaker in Him."

3. The activity of the intellective faculty consists in understanding the meaning of terms, propositions, and inferences. First the intellect grasps the meaning of terms when it understands by a definition what each one is. But a definition must be given in more general terms; these, in turn, must be defined by others still more general, until we arrive at the highest and most general. If these last are unknown, we cannot understand the less general by way of definition. Consequently, unless one knows what being per se is, he cannot fully know the definition of any particular substance.⁸ But being per se cannot be known unless it is known together with its properties, which are unity, truth, and goodness. And since being can be understood as diminished or as complete, as imperfect or as perfect, as in potency or in act, as existing in a qualified or in an unqualified manner, as in part or in entirety, as transient or permanent, as existing through something else or per se, as mixed with non-being or as pure being, as dependent or as absolute, as posterior or prior, as changeable or unchangeable, as simple or composite; and since "privations and defects can in no way be known except through something positive,"⁹ therefore our intellect does not make a full and ultimate analysis of any single created being unless it is aided by a knowledge of the most pure, most actual, most complete and absolute Being, which is Being unqualified and eternal, and in whom are the essences of all things in their purity. For how could the intellect know that a specific being is defective and incomplete if it had no knowledge of the Being that is free from all defect? And in like manner may we reason about the other properties mentioned before.

Secondly, the intellect can be said truly to comprehend the meaning of propositions when it knows with certainty that they are true; and to know in this way is really to know, for it cannot be deceived in such comprehension. Since it knows that this truth

⁸ St. Bonaventure, Itinerarium.

gogicam, quae perficit per excessus mentales et sapientiae perceptiones suavissimas, secundum *virtutes* praedictas tres theologicas et *sensus* spirituales reformatos et *excessus* tres supradictos et *actus mentis hierarchicos*, quibus ad interiora regreditur mens nostra, ut ibidem speculetur Deum in *splendoribus Sanctorum*¹⁶ et in eisdem tanquam in cubilibus *dormiat in pace et requiescat*,¹⁷ sponso adiurante, quod non excitetur, donec de eius voluntate procedat.¹⁸

7. Ex his autem duobus gradibus mediis, per quos ingredimur ad contemplandum Deum *intra nos* tanquam in speculis imaginum creaturarum, et hoc quasi ad modum alarum expansarum ad volandum, quae tenebant medium locum,¹⁹ intelligere possumus, quod in divina manuducimur per ipsius animae rationalis potentias *naturaliter insitas* quantum ad earum *operationes, habitudines et habitus scientiales*; secundum quod apparet ex tertio gradu. — Manuducimur etiam per ipsius animae potentias *reformatas*, et hoc gratuitis *virtutibus, sensibus* spiritualibus et mentalibus *excessibus*, sicut patet ex quarto. — Manuducimur nihilominus per *hierarchicas operationes*, scilicet purgationis, illuminationis et perfectionis mentium humanarum, per hierarchicas revelationes sacrarum Scripturarum nobis per Angelos datarum, secundum illud Apostoli, quod Lex data est *per Angelos in manu Mediatoris*.²⁰ Et tandem manuducimur per *hierarchias et hierarchicos ordines*, qui in mente nostra disponi habent ad instar supernae Ierusalem.

8. Quibus omnibus luminibus intellectualibus mens nostra repleta, a divina Sapientia tanquam domus Dei inhabitatur, effecta Dei filia, sponsa et amica; effecta Christi capitis membrum, soror et coheres; effecta nihilominus Spiritus sancti templum, fundatum per fidem, elevatum per spem et Deo dedicatum per mentis et corporis sanctitatem. Quod totum facit sincerissima caritas Christi, quae *diffunditur in cordibus nostris per Spiritum sanctum, qui datus est nobis*,²¹ sine quo Spiritu non possumus scire secreta Dei. Sicut enim *quae sunt hominis nemo potest scire nisi spiritus hominis, qui est in illo; ita et quae sunt Dei nemo scit nisi spiritus Dei*.²² — In caritate igitur radicemur et fundemur, ut possimus *comprehendere cum omnibus Sanctis, quae sit longitudo aeternitatis, quae latitudo liberalitatis, quae sublimitas maiestatis et quod profundum sapientiae iudicantis*.²³

¹⁶ Ps. 109, 3.

¹⁸ Cant. 2, 7.

²⁰ Gal. 3, 19.

²² 1 Cor. 2, 11.

¹⁷ Ps. 4, 4.

¹⁹ Isai. 6, 2.

²¹ Rom. 5, 5.

²³ Eph. 3, 18—19.

with the three aforementioned theological virtues, the reformed spiritual senses, the three spiritual transports, and the hierarchical acts of the mind by which it turns back to its interior there to see God in the brightness of His Saints; and there as in her resting place she sleeps in peace and rests while the bridegroom beseeches that the spouse may not be awakened until she pleases to come forth.

7. Thus by these two intermediate steps through which we enter into the contemplation of God within us as in mirrors of created images, like the two middle wings of the Seraph spread for flight, we can understand how we are guided to things divine through the rational soul itself and its naturally implanted faculties, considered in their activities, their relationships, and their possession of sciences. This is apparent from the explanation of the third step. We are also guided by the reformed faculties of the soul itself. This takes place with the help of freely-given virtues, spiritual senses, and spiritual transports. And this becomes clear in the fourth step. Moreover we are guided by the hierarchical activities of the human soul, its purification, enlightenment, and perfection, and by the hierarchical revelations of Sacred Scripture, given to us by the angels, according to the word of the Apostle that the Law was given *by angels through a mediator*. And finally, we are led through the hierarchies and the hierarchic orders which must be arranged in our mind as they are in the heavenly Jerusalem.

8. Filled with all these intellectual lights, our mind like the house of God is inhabited by Divine Wisdom; it is made a daughter, a spouse, and a friend of God; it is made a member, a sister, a co-heir of Christ the Head; it is made the temple of the Holy Spirit, faith laying the foundation, hope building it up, and sanctity of soul and body dedicating it to God. All this is accomplished by a most sincere love of Christ, which is *poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us*, without Whom we cannot know the mysteries of God. For no one can know the things of a man save the spirit of the man which is in him. Even so, the things of God no one knows but the Spirit of God. Let us, therefore, be rooted and grounded in charity that we may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length of the eternity, the breadth of the liberality, the height of the majesty, and the depth of the discerning wisdom of God.

CAP. V

*De speculatione divinae unitatis
per eius nomen primum, quod est esse.*

1. Quoniam autem contingit contemplari Deum non solum *extra nos* et *intra nos*, verum etiam *supra nos*: *extra* per vestigium, *intra* per imaginem et *supra* per lumen, quod est signatum supra mentem nostram,¹ quod est lumen Veritatis aeternae, cum "ipsa mens nostra immediate ab ipsa Veritate formetur";² qui exercitati sunt in primo modo intraverunt iam in *atrium* ante tabernaculum; qui vero in secundo, intraverunt in *sancta*; qui autem in tertio, intrant cum summo Pontifice in *sancta sanctorum*; ubi supra arcam sunt Cherubim gloriae obumbrantia propitiatorium,³ per quae intelligimus duos modos seu gradus contemplandi Dei invisibilia et aeterna, quorum unus versatur circa essentialia Dei, alius vero circa propria personarum.

2. Primus modus primo et principaliter defigit aspectum in ipsum *esse*, dicens, quod *qui est*⁴ est primum nomen Dei. Secundus modus defigit aspectum in ipsum *bonum*, dicens, hoc esse primum nomen Dei. Primum spectat potissime ad *vetus* testamentum, quod maxime praedicat divinae essentiae unitatem; unde dictum est Moysi: *Ego sum qui sum*,⁵ secundum ad *novum*, quod determinat personarum pluralitatem, baptizando in nomine *Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti*.⁶ Ideo magister noster Christus, volens adolescentem, qui servaverat Legem, ad evangelicam levare perfectionem, nomen *bonitatis* Deo principaliter et praecise attribuit. *Nemo*, inquit, *bonus nisi solus Deus*.⁷ Damascenus igitur sequens Moysen dicit, quod *qui est* est primum nomen Dei; Dionysius sequens Christum dicit, quod *bonum* est primum nomen Dei.⁸

3. Volens igitur contemplari Dei invisibilia quoad *essentiae unitatem* primo defigit aspectum in ipsum *esse* et videat, ipsum

¹ Ps. 4, 7.

² August., 83 Qq., q. 51, 2, 4.

³ Exod. 25--28.

⁴ Ibid. 3, 14.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Matth. 28, 19.

⁷ Luc. 18, 19.

⁸ Damasc., Libr. 1 de Fide orthod., 9; Dionys., de Div. Nov., 3, 1; 4, 1.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CONSIDERATION OF THE DIVINE UNITY
THROUGH ITS PRIMARY NAME WHICH IS *BEING*

1. It is possible to contemplate God not only outside us and within us but also above us: outside, through vestiges of Him; within, through His image; and above, through the light that shines upon our mind. This is the light of Eternal Truth, since "our very mind is formed immediately by Truth Itself." Those who have become practiced in the first way of contemplation have already entered the atrium before the Tabernacle; those who have become practiced in the second have entered into the Holy Places; and those who are practiced in the third, enter with the High Priest into the Holy of Holies, where the Cherubim of Glory stand over the Ark, overshadowing the Seat of Mercy. By these Cherubim we understand the two kinds or degrees of contemplating the invisible and eternal things of God: the first considers the essential attributes of God; the second, the proper attributes of the Persons.

2. The first method fixes the soul's gaze primarily and principally on Being Itself, declaring that the first name of God is *He Who is*. The second method fixes the soul's gaze on the Good Itself, saying that this is the first name of God. The former looks especially to the Old Testament, which proclaims chiefly the unity of the divine essence. Hence it was said to Moses, *I am Who am*. The latter looks to the New Testament, which determines the plurality of the Divine Persons by baptizing in the name of the *Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*. Thus it is that Christ, our Master, wishing to raise up to the perfection of the Gospel the youth who had observed the Law, attributed to God principally and exclusively the name *Goodness*. For He says, *No one is good but only God*. Hence St. John Damascene, following Moses, says that *He who is* is the first name of God; whereas Dionysius, following Christ, says that *Good* is the first name of God.

3. He, therefore, who wishes to contemplate the invisible things of God in relation to the unity of His essence should fix the attention of his soul on Being Itself and see that Being Itself is so absolutely certain that it cannot be thought not to be,¹ because the most pure Being Itself does not come to our mind except in full flight from non-being, as also the absolute nothing

esse adeo in se *certissimum*, quod non potest cogitari non esse, quia ipsum *esse purissimum* non occurrit nisi in plena fuga *non-esse*, sicut et *nihil* in plena fuga *esse*. Sicut igitur *omnino nihil* nihil habet de *esse* nec de eius conditionibus, sic econtra ipsum *esse* nihil habet de *non-esse*, nec actu nec potentia, nec secundum veritatem rei nec secundum aestimationem nostram. Cum autem *non-esse* privatio sit essendi, non cadit in intellectum nisi per *esse*; *esse* autem non cadit per aliud, quia omne, quod intelligitur, aut intelligitur ut *non ens*, aut ut *ens in potentia*, aut ut *ens in actu*. Si igitur *non ens* non potest intelligi nisi per *ens*, et *ens in potentia*, non nisi per *ens in actu*, et *esse* nominat ipsum purum actum entis: *esse* igitur est quod primo cadit in intellectum, et illud *esse* est quod est purus actus. Sed hoc non est *esse* particulare, quod est *esse* arctatum, quia permixtum est cum potentia; nec *esse* analogum, quia minime habet de actu, eo quod minime est. Restat igitur, quod illud *esse* est *esse* divinum.

4. Mira igitur est caecitas intellectus, qui non considerat illud quod prius videt et sine quo nihil potest cognoscere. Sed sicut oculus intentus in varias colorum differentias lucem, per quam videt cetera, non videt, et si videt, non advertit; sic oculus mentis nostrae, intentus in entia *particularia* et *universalia*, ipsum *esse extra omne genus*, licet primo occurrat menti, et per ipsum alia, tamen non advertit. Unde verissime apparet, quod "sicut oculus vespertilionis se habet ad lucem, ita se habet oculus mentis nostrae ad manifestissima naturae",⁹ quia assuefactus ad tenebras entium et phantasmata sensibilibus, cum ipsam lucem summi *esse* intuetur, videtur sibi nihil videre; non intelligens, quod ipsa caligo summa est mentis nostrae illuminatio,¹⁰ sicut, quando videt oculus puram lucem, videtur sibi nihil videre.

5. Vide igitur ipsum purissimum *esse*, si potes, et occurrit tibi, quod ipsum non potest cogitari ut *ab alio acceptum*; ac per hoc necessario cogitatur ut omnimode *primum*, quod nec de nihilo nec de aliquo potest esse. Quid enim est per se, si ipsum *esse* non est per se nec a se? — Occurrit etiam tibi ut *carens omnino non-esse* ac per hoc ut nunquam incipiens, nunquam desinens, sed *aeternum*. — Occurrit etiam tibi ut *nullo modo in se habens*, nisi quod est ipsum *esse*, ac per hoc ut cum nullo compositum, sed *simplicissimum*. — Occurrit tibi ut *nihil habens possibilitatis*, quia omne

⁹ Aristot., II *Metaph.* text. 1 (1 brevior, c. 1).

¹⁰ Ps. 138, 11.

does not, except in full flight from being. Just as, therefore, complete nothingness contains nothing of being or of its attributes, so contrariwise, being itself contains nothing of non-being, either in act or in potency, in objective truth or in our estimate of it. But since non-being is the privation of being, it does not come into the intellect except by means of being. Being, however, does not come to us by means of something else, because everything that is grasped by the intellect is grasped either as non-being, or as being in potency, or as being in act. If, therefore, non-being cannot be grasped except through being, and if being in potency cannot be understood except through being in actuality, and if being designates the pure actuality of being, then being is that which first comes into the intellect, and this being is that which is pure act. But this being is not particular being, which is a limited being, since it is mixed with potentiality; nor is it analogous being, for that has the least of act because it least exists. It remains, therefore, that the being which we are considering is the Divine Being.³

4. Strange, then, is the blindness of the intellect which does not consider that which it sees before all others and without which it can recognize nothing.⁹ But just as the eye, intent on the various differences of color, does not see the light through which it sees other things, or if it does see, does not notice it, so our mind's eye, intent on particular and universal beings, does not notice that being which is beyond all categories, even though it comes first to the mind, and through it, all other things. Wherefore it appears most true that "as the eye of the bat is disposed towards the light, so the eye of our mind is disposed towards the most evident things of nature." Thus our mind, accustomed as it is to the opaqueness in beings and the phantasms of visible things, appears to be seeing nothing when it gazes upon the light of the highest being. It does not understand that this very darkness is the supreme illumination of our mind, just as when the eye sees pure light, it seems to be seeing nothing.

5. Behold, if you can, this most pure Being⁴ and you will find that it cannot be thought of as a being which is received from something else. Hence, it must necessarily be thought of as absolutely first, since it cannot come into existence from nothing or from something else. For what else exists of itself if this very being is not through and by itself? This most pure Being also appears to you as absolutely lacking in non-being, and therefore as having no beginning and no end, but is eternal. Furthermore, it appears to you as having nothing whatsoever except this very being itself, and, hence, as having no composition but is most simple. It appears to you as having nothing of possibility, since

possibile aliquo modo habet aliquid de *non-esse*, ac per hoc ut summe *actualissimum*. — Occurrit ut *nihil habens defectibilitatis*, ac per hoc ut *perfectissimum*. — Occurrit postremo ut *nihil habens diversificationis*, ac per hoc ut summe *unum*.

Esse igitur, quod est esse purum et esse simpliciter et esse absolutum, est esse *primarium, aeternum, simplicissimum, actualissimum, perfectissimum et summe unum*.

6. Et sunt haec ita certa, quod non potest ab intelligente ipsum esse cogitari horum oppositum, et unum horum necessario infert aliud. Nam quia simpliciter est *esse*, ideo simpliciter *primum*; quia simpliciter *primum*, ideo non est ab alio factum, nec a se ipso potuit, ergo *aeternum*. Item, quia *primum et aeternum*, ideo non ex aliis, ergo *simplicissimum*. Item, quia *primum, aeternum et simplicissimum*, ideo nihil est in eo possibilitatis cum actu permixtum, et ideo *actualissimum*. Item, quia *primum, aeternum, simplicissimum, actualissimum*, ideo *perfectissimum*; tali omnino nihil deficit, neque aliqua potest fieri additio. Quia *primum, aeternum, simplicissimum, actualissimum, perfectissimum*, ideo *summe unum*. Quod enim per omnimodam superabundantiam dicitur dicitur respectu omnium. "Quod etiam simpliciter per superabundantiam dicitur, impossibile est, ut conveniat nisi uni soli."¹¹ Unde, si Deus nominat esse *primarium, aeternum, simplicissimum, actualissimum, perfectissimum*, impossibile est, ipsum cogitari non esse, nec esse nisi *unum solum*. Audi igitur, *Israel, Deus tuus Deus unus est*.¹² — Si hoc vides in pura mentis simplicitate, aliquantulum perfunderis aeternae lucis illustratione.

7. Sed habes unde subleveris in admirationem. Nam ipsum esse est *primum et novissimum*, est *aeternum et praesentissimum*, est *simplicissimum et maximum*, est *actualissimum et immutabilissimum*, est *perfectissimum et immensum*, est *summe unum et tamen omnimodum*. — Si haec pura mente miraris, maiore luce perfunderis, dum ulterius vides, quia ideo est *novissimum*, quia *primum*. Quia enim est *primum*, omnia operatur propter se ipsum; et ideo necesse est, quod sit finis ultimus, initium et consummatio, *alpha et omega*.¹³ — Ideo est *praesentissimum*, quia *aeternum*. Quia enim *aeternum*, non fluit ab alio nec deficit a se ipso nec

¹¹ Aristot., V *Topic.* c. 3 (c. 5).

¹² Deut. 6, 4.

¹³ Apoc. 1, 8; Prov. 10, 4.

every possible being has in some way something of non-being; and hence is supremely and in the highest degree actual. It appears to you as having no defect and thus is most perfect. Finally, it appears to you as having no diversity⁶ and through this, is supremely one.

Therefore, that Being which is called pure being and simple being and absolute being is the first being, the eternal, the most simple, the most actual, the most perfect, and the supremely one.

6. And these things are so certain that their opposites cannot be thought of by one who really understands being itself; and one of them necessarily implies the other. For since it is unqualifiedly being, therefore it is unqualifiedly first; and since it is unqualifiedly first, therefore it has not been made by another, nor could it be made by itself; hence it is eternal. Again, since it is the first and eternal, it is, therefore, not composed of other things, and hence is most simple. And because it is first, eternal, and most simple, it has nothing of possibility mixed with act, and thus it is most actual. Again, because it is first, eternal, most simple, and most actual, it is most perfect; for such a being lacks absolutely nothing, nor can any addition be made to it. And since it is first, eternal, most simple, most actual,⁶ and most perfect, therefore it is supremely one. For what is asserted in omnifarious superabundance is asserted in relation to all things. But "that which is asserted by superabundance in an unqualified manner can apply to one thing alone." Hence, if "God" is the name of the being that is first, eternal, most simple, most actual, and most perfect, such a being cannot be thought not to be, nor can it be thought to be other than one. Hear, therefore, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord.

If you behold this in the pure simplicity of your mind, you will be somewhat suffused by the illumination of Eternal Light.

7. You have here something to lift you up in admiration. For being itself is both the first and last; it is eternal and yet most present; it is most simple and the greatest; it is most actual and most changeless; it is most perfect and immense; it is supremely one and yet omnifarious. Admiring all these things with a pure mind,⁷ you will be flooded with a still greater light when you behold further that pure being is precisely the last because it is the first. For since it is first, it does all things for itself, and thus the first being is of necessity the ultimate end, the beginning and the consummation, the *Alpha* and the *Omega*. Again, it is entirely present precisely because it is eternal. For, as it is eternal, it does not proceed from another, nor does it of itself cease to exist, nor does it progress from one state into another; and therefore it has

et debito et ex utroque permixto, quae est diffusio plenissima per modum naturae et voluntatis, quae est diffusio per modum Verbi, in quo omnia dicuntur, et per modum Doni, in quo cetera dona donantur; potes videre, per summam boni communicabilitatem necesse esse Trinitatem Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. In quibus necesse est propter summam bonitatem esse summam communicabilitatem, et ex summa communicabilitate summam consubstantialitatem, et ex summa consubstantialitate summam configurabilitatem, et ex his summam coaequalitatem, ac per hoc summam coaeternitatem, atque ex omnibus praedictis summam cointimitatem, qua unus est in altero necessario per summam circumincessionem et unus operatur cum alio per omnimodam indivisionem substantiae et virtutis et operationis ipsius beatissimae Trinitatis.

3. Sed cum haec contemplaris, vide, ne te existimes comprehendere incomprehensibilem. Habes enim adhuc in his sex conditionibus considerare quod vehementer in stuporem admirationis inducit oculum mentis nostrae. Nam ibi est summa communicabilitas cum personarum proprietate, summa consubstantialitas cum hypostasum pluralitate, summa configurabilitas cum discreta personalitate, summa coaequalitas cum ordine, summa coaeternitas cum emanatione, summa cointimitas cum emissionem. Quis ad tantorum mirabilium aspectum non consurgat in admirationem? — Sed haec omnia certissime intelligimus esse in beatissima Trinitate si levamus oculos ad superexcellentiissimam bonitatem. Si enim ibi est summa communicatio et vera diffusio, vera est ibi origo et vera distinctio; et quia totum communicatur, non pars, ideo ipsum datur, quod habetur, et totum: igitur emanans et produciens et distinguuntur proprietatibus, et sunt essentialiter unum. Quia igitur distinguuntur proprietatibus, ideo habent personales proprietates et hypostasum pluralitatem et originis emanationem et ordinem non posterioritatis, sed originis, et emissionem non localis mutationis, sed gratuita inspirationis, per rationem auctoritatis producentis, quam habet mittens respectu missi. — Quia vero sunt unum substantialiter, ideo oportet, quod sit unitas in essentia et forma dignitate et aeternitate et existentia et incircumscribilitate. — Dum ergo haec per se singillatim consideras, habes unde veritatem contempleris; dum haec ad invicem confers, habes unde in admirationem altissimam suspendaris: et ideo, ut mens tua per admirationem in admirabilem ascendat contemplationem, haec simul sunt considerata.

mixture of both, a love which is the fullest diffusion by way of nature and will, which is also a diffusion by way of the Word, in which all things are said, and by way of the Gift, in which all other gifts are given, — if you can do this, then you can see that through the utmost communicability of the Good, there must be the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.³ By reason of Their supreme goodness,³ the three Persons must necessarily have supreme communicability; by reason of that, supreme consubstantiality; and by reason of supreme consubstantiality, They must have supreme conformability. Then by reason of all these, They must have supreme coequality, and hence supreme coeternity. Finally, from all the foregoing taken together, They must have supreme mutual intimacy, by which one Person is necessarily in the other by reason of Their supreme interpenetration, and one acts with the other in absolute indivision of the substance, power, and activity of the Most Blessed Trinity Itself.

3. But when you contemplate these things, take care that you do not believe you can understand the incomprehensible. For you have still something else to consider in these six characteristics, which forcibly strike the eyes of our mind with awesome admiration. For here we have supreme communicability side by side with a character proper to each Person, supreme consubstantiality side by side with a plurality of hypostases, supreme conformability side by side with distinct Personality, supreme coequality side by side with order, supreme coeternity side by side with emanation, and supreme mutual intimacy side by side with the out-sending of Persons. Who would not be lifted up in admiration at the sight of such great wonders? But we know with absolute certainty that all these things are in the most blessed Trinity, when we but raise our eyes to the all-excelling Goodness. If, therefore, there is supreme communication and true diffusion, then true origin and true distinction are likewise present. And, since the whole is communicated and not a part merely, then whatever is possessed is given, and given completely. As a result, He who proceeds and He who produces are distinguished by their properties and yet are one and the same in essence. Since, then, they are distinguished by their properties, it follows that they have personal properties and plurality of hypostases, and emanation from their origin, and order, not of posteriority but of origin, and out-sending, consisting not in local change but in freely given inspiration by the authority which the Sender, being the Producer, has over the One Sent. Moreover, since they are really one in substance, they must possess oneness of essence, of form, of dignity, of eternity, of existence, and of uncircumscribability.

CAP. VII

De excessu mentali et mystico, in quo requies datur intellectui, affectu totaliter in Deum per excessum transeunte.

1. His igitur sex considerationibus excursis tanquam sex gradibus throni veri Salomonis, quibus pervenitur ad pacem, ubi verus pacificus in mente pacifica tanquam in interiori Hierosolyma requiescit; tanquam etiam sex alis Cherub, quibus mens veri contemplativi plena illustratione supernae sapientiae valeat sursum agi; tanquam etiam sex diebus primis, in quibus mens exercitari habet, ut tandem perveniat ad sabbatum quietis; postquam mens nostra contuita est Deum *extra se* per vestigia et in vestigiis, *intra se* per imaginem et in imagine, *supra se* per divinae lucis similitudinem super nos relucens et in ipsa luce, secundum quod possibile est secundum statum viae et exercitium mentis nostrae; cum tandem in *sexto* gradu ad hoc pervenerit, ut speculetur in principio primo et summo et mediatore *Dei et hominum*, Iesu Christo,¹ ea quorum similia in creaturis nullatenus reperiri possunt, et quae omnem perspicacitatem humani intellectus excedunt: restat, ut haec speculando transcendat et transeat non solum mundum istum sensibilem, verum etiam semetipsam; in quo transitu Christus est *via et ostium*,² Christus est *scala et vehiculum* tanquam *propitiatorium super arcam Dei collocatum et sacramentum a saeculis absconditum*.³

2. Ad quod propitiatorium qui aspicit plena conversione vultus, aspiciendo eum in cruce suspensum per fidem, spem et caritatem, devotionem, admirationem, exultationem, appreciationem, laudem et iubilationem; *pascha*, hoc est transitum, cum eo facit, ut per virgam crucis transeat mare rubrum,⁴ ab Aegypto intrans desertum, ubi gustet *manna absconditum*,⁵ et

¹ 1 Tim. 2, 5.

² Ioan. 14, 6 et 10, 7.

³ Exod. 25, 20; Eph. 3, 9.

⁴ Exod. 12, 11.

⁵ Apoc. 2, 17.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MYSTICAL TRANSPORT OF THE MIND IN WHICH REST IS GIVEN TO OUR UNDERSTANDING AND OUR AFFECTION PASSES OVER ENTIRELY TO GOD

1. Accordingly, the mind has reached the end of the way of six contemplations. They are like six steps by which it arrives at peace as at the throne of the true Solomon, where the Man of Peace rests in the peaceful mind as in an inner Jerusalem. They are also like the six wings of the Cherubim, by which the mind of the true contemplative, overflowed by the light of heavenly wisdom,¹ is enabled to soar on high. They are like the first six days, during which the mind must be trained so that it may finally reach the Sabbath of rest.

After our mind has beheld God outside itself through and in vestiges of Him, within itself through and in His image, and above itself through the divine similitudes shining upon us, and in the divine Light itself in so far as it is possible in our state as wayfarer and by the exercise of our minds, and when at length the mind has reached the sixth step, where it can behold in the first and highest Principle and in the Mediator of God and men, Jesus Christ, things the like of which cannot possibly be found among creatures, and which transcend all acuteness of the human intellect — when the mind has done all this, it must still, in beholding these things, transcend and pass over, not only this visible world, but even itself. In this passing over, Christ is the way and the door; Christ is the ladder and the vehicle, being, as it were, the Mercy-Seat above the Ark of God and *the mystery which has been hidden from eternity*.²

2. He who turns his full countenance toward this Mercy-Seat and with faith, hope, and love, devotion, admiration, joy, appreciation, praise and rejoicing, beholds Christ hanging on the Cross, such a one celebrates the Pasch, that is, the Passover, with Him. Thus, using the rod of the Cross, he may pass over the Red Sea, going from Egypt into the desert, where it is given to him to taste the *hidden manna*; he may rest with Christ in the tomb, as one dead to the outer world, but experiencing, nevertheless, as far as is possible in this present state as wayfarer, what was said on the Cross to the thief who was hanging there with Christ: *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*.

cum Christo requiescat in tumultu quasi exterius mortuus, sentiens tamen, quantum possibile est secundum statum viae, quod in cruce dictum est latroni cohaerenti Christo: *Hodie mecum eris in paradiso*.⁶

3. Quod etiam ostensum est beato Francisco, cum in excessu contemplationis in monte excelso — ubi haec, quae scripta sunt, mente tractavi — apparuit Seraph sex alarum in cruce confixus, ut ibidem a socio eius, qui tunc cum eo fuit, ego et plures alii audivimus; ubi in Deum transit per contemplationis excessum; et positus est in exemplum perfectae contemplationis; sicut prius fuerat actionis, tanquam alter *Iacob et Israel*,⁷ ut omnes viros vere spirituales Deus per eum invitaret ad huiusmodi transitum et mentis excessum magis exemplo quam verbo.

X 4. In hoc autem transitu, si sit perfectus, oportet quod relinquatur omnes intellectuales operationes, et apex affectus totus transferatur et transformetur in Deum. Hoc autem est mysticum et secretissimum, quod *nemo novit, nisi qui accipit*,⁸ nec accipit nisi qui desiderat, nec desiderat nisi quem ignis Spiritus sancti medullitus inflamat, quem Christus misit in terram.⁹ Et ideo dicit Apostolus,¹⁰ hanc mysticam sapientiam esse per Spiritum sanctum revelatam.

5. Quoniam igitur ad hoc nihil potest natura, modicum potest industria, parum est dandum inquisitioni, et multum unctioni; parum dandum est linguae, et plurimum internae laetitiae; parum dandum est verbo et scripto, et totum Dei dono, scilicet Spiritui sancto; parum aut nihil dandum est creaturae, et totum creatrici essentiae, Patri et Filio et Spiritui sancto, dicendo cum Dionysio¹¹ ad Deum Trinitatem: "Trinitas superessentialis et superdeus et superoptime Christianorum inspector theosophiae, dirige nos in mysticorum eloquiorum superincognitum et superluculentem et sublimissimum verticem; ubi nova et absoluta et inconvertibilia theologiae mysteria secundum superluculentem absconduntur occulte docentis silentii caliginem in obscurissimo, quod est supermanifestissimum, supersplendentem, et in qua omne relucet, et invisibilium superbonorum splendoribus superimplentem invisibiles intellectus." Hoc ad Deum. Ad amicum autem, cui haec scribuntur,

6 Luc. 23, 43.

7 Gen. 35, 10.

8 Apoc. 2, 17.

9 Luc. 12, 49.

10 1 Cor. 2, 10, seqq.

11 Dionys., *de Mystica Theolog.*, 1, 1.

3. This also was shown to the Blessed Francis, when, in a transport of contemplation on the mountain height — where I pondered over the matter that is here written — there appeared to him the six-winged Seraph fastened to a cross, as I and many others have heard from the companion who was then with him at that very place. Here he passed over into God in a transport of contemplation. He is set forth as an example of perfect contemplation, just as previously he had been of action, like a second Jacob-Israel. And thus, through him, more by example than by word, God would invite all truly spiritual men to this passing over and this transport of soul.

X 4. In this passing over, if it is to be perfect, all intellectual activities ought to be relinquished³ and the most profound affection transported to God, and transformed into Him. This, however, is mystical and most secret, *which no one knows except him who receives it*, no one receives except him who desires it, and no one desires except him who is penetrated to the marrow by the fire of the Holy Spirit, Whom Christ sent into the world. That is why the Apostle says that this mystical wisdom is revealed by the Holy Spirit.⁴

5. And since, therefore, nature avails naught and human endeavor but little, little should be attributed to inquiry, but much to unction; little to the tongue, but very much to interior joy; little to the spoken or written word, but everything to the Gift of God, that is, to the Holy Spirit. Little or nothing should be attributed to the creature, but everything to the creative essence — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And thus, with Dionysius, we address the Triune God: "O Trinity, Essence above all essence, and Deity above all deity, supremely best Guardian of the divine wisdom of Christians, direct us to the supremely unknown, superluminous, and most sublime height of mystical knowledge. There new mysteries — absolute and changeless mysteries of theology — are shrouded in the superluminous darkness of a silence, teaching secretly in the utmost obscurity that is manifest above all manifestation; of a darkness that is resplendent above all splendor,⁵ and in which everything shines forth; of a darkness which fills invisible intellects full above all plenitude with the splendors of invisible good things that are above all good."

So much let us say to God. To the friend, however, for whom these words were written, we can say with Dionysius: "And you,

dicatur cum eodem: "Tu autem, o amice, circa mysticas visiones, corroboratio itinere, et sensus desere et intellectuales operationes et sensibilia et invisibilia et omne non ens et ens, et ad unitatem, ut possibile est, inscius restituere ipsius, qui est super omnem essentiam et scientiam. Etenim te ipso et omnibus immensurabili et absoluto purae mentis excessu, ad superessentialem divinarum tenebrarum radium, omnia deserens et ab omnibus absolutus, ascendes."

6. Si autem quaeras, quomodo haec fiant, interroga gratiam, non doctrinam; desiderium, non intellectum; gemitum orationis, non studium lectionis; sponsum, non magistrum; Deum, non hominem; caliginem, non claritatem; non lucem, sed ignem totaliter inflammantem et in Deum excessivis unctionibus et ardentissimis affectionibus transferentem. Qui quidem ignis Deus est, et huius *caminus est in Ierusalem*,¹² et Christus hunc accendit in fervore suae ardentissimae passionis, quem solus ille vere percipit, qui dicit: *Suspendium elegit anima mea, et mortem ossa mea*.¹³ Quam mortem qui diligit videre potest Deum, quia indubitanter verum est: *Non videbit me homo et vivet*.¹⁴ — Moriamur igitur et ingrediamur in caliginem, imponamus silentium sollicitudinibus, concupiscentiis et phantasmatis; transeamus cum Christo crucifixo *ex hoc mundo ad Patrem*, ut, ostenso nobis Patre, dicamus cum Philippo: *Sufficit nobis*; audiamus cum Paulo: *Sufficit tibi gratia mea*,¹⁵ exsulemus cum David dicentes: *Defecit caro mea et cor meum, Deus cordis mei et pars mea Deus in aeternum. Benedictus Dominus in aeternum, et dicet omnis populus: Fiat, fiat. Amen*.¹⁶

EXPLICIT ITINERARIUM MENTIS IN DEUM

¹² Isai. 31, 9.

¹³ Iob 7, 15.

¹⁴ Exod. 33, 20.

¹⁵ Ioan. 13, 1; *ibid.* 14, 8; II Cor. 12, 9.

¹⁶ Ps. 72, 26; Ps. 105, 48.

my friend, in this matter of mystical visions, redouble your efforts, abandon the senses, intellectual activities, visible and invisible things — everything that is not and that is — and, oblivious of yourself, let yourself be brought back, in so far as it is possible, to unity with Him Who is above all essence and all knowledge. And transcending yourself and all things, ascend to the superessential gleam of the divine darkness by an incommensurable and absolute transport of a pure mind."

6. If you wish to know how these things may come about, ask grace, not learning; desire, not the understanding; the groaning of prayer, not diligence in reading; the Bridegroom, not the teacher; God, not man; darkness, not clarity; not light, but the fire that wholly inflames and carries one into God through transporting unctions and consuming affections. God Himself is this fire, and *His furnace is in Jerusalem*; and it is Christ who enkindles it in the white flame of His most burning Passion. This fire he alone truly perceives who says: *My soul chooseth hanging, and my bones, death*. He who loves this death can see God, for it is absolutely true that *Man shall not see me and live*.

Let us, then, die and enter into this darkness. Let us silence all our care, our desires, and our imaginings. With Christ crucified, let us pass *out of this world to the Father*, so that, when the Father is shown to us, we may say with Philip: *It is enough for us*. Let us hear with Paul: *My grace is sufficient for thee*, and rejoice with David, saying: *My flesh and my heart have fainted away: thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion forever. Blessed be the Lord forever, and let all the people say: so be it, so be it. Amen*.