

Objection 1. It would seem that all the moral virtues are about the passions. For the Philosopher says (Ethic. ii, 3) that “moral virtue is about objects of pleasure and sorrow.” But pleasure and sorrow are passions, as stated above (q. 23, a. 4; q. 31, a. 1; q. 35, Aa. 1, 2). Therefore all the moral virtues are about the passions.

Objection 2. Further, the subject of the moral virtues is a faculty which is rational by participation, as the Philosopher states (Ethic. i, 13). But the passions are in this part of the soul, as stated above (q. 22, a. 3). Therefore every moral virtue is about the passions.

Objection 3. Further, some passion is to be found in every moral virtue: and so either all are about the passions, or none are. But some are about the passions, as fortitude and temperance, as stated in Ethic. iii, 6,10. Therefore all the moral virtues are about the passions.

On the contrary, Justice, which is a moral virtue, is not about the passions; as stated in Ethic. v, 1, seqq.

I answer that, Moral virtue perfects the appetitive part of the soul by directing it to good as defined by reason. Now good as defined by reason is that which is moderated or directed by reason. Consequently there are moral virtues about all matters that are subject to reason’s

direction and moderation. Now reason directs, not only the passions of the sensitive appetite, but also the operations of the intellective appetite, i.e. the will, which is not the subject of a passion, as stated above (q. 22, a. 3). Therefore not all the moral virtues are about passions, but some are about passions, some about operations.

Reply to Objection 1. The moral virtues are not all about pleasures and sorrows, as being their proper matter; but as being something resulting from their proper acts. For every virtuous man rejoices in acts of virtue, and sorrows for the contrary. Hence the Philosopher, after the words quoted, adds, “if virtues are about actions and passions; now every action and passion is followed by pleasure or sorrow, so that in this way virtue is about pleasures and sorrows,” viz. as about something that results from virtue.

Reply to Objection 2. Not only the sensitive appetite which is the subject of the passions, is rational by participation, but also the will, where there are no passions, as stated above.

Reply to Objection 3. Some virtues have passions as their proper matter, but some virtues not. Hence the comparison does not hold for all cases.