

Objection 1. It would seem that the moral virtues do not remain after this life. For in the future state of glory men will be like angels, according to Mat. 22:30. But it is absurd to put moral virtues in the angels*, as stated in Ethic. x, 8. Therefore neither in man will there be moral virtues after this life.

Objection 2. Further, moral virtues perfect man in the active life. But the active life does not remain after this life: for Gregory says (Moral. iv, 18): “The works of the active life pass away from the body.” Therefore moral virtues do not remain after this life.

Objection 3. Further, temperance and fortitude, which are moral virtues, are in the irrational parts of the soul, as the Philosopher states (Ethic. iii, 10). Now the irrational parts of the soul are corrupted, when the body is corrupted: since they are acts of bodily organs. Therefore it seems that the moral virtues do not remain after this life.

On the contrary, It is written (Wis. 1:15) that “justice is perpetual and immortal.”

I answer that, As Augustine says (De Trin. xiv, 9), Cicero held that the cardinal virtues do not remain after this life; and that, as Augustine says (De Trin. xiv, 9), “in the other life men are made happy by the mere knowledge of that nature, than which nothing is better or more lovable, that Nature, to wit, which created all others.” Afterwards he concludes that these four virtues remain in the future life, but after a different manner.

In order to make this evident, we must note that in these virtues there is a formal element, and a quasi-material element. The material element in these virtues is a certain inclination of the appetitive part to the passions and operations according to a certain mode: and since this mode is fixed by reason, the formal element is precisely this order of reason.

Accordingly we must say that these moral virtues do not remain in the future life, as regards their material element. For in the future life there will be no concupiscences and pleasures in matters of food and sex; nor fear and daring about dangers of death; nor distributions and commutations of things employed in this present life. But, as regards the formal element, they will remain most perfect, after this life, in the Blessed, in as much as each one’s

reason will have most perfect rectitude in regard to things concerning him in respect of that state of life: and his appetitive power will be moved entirely according to the order of reason, in things pertaining to that same state. Hence Augustine says (De Trin. xiv, 9) that “prudence will be there without any danger of error; fortitude, without the anxiety of bearing with evil; temperance, without the rebellion of the desires: so that prudence will neither prefer nor equal any good to God; fortitude will adhere to Him most steadfastly; and temperance will delight in Him Who knows no imperfection.” As to justice, it is yet more evident what will be its act in that life, viz. “to be subject to God”: because even in this life subjection to a superior is part of justice.

Reply to Objection 1. The Philosopher is speaking there of these moral virtues, as to their material element; thus he speaks of justice, as regards “commutations and distributions”; of fortitude, as to “matters of terror and danger”; of temperance, in respect of “lewd desires.”

The same applies to the Second Objection. For those things that concern the active life, belong to the material element of the virtues.

Reply to Objection 3. There is a twofold state after this life; one before the resurrection, during which the soul will be separate from the body; the other, after the resurrection, when the souls will be reunited to their bodies. In this state of resurrection, the irrational powers will be in the bodily organs, just as they now are. Hence it will be possible for fortitude to be in the irascible, and temperance in the concupiscible part, in so far as each power will be perfectly disposed to obey the reason. But in the state preceding the resurrection, the irrational parts will not be in the soul actually, but only radically in its essence, as stated in the Ia, q. 77, a. 8. Wherefore neither will these virtues be actually, but only in their root, i.e. in the reason and will, wherein are certain nurseries of these virtues, as stated above (q. 63, a. 1). Justice, however, will remain because it is in the will. Hence of justice it is specially said that it is “perpetual and immortal”; both by reason of its subject, since the will is incorruptible; and because its act will not change, as stated.

* “Whatever relates to moral action is petty, and unworthy of the gods” (Ethic. x, 8)