

**Objection 1.** It seems that honor is not properly due to those who are above us. For an angel is above any human wayfarer, according to Mat. 11:11, “He that is lesser in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist.” Yet an angel forbade John when the latter wished to honor him (Apoc. 22:10). Therefore honor is not due to those who are above us.

**Objection 2.** Further, honor is due to a person in acknowledgment of his virtue, as stated above (a. 1; q. 63, a. 3). But sometimes those who are above us are not virtuous. Therefore honor is not due to them, as neither is it due to the demons, who nevertheless are above us in the order of nature.

**Objection 3.** Further, the Apostle says (Rom. 12:10): “With honor preventing one another,” and we read (1 Pet. 2:17): “Honor all men.” But this would not be so if honor were due to those alone who are above us. Therefore honor is not due properly to those who are above us.

**Objection 4.** Further, it is written (Tob. 1:16) that Tobias “had ten talents of silver of that which he had been honored by the king”: and we read (Esther 6:11) that Assuerus honored Mardocheaus, and ordered it to be proclaimed in his presence: “This honor is he worthy of whom the king hath a mind to honor.” Therefore honor is paid to those also who are beneath us, and it seems, in consequence, that honor is not due properly to those who are above us.

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher says (Ethic. i, 12) that “honor is due to the best.”

**I answer that,** As stated above (a. 1), honor is nothing but an acknowledgment of a person’s excelling goodness. Now a person’s excellence may be considered, not only in relation to those who honor him, in the point of his being

more excellent than they, but also in itself, or in relation to other persons, and in this way honor is always due to a person, on account of some excellence or superiority.

For the person honored has no need to be more excellent than those who honor him; it may suffice for him to be more excellent than some others, or again he may be more excellent than those who honor him in some respect and not simply.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The angel forbade John to pay him, not any kind of honor, but the honor of adoration and latria, which is due to God. Or again, he forbade him to pay the honor of *dulia*, in order to indicate the dignity of John himself, for which Christ equaled him to the angels “according to the hope of glory of the children of God”: wherefore he refused to be honored by him as though he were superior to him.

**Reply to Objection 2.** A wicked superior is honored for the excellence, not of his virtue but of his dignity, as being God’s minister, and because the honor paid to him is paid to the whole community over which he presides. As for the demons, they are wicked beyond recall, and should be looked upon as enemies, rather than treated with honor.

**Reply to Objection 3.** In every man is to be found something that makes it possible to deem him better than ourselves, according to Phil. 2:3, “In humility, let each esteem others better than themselves,” and thus, too, we should all be on the alert to do honor to one another.

**Reply to Objection 4.** Private individuals are sometimes honored by kings, not that they are above them in the order of dignity but on account of some excellence of their virtue: and in this way Tobias and Mardocheaus were honored by kings.