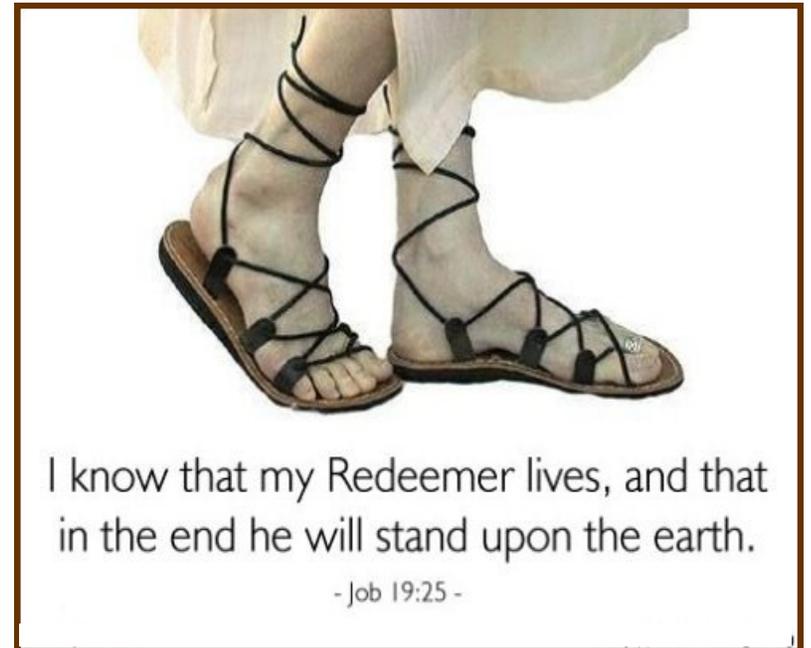


FOR MORE PAMPHLETS ON BOOKS OF THE BIBLE
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.pamphletstoinspire.com

Job

Chapter Twenty Five:



I know that my Redeemer lives, and that
in the end he will stand upon the earth.

- Job 19:25 -

The Short Answer of Baldath

*The commentary on the Book of Job, is by Saint Thomas Aquinas and was translated by Brian Mulladay and edited by Rev. Joseph Kenny, O.P.
The book shows how human affairs are ruled by divine providence using probable arguments.*

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE: THE SHORT ANSWER OF BALDATH

The Lesson:

1 Then Baldath the Shuite said in response: 2 Power and terror are with him who makes peace in his higher works. 3 Can one number his soldiers? And over whom does his light not rise? 4 Can a man be justified in comparison with God? Or who born of woman appears pure? 5 Behold! Even the moon does not shine, and the stars are not pure in his sight. 6 How much more is man corruption and the son of man a worm.

Job in his answer had now refuted the two calumnies which Eliphaz had thrown at him in his previous response. (22:5,12) He had shown that he was punished neither for sin nor for denying divine providence. He had shown very clearly that it was not repugnant to divine providence if evil men prosper in this world, because their punishment is reserved to another time. So they could not resist this argument further. But he had not demonstrated the other point so clearly that he was not punished because of his sins, but rather showed the weakness of his demonstrations when he said, "No one can know his thoughts." (23:13) Baldath, therefore, opposed this argument now, arguing against Job because he was claiming that he was not punished because of his sins.

Seeming to ignore the words in which Job had said that it was not sufficient to argue against him based on the power of God, (23:13) he takes the beginning of his argument from divine power and proposes the greatness of divine power in two ways. First, as to the fact that God exercises his power on higher creatures, preserving them in the greatest peace, and so he says, "Power and terror," by reason of which he ought to be feared, "are with him, (God), who makes peace in his higher works." In lesser creatures more discord is found, as much in rational creatures, which is clear from the contrary motions of human wills, as in corporeal creatures, which appears in the contrariety through which they are subject to generation and corruption. But one finds no contrariety in superior bodies, and so they are incorruptible. In like manner the higher intellectual substances also live in supreme peace, and so they are without unhappiness. This highest concord of superior creatures proceeds from divine power, which has placed the higher creatures in a more perfect participation of his unity, as if they are nearer to him; and so he clearly says, "in his higher works," those more conformed to him.

Second, he shows the divine power from those things he does in lower creatures in which he acts through the ministry of higher creatures, whose great number is unknown to man. So he then says, "Can one number his soldiers?" He calls soldiers of God are all of the heavenly powers which follow the divine will just as soldiers obey the command of their leader. The number of these heavenly armies is unknown to man, as Isaiah says, "He who leads out his host without number." (40:26) Lest anyone deny that the heavenly powers regard themselves as soldiers, obeying the command of another, but are like leaders and princes who do everything from their own will, as those worshippers of many gods thought, he then says, "And over whom does his light not rise?" This is as if to say: All the heavenly powers are directed by divine illumination as men are directed by the fact that the light of the sun rises over them.

Using the premise of the divine power, he proceeds to his proposition saying, "Can a man be justified in comparison to God?" as if to say: Since God is so great and so excellent in justice that he even makes concord in the highest creatures, which is an effect of justice according to Isaiah, "The work of justice is peace." (32:17), all justice of man compared to divine justice is reckoned as nothing. Not only can man not seem to be just compared to God, but what is more, he appears unjust compared to him. Analogously, things which have too little beauty seem ugly compared to the most beautiful things, and so he then says, "Or who born of a woman appears pure?" He emphasizes this because from the very fact that man is born of woman through the concupiscence of the flesh, he contracts some stain.

Next, he strengthens what he had said with a metaphor when he then says, "Behold! Even the moon does not shine, and the stars are not pure in his sight." Here consider that he does not mention the sun because it is not evident to the senses that its light is obscured in the presence of a brighter light. But the moon and the stars are darkened even in the presence of the corporeal light of the sun, and so their brightness seems even more like darkness, compared to the immensity of divine light. From this he concludes his proposition, "how much more is man corruption and the son of man a worm," for he cannot be reckoned shining with the splendor of justice if compared to the divine justice, nor clean in innocence if compared to divine purity. He expressly compares man to corruption as consisting in matter which is close to corruption, and the son of man to a worm which is generated from putrefaction. He wants to show in this that man cannot propose his own justice and innocence, however great it may be, as it is reckoned as nothing in comparison to God, when divine justice is in question.

END OF JOB CHAPTER 25