Aquinas Reader On Aristotle or The Philosopher

St. Thomas Aquinas is often referred to as one of the greatest commentators of Aristotle. The aim of this work is to make St. Thomas the philosopher more accessible for a concentrated study. In order to accomplish this, his principle work, the Summa Theologica has been currated to only sections including the mention of 'Aristotle' or 'The Philosopher'. This subset of articles has been further divided by book from the Aristotelian corpus. Keywords and a simple summary have been added to enrich the learning experience with overarching snapshots. We have added a reference distribution to illustrate the prominence of his citations. The sections presented are as they appear in the Summa Theologica for each reference book identified by headers. Each reference book in study is highlighted throughout in yellow for convenience. Books identified with multiple matching references have been adjudicated arbitrarily.

This is a smaller reader of Aquinas in so far as Aristotle is referenced in **De Causis.**

We hope you enjoy this study of Aristotle as he is depicted through the lens of St. Thomas.

# De Causis

**Keywords:**

thing, objects, caused, says, intelligent, causis, according, understands, naturally, shall, souls, virtues, substances, essence, knowledge, happiness, intellectual, wherefore, separated, returns, perfection, operation, consists, way, forms, universal, proper, gift, mind, existing, animal, intellect, viz, away, vice, matter.

## Volume 1 - Question 5. Goodness in general

**Article 1. Whether goodness differs really from being?**

Objection 2. Further, nothing can be its own form. "But that is called good which has the form of being", according to the commentary on **De Causis**. Therefore goodness differs really from being.

**Article 2. Whether goodness is prior in idea to being?**

On the contrary, It is said by Aristotle (**De Causis**) that "the first of created things is being."

## Volume 2 - Question 2. Things in which man's happiness consists

**Article 6. Whether man's happiness consists in pleasure?**

Objection 2. Further, "the first cause goes more deeply into the effect than the second cause" (**De Causis** i). Now the causality of the end consists in its attracting the appetite. Therefore, seemingly that which moves most the appetite, answers to the notion of the last end. Now this is pleasure: and a sign of this is that delight so far absorbs man's will and reason, that it causes him to despise other goods. Therefore it seems that man's last end, which is happiness, consists principally in pleasure.

## Volume 1 - Question 3. The simplicity of God

**Article 8. Whether God enters into the composition of other things?**

Further, the first cause rules all things without commingling with them, as the Philosopher says (**De Causis**).

## Volume 2 - Question 5. The attainment of happiness

**Article 5. Whether man can attain happiness by his natural powers?**

I answer that, Imperfect happiness that can be had in this life, can be acquired by man by his natural powers, in the same way as virtue, in whose operation it consists: on this point we shall speak further on (I-II:63. But man's perfect Happiness, as stated above (I-II:3:8), consists in the vision of the Divine Essence. Now the vision of God's Essence surpasses the nature not only of man, but also of every creature, as was shown in I:12:4. For the natural knowledge of every creature is in keeping with the mode of his substance: thus it is said of the intelligence (**De Causis**; Prop. viii) that "it knows things that are above it, and things that are below it, according to the mode of its substance." But every knowledge that is according to the mode of created substance, falls short of the vision of the Divine Essence, which infinitely surpasses all created substance. Consequently neither man, nor any creature, can attain final Happiness by his natural powers.

## Volume 1 - Question 10. The eternity of God

**Article 2. Whether God is eternal?**

Objection 2. Further, what is before eternity, and after eternity, is not measured by eternity. But, as Aristotle says (**De Causis**), "God is before eternity and He is after eternity": for it is written that "the Lord shall reign for eternity, and beyond [Douay: 'for ever and ever']" (Exodus 15:18). Therefore to be eternal does not belong to God.

## Volume 4 - Question 6. The order of assumption

**Article 4. Whether the flesh of Christ was assumed by the Word before being united to the soul?**

Objection 3. Further, as is said (**De Causis**), the first cause excels the second in bringing about the effect, and precedes it in its union with the effect. But the soul of Christ is compared to the Word as a second cause to a first. Hence the Word was united to the flesh before it was to the soul.

## Volume 1 - Question 14. God's knowledge

**Article 2. Whether God understands Himself?**

Reply to Objection 1. Return to its own essence means only that a thing subsists in itself. Inasmuch as the form perfects the matter by giving it existence, it is in a certain way diffused in it; and it returns to itself inasmuch as it has existence in itself. Therefore those cognitive faculties which are not subsisting, but are the acts of organs, do not know themselves, as in the case of each of the senses; whereas those cognitive faculties which are subsisting, know themselves; hence it is said in **De Causis** that, "whoever knows his essence returns to it." Now it supremely belongs to God to be self-subsisting. Hence according to this mode of speaking, He supremely returns to His own essence, and knows Himself.

Objection 1. It seems that God does not understand Himself. For it is said by the Philosopher (**De Causis**), "Every knower who knows his own essence, returns completely to his own essence." But God does not go out from His own essence, nor is He moved at all; thus He cannot return to His own essence. Therefore He does not know His own essence.

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## Volume 2 - Question 17. The acts commanded by the will

**Article 9. Whether the acts of the external members are commanded?**

But because, as we shall state later on, the effect of the sin of our first parent was that his nature was left to itself, through the withdrawal of the supernatural gift which God had bestowed on man, we must consider the natural cause of this particular member's insubmission to reason. This is stated by Aristotle (**De Causis** Mot. Animal.) who says that "the movements of the heart and of the organs of generation are involuntary," and that the reason of this is as follows. These members are stirred at the occasion of some apprehension; in so far as the intellect and imagination represent such things as arouse the passions of the soul, of which passions these movements are a consequence. But they are not moved at the command of the reason or intellect, because these movements are conditioned by a certain natural change of heat and cold, which change is not subject to the command of reason. This is the case with these two organs in particular, because each is as it were a separate animal being, in so far as it is a principle of life; and the principle is virtually the whole. For the heart is the principle of the senses; and from the organ of generation proceeds the seminal virtue, which is virtually the entire animal. Consequently they have their proper movements naturally: because principles must needs be natural, as stated above (Reply to Objection 2).

## Volume 3 - Question 23. Charity, considered in itself

**Article 6. Whether charity is the most excellent of the virtues?**

Reply to Objection 1. The operation of the intellect is completed by the thing understood being in the intellectual subject, so that the excellence of the intellectual operation is assessed according to the measure of the intellect. On the other hand, the operation of the will and of every appetitive power is completed in the tendency of the appetite towards a thing as its term, wherefore the excellence of the appetitive operation is gauged according to the thing which is the object of the operation. Now those things which are beneath the soul are more excellent in the soul than they are in themselves, because a thing is contained according to the mode of the container (**De Causis** xii). On the other hand, things that are above the soul, are more excellent in themselves than they are in the soul. Consequently it is better to know than to love the things that are beneath us; for which reason the Philosopher gave the preference to the intellectual virtues over the moral virtues (Ethic. x, 7,8): whereas the love of the things that are above us, especially of God, ranks before the knowledge of such things. Therefore charity is more excellent than faith.

## Volume 3 - Question 37. Discord, which is contrary to peace

**Article 2. Whether discord is a daughter of vainglory?**

Reply to Objection 3. The reason why concord makes small things thrive, while discord brings the greatest to ruin, is because "the more united a force is, the stronger it is, while the more disunited it is the weaker it becomes" (**De Causis** xvii). Hence it is evident that this is part of the proper effect of discord which is a disunion of wills, and in no way indicates that other vices arise from discord, as though it were a capital vice.

## Volume 1 - Question 45. The mode of emanation of things from the first principle

**Article 4. Whether to be created belongs to composite and subsisting things?**

Objection 1. It would seem that to be created does not belong to composite and subsisting things. For in the book, **De Causis** (prop. iv) it is said, "The first of creatures is being." But the being of a thing created is not subsisting. Therefore creation properly speaking does not belong to subsisting and composite things.

## Volume 3 - Question 45. The gift of wisdom

**Article 3. Whether wisdom is merely speculative, or practical also?**

Reply to Objection 1. The higher a virtue is, the greater the number of things to which it extends, as stated in **De Causis**, prop. x, xvii. Wherefore from the very fact that wisdom as a gift is more excellent than wisdom as an intellectual virtue, since it attains to God more intimately by a kind of union of the soul with Him, it is able to direct us not only in contemplation but also in action.

**Article 5. Whether it belongs to God alone to create?**

I answer that, It sufficiently appears at the first glance, according to what precedes (Article 1), that to create can be the action of God alone. For the more universal effects must be reduced to the more universal and prior causes. Now among all effects the most universal is being itself: and hence it must be the proper effect of the first and most universal cause, and that is God. Hence also it is said (**De Causis** prop., iii) that "neither intelligence nor the soul gives us being, except inasmuch as it works by divine operation." Now to produce being absolutely, not as this or that being, belongs to creation. Hence it is manifest that creation is the proper act of God alone.

## Volume 1 - Question 50. The substance of the angels absolutely considered

**Article 2. Whether an angel is composed of matter and form?**

Whence it is said (**De Causis**, prop. 16) that "intelligence is finite from above," as receiving its being from above itself, and is "infinite from below," as not received in any matter.

## Volume 3 - Question 52. The gift of counsel

**Article 2. Whether the gift of counsel corresponds to the virtue of prudence?**

Objection 2. Further, one gift suffices to help one virtue, since the higher a thing is the more one it is, as proved in **De Causis**. Now prudence is helped by the gift of knowledge, which is not only speculative but also practical, as shown above (II-II:9:3). Therefore the gift of counsel does not correspond to the virtue of prudence.

## Volume 2 - Question 50. The subject of habits

**Article 6. Whether there are habits in the angels?**

However, the angelic intellect and the human intellect differ with regard to this habit. For the human intellect, being the lowest in the intellectual order, is in potentiality as regards all intelligible things, just as primal matter is in respect of all sensible forms; and therefore for the understanding of all things, it needs some habit. But the angelic intellect is not as a pure potentiality in the order of intelligible things, but as an act; not indeed as pure act (for this belongs to God alone), but with an admixture of some potentiality: and the higher it is, the less potentiality it has. And therefore, as we said in the I:55:1, so far as it is in potentiality, so far is it in need of habitual perfection by means of intelligible species in regard to its proper operation: but so far as it is in act, through its own essence it can understand some things, at least itself, and other things according to the mode of its substance, as stated in **De Causis**: and the more perfect it is, the more perfectly will it understand.

## Volume 1 - Question 56. The angel's knowledge of immaterial things

**Article 2. Whether one angel knows another?**

On the contrary, We read in **De Causis** that "every intelligence knows the things which are not corrupted."

## Volume 1 - Question 55. The medium of the angelic knowledge

**Article 3. Whether the higher angels understand by more universal species than the lower angels?**

On the contrary, Dionysius says (Coel. Hier. xii) that the higher angels have a more universal knowledge than the lower. And in **De Causis** it is said that the higher angels have more universal forms.

Objection 2. Further, it is stated in **De Causis** that "every intelligence knows what is above it, in so far as it is caused by it; and what is beneath it, in so far as it is its cause." But one angel is not the cause of another. Therefore one angel does not know another.

## Volume 1 - Question 58. The mode of angelic knowledge

**Article 1. Whether the angel's intellect is sometimes in potentiality, sometimes in act?**

Objection 3. Further, in the book **De Causis** it is stated that "an intelligence understands according to the mode of its substance." But the angel's intelligence has some admixture of potentiality. Therefore it sometimes understands potentially.

## Volume 1 - Question 57. The angel's knowledge of material things

**Article 3. Whether angels know the future?**

Objection 2. Further, the present and the future are differences of time. But the angel's intellect is above time; because, as is said in **De Causis**, "an intelligence keeps pace with eternity," that is, aeviternity. Therefore, to the angel's mind, past and future are not different, but he knows each indifferently.

## Volume 1 - Question 61. The production of the angels in the order of natural being

**Article 2. Whether the angel was produced by God from eternity?**

Objection 2. Further, everything which exists at one period and not at another, is subject to time. But the angel is above time, as is laid down in the book **De Causis**. Therefore the angel is not at one time existing and at another non-existing, but exists always.

## Volume 2 - Question 67. The duration of virtues after this life

**Article 5. Whether anything of faith or hope remains in glory?**

Objection 1. It would seem that something of faith and hope remains in glory. For when that which is proper to a thing is removed, there remains what is common; thus it is stated in **De Causis** that "if you take away rational, there remains living, and when you remove living, there remains being." Now in faith there is something that it has in common with beatitude, viz. knowledge: and there is something proper to it, viz. darkness, for faith is knowledge in a dark manner. Therefore, the darkness of faith removed, the knowledge of faith still remains.

## Volume 4 - Question 75. The change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ

**Article 5. Whether the accidents of the bread and wine remain in this sacrament after the change?**

Reply to Objection 1. As is said in the book **De Causis**, an effect depends more on the first cause than on the second. And therefore by God's power, which is the first cause of all things, it is possible for that which follows to remain, while that which is first is taken away.

## Volume 1 - Question 84. How the soul while united to the body understands corporeal things beneath it

**Article 3. Whether the soul understands all things through innate species?**

Objection 1. It would seem that the soul understands all things through innate species. For Gregory says, in a homily for the Ascension (xxix in Ev.), that "man has understanding in common with the angels." But angels understand all things through innate species: wherefore in the book **De Causis** it is said that "every intelligence is full of forms." Therefore the soul also has innate species of things, by means of which it understands corporeal things.

## Volume 5 - Question 83. The subtlety of the bodies of the blessed

**Article 3. Whether it is possible, by a miracle, for two bodies to be in the same place?**

I answer that, As shown above (Article 2) the reason why two bodies must needs be in two places is that distinction in matter requires distinction in place. Wherefore we observe that when two bodies merge into one, each loses its distinct being, and one indistinct being accrues to the two combined, as in the case of mixtures. Hence it is impossible for two bodies to remain two and yet be together unless each retain its distinct being which it had hitherto, in so much as each of them was a being undivided in itself and distinct from others. Now this distinct being depends on the essential principles of a thing as on its proximate causes, but on God as on the first cause. And since the first cause can preserve a thing in being, though the second causes be done away, as appears from the first proposition of **De Causis**, therefore by God's power and by that alone it is possible for an accident to be without substance as in the Sacrament of the Altar. Likewise by the power of God, and by that alone, it is possible for a body to retain its distinct being from that of another body, although its matter be not distinct as to place from the matter of the other body: and thus it is possible by a miracle for two bodies to be together in the same place.

## Volume 1 - Question 89. The knowledge of the separated soul

**Article 2. Whether the separated soul understands separate substances?**

I answer that, Augustine says (De Trin. ix, 3), "our mind acquires the knowledge of incorporeal things by itself"—i.e. by knowing itself (I:88:1 ad 1). Therefore from the knowledge which the separated soul has of itself, we can judge how it knows other separate things. Now it was said above (Article 1), that as long as it is united to the body the soul understands by turning to phantasms, and therefore it does not understand itself save through becoming actually intelligent by means of ideas abstracted from phantasms; for thus it understands itself through its own act, as shown above (I:87:1). When, however, it is separated from the body, it understands no longer by turning to phantasms, but by turning to simply intelligible objects; hence in that state it understands itself through itself. Now, every separate substance "understands what is above itself and what is below itself, according to the mode of its substance" (**De Causis** viii): for a thing is understood according as it is in the one who understands; while one thing is in another according to the nature of that in which it is. And the mode of existence of a separated soul is inferior to that of an angel, but is the same as that of other separated souls. Therefore the soul apart from the body has perfect knowledge of other separated souls, but it has an imperfect and defective knowledge of the angels so far as its natural knowledge is concerned. But the knowledge of glory is otherwise.

## Volume 1 - Question 94. The state and condition of the first man as regards his intellect

**Article 2. Whether Adam in the state of innocence saw the angels through their essence?**

Objection 3. Further, one separate substance knows another separate substance, by knowing itself (**De Causis** xiii). But the soul of the first man knew itself. Therefore it knew separate substances.