

Reception: What will or will not be

Notes and examples on Reception.

Primarily based on Masha'Allah's book *On Reception*, from translations by Robert Hand [RH] and James Holden [JH].

Masha'Allah tells us that we learn, from reception, "*whether a thing is to be or not to be, and when it will be if it should be done; and when there shall appear that which is not, if it should not be done; and what will prohibit it if it is not [done], and through whom it is done, and whence it should be done.*"[JH p1]

Reception Basics

Which Chart Elements are Examined?

What Constitutes Reception?

Committing Disposition

Committing Disposition - Another Example

Applications and Separations

Reception and the Joining of Planets

Horary Rules

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Which Chart Elements are Examined?

The following elements of a chart are examined in judging what will or will not be:

- the 7 planets
- the 12 zodiac signs
- the places of the Exaltations and Falls of the planets
- the applications and separations of the ☿ and the standard Ptolemaic aspects (✕, □, △, ♀)
- Mutual receptions
- return of reception
- planets giving (pushing) their dispositions

The state of the significator's *disposition* either *perfects* (brings about) or *prohibits* whatever matters the significator represents.

What Constitutes Reception?

Reception happens when one planet (A) is in the domicile or exaltation of another planet (B) whom it aspects or conjuncts. The aspect (or conjunction) from planet A must *perfect* (become exact) before that of a third planet (C) intercedes by completing its own aspect or conjunction with planet B, or, before B moves into another sign.

♂ 10 ♏ ⇒ ♀ ♏ 15 ♏

♂ is applying to ♀ ♏ who is in ♂'s domicile (♏), therefore
♂ receives ♏, but,
♂ is not in a domicile (♏, ♏) or Exaltation (♏) of ♏, so
♏ *does not receive* ♂ (this is a weaker reception than if ♏ received ♂)

♂ 10 ♏ ⇒ ☐ ♏ 20 ♏

♂ is in ♏'s domicile (♏) applying to ☐ ♏
☐ is in ♂'s domicile (♏), therefore,
♂ receives ♏ and ♏ receives ♂ and
there is **Mutual Reception** [MR] by *domicile* (strongest form of reception)

MR can happen by Exaltation if the two planets are in each other's signs of exaltation. Masha'Allah tells us that if the matter being analyzed has to do with a King, the Exaltation rulers will have more authority over the matter than the domicile rulers.

What Constitutes Reception Continued

Mutual reception by domicile is the strongest form of reception followed by Mutual reception by exaltation.

As a general rule, reception is stronger if the planet applied to (B) receives the applying planet (A).

Later authors also considered reception by triplicity, term, and face but only considered it to an *effective* reception if the reception involved at least two of these minor dignities i.e. received by triplicity and term or triplicity and face or term and face. Masha'Allah mentions these minor dignities in his *Book of Thoughts and Intentions* but only in relation to determining which planet is stronger than another.

Committing Disposition

Any planet (A) joining another (B) from *B*'s domicile or exaltation *commits its disposition* to *B*, who, because of reception, will perfect the matter signified by *A*.

The language used here makes sense in that if *A* is in a domicile of *B* he is a guest in *B*'s home. Astrologically speaking, the ruler of the domicile (*B*) is responsible for *settling* or *disposing* of all matters within his domicile, including those of other planets lodged there. If *B* is averse (♁ or ♋) to its own sign he is blind to the needs of planets in that domicile unless there is some mitigating condition.

The nature of the aspect qualifies the nature of the request as a hard one with difficulty, delay, or labour (♁ , ♊); an easy one, without labour or difficulty (♋ , ♌), or a familiar, or congenial one, easily done (♍).

Example:

$\text{☉ } 10 \text{ } \text{♎} \text{ } \text{♁} \text{ } \text{♊} 10 \text{ } \text{♍}$

the ☉ perfects a ♁ to ♊ ,
committing his disposition to ♊ , who
receives the ☉ in his domicile (♎), and so
accepts the ☉ 's disposition and will perfect it, but
due to the ♁
only after some anxiety and errors i.e. not easily

Committing Disposition - Another Example

Example:¹

☉ 1 ♌ ⇒ ♍ ♎ 25 ♏

the ☉ is in ♌ (the exaltation of ♎) applying to ♍ ♎
♎ is in ♏ (the exaltation of the ☉) therefore
there is **Mutual Reception** by *exaltation*, and
the ☉ commits his disposition to ♎, who accepts it

According to Masha'Allah, when there is Mutual Reception, "*there is peace and the matter will be perfected*"; however, if ♎ leaves ♏ before the ♍ can perfect, "*there will be enmities, contrariness, misunderstandings, denials and ♎ will not receive the ☉*" and so will not take on the ☉'s disposition.

And the same lack of reception would occur if the ☉ had been in its own Exaltation (♏) and ♎ in his own Exaltation (♌) as neither planet would receive the other.

¹The examples used by Masha'Allah so far involve planets in their sign of Fall or Detriment which we will see (in later examples), may result in a commitment being rejected.

Applications and Separations

The faster, lighter planet (A) moves to join a slower, heavier planet (B) and in so doing, A commits his disposition to B and the aspect does not leave off until the two planets are separated.

Note: Robert Hand says "*there is no separating orb*" and so once the two planets are no longer in a partile (exact according to degree) configuration, the matter is done; however, other authors may consider planets to be in aspect as long as they are within the moiety of both.

The *moiety* of an aspect between two planets is equal to the addition of half of each planet's orb. For example, the ☉ has an orb of 15° , ♄ of 9° so the moiety is 12° ($7.5^\circ + 4.5^\circ$) or $(15^\circ + 9^\circ)/2$ so, for some, the pair would not be fully separated until the ☉ was 12° past ♄.

A planet *applying to* (joining) another planet indicates "*what will be*".

A planet separating from another planet indicates "*what has passed away*".

Reception and the Joining of Planets

Benefics joined to Benefics

If a benefic (♀ or ♄) joins with and is received by another benefic, the reception increases the good indicated by the planets.

Benefics joined to Malefics

If a benefic (♀ or ♄) joins with and is received by a malefic planet (♂ or ♀) then the malefics are at peace and *"their evil goes away"* unless they are joined by a ☐ or ♄, in which case there will be some labour, and error.

Malefics joined to Malefics

If a malefic (♂ or ♀) joins with another malefic with reception, they are made good and their evil and impediment goes away.

Note: the above are generalities based on the essential nature of the planets; there are conditions under which a benefic can act as a malefic and vice versa.

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Questions in General

Choosing Significators

Perfection and Outcomes

Timing

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Questions in General

A question must be of great concern or necessity for the querent (the one asking the question); and they should not ask further questions with regard to the matter until the first question has been understood and examined i.e. don't begin the analysis with a series of questions; a clear, concise question is best

An astrologer should not look to answer his own questions as "*it does not suit a wise man to look for himself*".

To examine the question, draw up a chart for the time the question is verbally put to the astrologer; or, if in the form of a letter, the moment when the astrologer understands what is asked; calculate the Asc, the MC, the places of the 7 planets, and note who disposes each of them and which houses they are in.

Note: James Holden thinks the calculation of the MC implies a quadrant system of houses, most likely Alchabitius, but he acknowledges that Masha'Allah, in later examples, appears to be using a Sign-House system or Equal House system. House cusps given in the following example charts are from the printed book but were not original to Masha'Allah.^a

^aIn Holden's translation of Masha'Allah's *The Book of Thoughts and Intentions* he indicates that either the Alchabitius or Equal House systems were used.

Choosing Significators

Masha'Allah's method for choosing which planets will act as significators for the *querent* (the person asking the question) and the *quesited* (question's subject matter) can be reduced to:

- Does the ruler of the Ascendant (L1) aspect the 1st House?
 - Yes? use L1 as the main signifier of the querent and the ♃ as their partner
 - No? does L1 aspect another planet that aspects the 1st House or one who does so indirectly by aspecting a 3rd planet that aspects the 1st House?
 - Yes? work through these planets and use the ♃ as a their partner
 - No? repeat the same steps using the ♃ instead of L1 and if she is suitable, make her the main signifier and L1 her partner
- If neither L1 nor the ♃ are usable, see which of the two is the first to leave its sign and judge the effect from that planet's first joining to another planet after entering its new sign, using the other planet (L1 or ♃) as their partner;¹ noting that matters will be slow and inactive until the sign change occurs.

¹Normally the ♃ is the first to change signs as she moves faster than the other planets.

Choosing Significators Continued

- The main significator of the quesited will be the ruler of the house signifying the matter i.e. Life, ruler of 1st House (L1); Wealth, ruler of 2nd House (L2); Siblings, ruler of the 3rd House (L3); etc.
- Planets in the 1st House and the house signifying the matter at hand have a bearing on the conditions surrounding the matter BUT they do not determine the outcome of the matter; that depends on the chosen significators, their aspects and condition.²
 - planets in the affected houses, if they are received by their dispositor, "*indicate the goodness and worthiness of the thing sought*", if they are not received by their dispositor (which implies no aspect between the two), then they indicate impediments and the worthlessness of what is sought
- If the ruler of the Asc or the ☾ does not aspect the 1st House it is to be considered *evil and impeded*

²Robert Hand says "*Rulers of houses in general are more important to outcomes than occupants of houses.*"

Perfection and Outcomes

Perfection (the performance of a thing) is perhaps known from the planet to which the ruler of the Asc is first joined; from the ☿; or from the second one that receives the commitment [of the disposition], or namely from whichever one is the last reception [and] there will be the end; or from the ruler of the thing quesited; or from a benefic that is in a good place without reception. [JH p36]

Perfection can come about in a number of ways ([RH p31, 34])

- significator of the querent (A) to the significator of the quesited (B), with or without reception, and B does not commit his disposition to a third planet (C)
- L1 joining a benefic in the house signifying the matter
- L1 joining a malefic with dignity in the house signifying the matter
- L1 joining, and received by, an undignified malefic in the house signifying the matter
- significator of the quesited to L1, with or without reception, or, to planets in the 1st (use same method described for L1 to planets in the house of the matter signified)
- L1 or the ☿ to a benefic, angular or strongly dignified, with or without reception; or, a malefic, similarly placed, with reception

Outcomes Continued

If *A* is the significator of the querent and receives *B*, the significator of what is sought; the querent will get what he has been seeking but if *A* is the significator of what is sought and *B* is the significator of the querent, then the querent will get what has been asked about without any seeking of it on his part. [JH 38]

Outcomes are better, stronger, more readily done, and stable, and durable if the significator of the quesited receives the significator of the querent. [JH 38]

"Reception will not be destroyed in any way whatsoever,...,if the planet which receives has rulership over a matter, and it is the dispositor [of the querent's significator] and the disposition comes to it [the querent's significator applies to it], and if it does not commit disposition to another. Because if it should commit disposition to another planet after its own reception, the reception signifies the accomplishment of the matter, and the commission of its disposition to another planet signifies the end of the matter and to what [state] its final affairs would come." [RH p32]

Outcomes Continued

"After that, the ruler of the house of the thing [quesited] is looked at to see to what planet it commits its own disposition after its effecting...if it is a benefic, they say the thing will be made better. And if it is a malefic, they say that the thing will be subsequently destroyed." [JH]p22

The exception is if the question is about death as there is nothing that can come after it.

If the first joining of the querent's significator and is to a malefic and does not involve reception and if the malefic is not the significator of the quesited; a *prohibition* is indicated [JH p35].

Timing [JH 32-33] [RH 27-29]

When the joining is by aspect (not conjunction) the number of degrees needed to perfect the aspect gives the number of days.

If it doesn't happen then, it will happen when the two join bodily in a strong place, an angle or a place where the significator of the matter rejoices.

If not then, it will happen when the planet handling the disposition is rising from the ☉, renewing itself.

If the significators started off Void of Course, needing to enter a new sign before joining with another planet, then things will go slowly and matters will be prolonged [JH 17, RH 8]

Angles strengthen, hurry, and fortify the matter and, for good or ill, whatever is signified by the ruler of the disposition, it will last. [JH p36] while cadent houses cause delays, little advancement, and only small things [JH p48].

Swiftness of completion, as indicated by the houses, from the quickest to the slowest is:

Asc, MC, 11th, 7th, 4th, 9th, 5th, 3rd, with all these being "*good and praiseworthy*" while the averse house are slowest and "*inimical*" to the querent: 8th, 6th, 12th, 2nd [JH p48, RH p46]

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 About Life or Death

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About Life or Death [JH p18-19,23,27] [RH p10-11,15,19]

If a person asks whether he will die during the year, look for indications that:³

They will escape death:

- L1 to a benefic who is not L8 and who does not pass on disposition or return it to another
- L1 to a planet that receives him, and if they are ill, they will recover from their illness
- ☿ joined to L8 but L1 strong and unimpeded
- L8 joined to and received by L1 *"will not completely destroy" life*

Death wins out:

- L1 joined to L8 or vice versa (do not consider the ☿)
- L1 joined to a malefic or L8 without reception and the ☿ evil and impeded
- L1 joined to a malefic in the 8th
- L1 joined, without reception, to a benefic in the 8th who has dignity there
- L8 joined to a planet in the 1st

To know if the person will fully recover their 'good fortune and health' examine the planet that signifies escape from death; if it aspects the significator's original position in the chart the person will escape all harm.⁴

³If L1 is impeded, use the ☿ in its place.

⁴Robert Hand fnp11

About Life or Death Continued [JH 27-29][RH 19-22]

- when L8 joins and is received by L1, L8 cannot completely destroy life but we need to look at L1 and the ☿ and if one signifies life and the other death, the significations of L1 are stronger as it has more significance in the matter of Life than the ☿; however, as they are partners, the ☿ will impact the effects of L1 according to the strength or weakness of L1 and the ☿
- L8 is inimical to L1 UNLESS they are the same planet as *"then it will not impede itself, even if it is also a malefic"* (and the same is true of L1 and L6)

Sickness [JH]p19-21, [RH]p11-13

Mercury (L1) is Void of Course, does not aspect the 1st, and is not first to leave his sign.

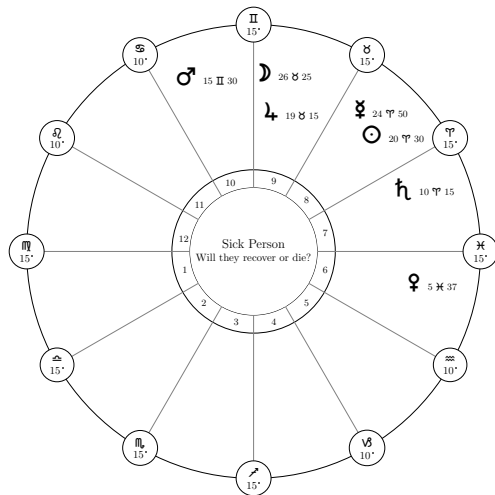
The ♃ is also Void of Course but she is ♈ the 1st House and she is the first to enter a new sign so we look to her first with ♄ being made the sharer.

☾ in ♉ Δ 1st House ⇒ enters ♀

⇒ ♀ in ♄ and commits her disposition (no mention of reception as the ♃ is now in ♌ where ♀ has no dignities)

♀ \Rightarrow * ♀ in ♂, MR by domicile

As \mathbf{L}_4 cannot join with any other planet¹, he ends the disposition and becomes the final authority over the matter and so determines the final outcome.



¹He can only apply to \mathfrak{h} and he is already separated from him.

Sickness Continued

After examining the 𐤎 committing her disposition, Masha'allah then looks at 𐤍 (L1) as sharing in the matter and finds it confirms what the 𐤎 signified:

𐤍 in 𐤍 Void of Course \Rightarrow 𐤍

\Rightarrow 𐤍 𐤍 𐤍 who receives him from 𐤍

𐤍 \Rightarrow 𐤍 𐤍 in 𐤍 MR by domicile

And again, 𐤍 is the end of the disposition chain, supporting what the 𐤎 indicated.

𐤍, a benefic, as the final arbiter of the disposition promises "health and quiet" and the end of the illness after a prolonged period (due to the VOC's) but we are told that from the time of 𐤍 accepting the 𐤎's disposition to her joining with 𐤍, the person would have gradually strengthened, with the illness leaving him completely once 𐤍 separates from 𐤍 by one minute.

Sickness (Alternative Scenarios)

One odd thing here, how does ♀ join with ♃'s ✕ at 19 ♋ before it joins with ♂'s ♎ at 15 ♋? Even assuming he took the aspect moieties into account, ♀ would have been within moiety of ♂ ♎ at 7.5° ♋ ($15 - (7+8)/2$) which is less than the reach of ♃'s ✕ moiety of 11 ♋ ($19 - (9+7)/2$).

Masha'allah does list the ♂ connection as an alternative scenario, saying such a connection would have meant death for the querent as ♂'s is L8 and does not receive ♀ in ♋. So perhaps, the ♎ → ♀ → ♃ connections are also simply to illustrate a point.

He goes on to warn that the ☉, if not L1, destroys by combustion if he does not receive the planet, and this also applies to his ♎ or ♏. [JH p23.]¹

¹I've seen this before as a planet being protected from combustion if he's in his own signs; here, they have to be in the ☉'s signs (♏ or ♏) where the ☉ will receive them and so protect them.

A Life Question

The ☉ and ☾ are both VOC, with the ☾ being first to leave her sign so looked to her first with the ☉ as sharer.

☾ 28 ♀ ⇒ ♂

⇒ ☐ ♀ 2 ≈

(☾ commits her disposition to ♀, no reception)

♀ is joined to, and received by, ♀

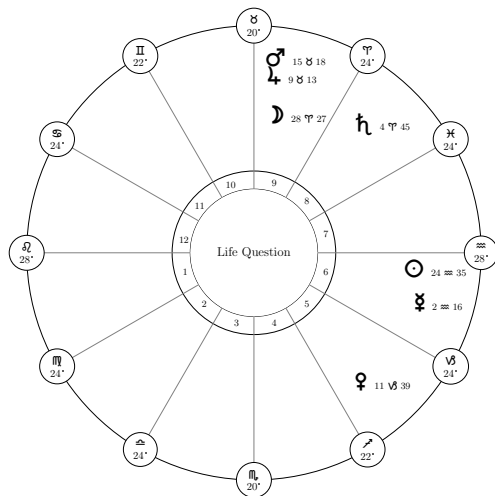
(♀ is within 2° of a perfect ♂, already engaged) therefore ♀ signifies the person's health and good fortune

☉ 24 ≈ ⇒ ♂

⇒ ♂ ♀ (with reception)

so the ☉ also signifies health and good fortune

Both L1 and the ☾ indicate the same for the person's health and fortune.



A Life Question Continued

Wanting to know when the sickness would lessen, Masha'Allah says he next looked at the House of Sickness, the 6th, which was ruled by ♄, and ♀ (11 ♄) was separated from ♄ by 7° and moving to ♌ (15 ♄) with each receiving the other; ♄ receiving ♀ in his exaltation, ♀ receiving ♄ in her domicile.

This *"signified a lessening of pain and the arrival of health"*

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Finding Wealth or Not [JH 29-31][RH 23-25]

If the question is about wealth in general, and not specific to some source or person, examine L1 and the ☽ to see which is the main significator of the querent and which the sharer and use L2 as the significator of the quesited, wealth.

"The connection of the ruler of the Asc or the ☽ with the ruler of the thing is the attainment of the thing by itself", whether joined to a benefic or malefic, with or without reception, unless the significator of the quesited commits its disposition to another planet.¹

If L2 commits its disposition to:

- a malefic, with reception, *"the thing will be perfected"*
- a benefic, with or without reception, *"he will find wealth...if the dispositor is in a strong [place] or in the angles"* as angles are useful to the 2nd and hasten things; cadent houses delay things

Wealth is also shown if the 2nd holds: a benefic, a dignified malefic, or a malefic without dignity that receives L1.

¹Hand says this is true only for the stronger of the two, L1 or ☽.

Finding Wealth or Not Continued

If L1 joins with L2 or planets in the 2nd, the querent has been seeking wealth but if L2 joins with L1, the wealth will come about without any seeking on the querent's part and they will receive more than they hoped for.

If no L1, ☿, 2nd House Connections

If L1 or the ☿ do not connect to L2 or a planet in the 2nd, see if one of them connects to a benefic (with or without reception) that is in a strong place or angular; if that benefic does not commit its disposition elsewhere, the querent will find wealth.

And the same applies if it connects to a malefic with reception but if it is without reception, the matter will be destroyed.

A benefic that commits its disposition to a malefic who does not receive it signifies the matter ruled by the benefic will be harmed when the disposition is complete; with reception, the matter is perfected without harm.

Looking to Borrow

If a person is looking to borrow from another, L1 and the ♃ signify the querent, L2, his wealth while L7 and L8 signify the possible lender and their wealth.

The querent will get what he seeks if:

- L1 or the ♃ are joined to L8 or a planet in the 8th
- L8 is joined to L1 or a planet in the 1st that is a benefic, a dignified malefic, or a malefic that receives it
- either L1 or the ♃ joined to a malefic with reception or a benefic in a strong place

But if the person is looking to borrow from the King, use the 11th (Wealth of the King) instead of the 8th.

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L1, ♀ (16 ♊), was VOC, separating from ♋ ♏ (14 ♏), L8 (the deceased person's wealth) by reception

"Separation by reception is something foul and a horrible thing" [JH 35]

♏ (28 ♏) VOC separating from ♏ ♏ (16 ♊)

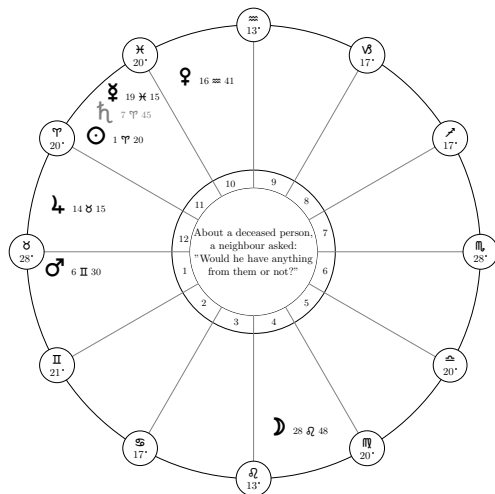
♏ first to leave her sign ♏ ⇒ ♏

⇒ ♏ ♂ (6 ♏), neither planet receives the other, and

since ♂ is not L8 he signifies prohibition

♀ moves from ♊ to ♏

⇒ ♏ ♂ (6 ♏), neither planet receives the other shows the same as the ♏



House cusps are not original, Holden shows ♏ as 20 ♏;
Hand uses the degrees shown but puts ♏ in the 10th

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Seeking a Kingdom

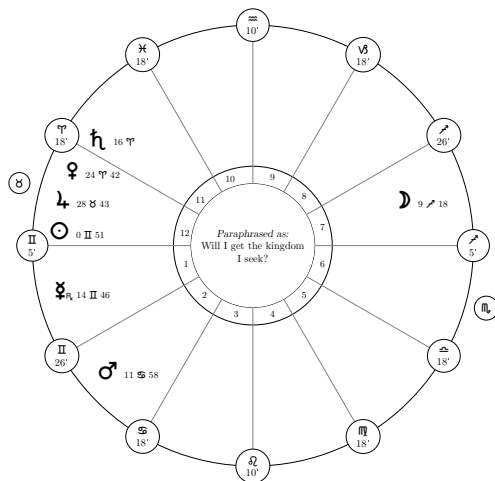
☿_R(L1) ⇒ ☿☉ ⇒ ✱ ♀ (L10)

however

♂ ⇒ ☐ ♀ (L10) perfects first
cutting off the ☉ and denying the querent the
kingdom

And Masha'Allah said the querent would know his
hope was lost when ♂ perfected its ☐ to ♀

Note that the ☾ shows the same thing as she first
applies to ☿, committing her disposition to him
and so he hands both his own and her disposition
to the ☉. And while ☿ receives the ☉, the ☉
is not L10 so the matter at hand is not perfected.



Another Question on a Kingdom

♃ 4 ♌ (L1) ⇒ ♀ ♏ 11 ♏ in the 10th "completes"
the matter as ♏ receives the ♃ in his exaltation.

The man had little joy from his advancement;
however, because ♏ was in a place where he had
no dignity, being in his Fall and furthermore, in a
pitted degree and because it hated its own place it
gave something hateful but it made what it gave
fixed, strong, and stable because it was in an angle.

