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The Kingdom of God in the Gospel Commentaries of St. Thomas Aquinas: Historical,
Ecclesiastical and Eschatological Dimensions

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The Kingdom of God in the Gospel Commentaries of St. Thomas Aquinas: Historical, Ecclesiastical and Eschatological Dimensions

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The preaching of the Gospel opens with the proclamation that the Kingdom of God is at hand. For two millennia, Christian theologians have been exploring the depths of that proclamation through reflection on both the Scriptures and on their great predecessors in the tradition. St. Thomas Aquinas stands as one of the greatest theologians of the Church but his understanding of the Kingdom has not been a major subject of investigation. Instead, Thomas' thought on the subject has been ignored or criticized. When it has been addressed, it has been approached almost entirely from the direction of Aquinas as a systematic theologian or philosopher, rather than as an interpreter of Scripture. The Biblical commentaries of Thomas have only recently experienced a resurgence of scholarly interest, and while many great scholars have produced fine work on numerous topics, few have yet turned to the Kingdom.

This dissertation seeks to correct that lacuna by examining the Kingdom in the light of Aquinas' scriptural works, especially his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew. After exploring the Kingdom as presented in that text, it looks into his other Biblical commentaries, his broader theological works, and the Matthew commentaries of his contemporaries to provide a full examination of Aquinas' kingdom doctrine in its historical and theological context. This approach not only gives us insight into how he approaches the Bible, but also reveals a fascinating, multifaceted interpretation of the Kingdom which builds on Scripture and, in

conjunction with ideas from Aristotle, Pseudo-Dionysius, Johannine mysticism and the mendicant movement, constructs a vision of the Kingdom. This vision is contemplative and evangelical, internal and ecclesiastical, focused on God and others, and manifest in multiple dimensions. Yet the Kingdom for Aquinas remains fundamentally oriented towards an eschatological vision at which the full promise of humanity is revealed and God becomes all in all.

This dissertation by Matthew L. Martin fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Historical Theology approved by Joshua C. Benson, Ph.D., as Director, and by Chad C. Pecknold, Ph.D., and Michael Root, Ph.D. as Readers.

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Chapter 1: Introductory Material

Introduction and State of the Question

The Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God is a key topic in Scripture and Christian theology, and Saint Thomas Aquinas treats the Kingdom at several points across his literary corpus. However, the Kingdom has rarely received close attention in recent scholarship on Aquinas. Instead, the topic has been generally neglected, reduced to a subordinate position or singled out for critique. For example, most work on Aquinas's ecclesiology for the past century, from Chenu and Congar onward, has taken its cue from the *Summa* and the *Commentary on Hebrews* and focused on the "Church as Body of Christ." Far less attention has been given to the Church's relationship to the Kingdom. Similarly, "if one consults the standard index to the two *Summae* of Thomas under the word *regnum* (kingdom) one will find almost nothing."¹

Even works focusing on the Kingdom neglect Aquinas's use of Scripture, especially his *Lectura super Mattheum* or *Commentary on Matthew*. Abstracts of two Roman dissertations on Aquinas and the Kingdom, for example, make only passing reference to the *Commentary on Matthew*, focusing instead on the *Summa*. A dissertation on the Kingdom of God in Aquinas, done only twenty-five years ago, likewise does not even include the *Commentary* in its bibliography. Thus, not only is a major theological theme minimized, but it has been approached almost entirely from the direction of Aquinas as a systematic theologian or philosopher, rather than as an interpreter of Scripture.

The Biblical commentaries of Thomas have only recently experienced a resurgence of

¹ Benedict T. Viviano, OP, *The Kingdom of God in History* (Wilmington DE: Michael Glazier, 1988), 61.

scholarly interest, and while many great scholars have produced fine work on numerous topics, few have yet turned to the Kingdom. This is compounded by the fact that the textual history of the Commentary on Matthew is more troubled than usual,² and it was not until recently³ that an uncorrupted Latin text was available to the general public.

Some work has been done on the concept of the Kingdom in Aquinas, but my research indicates that it has remained largely at the level of doctoral theses and dissertations. Joanne Edwards, S.J., did a dissertation for the Gregorian University on the topic of the Kingdom in 1958, only the first two chapters of which are easily accessible.⁴ Edwards' primary focus in those sections is on divine providence, teleology and predestination, and while the Gospel commentaries are cited in the Bibliography, no notes from them are included in the available text, and the Matthew text is the incomplete Marietti edition.

Walter Mitchell's 1973 dissertation for the Pontifical University of St. Thomas, *The Relationship Between Kingdom and Church in the Writings of St. Thomas*,⁵ also makes use of the Marietti text, without use of any of the new material that had been discovered at that point.⁶ While Mitchell devotes some attention to Aquinas' commentary on Matthew, the study occupies only three pages, and is primarily focused on how the Church and the Kingdom interrelate. A

² For more details, see Chapter 2, below.

³ September 2013, to be precise—after work had already begun on this project.

⁴ Joanne H. Edwards, S.J., *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Kingdom of God* (Excerpt from dissertation, Facultate Theologica Pontificiae Universitatis Gregoriana, 1958). The third chapter, on the Church and the Kingdom, is not included in the excerpt, although the table of contents is suggestive, featuring sections on “Kingdom of God and Church Identical”, “The Visibility of the Kingdom” in both the Old and New Testament, and “The Church Militant and the Mystical Body of Christ” as compared in the Commentary on the *Sentences* and the *Summa Theologiae*. The penultimate section is “The Kingdom in Its Imperfect and Figurative State,” which suggests a continuity with what we will see Thomas say about the Kingdom in the Commentary on Matthew in Chapter 2 of this work.

⁵ Walter A. Mitchell, *The Relationship Between Kingdom and Church in the Writings of St. Thomas*, (Excerpt from dissertation, Pontificiam Universitatem S. Thomae de Urbe, 1973).

⁶ For references to those materials, see Chapter 2, note 17.

1987 dissertation by William Edward Vinson Jr.⁷ makes no reference to the Gospel commentaries and, similarly to Edwards, focuses primarily on Thomas' metaphysics and teleological structure of the universe. On this topic, Aquinas as an exegete appears to have been neglected.

Other, more public studies of or references to Thomas' thought on the Kingdom have been more critical. Writing in *The Thomist* in 1980, Benedict Viviano states that “Thomas Aquinas does not devote any significant portion of his principal theological enterprise to the kingdom of God, the central theme of the preaching of Jesus. This may be considered a serious weakness in the greatest doctor of the medieval Church.”⁸ When considering the multifaceted definition of the Kingdom in the commentary on Matthew 3, Viviano characterizes it as containing “the familiar false start based on Luke 17:21, which becomes the basis for an individualist, private interior definition ... the usual Augustinian line ... [and] a rather remote, arbitrary equivocation.”⁹ More recently, Germain Grisez has set Thomas' understanding of the Beatific Vision as man's ultimate end in opposition to the concept of the Kingdom of God (at least as understood by Grisez).¹⁰ While the primary focus on the text is on human fulfillment and beatitude, the idea that the Kingdom could be set in opposition to Thomas' thought is startling and suggests that more work needs to be done in exactly how Thomas understood the Kingdom.

Based on this, one might assume that there is very little to say about Aquinas as a

7 William Edward Vinson Jr., *The Kingdom of God According to Thomas Aquinas: A Study of the Relationship Between Thomas's Philosophy and Theology Reflected in His Doctrine of Church and State*, (Dissertation Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988).

8 Benedict T. Viviano, “The Kingdom of God in Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas.” *The Thomist*, 44:4 (Oct 1980): 509. This text was reused as Chapter 3 of Viviano's book *The Kingdom of God in History* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1988); reference has been made to both texts throughout this work.

9 Viviano, “Kingdom in Albert and Aquinas”, 510.

10 Germain Grisez, “The True Ultimate End of Human Beings: The Kingdom, Not God Alone.” *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 38-61. For a response to Grisez, see Ezra Sullivan, OP, “Seek First the Kingdom: A Reply to Germain Grisez's Account of Man's Ultimate End” in *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, Vol. 8, No. 4 (2010): 959-995.

scriptural theologian when dealing with the Kingdom of God. However, as this dissertation will demonstrate, examining the Kingdom in the light of Aquinas' scriptural works is valuable for multiple reasons. Examining how Thomas treats the Kingdom texts in the Gospels and other works not only gives us insight into how he approaches the Bible, but also reveals a fascinating, multifaceted interpretation of the Kingdom which builds on Scripture and, in conjunction with ideas from Aristotle, Pseudo-Dionysius, Johannine mysticism and the mendicant movement, constructs a vision of a Kingdom that is both contemplative and evangelical, internal and ecclesiastical, focused on God and others, and manifest in multiple dimensions and yet fundamentally oriented towards an eschatological vision at which the full promise of humanity is revealed and God becomes all in all.

This dissertation seeks to explore that multifaceted vision of the Kingdom, primarily through careful analysis and comparison of Thomas' texts, with several goals in mind. First, in the words of Thomas J. White, “a presupposition ... is that there exists a perennial Thomistic theological science that is of enduring value down through time, of as much relevance today as it was in the age of St. Thomas Aquinas.”¹¹ Thus, a careful study of a dimension of Thomas' thought that has been neglected can help clarify his thought not only on this topic, but on other elements as well. An understanding of the Kingdom, through the light of Thomas' Scriptural commentaries, can enlighten us regarding Aquinas' approach to Scripture, his political theology and theological anthropology, his soteriology and ecclesiology, and his eschatology. Studying this also helps us understand Thomas as part of the great scholastic tradition he participated in, by highlighting where he agrees with his predecessors and colleagues as well as where he breaks

11 Thomas Joseph White, OP, *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015), 4.

new ground. Finally, given Thomas' penetrating intellect and vast knowledge of that tradition, there is the real possibility that his insights into this topic can provide valuable guidance for the problems of our own era.

This chapter lays out the background material for understanding Thomas' work on the Kingdom of Heaven. After a brief biographical sketch, we discuss Thomas' principles and method of Scriptural exegesis, and then examine Thomas' concepts of kingdom and politics, contemplation, and participation, philosophical ideas that inform his conception of the Kingdom.

The second chapter focuses on the texts identified as central to this project—the commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew and John. This chapter is very much the heart of this work, and through careful examination of those two texts, it will lay out the overall structure and fundamental details of Aquinas' understanding of the Kingdom of God. The material on Matthew will emphasize the fundamental definition of the Kingdom as a multifaceted entity, analyzing its internal, evangelical/Scriptural, ecclesiological and eschatological dimensions, as well as its relationship to the world and the older kingdom of Israel, and its conflict with the kingdom of the Devil. The John material is less extensive, but highlights the contemplative nature of the Kingdom and the fact that it is, as Christ says, “not of this world”.

The third chapter is dedicated to Thomas' other Scriptural commentaries, especially on the Psalms and the Epistles of St. Paul. This will continue the exegetical work of the second chapter, reinforcing the conclusions drawn therein and supplementing several key points.

The fourth chapter provides a brief survey of the topic of the kingdom and kingship where it appears in other works, such as Thomas' *Summae* or various sermons. This will highlight the continuity and development of Aquinas' thought on this subject throughout his career, as well as complete the project of filling in the details of Thomas' theology of the

Kingdom.

The fifth chapter helps place Thomas in his historical context by comparing his work on the Gospel of Matthew—the keystone of this dissertation—with that of his predecessor Hugh of St. Cher, and his master, St. Albertus Magnus. The comparison between these three scholars will demonstrate that Thomas is both working within the greater Dominican tradition and at the same time doing original work in his approach to the Kingdom. Finally, a conclusion will return to some of these critiques and issues regarding the kingdom and seek to synthesize Thomas' thought on the subject, guided primarily by its expression in his exegetical work. This will allow us to treat Thomas' understanding of the Kingdom in its fullness and in a Biblical context, in contrast to Edwards' emphasis on the philosophical dimension, Mitchell's focus on the ecclesiology or Vinson's on church-state relations, or Viviano's dismissal of Thomas as neglectful or confused about the Kingdom. This has the benefit of taking Aquinas seriously as a *Magister in sacra pagina* by exploring his commentaries through the best texts available, and treating him as a Scriptural theologian first and foremost. This method, in conjunction with the previous work mentioned above, will lead us a deeper and more complete understanding of the Kingdom in Thomas' thought, and perhaps a new level of understanding of Christ's teaching and mission.

Background Material on St. Thomas Aquinas

A Biographical Sketch

The biography of Thomas Aquinas is so well-known as to hardly need introduction. Born near Naples in 1224 or 1225¹² to a noble Italian family, and schooled at the famous abbey of

¹² The chronology followed here is that of Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas, Vol. 1: The Person and His*

Monte Cassino, Thomas caused quite a stir among his relatives when he joined the recently founded Order of Preachers in April 1244.¹³ After some initial difficulties, the young friar made his way to the University of Paris, and studied first there and then in Cologne, especially under the famous Albert the Great.¹⁴ Returning to Paris as a bachelor of the *Sentences* in 1251 or 1252,¹⁵ he became a *Magister in Sacra Pagina*¹⁶ in 1256, beginning the fullness of a career that would span less than two decades and yet produce some of the most renowned theology in the history of the Catholic Church. Thomas' contributions as a commentator on Scripture, though, have only recently begun to be recognized, and this project hopes to make some small contribution in understanding that part of his work.

Aquinas as Exegete

The 13th century was “a time when a renewed emphasis upon Scripture and the gospel, begun in the previous century, was bearing abundant fruit,”¹⁷ and Thomas, as part of the new Dominican order and a rising star of the University of Paris, was involved in producing that

Work, (hereafter Torrell I) Revised Edition, translated by Robert Royal (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 327-30.

13 Torrell, I.328.

14 Torrell, I.328.

15 Torrell, I.328.

16 “Master of the Sacred Page”, dedicated to the exposition of Scripture. For more on this part of Thomas' life, see Torrell, I.54-74.

17 Nicholas M. Healy, Introduction to *Aquinas on Scripture: An Introduction to His Biblical Commentaries*, edited by Thomas G. Weinandy, Daniel A. Keating and John P. Yocum (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 4.

fruit¹⁸. Aquinas started his career with Scripture as a biblical bachelor¹⁹, and after moving on for a time to the *Sentences*, returned to the Scriptural texts with more depth as a *Magister in Sacra Pagina*. His inaugural lecture for that position has been recorded as *Hic est liber* and *Rigans montes*²⁰. The lecture's text devotes much attention to the value and the various divisions of Sacred Scripture, but little to the interpretation thereof. It does, however, provide us with some valuable material on Aquinas' conception of kingship, where he speaks of “the command of a king who is able to punish transgressors”²¹ and makes an early mention of the connection between the king and law.

The paucity of exegetical principles in the inaugural lecture is not necessarily a problem when we remember that it *was* an inaugural lecture. Not only is that not the best venue for detailed exegetical work, but Pim Valkenberg highlights the growing dependence on Scripture in Aquinas' theological works and posits that this is due to “Aquinas's growing acquaintance with Scripture through his daily lecturing on Scripture as *Magister in Sacra Pagina*, and his daily praying and singing of Scripture as a Friar Preacher.”²² This understanding of Thomas career,

18 For a survey of Aquinas' Scripture commentaries and scholarship, see *Aquinas on Scripture*, or Paul Murray, OP, *Aquinas at Prayer: The Bible, Mysticism and Poetry* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 83-158. For examples of more specific and in-depth study of Aquinas on specific books, see *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology*, edited by Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005) and their follow-up volume *Reading Romans with St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012). For more general study of medieval exegesis, Beryl Smalley's work is somewhat dated, but still valuable, and Henri de Lubac's five-volume *Medieval Exegesis* is probably the most comprehensive source available. For background on the cultural and intellectual background of the time and place, especially within the context of the French schools and universities, see the works of Gilbert Dahan, such as *Interpréter la Bible au moyen âge: cinq écrits du XIIIe siècle sur l'exégèse de la Bible traduits en français* (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2009).

19 See Torrell, I.27-28.

20 Inaugural lectures at medieval universities are also a broad topic; for an introduction, Nancy Spatz's dissertation is a recommended starting point.

21 “... mandatum regis qui potest transgressores punire,” St. Thomas Aquinas, *Hic est Liber*; 2, in *Principium*, translated by Ralph McInerney in *Thomas Aquinas: Selected Writings* (Penguin, 1998), revised and html-edited by Joseph Kenny, O.P., at <http://dhsprory.org/thomas/Principium.html>, accessed September 26, 2015.

22 Pim Valkenberg, “Aquinas and Christ's Resurrection” in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas*, 282. See 280-83 for an analysis of how Aquinas grew and changed in his use of Scripture through his theological career. For more on

“based on the theologically primary function of Scripture as source and framework of Aquinas's theology,”²³ places the Gospel commentaries—some of Aquinas' last work—alongside the *Summa Theologiae* as a 'capstone' to his career.

Thomas does speak of principles of Scriptural interpretation at the start of the *Summa*, in I.1.9 and 10. Article 9 establishes the legitimacy of the use of metaphors by Scripture, thus undercutting any appeal to simplistic literalism. Rather, “spiritual things are propounded under the likenesses of corporeal things, so that even the simple [*rudem*] can grasp them.”²⁴ Article 10, meanwhile, establishes the famous medieval division of the senses of Scripture:

The first signification, in which words signify things, pertains to the first sense, which is the historical or literal sense. That signification where the things signified by the words themselves signify other things, is called the spiritual sense, which is founded upon the literal and presumes it. This spiritual sense is divided in a threefold way ...²⁵

The example Thomas gives of the spiritual senses in this article is the Old Law, which can be related in the moral sense to the commands of the New Law, in the allegorical sense to the life of Christ, and in the anagogical sense to eternal glory. This example foreshadows various ways in which the Kingdom will be identified, as we will see in later chapters.

“St. Thomas,” John F. Boyle says in discussing Aquinas' *Commentary on John*, “may ... be of some value to the modern interpreter of Scripture, precisely because he is not one of us.”²⁶

Thomas' career as *Magister in Sacra Pagina*, see Murray, 83-89 and Torrell, I.54-74.

²³ Valkenberg, 282.

²⁴ “... spiritualia sub similitudinibus corporalium proponantur; ut saltem vel sic rudes eam capiant.” *Summa Theologiae* (hereafter *ST*), Part 1, Question 1, Article 9. Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Chicago: Benzinger Bros, 1947), hosted at www.dhspriory.org/thomas/summa/index.html. Accessed on April 7, 2016. Reference has also been made to the Leonine edition at www.corpusthomicum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016.

²⁵ *ST* I.1.10.

²⁶ John F. Boyle, “Authorial Intention and the *Divisio textus*,” in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas*, 3.

Thomas is famed for his emphasis on the literal sense,²⁷ which is for him the proper foundation of theological arguments.²⁸ Boyle has tracked down two of Thomas' principles for interpreting Scripture which provide depth and flexibility to this "literal reading". One finds these principles

tucked away in an article of his disputed questions *De potentia* ... for how one is to read the literal sense of Scripture, Thomas poses two negative principles: first, one ought not assert something false to be found in Scripture, especially what would contradict the faith; and second, one ought not to insist upon one's own interpretation to the exclusion of other interpretations which in their content are true and in which what Thomas calls "the circumstance of the letter" is preserved.²⁹

This multiplicity of "literal meanings", which is also found in the *Summa*,³⁰ reinforces the spiritual senses, as well, since "under one letter it contains many senses in such a way that it is suited to different human minds."³¹ Boyle points out that the apparent indifference to authorial intent, which strikes us as so different from modern interpretation, is in keeping with a tradition that goes back at least to Augustine, and speaks of an admirable humility in the face of the fact that all of us are working from the same text.³² This is reinforced by the presence of the divine authorship, and allows Aquinas to preserve his reverence for the Fathers while citing numerous points where they offer diverging interpretation of the texts.³³ Boyle also states that Aquinas tends to locate intent, understood less as "what the author meant" as "the goal the author sought

27 See Valkenberg, 281, and Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 3rd Edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 301-2, 305.

28 Gilles Emery, O.P., "Biblical Exegesis and the Speculative Doctrine of Trinity" in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas*, 45; Nicholas Healy, 16. Cf. also *ST I.1.10* Rep. Obj. 1.

29 Boyle, 4.

30 *ST I.1.10*, where Thomas says that "... according to the literal sense, one word in Scripture may have many senses." ("... secundum litteralem sensum in una littera Scripturae plures sint sensus.")

31 *De Potentia* Q.4 A. 1, translated and cited by Scott W. Hahn and John A. Kincaid in "The Multiple Literal Sense in Thomas Aquinas's Commentary on Romans and Modern Pauline Hermeneutics" in *Reading Romans with St. Thomas Aquinas, Aquinas*, edited by Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 165.

32 Boyle, 4-5.

33 Boyle, 5-6. See also Mary Healy, "Aquinas's Use of the Old Testament in His Commentary on Romans" in *Reading Romans with St. Thomas*, 186-8, on Thomas' understanding of the literal sense and authorial intent.

to accomplish”, less in individual passages than in a book of the Bible as a whole, and makes use of the *divisio textus* to identify and elaborate on that understanding of it.³⁴ This may be why Thomas' style can be described, in the words of one author, as “a method which demands, at almost every turn, the creation of a whole algebra of divisions and distinctions, imposing on the text of Scripture an Aristotelian structure which it could be argued, risks obscuring rather than revealing the true meaning of the text.”³⁵ Yet this approach to the text fits in nicely with the purpose of this dissertation, for in the *Hic est liber*, following the grand tradition, Thomas speaks of the Gospel of Matthew as dealing with “what pertains to the royal dignity.”³⁶

In her exploration of Aquinas' exegetical principles, Mary Healy lays out that the first principle is that Scripture for Aquinas is “theologically robust. That is, it makes truth claims that are internally consistent and rationally defensible, and that can be incorporated into a formal theological argument without fear that they will dissolve into a mass of inconsistencies and ambiguities.”³⁷ This is closely related to the second principle, that of “the fundamental unity of the canon,”³⁸ which allows for Aquinas' project of “faithfully interpreting Scripture by organizing its teaching into a coherent synthesis.”³⁹ Indeed, for Thomas, like for most Fathers and medieval scholars of Scripture, “the pedagogical function of theological inquiry is to train readers of Scripture so that they read it more profoundly and with less error.”⁴⁰

While Aquinas' primary emphasis was on the literal sense,⁴¹ the spiritual sense (which he

34 Boyle, 6-7.

35 Murray, 88.

36 “De ipso enim quantum ad dignitatem regiam determinat”, St. Thomas Aquinas, *Hic est liber* in *Principium*.

37 Mary Healy, 193.

38 Mary Healy, 193.

39 Mary Healy, 193.

40 Nicholas Healy, 12.

41 See the famous passage in the *Summa Theologiae*, I.1.10, Rep. Obj. 1, where Thomas, citing Augustine, states that only the literal sense can be properly used in theological argument. This Augustinian method will be shared by

defines as what “consists in the expression of certain things by the figures of other things”⁴²) is not absent from his commentaries. It will prove to be of especial importance for understanding the kingdom and its prefigurements in history, for “the state of the Church is intermediate between the state of the synagogue and the state of the Church Triumphant. Therefore, the Old Testament was a figure of the New Testament, and the Old and New Testaments are figures of heavenly things.”⁴³ Thomas goes on to give examples of two spiritual senses that are directly related to the topic of this dissertation:

And so the spiritual sense that has the purpose of believing rightly can [in the first place] be based on the sort of figures in which the Old Testament is a figure of the New; and this is the allegorical or typical sense, in accordance with which those things mentioned in the Old Testament are interpreted as having to do with Christ and his Church. Alternatively, the spiritual sense can be based on the sort of figures in which both the New and the Old Testament symbolize the Church Triumphant, and this is the anagogical sense.⁴⁴

Key Philosophical Concepts

Several general concepts should be outlined before we engage directly with the Gospel commentaries, to help understand the key ideas and themes Thomas uses in explicating the Kingdom of God in those texts. Among these are his understanding of the nature and purpose of a kingdom, as well as his thought on participation and contemplation, since as will be seen later, those elements are foundational to Aquinas’ understanding of the meaning of the Kingdom of

Albert, as seen in Chapter 5, while Hugh of St. Cher, while not neglecting the literal sense, will place more emphasis on the moral sense.

42 QQ VII.6.15, translated and cited by Eleonore Stump, “Biblical commentary and philosophy” in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, edited by Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 257.

43 QQ VII.6.15, translated and cited by Stump, 258.

44 *Ibid.* The moral sense is not mentioned in this portion, but in an earlier part of the paragraph Thomas defines part of the distinction between the three spiritual senses as that the moral or tropological sense has to do with acting rightly, while the other two senses have to do with believing rightly. See QQ VII.6.a2 in the Taurini edition at corpusthomaticum.org, or Stump, 257.

God.

Nature and Purpose of “Kingdom”

“Political science,” Thomas says in commenting on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, “is especially concerned with framing laws and apportioning rewards and punishments in order to develop good citizens and doers of good works. This is to operate in accord with virtue.”⁴⁵ This is a theme that will recur throughout Thomas' treatment of kingdoms, both earthly and Heavenly, and we will see it in his mentor Albert as well when we consider his *Commentary on Matthew* in Chapter 5.

One of the primary sources for Aquinas' political thought is the fragmentary treatise *De regimine principum*, also known as *De Regno*.⁴⁶ Written to the king of Cyprus, and presumably abandoned after the death of its intended recipient in 1267,⁴⁷ this text provides a *precis* of Aquinas' political philosophy, drawn largely from Aristotle but influenced by Christian thought. However, given its incomplete status and unique genre, Torrell considers this work inferior to the treatise on law in the *Summa Theologiae* for the purposes of understanding Aquinas' politics.⁴⁸ However, since the concern of this dissertation is primarily with the concepts of kingdom and kingship and Aquinas' understanding of those terms in Scripture, and only secondarily with

45 St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by C. I. Litzinger, O.P (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1964), hosted at www.dhspriory.org/thomas/Ethics.htm, Book 1, Lecture 14, ¶174. For further study of Thomas' political thought, see the introductory material and commentary in *Aquinas: Political Writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought), edited and translated by R.W. Dyson (Cambridge University Press, 2002), as well as Thomas Gilby, *Principality and Polity* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958). For general study of Christian political philosophy, starting points include James V. Schall, *Roman Catholic Political Philosophy* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004) and C.C. Pecknold, *Christianity and Politics: A Brief Guide to the History* (Cascade Books: 2010).

46 While Aquinas also commented on Aristotle's *Politics*, only a portion of that commentary exists, and even there, only the Leonine text can be relied on. See Torrell, I.233-34, 344 for discussion of the textual issues.

47 See the introductory material by R.W. Dyson in *Aquinas: Political Writings* and Jean-Pierre Torrell, OP, *St. Thomas Aquinas, Volume 2: Spiritual Master*, translated by Robert Royal (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003) (hereafter referenced as Torrell II), 301-2.

48 Torrell II.302.

'political theology' properly understood, it provides valuable material, and much of what is found in the *De Regno* is in accord with the *Summa* on these points.

Unlike the beasts, which are equipped by nature and instinct with what is required for their ends, man's end requires both reason and communal activity, since “one man cannot provide for life sufficiently by himself.”⁴⁹ Self-sufficient households or villages may work on some level, and Aquinas follows Aristotle in describing the city as “the perfect community, insofar as all the necessities of life [are found therein], but even moreso in one province, on account of the necessity of fighting and mutual aid against enemies.”⁵⁰ This martial dimension will recur in numerous cases in Aquinas' understanding of kingdoms in both the earthly and the spiritual senses.

The king “is one who rules the multitude of a city or province and for the common good.”⁵¹ One who falls short of the latter half of the definition is instead a tyrant, and Aquinas develops a bit from Augustine, who tends to see tyrants as punishment for sinners and an opportunity for the faithful to exercise virtue.⁵² Aquinas does not deny this⁵³, but he is also aware that the tyrant “also impedes spiritual goods, because those who desire more to be preeminent than to be productive impede all progress of their subjects, suspecting that every excellence in

49 “... unus homo per se sufficienter vitam transigere non posset.” Thomas Aquinas, *De Regno ad regem Cypri*, translated by Gerald B. Phelan, revised by I. Th. Eschmann, O.P., re-edited and chapter numbers aligned with Latin, by Joseph Kenny, O.P. (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949), hosted at www.dhspriority.org/thomas/DeRegno.htm, accessed on April 7, 2016. Book 1, Chapter 1, ¶5.

50 “... quae est perfecta communitas, quantum ad omnia necessaria vitae; sed adhuc magis in provincia una propter necessitatem compugnationis et mutui auxilii contra hostes.” *De Regno*, B.1 C.2 ¶14. Cf. Aquinas, *Political Writings*, 10n34, where Dyson describes this as “St. Thomas' gloss on Aristotle, made as a concession to the fact that he is talking about medieval kingdoms rather than Greek city-states.”

51 “... est qui unius multitudinem civitatis vel provinciae, et propter bonum commune, regit.” *De Regno* B.1 C.3 ¶15.

52 Cf. Dyson's introduction in *Political Writings*, xxix.

53 Indeed, the concept of tyrants as a punishment for sin is highlighted in *De Regno* B.1 C.7 ¶52, where Thomas says that national repentance from sin is necessary if a people hopes for divine relief from tyranny.

their subjects will be prejudicial to their unjust rule.”⁵⁴ This will also be of interest when seen in the light that Aquinas, following Scripture, refers often to the “kingdom of the devil” in his Gospel commentaries.

To avoid the danger of tyranny, Thomas provides several prescriptions “so that the multitude provided for by a king should not fall under a tyrant.”⁵⁵ Most of this chapter deals with ways to structure the government to prevent or relieve tyranny, but the first principle Aquinas gives is that the one “who is promoted to king should not be likely to decline to tyranny.”⁵⁶ This emphasis on the moral dimension of kingship comes out even more strongly in the following chapters, where Thomas dismisses riches and glory as “not a sufficient reward for royal solicitude”⁵⁷ and instead encourages the king to “expect a reward from God.”⁵⁸ While this reward might be temporal, Aquinas notes that temporal rewards can be associated with both good and evil kings, and that

to good kings, who rule the people of God with pious intent and fight his enemies ... he promises not earthly, but eternal rewards for them, which is in nothing but He Himself. As Peter says to the shepherds of the people of God (1 Peter 5:2, 4): *feed the flock of God among you, and when the prince of pastors comes, that is the king of kings, Christ, you shall secure an unwithering crown of glory.*⁵⁹

The choice of this passage of Scripture raises interesting questions, since in its context, it

54 “... sed etiam spiritualia eorum bona impedit, quia qui plus praeesse appetunt quam prodesse, omnem profectum subditorum impediunt, suspicantes omnem subditorum excellentiam suae iniquae dominationi praeiudicium esse.” *De Regno* B.1 C.4 ¶26.

55 “... ut sic multitudini provideatur de rege, ut non incidant in tyrannum.” *De Regno*, B.1 C.7 ¶41.

56 “... promoveatur in regem, quod non sit probabile in tyrannidem declinare.” *De Regno*, B.1 C.7 ¶42.

57 “... regiae sollicitudini non est sufficiens praemium” *De Regno*, B.1 C.9 ¶61.

58 “... praemium expectet a Deo.” *De Regno*, B.1 C.9 ¶62.

59 “... bonis regibus, qui pia intentione Dei populum regunt et hostes impugnant? Non quidem terrenam, sed aeternam mercedem eis promittit, nec in alio quam in se ipso, dicente Petro pastoribus populi Dei: pascite qui in vobis est gregem domini, ut cum venerit princeps pastorum, id est rex regum, Christus, percipiat immarcescibilem gloriae coronam,” *De Regno* B.1 C.9 ¶62.

is addressed to the elders or bishops of the Church, not to secular rulers. The application of it to the latter could be taken to suggest a sacerdotal role for kings, but other texts from Thomas⁶⁰ deny this. Rather, Thomas is concerned about the responsibility of a Christian king for the spiritual well-being of his subjects, so far as his responsibilities extend—a role parallel to a bishop's but distinct and, in spiritual matters, subordinate to it.

Another element of this promise of a heavenly reward, based on the rest of the chapter, is simply the paucity of every earthly reward when compared to the desires of man and the rewards due to virtue. This is in keeping with Augustine, whom Aquinas cites as stating “we call Christian princes happy ... if they rule justly, if they prefer to rule their passions rather than nations, and if they do all things not for the desire of fleeting glory but for the love of eternal happiness.”⁶¹

Thomas uses this theme as a bridge from earthly kingdoms to the Kingdom of Heaven and possession of its honors and glory. “What worldly and transient honor can be like to this honor, that a man should be of the city and household of God, and be numbered with the sons of God and obtain the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom with Christ?”⁶² This is not divorced from earthly kingship, though, for Aquinas goes on to argue that “those who execute the office of king laudably and with dignity will obtain an eminent grade of heavenly beatitude.”⁶³

This may offend modern, democratic sensibilities, but Thomas makes a good case for

60 See the discussion of the power of the keys in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, discussed in Chapter 4 of this work.

61 “Christianos principes ideo felices dicimus, ... si iuste imperant, si malunt cupiditatibus potius quam gentibus quibuslibet imperare, si omnia faciunt non propter ardorem inanis gloriae, sed propter charitatem felicitatis aeternae.” *De Regno* B.1 C.9 ¶64.

62 “Quis enim mundanus et caducus honor huic honori similis esse potest, ut homo sit civis et domesticus Dei, et inter Dei filios computatus haereditatem regni caelestis assequatur cum Christo?” *De Regno* B.1 C.9 ¶66.

63 “... eminentem obtinebunt caelestis beatitudinis gradum, qui officium regium digne et laudabiliter exequentur.” *De Regno* B.1 C.10 ¶67.

why a good king should receive a special reward in Heaven. “For if beatitude is the reward of virtue, it follows that greater virtue is owed a greater grade of beatitude. Now virtue is special by which a man can direct not only himself but also others. ... Therefore to exercise the office of a king well is of extraordinary virtue, so it should be rewarded with extraordinary beatitude.”⁶⁴

This is an exhortation to virtuous rulership, given that it is set out in the context of a letter addressed to a king. Thomas goes on to say that a king “bears a particular similitude to God, for he does in a kingdom what God does in the world.”⁶⁵ Since one of Thomas' general principles is that love is based on likeness, as he states in this paragraph, and as likeness to God is the measure of created goodness, it follows that good kings are specially good and loved by God. Even in the eschaton, when “all will be kings and reign with Christ, as members with the head ... the house of David will be like unto the house of God, because as, by reigning faithfully, he did the work of God among the people, therefore in his reward he will be and be joined closely to God.”⁶⁶ Tyrants, however, squander this reward of translation “from kingly honor, in which they were raised on earth, to the glory of the kingdom of heaven.”⁶⁷

Moving from rewards and punishments to duties, Thomas says that the king “should be in the kingdom what the soul is in the body and God is in the world.”⁶⁸ The virtues that Thomas associates with this are justice, clemency and mercy—the same set of virtues he will mention

64 “Si enim beatitudo virtutis est praemium, consequens est ut maiori virtuti maior gradus beatitudinis debeatur. Est autem praecipua virtus, qua homo aliquis non solum se ipsum sed etiam alios dirigere potest ... Est igitur excellentis virtutis bene regium officium exercere; debetur igitur ei excellens in beatitudine praemium.” *De Regno*, B.1 C.10 ¶68.

65 “... quod praecipue Dei similitudinem gerit, dum agit in regno quod Deus in mundo” *De Regno* B.1 C.10 ¶72.

66 “... scilicet omnes reges erunt et regnabunt cum Christo, sicut membra cum capite; ... domus David erit sicut domus Dei, quia sicut regendo fideliter Dei officium gessit in populo, ita in praemio Deo propinquius erit et inhaerebit.” *De Regno* B.1 C.10 ¶74.

67 “... ex honore regio, quo sublimantur in terris, in caelestis regni gloriam” *De Regno* B.1 C.11 ¶75.

68 “... sit in regno sicut in corpore anima et sicut Deus in mundo.” *De Regno* B.1 C.13 ¶95.

when commenting on Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem in Matthew 21.

While the divine action and the soul's effects on the body are associated with both creation and government, the latter is more proper to kings, “for not all kings institute the kingdom or city in which they reign.”⁶⁹ Unfortunately, from about this point onward, the text of *De Regno* is fragmentary and incomplete, and most of what remains applies more to founding a city or kingdom than to governing one. The role of a governor, like that of one who directs “anything ordained to an end beyond itself, like a ship to a port ... is not only to preserve the thing itself unharmed, but also to lead it to its end.”⁷⁰ The ultimate end of man is eternal salvation, and that is the province of the Church. The same principle applies to man in a multitude, but with some nuances. “The end of a gathered multitude is to live according to virtue,”⁷¹ and just like the individual, “the ultimate end of a gathered multitude ... [is] by virtuous life to attain to the divine reward.”⁷²

However, since this can only be attained through divine aid, and rests not within the power of human nature, “kingship of this kind pertains to a king who is not only man but also God, namely to Our Lord Jesus Christ ... who therefore is called in Holy Scripture not only priest, but also king; with Jeremiah saying *The king shall reign and be wise* (23:5).”⁷³ This kingship extends to all the faithful as members of Christ's body, but “the ministry of this

69 “Non enim omnes regnum aut civitatem instituunt, in quo regnant,” *De Regno* B.1 C.14 ¶98.

70 “... aliquid ad finem extra se ordinetur, ut navis ad portum, ... non solum ut rem in se conservet illaeram, sed quod ulterius ad finem perducatur.” *De Regno* B.1 C.15 ¶103.

71 “... finis esse multitudinis congregatae vivere secundum virtutem.” *De Regno* B.1 C.15 ¶106.

72 “... ultimus finis multitudinis congregatae ... per virtuosam vitam pervenire ad fruitionem divinam.” *De Regno* B.1 C.15 ¶107.

73 “... regem huiusmodi regimen pertinet, qui non est solum homo sed etiam Deus, scilicet ad dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, ... propter quod non solum sacerdos, sed rex in Scripturis sacris nominatur, dicente Ieremia: regnabit rex, et sapiens erit,” *De Regno* B.1 C.15 ¶109. Thomas will make extensive use of Jeremiah 23:5 when discussing Christ's kingship.

kingdom, that spiritual things might be distinct from earthly ones, has been committed not to earthly kings but to priests.”⁷⁴ The reason for this is due not so much to the dignity of the position as the nature of the end sought, since “they to whom care for antecedent ends pertains owe it to be subject to those who have care of final ends.”⁷⁵ Thomas understands paganism and even the Old Covenant as promising earthly rewards for worship or virtue, so in his eyes, it is proper under such religions for the priests to be subordinate to the kings. The opposite situation obtains under Christian belief.⁷⁶

However, this distinction and subordination does not absolve the king for responsibility with regard to the virtue and spiritual well-being of his subjects. “Since the end of the life we presently live is heavenly beatitude, it pertains to the royal office to procure the good life of the multitude in a way fitting to the heavenly beatitude that follows.”⁷⁷ This purpose can be divided into instituting a virtuous life for the masses, preserving it once established, and promoting growth in virtue.⁷⁸ The necessities for the first purpose are peaceful unity among the people, direction in acting well, and a supply of “the necessities for living well.”⁷⁹ Once peace and prosperity allow for the establishment of virtuous life in the city or kingdom, it must be protected through the maintenance of government (here described by Thomas as the replacement of

74 “Huius ergo regni ministerium, ut a terrenis essent spiritualia distincta, non terrenis regibus sed sacerdotibus est commissum,” *De Regno* B.1 C.15 ¶110. Thomas goes on to develop the superiority of the Pope over kings, placing him firmly in the papal camp regarding the great tensions of the Middle Ages between papal and secular authority, although he does not deny secular authority its legitimate place.

75 “... ei, ad quem finis ultimi cura pertinet, subdi debent illi, ad quos pertinet cura antecedentium finium,” *De Regno* B.1 C.15 ¶110.

76 See *De Regno* B.1 C.15 ¶111.

77 “Quia igitur vitae, qua in praesenti bene vivimus, finis est beatitudo caelestis, ad regis officium pertinet ea ratione vitam multitudinis bonam procurare secundum quod congruit ad caelestem beatitudinem consequendam” *De Regno* B.1 C.16 ¶115.

78 *De Regno* B.1 C.16 ¶117.

79 “... necessariorum ad bene vivendum” *De Regno* B.1 C.16 ¶118.

officials), the establishment of just laws, and the protection of the kingdom from enemies.⁸⁰ In Matthew's Gospel, we will see Thomas highlight all three of those elements through the commissioning of the Apostles, the giving of the New Law, and the confrontation with and defeat of the kingdom of the Devil. The third duty is detailed only briefly, with Thomas declaring that the king work for it by correcting what is inordinate, supplying what is deficient, and encouraging improvement in whatever can be done better.⁸¹

As noted above, Thomas also addresses political structure and goals in several other works. The conclusion of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and Thomas' commentary on it, discusses the necessity of legislation in promoting virtue among men, since “many men cannot be led [lit. *provocari*, “provoked] to goodness by speaking.”⁸² Law is intended to inculcate virtue among those who are subject to the passions and thus need restraint and punishment, especially since “law have coercive power insofar as it is promulgated by a king or prince”⁸³--coercive power apparently being proper to those offices. This leads into one of St. Thomas' famous definitions of law: “an instruction proceeding from prudence and intellect, directing things to the good. Hence it stands that law is necessary to making men virtuous.”⁸⁴

The *Summa Theologiae* develops this theme in its famous “treatise on law”, primarily in the *Prima Secundae*, Question 90, where Thomas discusses the essence of law, and Question 92, where the effects of law are laid out. Thomas repeats the principles that “law is nothing other

80 *De Regno* B.1 C.16 ¶119-120.

81 *De Regno* B.1 C.16 ¶121.

82 “Sed multi hominum non possunt per sermones provocari ad bonitatem” *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics*, B.10 L.14, ¶2141.

83 “... lex habet coactivam potentiam, in quantum est promulgata a rege vel principe.” *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics*, B.10 L.14 ¶2153.

84 “Et est sermo procedens ab aliqua prudentia et intellectu dirigente ad bonum. Unde patet, quod lex necessaria est ad faciendum homines bonos.” *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics*, B.10 L.14 ¶2153.

than a certain direction of reason in the ruler, by which the subordinates are governed” and that “what is proper to law is to lead subjects to their proper virtue.”⁸⁵

Participation

The idea of becoming good is, in Aquinas' philosophy and theology, closely linked to the concept of participation, since “the gradation of perfection among creatures is rooted in their degrees of participation in and proximity to transcendent and absolute perfection. 'The nearer a thing approaches the divine likeness, the more perfect it is.’”⁸⁶ As O'Rourke points out, this is a Neoplatonic concept, which Aquinas receives through Pseudo-Dionysius⁸⁷ and Boethius.⁸⁸ It also serves as a buttress for Aquinas' theory of human flourishing, since under this system, “there is at the highest point of human intellection a certain participation in the simple knowledge of higher, intellectual substances.”⁸⁹ Aquinas makes this explicitly Christological when commenting on John 5, with the conclusion that “the first and foremost life cannot be but intellectual or spiritual life. Since Christ is the Word, the Wisdom of God, he himself is life per se. He is the source of life.”⁹⁰

Thus, the Aristotelian understanding of contemplation, to which we now turn, is supported by the concept of man's highest activity participating, at its highest point, in things still

85 *ST I-II.92.1.*

86 Fran O'Rourke, *Pseudo-Dionysius and the Metaphysics of Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 263.

87 O'Rourke, 263.

88 See John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 96-97, 105, which cite definitions of participation from Aquinas' commentary on *De Hebdomadibus*, and Daria Spezzano, *The Glory of God's Grace: Deification According to St. Thomas Aquinas* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2015), 24, which also summarizes the Boethian definition.

89 O'Rourke, 265.

90 Carlo Leget, “The Concept of “Life” in the *Commentary on St. John*” in *Reading John with Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 160.

higher—and Aquinas will further develop this so that, through grace, the intellect and thus the whole human person participates in the divine nature.⁹¹ Indeed, according to Daria Spezzano's recent work on deification, “Thomas's primary definition of grace in the *Summa* ... [is] a created *habitus* that is a “participation in the divine nature” (cf. 2 Pet 1:4).”⁹²

Contemplation

Aquinas follows Aristotle in seeing contemplation as the most perfect end of man and the form of happiness, although he also holds that Aristotle's definition is limited to this life, as happiness in the life beyond cannot be discerned by reason.⁹³ In the commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aquinas states that “it stands that happiness is the proper operation of man, according to virtue, in a perfect life.”⁹⁴ Since “the optimum activity of man is the operation of what is best in man,”⁹⁵ and the intellect is the highest power in man in its powers over the rest of man, its nobility and its object,⁹⁶ it follows that happiness, properly called, lies “in the best human activity, [which] is the contemplation of truth.”⁹⁷ Aristotle and Aquinas argue not only for the supremacy of the act and of the subject of philosophical contemplation (immaterial, unchanging truth), but that “there is greater pleasure in the consideration of truth that is known

91 See Cauty, 284-5, for a brief discussion of the “Dionysian concept of unifying faith.”

92 Spezzano, 3; for more on participation in divine goodness, see 23-30 and 129-50.

93 *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*, B. 1, L. 9, ¶113. For a discussion of Aquinas' use and departures from Aristotle here, see Frederick Copleston, S.J., *A History of Philosophy: Volume 2: Mediaeval Philosophy: Part II: Albert the Great to Duns Scotus* (NY: Image Books, 1962), 118-25.

94 “... patet, quod felicitas est operatio propria hominis secundum virtutem in vita perfecta.” *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics*, B.1 L.10 ¶130.

95 “... operatio optima hominis sit operatio eius, quod est in homine optimum.” *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics*, B.10 L.10 ¶2080.

96 Cf. *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics*, B.10 L.10 ¶2082-85.

97 “Optima autem inter operationes humanas est speculatio veritatis.” *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics* B.10 L.10 ¶2087. “Speculation” and “contemplation” are the same thing for Thomas, and are distinct from what is commonly referred to as ‘infused contemplation’. See Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Christ and Spirituality in St. Thomas Aquinas*, translated by Bernhard Blankenhorn, O.P. (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 6, 14-15.

than in its seeking.”⁹⁸ Further, “the perfection of friendship ... [is] partnership in philosophic activity.”⁹⁹

When commenting on the works of Aristotle, Aquinas limits himself to humanity's natural capabilities and what can be known by reason. In the *Summa Theologiae*, when he turns to the question of happiness, he points out the limits of this very definition of happiness, saying that “we speak of men as happy, but as men.”¹⁰⁰ However, perfect happiness is in keeping with the imperfect happiness defined by Aristotle,¹⁰¹ but in a deeper and unfailing way. Providing an excellent example of the Scholastic maxim that 'grace perfects nature', Aquinas says that “in that state of beatitude, the mind of man will be joined to God in one, continuous, unending action.”¹⁰² Therefore, “ultimate and perfect beatitude cannot be anything other than the vision of the Divine Essence,”¹⁰³ which is the perfect end of the intellect and therefore of man.¹⁰⁴ This was a position that Thomas held from the very beginning of his career; the *Commentary on the Sentences* includes the statement that “the ultimate end of this *doctrina* [theology] is the contemplation of the first truth in the fatherland”¹⁰⁵--or, if one is willing to take some liberties

98 “Unde et maior est delectatio in consideratione veritatis iam cognitae, quam in inquisitione eius” *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics* B.10 L.10 ¶2092.

99 Henry V. Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism: A Study of the Commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 142.

100 “... beatos autem dicimus ut homines.” *ST* I-II.3.2 ad 4.

101 This distinction is also why for Aristotle, that happiness is something episodic and limited, due to the limitations of human life, while for Thomas, it can be perpetual and all-consuming in the state of blessedness. See Ralph McInerney, *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 24-25, 29-31.

102 “... una et continua et sempiterna operatione in illo beatitudinis statu mens hominis Deo coniungitur.” *ST* I-II.3.2 ad 4. See Spezzano, 76-80, for the intellectual dimension of man's perfection and divinization.

103 “... ultima et perfecta beatitudo non potest esse nisi in visione divinae essentiae.” *ST* I-II.3.8 Resp.

104 The perfection of the thing contemplated, and the love of it, also makes theological contemplation distinct from and superior to philosophical contemplation. See Torrell, *Christ and Spirituality in St. Thomas Aquinas*, 10-12. Note that the nature and object of the act that makes happiness are in keeping with Aristotle; it is the degree and quality that differs from the Philosopher's imperfect version.

105 *Sentences* I, Prologue, A.3, translated and referenced by Torrell, *Christ and Spirituality in St. Thomas Aquinas*, 6.

with the Latin, in the Kingdom.

The *Summa Contra Gentiles* demonstrates that the contemplation of God that makes for perfect happiness cannot be the imperfect 'common sense' knowledge of God or the degree of knowledge that can come through reason¹⁰⁶ or even through faith.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, Thomas concludes that “it is impossible that the ultimate happiness of man is in this life.”¹⁰⁸ However, after discussing the Beatific Vision, Thomas does grant that “in this life, nothing is so like that ultimate and perfect happiness as a life contemplating truth; insofar as that is possible in this life. Thus philosophers, who were unable to possess full knowledge of this ultimate happiness, posited that the ultimate happiness of man is the contemplation which is possible in this life.”¹⁰⁹ Indeed, in his *Commentary on Matthew*, Thomas sees contemplation as the fulfillment of the happy life promised in the Beatitudes.¹¹⁰ This contemplation does not supersede or destroy the centrality of charity to the Christian life, for as Bernhard Blankenhorn points out, “charity needs cognition, for blind love falls short of perfect love.”¹¹¹ However, it is true that “the late Aquinas refuses Albert's relative priority of the will over the intellect in beatitude. The will's act involves the desire for an absent good or delight in its presence. But the intellect's act reaches completion by making its object intentionally present. ... Perfect delight naturally follows and depends on

106 St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Leonine Text (Taurini, 1961), supplemented by the translation by Vernon J. Rourke, hosted at www.dhspriory.org/thomas/ContraGentiles.htm, accessed on April 7, 2016 (hereafter *SCG*), B.3 C.38-39.

107 *SCG* B.3 C.40.

108 “... impossibile est quod in hac vita sit ultima hominis felicitas.” *SCG* B.3 C.48 ¶1.

109 “Huius autem ultimae et perfectae felicitatis in hac vita nihil est adeo simile sicut vita contemplantium veritatem, secundum quod est possibile in hac vita. Et ideo philosophi, qui de illa felicitate ultima plenam notitiam habere non potuerunt, in contemplatione quae est possibilis in hac vita, ultimam felicitatem hominis posuerunt.” *SCG* B.3 C.63 ¶10.

110 Jeremy Holmes, “Aquinas' *Lectura in Matthaeum*” in *Aquinas on Scripture: An Introduction to His Biblical Commentaries*, 82.

111 Bernard Blankenhorn, OP, *The Mystery of Union with God: Dionysian Mysticism in Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015), 286-7.

noetic union.”¹¹² Further, according to Torrell, Thomas makes contemplation the ground and anticipation of our friendship with the Holy Spirit and our eschatological return to the Father.¹¹³ This contemplative approach also informs Thomas' approach to Scripture; according to Nicholas Healy, the *lectio* method of doing theology, involving students examining and arguing on the text under the direction of a master, “is a thoroughly communal and, as it were, active form of contemplation”¹¹⁴--and perhaps a foretaste of the Kingdom, where “they will all be taught by God” (John 6:54).

The *Summa Contra Gentiles* raises some other points in its more extensive treatment of contemplation, and one of them is of special interest to our topic. Connecting politics to the end of contemplation, St. Thomas says that this end “also requires rest from the disturbances of the passions ... and from exterior disturbances, to which the whole regimen of civil life is ordered.”¹¹⁵ In a case of grace perfecting nature, this dissertation will seek to demonstrate that this perfection of man is also the end of the Kingdom of God, towards which all the imperfect dimensions of that kingdom lead.

With these concepts established, we can move forward to the heart of this dissertation: a careful consideration of Thomas' discussion of the Kingdom in his two Gospel commentaries. In those chapters, we will examine what Thomas has to say about the Kingdom, and demonstrate how it takes the concepts of kingdoms in general, participation and contemplation to build a distinctive understanding of the Kingdom of Heaven.

112 Blankenhorn, 294. For more on the centrality of the intellect to union with God in Thomas, see Blankenhorn, Chapter 8 (317-441).

113 See Torrell, II.169-72.

114 Nicholas Healy, 12.

115 “Requiratur etiam quies a perturbationibus passionum ... et quies ab exterioribus perturbationibus, ad quam ordinatur totum regimen vitae civilis.” *SCG* B.3 C.37 ¶7.

A Note on Translation

With some exceptions (primarily brief references in this first chapter, and the section on the academic sermons in Chapter 5, where the English translators have access to superior texts), references to the various texts of St. Thomas, Hugh and St. Albert are to the Latin texts, often those hosted at dhs priory.org/thomas and corpusthomisticum.org. The translations are my own, but guided by and checked against previous English translations in many cases. Hence, citations are given for both the Latin that served as the source, and the English translations used for reference and for locating texts.

Chapter II: The Kingdom of God and Kingship of Christ in the Gospel Commentaries of St. Thomas Aquinas

Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there has been a resurgence in the study of St. Thomas as a Scriptural exegete, but the interest has not extended to all his works. The *Commentary on Matthew* is a substantial work of St. Thomas, but up until now, it has been little studied, due not only to the general neglect of Thomas' Scriptural works, but to specific textual problems that will be surveyed briefly below. It is, however, a natural starting point for studying Aquinas' doctrine on the Kingdom of God¹ and the Kingship of Christ, since St. Thomas drew the connection between this Gospel and those subjects at the very beginning of his academic career. While focusing on the treatment in the *Summa*, as other authors have, gives us a picture of Aquinas' thought in summary, approaching the topic of the Kingdom through his Biblical commentaries helps us better understand how Thomas drew on Scripture to construct his understanding of such a Scripturally grounded topic.

In his inaugural lecture as a Master of Theology at the University of Paris, he stated that the Synoptic Gospels treat primarily of Christ's humanity, in contrast to the Gospel of John, which focused on His divinity. The three Synoptics "are distinguished according to the three dignities which relate to Christ the man. Of these, Matthew defines what pertains to the royal dignity; hence, in the beginning of his Gospel he shows that he had descended from kings

¹ Or Heaven; the two terms are interchangeable for Aquinas and will be used in that manner here.

according to the flesh, and shows him adored by the royal Magi.”²

Thus, the present chapter will examine the various references, descriptions and uses of the kingdom and kingship imagery in Aquinas' commentary on the Gospels. The primary focus, as mentioned, will be on the neglected Matthew commentary. The key text, as has been noted,³ is the multidimensional description of the Kingdom of Heaven in the commentary on John the Baptist's preaching in Matthew 3. After examining that text, we will consider how those various forms or aspects of the Kingdom are demonstrated in the rest of the commentary, as well as the Kingdom of Heaven's relation to other kingdoms, such as the kingdom of Israel under the Old Law and the 'kingdom of the Devil.' After doing the work of stepping through Matthew, and considering various other elements of the Kingdom as expressed in Thomas' exegesis, we will highlight some of the points in the *Commentary on John* that address the same or similar themes, and come to a conclusion regarding the coherence of Aquinas' kingdom structure in the Gospel commentaries.

The *Catena Aurea* and the Commentaries

Before we begin an analysis of the Gospel commentaries, we should briefly address their relation to Thomas' other major work on the Evangelists, the *Catena Aurea*. Thomas began this collection of patristic commentary on the Gospels “at the request of Urban IV toward the end of 1262 or the beginning of 1263”⁴ and had the volume on Matthew ready to offer to that pope

2 “... qui distinguuntur secundum tres dignitates, quae Christo homini competunt. De ipso enim quantum ad dignitatem regiam determinat Matthaeus; unde in principio sui Evangelii eum secundum carnem a regibus descendisse ostendit et a magis regibus adoratum.” St. Thomas Aquinas, *Hic est liber*.

3 Mitchell, 49-51; Viviano, *Kingdom*, 62-63.

4 Torrell, I.136.

before his death in October 1264.⁵ The rest of the text took somewhat longer to complete, but it was finished “between 1265 and 1268, before Thomas returned to Paris.”⁶ Thus, it predates both of the Gospel commentaries. Torrell characterizes the last several chapters of the *Commentary on St. John* as “a rewriting of the *Catena*”⁷ and Jeremy Holmes, having selected the passage on the Transfiguration as “typical” of the *Commentary on St. Matthew*, concludes that “those parts of Thomas’ text which are directly dependent on the *Catena* make 70 per cent of the total commentary on Mt. 17.1-9.”⁸

The *Catena Aurea* contains little of Thomas' own thought, but it is an invaluable companion to a study of the Gospel commentaries as a way to track Thomas’ sources.⁹ While direct study of the *Catena* on kingship would be a valuable work in itself it lies beyond the scope of this discussion, and use of the *Catena* will be limited to cross-referencing its citations to uses of the Fathers in the Gospel commentaries.

The Commentary on St. Matthew

Although earlier scholarship dated the *Lectura in Mattheum* to Thomas’ first period as a *Magister in Sacra Pagina* at the University of Paris,¹⁰ from 1256-1259, more recent work has demonstrated conclusively that it belongs to the second Parisian period, most likely during the academic year of 1269-1270.¹¹ This means that the Matthew commentary is an immediate

5 Torrell, I.136-37.

6 Torrell, I.137.

7 Torrell, I.139.

8 Holmes, 86.

9 Often more easily that the raw text of the commentaries allows, given that the *Catena Aurea* has been studied and annotated with more depth than those commentaries, especially the neglected Matthew text.

10 See Torrell, I.55-56, and Holmes, 75.

11 See Torrell, I.55-56, and Holmes, 75-76.

predecessor to Aquinas' better-known commentary on John, and as Holmes points it, it is the work of "Aquinas at the height of his powers, with the entire patristic tradition at his fingertips and a complete command of scholastic theology."¹²

Unfortunately, the text available to us may not represent Aquinas at his full brilliance. As Holmes notes, "the *lectura* come down to us through *reportationes*, that is, notes taken down by person in the audience and later filled out from memory or other sources to look more like the actual transcript of a lecture."¹³ Unlike the Commentary on John,¹⁴ Thomas does not appear to have reviewed these notes for publication.¹⁵ In addition, the manuscript tradition is limited—only four manuscripts, from two sources, survive. "Peter [d'Andria] seems to have written down the comments on chapters 1-12 of Matthew, while Leodegar [of Besançon] recorded the lectures from 6.9 through to the end of the Gospel."¹⁶

The tradition is further complicated by the fact that the manuscripts are "not only incomplete but erroneous."¹⁷ Key portions of the text of Chapters 5 and 6—dealing with the Sermon on the Mount—were missing from all the manuscripts available until recently; the commentary's first editor, Bartholomew of Sina, filled in the gaps with a commentary by Peter de Scala, a late 13th-century Dominican.¹⁸ Fortunately for scholars of Thomas, in 1955, a copy of Peter d'Andria's *reportatio* containing the missing material was discovered in a library at

12 Holmes, 77.

13 Holmes, 74.

14 Torrell, I.339.

15 Holmes, 74.

16 Holmes, 74.

17 Torrell, I.57.

18 Torrell, I.56-57 and Holmes, 74-75.

Basel.¹⁹ Until recently, only fragments of this text were available to the public.²⁰ However, as of September 2013, the Aquinas Institute of Lander, Wyoming has published a Latin-English edition of the Commentary on Matthew which, though primarily based on the earlier Marietti text, uses the Basel manuscript to correct the lacunae and replace the interpolated portions.

While a final critical edition awaits the work of the Leonine Commission, for the first time, the academic community has easy access to a complete and uncorrupted version of the Commentary text. Whatever faults remain in what has come down to us, this remains a valuable commentary and source of insight into Aquinas' biblical theology.

This study of the concept of the Kingdom and of kingship in the *Commentary on Matthew* is, as mentioned, arranged thematically. The heart of the teaching on the Kingdom can be found in the commentary on its first mention in Matthew 3, so the study will begin there with an examination of Thomas' multidimensional definition of what the Gospel means by “the Kingdom of Heaven.” We will then examine the four dimensions that Aquinas identifies in that structure—the internal or moral and spiritual, the Scriptural or evangelical, the ecclesiastical, and the eschatological. Following that, some commentary is in order on what Thomas has to say about both the Kingdom in relation to history and the kingdoms of the world, especially that of Israel under the Old Law. and to the kingdom of the Devil that it perpetually wars against.

However, these divisions cannot be made perfect. Thomas is a master of interweaving various themes throughout his exegesis, especially when he can draw on multiple patristic

19 Torrell, I.57 and Holmes, 74-75.

20 Selections of it were reproduced in J.-P. Renard, “*La Lectura super Matthaeum* V. 20-48 de Thomas d’Aquin (Edition d’après le ms. Bale, Univ. Bibl. B.V. 12)”, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 50 (1983), 145-190, and H.-V. Schooner, ““*La Lectura in Matthaeum* de S. Thomas (Deux fragments inédits et la *Reportatio* de Pierre d’Andria)”, *Angelicum* 33 (1956), 121-42.

sources to support the various facets of his interpretation. Thus, we will often see Thomas strike an ecclesiastical note in a passage dealing with the kingdom in the individual soul, or connect the proper interpretation of Scripture to the relationship between the Kingdom of Heaven and the earthly Israel. While the larger segments dealing with these themes are placed appropriately, trying to fit every reference into the proper theme would result in a fragmented hodgepodge of texts. This organic unity further supports this contention that for Thomas, these are all aspects of a unified concept of the Kingdom, not a confused collection of exegeses.

Matthew 3: Defining the Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 3, which opens with the proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven by John the Baptist, provides the clearest statement in the *Commentary on Matthew* of what the Kingdom of Heaven is.²¹ Aquinas opens the discussion of the Kingdom by stating that “one never finds the promise of the Kingdom of Heaven in the Old Testament, but it was proclaimed first by John, which pertains to his dignity.”²² This will be highlighted further in the section on the Kingdom's relation to Israel, but for the moment, it should be noted that the Kingdom of Heaven is something new, while at the same time being in continuity with what has gone before.

“The Kingdom of Heaven”, he continues, “is received in four ways in Scripture.”²³ The first,

21 St. Thomas uses the terms ‘kingdom of God’ and ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ interchangeably; indeed, in St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 13-28* (hereafter *Commentary on Matthew* V.2), trans. by Jeremy Holmes (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2013) Chapter 13, Lecture 1 ¶1123, 15, he uses both terms in the same sentence and on the same topic. This dissertation will follow its Master on the point.

22 “Et nota quod numquam in Scriptura veteris testamenti invenitur promissum regnum caelorum; sed primo Ioannes nuntiat, quod pertinet ad dignitatem eius.” St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 1-12* (hereafter *Commentary on Matthew* V.1), trans. by Jeremy Holmes (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2013) Chapter 3, Lecture 1 ¶250, 80; Cf. ¶258, as well as Jerome and Chrysostom, cited in St. Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea: Matthew*, translated by John Henry Parker, v. I, J.G.F. and J. Rivington (London, 1842), hosted at www.dhsprory.org/thomas/CAMatthew.htm, accessed on April 7, 2016, Chapter 3, Lecture 11.

23 “Regnum autem caelorum in Scriptura quatuor modis accipitur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶250, 80. This definition is lifted directly from Remigius, down to the citations of Scripture; cf. *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.3 L.1.

based on the common medieval reading of Luke 17:21 (“The Kingdom of God is within you”), is Christ’s indwelling by grace in the individual soul. “And this is called the kingdom of heaven because, by grace, the road to the kingdom of heaven is begun in us.”²⁴ Benedict Viviano calls this a “familiar false start based on Luke 17:21, which becomes the basis for an individualist, private interior definition.”²⁵ The medieval tradition as received by Thomas did read Luke 17:21 as referring to an interior rule of Christ²⁶; defining it as a ‘false start’ seems to depend heavily on one’s premises and presuppositions regarding Jesus’ knowledge and mission. Suffice it to say that from a medieval perspective, since the Kingdom has not yet manifested in its visible fullness, and neither Jesus nor the report of his words in Scripture could be fundamentally in error, “the kingdom of God is within [or among] you” in the present tense must refer to the rule of Christ in the hearts of believers.

The second meaning given is Scripture; this interpretation hinges largely on Thomas’ reading of the parable of the vineyard in Matthew 21, which we will examine in more detail later. Here, Aquinas says that Scripture “is called the kingdom, because this law leads to the kingdom.”²⁷ This is keeping with what he saw about law in the *Summa*; “the intent of every lawgiver is to make good citizens”.²⁸ In this case, the New Law of the Gospel makes the good citizens who constitute the Kingdom of Heaven. Hence, while Viviano calls this interpretation one that “can

24 “Et dicitur regnum caelorum, quia per inhabitantem gratiam inchoatur nobis via caelestis regni.”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶250, 80. Since Remigius, and through him Aquinas, cite Matthew 21:43, which refers to the transfer of the Kingdom from the Jews to the Gentiles, in the context of Sacred Scripture, it can be taken as read that Scripture here encompasses the Old Testament as well as the New.

25 Viviano, “Kingdom of God in Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas”, 510.

26 Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea: Luke*, translated by John Henry Newman and Joseph Kenny, OP, hosted at www.dhspriory.org/thomas/CALuke.htm, accessed on April 7, 2016, Chapter 17, Lecture 6.

27 “Et dicitur regnum, quia lex eius ducit ad regnum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶250, 80.

28 “... quod voluntas cuiuslibet legislatoris haec est, ut faciat cives bonus.”, *ST* I-II.92.1.

only be characterized as a rather remote, arbitrary equivocation,”²⁹ Thomas appears to have a reason beyond just parroting Remigius and Origen.³⁰ If a kingdom is constituted by law and the authority to promulgate and interpret it, then the law does in a very real, if removed, sense, make the kingdom.³¹ In addition, if Christ is the Kingdom, as Thomas goes on to argue, and both Christ and the Scriptures are the Word (Scripture, admittedly, in a secondary and analogical sense), then Scripture has some claim, if only analogically, to represent the Kingdom, if only as its charter and representation. It also appears, from the emphasis placed on the preaching of Christ and the Apostles elsewhere in the Gospel, especially in the interpretation of the parables of Matthew 13, that this understanding of the Kingdom should not be limited strictly to the written Scriptures, but to the message they contain, which was set forth first in that preaching and continues to be preached throughout the history of the Church. Thomas' strong identification of Scripture and *sacra doctrina* was discussed in Chapter 1, and appears to have an influence here; hence, the material on preaching as the Kingdom in this Gospel will be discussed alongside the treatment of Scripture as the Kingdom.

The third meaning of kingdom is a more common one, which we will see very strongly in Hugh of St. Cher and Albertus Magnus in Chapter 5—“the present Church Militant.”³² However, like the first two meanings, this is a derivative meaning, since the earthly Church is modeled on the heavenly Church. As Walter Mitchell points out in his study of the relation between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Church, the Kingdom here “denotes the earthly church’s exemplary

29 Viviano, “Kingdom of God in Albert and Aquinas”, 510.

30 Cf. Remigius, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.3 L.1, and Origen, “Sed forte in Evangelio...”, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.21 L.6.

31 American scholars may have an advantage in seeing Thomas’ point here, given the reverence in which our Constitution and other founding documents are held, and the way in which they are seen as constitutive of the nation.

32 “Tertio, dicitur praesens Ecclesia militans”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶250, 80.

cause. Thomas does not mean equivalence of kingdom and church; rather he is explaining the operative force within the church now of its eschatological goal. This operative force makes the present church to be *like*, to *participate* in, the kingdom's reality, but does *not* make it now the kingdom to come nor declare it such."³³

That leads us to the fourth meaning, the "heavenly court" (*caelestis curia*), a meaning Aquinas³⁴ takes from Matthew 8:11 about the eschatological Kingdom in which peoples of all nations will join Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Aquinas concludes this set of definitions by stating that "before the time of John this was not mentioned, but only the kingdom of the Jebusites (Ex. 3:8), but in this way the kingdom of heaven is promised to His church."³⁵ The Kingdom of the Jebusites refers to the lands of Judea, especially the city of Jerusalem; Thomas makes a strong distinction here between the Kingdom of Israel and the full Kingdom of Heaven, which will be reinforced by his distinction between the Old Law and the New Law.

Unpacking this multifaceted understanding of the kingdom, and seeking a unifying theme, is the work of this dissertation, of course. However, as Mitchell notes above, the first three meanings given for kingdom are largely derivative—Christ's indwelling or grace as the way to the Kingdom, Scripture as the Law of the Kingdom, and the earthly Church as a reflection of the heavenly kingdom. The sense given to kingdom here appears to be primarily eschatological, emphasizing the heavenly kingdom—but just because the other aspects considered are secondary, it does not relegate them to unimportance. Rather, they are temporal instantiations or

³³ Mitchell, 51.

³⁴ Again following Remigius.

³⁵ "Ante tempus autem Ioannis non fiebat mentio, nisi de regno Iebusaeorum, Ex. III, 8, sed modo promittitur regnum caelorum suae Ecclesiae." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶250, 80-81.

foreshadowings of the full eschatological kingdom—the seeds that will bear the fullness of their fruit at the end of time—and as Mitchell points out, means of participating or moving towards the Kingdom during our earthly pilgrimage.³⁶ They also lead to the eschatological participation in Christ, whom Aquinas will go on to identify as a ‘fifth sense’ of the Kingdom of God.

The Fifth Sense of the Kingdom

Thomas identifies the Kingdom of God as possessing four senses when commenting on Matthew 3:2, but he adds another one only a few sentences later. Commenting on John’s proclamation of the coming Messiah in Matthew 3:11, St. Thomas states simply “that kingdom is Christ,”³⁷ again referring to Luke 17:21 and following a tradition that goes back to Origen³⁸ and which will further be developed by Bellarmine, Ratzinger and others.³⁹ Aquinas moves back and forth here between John the Baptist’s mission as preparation for the Kingdom and preparation for Christ; this is the point where he clearly identifies the two in this context.

What about that almost tossed-aside statement that “that kingdom is Christ”? St. Thomas holds a strong identification of king and kingdom, as we will see when we look at Psalm 2.⁴⁰ In addition, the three derivative senses mentioned earlier in the lecture could be applied to Christ as well as the Kingdom. Grace is the indwelling of Christ, after all, according to the theology of grace and of the Divine Missions expressed in the *Summa*.⁴¹ In addition, both Christ and Scripture are, in analogical senses, the Word of God. The identification of Christ with the Church

36 Mitchell, 51.

37 “Regnum illud Christus est,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶275, 89.

38 Viviano, “Kingdom of God in Albert and Aquinas”, 503.

39 See Sullivan, 959-995, especially pp. 990-3.

40 See Chapter 3, below.

41 See *ST* I.43, where Aquinas makes explicit that the indwelling associated with sanctifying grace is common to the Trinity, and that both the Son and Spirit can be spoken of as sent invisibly. *Ad. 1.* makes it clear that certain elements of grace can be appropriated to the indwelling of the Son, namely intellectual graces, which provides a link to the emphasis on contemplation seen in the commentaries on Matthew 8 and John 3.

is so well-known as barely to need comment. Even the fourth meaning of kingdom is Christocentric when seen in the broader context, as will be discussed in the commentaries on the Pauline letters.

With this fourfold⁴² structure of the Kingdom in place, we can now look at how Thomas explicates the individual components. The first one is the internal kingdom, which is strongly emphasized in the Sermon on the Mount—and the fact that this is a natural starting point, combined with the difficulties in accessing the authentic Thomas on that part of the Gospel, may be part of why study of the Kingdom in Aquinas' Scripture commentaries is an untilled field.

The First Aspect of the Kingdom: The Internal Kingdom and How It is Attained

Beatitudes and Beatitude

Chapters 5 and 6, which contain most of the Sermon on the Mount, also contain some of the richest Kingdom of Heaven material in Matthew's Gospel, and have been the hardest parts of Aquinas' commentary to mine. Many lectures on these two chapters were lost or corrupted parts of an already scanty manuscript tradition. These lacunae were only filled in by the discovery of the Basel manuscript in the 1950s, and took several decades after that to become fully accessible to students of St. Thomas.⁴³

The first reference to the kingdom of Heaven in this part of the Commentary is when

⁴² Or fivefold, depending on one's perspective.

⁴³ For a brief discussion of this issue, see Torrell, I.56-7, Holmes, 74-5, and Smalley, *Gospels*, 257-58. Selections from the Basel manuscript with commentary can be found in Renard and Schooner. The full Basel text of Chapters 5 and 6 has been reproduced in the Aquinas Institute's Latin/English edition of the *Commentary on Matthew*, and has been used here.

Thomas analyzes the structure of the Beatitudes: “in these beatitudes, some things are set forth as merits, and some as rewards, and this is clear in each. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*—here is the merit; *because theirs is the kingdom of Heaven*—here is the reward.”⁴⁴ These rewards, he goes on to say, “may be had in two ways, namely perfected and complete, and so it is fully in the homeland, or secondly inchoate and imperfectly, and so it is in this life. Hence, the holy have a certain inchoate form of this blessedness.”⁴⁵ This recalls the fourfold definition of the Kingdom from Matthew 3, where the ‘present’ or ‘earthly’ forms—sanctifying grace, Scripture, and the Church Militant—are subordinated to the eschatological form of the Eternal Kingdom. A case could be made for studying these texts dealing with either the Kingdom of the individual soul or the eschatological kingdom, but given the long association of the Sermon, and especially the Beatitudes, with moral theology and spirituality, I have placed them here.

And what is the reward promised to the poor by saying that “theirs is the kingdom of Heaven”? “In this is indicated not only the heights of honor, but affluence of riches.”⁴⁶ Aquinas cites James 2:5 here, and again draws both a parallel to and distinction from the rewards promised by the Old Law. The parallel is established by a citation of Deuteronomy 28:1, while the distinction is that Jesus “first sets beatitude in the contempt of temporal riches.”⁴⁷ Aquinas explains the Kingdom of Heaven here in the same terms that he explained the Devil’s promise of

44 “... in istis beatitudinibus quaedam ponuntur ut merita, et quaedam ut praemia: et hoc in singulis. *Beati pauperes spiritu: ecce meritum; quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum: ecce praemium*” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.2 ¶409, 132.

45 “... possunt dupliciter haberi, scilicet perfecte et consummate, et sic in patria tantum: et secundum inchoationem et imperfect, et sic in via. Unde sancti habent quamdam inchoationem illius beatitudinis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.2 ¶413, 133. Cf. Augustine, Sermon in Mont. i, 5, in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.9.

46 “... in quo notatur non solum altitudo honoris, sed affluentia divitiarum” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.2 ¶417, 134. Cf. Glossa, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.1.

47 “Primo ponit beatitudinem in contemptu divitiarum temporalium.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.2 ¶417, 134. Cf. Jerome, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.1.

worldly kingdoms in the Temptation narrative. Thomas will return to this motif of analogy to earthly rewards elsewhere, most notably in those sermons where he touches on the Kingdom and eternal reward. This has both moral implications, with the emphasis on poverty of spirit and detachment of riches, and eschatological ones, since Thomas will reiterate that all earthly riches are as nothing in comparison to heavenly ones.

The recurrence of the term “kingdom of heaven” in the ‘eighth beatitude’, as Thomas identifies 5:10-11, is explained by some of his authorities as the same thing as in the first, “and this is for designating the perfection of patience (Jas 1:4); for perfection is always shown in that it returns to its beginning, as is seen in a circle.”⁴⁸ One who suffers persecution has demonstrated all the virtues and thus is due all the rewards, by this interpretation, which are summed up by recapitulating the first promise. Aquinas proffers another interpretation, from Ambrose, that this refers to “insofar as to the glory of the soul and the body: the kingdom of heaven and the virtue of the soul correspond, but martyrdom corresponds to the blessedness which is found in the glorification of bodies because of the sufferings which they have endured.”⁴⁹ A third opinion is that “the kingdom of heaven is promised to the poor in hope, because they do not immediately go to it, but to martyrs in reality because they rush into it immediately.”⁵⁰ The second and third interpretations maintain the unity-in-distinction between present and eternal modes of the Kingdom that we have seen earlier in this commentary. This connection is reinforced by

48 “... et hoc designandum perfectionem patientiae, Iac. I, 4; perfectio autem semper designator per hoc quod revertitur ad sui principium, sicut apparet in circulo.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.3 ¶445, 144. Cf Augustine, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.8.

49 “... quantum ad gloriam animae et corporis: virtuti enim animae respondet regnum caelorum, sed martyrio respondet beatitudo quae consistit in glorificatione corporum propter supplicia quae passa sunt.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.3 ¶445, 144. Cf Ambrose, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.8.

50 “... regnum caelorum pauperibus promittitur in spe quia non statim evolvant, sed martyribus in re quia statim evolvant.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.3 ¶445, 144.

Aquinas' interpretation of Matthew 5:12, "Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven"—"namely, in the empyrean."⁵¹ This also gives us a first look at the idea of attaining the Kingdom through tribulation, which Aquinas will apply both to the king and to the subjects/participants in the Kingdom. The idea of entering the kingdom also parallels the desire for the Kingdom to come that Jesus will highlight for us in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6.

Asking for the Kingdom

Chapter 6 contains the Lord's Prayer, with the petition "Thy kingdom come", and Aquinas treats of the Kingdom in that context.⁵² He identifies this petition as the second petition of the prayer, and the first pertaining to us: "the last end is eternal life, and we request this by saying *thy kingdom come*."⁵³ Citing Augustine and Chrysostom, Aquinas "believe[s] that this is the literal meaning; hence we ask *come*, that is, make us to arrive at and share in eternal blessedness."⁵⁴ However, Thomas provides two other readings.

The first, which could be considered both allegorical and anagogical, comes from Augustine, who says that "Christ began reigning from when he redeemed the world ... thus *your kingdom come*, that is, the completion of your reign."⁵⁵ This argues for an eschatological understanding of the petition; "Lord, may you come to judge, and may the glory of your

51 "... scilicet empyreo", *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.3 ¶449, 146.

52 For more on this, adapted to the needs of a popular audience, see the section on *Expositio in orationem dominicam* under Collations and Sermons in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

53 "... finis ultimus est vita aeterna; et hoc petimus cum dicimus *adveniat regnum*." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.3 ¶585, 206.

54 "... credo quod hoc sit litteralis expositio; petimus ergo *adveniat*, id est fac nos pervenire et participare aeternam beatitudinem." *Commentary on Matthew*, V.1 C.6 L.3 ¶586, 207. Cf Augustine, Sermon in Mont. ii, 6 in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.6 L.4. Curiously, no citation from Chrysostom is given; conversely, an explanation given by Cyprian in the *Catena* but not mentioned here is that the Kingdom is Christ Himself; cf. Aquinas' comments on Matthew 3, above.

55 "Christus regnare incepit ex tunc ex quo mundum redemit ... *adveniat ergo regnum tuum*, id est consummation regni tui." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.3 ¶586, 207.

kingdom appear.”⁵⁶ However, Amos 5:18—“woe to those who desire the day of the Lord”—and the authority of Jerome seem to argue against this interpretation.⁵⁷

The second alternative fits in with the moral sense of Scripture, as well as the anagogical sense: “let the reign of sin be destroyed, and reign over us, O Lord: when we serve justice, then God rules, but when sin, the devil.”⁵⁸ Thomas continues by noting that “they could most rightly ask *your kingdom come* who have justified themselves as sons ... since the inheritance is due to sons, but that kingdom is in heaven; hence you cannot go hence without being made heavenly.”⁵⁹

All three interpretations converge in the idea of participation in the Kingdom, whether that be full participation in the first, the full manifestation of the Kingdom in the second, or our full conformity to the King and the Kingdom in the third. In all three cases, the Kingdom is to be desired and to be sought, and seeking the Kingdom will be considered later in this same chapter, so we turn to it now.

The Seeking of the Kingdom

We return to the Kingdom in Matthew 6:33—“Seek you therefore first the kingdom of God.” This statement, according to St. Thomas, “sets forth three things.”⁶⁰ The kingdom is the end, “because by the kingdom of God is understood eternal beatitude.”⁶¹ This is “because in life anything is ruled properly when it is under a governing rule. But in life things are not fully

56 “Domine, venias ad iudicium ut appareat Gloria regni tui.” *Commentary on Matthew*, C.6 L.3 ¶586, 207.

57 *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.3 ¶586, 207; cf. Jerome in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.6 L.4.

58 “... destruat regnum peccati, et tu Domine regna super nos: quando enim servimus iustitiae tunc Deus regnat, quando autem peccato diabolus.” *Commentary on Matthew*, C.6 L.3 ¶586, 207; cf. Jerome in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.6 L.4.

59 “... satis iuste poterant petere *adveniat regnum tuum* qui se filios comprobaverunt ... filiis enim debetur hereditas; sed regnum istud in caelis est; unde ire non potes nisi caelestis efficiaris.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.3 ¶586, 207.

60 “Tria hic ponit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶630, 230.

61 “... quia in regno Dei intelligitur beatitudo aeterna.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶630, 230.

submitted to God, because we are not without sin; and it will be so in glory, where we will accomplish the divine will perfectly.”⁶²

The second part of this verse is “the right way” to reach the kingdom, which is by justice. Here, Thomas is apparently drawing from Pseudo-Chrysostom. “Hence if you would go to the kingdom of God, it is needful that you keep the justice of the kingdom.”⁶³ This justice is specifically God’s justice, “because man, by the help of grace, believes that he can be saved.”⁶⁴ The third part of the verse, where Jesus says “and all these things will be added unto you”, returns to the motif of wages, where the day’s wages are identified as eternal life.

In a final note, the words “*to seek first*” are understood in two ways: as an end or as a reward. And thus he says *Seek first the kingdom of God*, and not temporal things. We ought not evangelize so that we might eat, but the other way around.”⁶⁵ Returning to the Lord’s prayer, Aquinas gives a hierarchy of goods to be sought: “Therefore first we should seek the very good of God, namely his glory; in other matters first the kingdom of God, second justice, third *your will be done*, fourth those things which are added, *our daily bread*, etc.”⁶⁶ One could easily argue that Thomas is saying the same thing in two ways, since the glory of God and the Kingdom of God are, in many ways and contexts, the same thing—the full manifestation of God in His creation and the bringing of that creation into conformity with His design. For human beings, the

62 “Tunc enim proprie aliquid regitur quando subditur regulae gubernantis. Sed in vita ista non subduntur totaliter Deo, quia non sumus sine peccatis; et haec erunt in Gloria, ubi perfecte faciemus voluntatem divinam.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶630, 230.

63 “Unde si vis ire ad regnum Dei oportet quod serves iustitiam regni.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶630, 230. Cf Pseudo-Chrysostom in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.6 L.20.

64 “... quia per auxilium gratiae credit homo se posse salvare,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶630, 231.

65 “... *quaerere primo* intelligitur dupliciter: sicut finem aut mercedem. Et sic dicit *quaerite primum regnum Dei*, et non temporalia. Non enim debemus evangelizare ut manducemus, sed e converso.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶630, 231.

66 “Quia primo debemus quaerere ipsum bonum Dei, scilicet gloriam eius; in aliis autem primo regnum Dei, secundo iustitiam, tertio *fiat voluntas tua*, quarto quae sunt adicienda, *panem nostrum* etc.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶630, 231.

full manifestation of that is in knowledge—the knowledge acquired through contemplation—and love, which is both fueled by contemplation and tested by tribulation. These two themes are discussed in some of the next chapters of Matthew.

Entering the Kingdom: Tribulation and Contemplation

Although the Kingdom of Heaven is not mentioned in the first half of Matthew 7, Aquinas does make some references to it when cross-referencing verses here with other parts of Scripture. The first such instance is in the discussion of Matthew 7:13 (“Enter in by the narrow gate...”), where the gate is understood to lead to the Kingdom. Thomas cites Augustine as saying that thus “the gate is Christ ...because without him one cannot come to the kingdom.”⁶⁷ The narrowness of the gate is also understood as the humility and suffering of Christ, with reference to Luke 24:26, and also to Acts 14:21, which says that “through many tribulations it is fitting that we enter the kingdom of God.”⁶⁸ This is the first mention of the relationship between suffering and entrance into the Kingdom; Thomas will make use of this elsewhere, especially commenting on the Passion.

The conclusion in 7:14, “and how few there are who find it!” is also connected to the kingdom in a cross-reference to Luke 9:62. “And some discover it and recede from it; of them it is said in Luke 9:62: *No one placing his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.*”⁶⁹ A similar connection to Luke is made in reference to the Kingdom in Matthew 8:11-12. “*And will sit down.* This reclining is a wealth of spiritual things, namely contemplation. Luke

67 “Christus porta est ... quia sine ipso non venit ad regnum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.7 L.1 ¶650, 240. Cf also Pseudo-Chrysostom in *Catean Aurea* Matthew C.7 L.7.

68 “... per multas tribulationes oportet nos intrare in regnum Dei.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.7 L.1 ¶650, 240.

69 “Sed et aliqui inveniunt, et retrocedunt, de quibus dicitur Lucae IX, 62: *nemo mittens manum suam ad aratrum, et aspiciens retro, aptus est regno Dei.*” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.7 L.1 ¶653, 241.

22:29: *And I dispose to you a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.*”⁷⁰

This bears some resemblance to Pseudo-Origen, where it describes “not the bodily posture, but the spiritual rest,”⁷¹ but the contemplative dimension appears original to Aquinas, and should be read in light of his commentary on John 3. The “children of the kingdom ... cast out into the outer darkness” (Matt. 8:12), by contrast, are understood as the Jews, “because in them God ruled”⁷²—a callback to the relationship between the Old and the New Law, which will be discussed below.

Similarly, the Apostles are commissioned in Chapter 10 to preach that “the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” (10:7) This may not seem directly relevant to the preceding passages, but St. Thomas makes an interesting move here by connecting this to the call for penance in Matthew 4:17, and looking forward to the Passion. “Psalm 118:155 [says] *Salvation is far from sinners*, but in this case it is near through the passion of Christ; Hebrews 9:12: *by His very blood he has entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption*. Thus He says *is at hand*, namely through my passion; thus in them it is founded by the participation of grace.”⁷³ Thomas once more makes reference to the Kingdom of God as “within you” from Luke 17:21. We will see later on, especially in the *Commentary on John* that St. Thomas sees the Kingdom as, in a very real sense, won through the victory that is the Passion and Resurrection. However, it also

70 “*Et recumbent*. Iste recubitus opulentia est rerum spiritualium, scilicet in contemplatione. Lc. XXII, 29: *eece dispono vobis regnum ut edatis et bibatis super mensam meam in regno meo*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.8 L.2 ¶704, 259.

71 *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.8 L.3.

72 “... quia in illis Deus regnabat.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.8 L.2 ¶705, 259. Cf Augustine, Jerome and Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.8 L.3.

73 “Ps. CXVIII, 155: *longe enim a peccatoribus salus*; sed modo est prope per passionem Christi; Hebr. IX, 12: *per proprium sanguine introivit semel in sancta, aeterna redemptione inventa*. Unde dicit *appropinquabit*, scilicet per passionem meam; unde in eis fundatur per participationem gratiae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.10 L.1 ¶817, 305-6.

fits into the moral sense here through the emphasis on grace, participation, and tribulation.

Turning to Matthew 11, the difficult passage on the “least in the Kingdom of Heaven” is followed by one that is even more challenging and obscure: “And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent bear it away.” (11:12) Again, Aquinas provides three explanations. The first is closest to the moral sense: Thomas takes it as presenting an analogy between the struggle and violence involved in robbery and that required of a sinner to “rise up to spiritual things that he may enter the kingdom of heaven.”⁷⁴

The second explanation, based on Hilary, is more properly allegorical. “You know that robbery is when property is taken against the will of its master: the preaching of salvation was sent to the Jews, and then by Christ to everywhere. ... And when He was sent to them, they did not receive Him; while those to whom He was not sent ‘stole’ Him according to humility.”⁷⁵ This is cross-referenced to Matthew 8:11 and 21:43. A somewhat puzzling note is that the men who “violently rob”⁷⁶ appear to be the Gentiles, who also received the Kingdom in humility. That focus on humility will return in Matthew 18.

The third explanation, which resembles Chrysostom’s commentary, combines elements of the moral and allegorical: “That which is stolen is taken with haste,”⁷⁷ and the effect of the preaching of the Kingdom “seemed like a hasty movement; therefore he says *suffers violence*,

74 “... quod posit venire ad regnum caelorum, assurgat ad spiritualia.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶922. 341.

75 “Scitis quod rapina est proprie quando alienum praeter voluntatem domini rapitur: praedicatio salutis missa est Iudaeis, et per Christum ubique ... Et cum ad eos mitteretur, no receperunt; tamen illi quibus non mittebatur, propter humilitatem rapiebant.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶922, 341. Cf Hilary in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.11 L.5.

76 “... violenter rapiunt.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶922, 341.

77 “Illud quod rapitur, cum festinatione rapitur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶922. 341. Cf Chrysostom in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.11 L.5.

because they move towards the kingdom in a rather hasty way.”⁷⁸ The passage remains somewhat obscure, but Thomas favors an approach that emphasizes the qualities of the soul needed to enter the Kingdom. He will return to them after the Transfiguration, in the teaching on ‘progression towards glory’ in Matthew 18.

The Common Way to the Kingdom: Humility, Docility, Charity

Thomas spoke of seeking for the kingdom and entering it above, but he brings the goal and the path to it into prime focus in Matthew 18-19, when he considers the ways of entering the kingdom and explains Jesus in these chapters as teaching “regarding progress towards that glory.”⁷⁹ Matthew 18 speaks of the “common way” (*viam communem*) towards that glory, while Matthew 19 will treat of the “way of perfection.”

The chapter opens, of course, with the disciples asking “who do you think is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” According to Thomas, this is a question inspired by the events of 17:24-27, “hence [Jesus] seemed to have preferred [Peter] to the others,”⁸⁰ which triggered envy in the still-weak disciples.

However, Aquinas does not see the question as entirely blameworthy. “In this question this must be imitated, that they did not desire things of earth, but things of heaven.”⁸¹ This seeking “excellence in the kingdom of heaven”⁸² can be pursued in two ways. The first is “so

78 “... videbatur festinus cursus; ideo dicit *vim patitur*, quia per modum cuiusdam festinationis tendunt ad regnum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶922. 341.

79 “... hic de profectione ad illam gloriam.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1485, 136. Cf Jerome and Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.18 L.1.

80 “... unde videbatur eum aliis praetulisse.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1486, 136.

81 “In ista petitione est hoc imitandum, quod non erant cupidi de terrestribus, sed de caelestibus.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1486, 136. Cf Chrysostom, “However, we are not even able to attain to their defects; we do not ask who is greater in the kingdom of heaven, but “who is greater in the kingdom of earth?” (Nos autem neque ad defectus eorum contingere possumus: neque enim quaerimus quis maior est in regno caelorum? Sed: quis maior est in regno terrae?) *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.18 L.1.

82 “... excellentia in regno caelorum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1487, 136.

that we judge ourselves suitable, and this is pride [*superbia*].”⁸³ “But to desire greater grace, so that our glory might be greater, is not an evil. ... Also, the apostles knew that in glory there were diverse mansions, just as *star differs from star in radiance*, so they asked because they believed that one was greater than another [in Heaven].”⁸⁴

The response, where Christ calls a little child, is here interpreted in three different ways. Again citing Chrysostom, Aquinas provides first the interpretation that it was an actual child, “because he was immune to passions, that he might present an exemplar of humility.”⁸⁵ Other interpretations, strange as they may seem to modern readers, are that “Christ, regarding himself as a little child, stood in their midst”⁸⁶ or that “the little child is understood to be the Holy Spirit, who makes children because He is the Spirit of humility.”⁸⁷

Whoever the child in question is, he is to be imitated in several ways. “Not in age, but in simplicity,” Thomas starts, and he goes on to state that “there are many conditions of children. They do not desire great things ... they are free from concupiscence ... They do not record injuries.”⁸⁸

“Therefore,” it goes on, “*unless you become like this child*, namely, imitators of the properties of children, *you will not enter the kingdom of heaven*. For no one will enter unless he

83 “... ita quod reputemus nos idoneos; et hoc est *superbia*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1487, 136-7.

84 “Sed appetere maiorem gratiam, ut maior nobis sit gloria, non est malum ... Item apostolic sciebant quod in gloria erant diversae mansiones, sicut *stella differt a stella in claritate*; ideo quaerebant, quia credebant unum maiorem alio” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1487, 137.

85 “... quia passionibus erat immunis, ut exemplum humilitatis praeberet.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1488, 137. Cf. Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.18 L.1. Jerome speaks similarly in the *Catena*.

86 “Christus se parvulum reputans, statuit se in medio” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1488, 137.

87 “... per parvulum intelligitur Spiritus Sanctus, qui facit parvulos, quia est Spiritus humilitatis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1488, 137. Notes on this passage on the *Catena Aurea* suggest this comes from Origen through Jerome.

88 “Non aetate, sed simplicitate ... Multae sunt conditiones parvulorum. Non magna appetunt ... Sunt immunes a concupiscentia ... non recordantur inimicitiae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1489, 137. Cf. Gloss and Jerome, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.18 L.1.

is humble: *Glory will uphold the humble in spirit*, Prov. 29:23”⁸⁹ An alternative explanation, however, is also offered, where entry into the kingdom is taken as “into the Evangelical teaching,”⁹⁰ tying this to Matthew 21. In either case, the entry is through humility, to the point that “whoever is an imitator of childlike innocence, that one is greater, because the greater the amount of humility, to that degree he is higher.”⁹¹

The emphasis on humility would seem to favor the interpretation of the Kingdom here as the divine teaching, which is to be received with childlike trust and docility, rather than seeing it as Heaven proper, where greatness is, as Aquinas notes, associated rather with charity. In response, he makes the argument that “humility is necessarily connected with charity.”⁹² The argument hinges on the nature, not only of humility, but of the opposing vice of pride. “Just as there are two things in pride, the inordinate affection for and the inordinate estimation of oneself, it is to the contrary in humility, because the humble one regards not his own excellence; therefore, he does not hold himself worthy.”⁹³ Since love is connected to the desire for excellence, the humble man is therefore open to loving God rather than his own excellence, and attributes less to himself. Thus, “the more a man has of charity, so the more he has of humility.”⁹⁴

The next parable of the kingdom, in Matthew 18:23-35, is interpreted as dealing with the divine mercy and the issue of ingratitude. The kingdom of heaven here “is the law of the king;

89 “Unde nisi efficiamini sicut parvulus iste, scilicet imitatores proprietatum parvulorum, non intrabitis in regnum caelorum. Nullus enim intrabit nisi humilis; *humiles spiritu suscipiet gloria*, Prov. XXIX, 23.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1490, 137. Cf. Gloss and Jerome, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.18 L.1.

90 “... in doctrinam Evangelii”, *Commentary on Matthew*. V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1490, 137.

91 “... quicumque est imitator puerilis innocentiae, hic maior est, quia quanto humilior, tanto altior.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1490, 138.

92 “... caritatem necessario comitatur humilitas.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1491, 138.

93 “Sicut enim in superbia sunt duo, affectus inordinatus, et aestimatio inordinate de se; ita, e contrario, est in humilitate, quia propriam excellentiam non curat, item non reputat se dignum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1491, 138.

94 “sic quanto homo plus habet de caritate, habet etiam magis de humilitate.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.1 ¶1491, 138.

the very word of God is justice and truth. ... This is therefore likened to a human king, when *the Word was made flesh*. Or by the king, the present Church is designated, as above in 13:41.”⁹⁵

Aquinas goes on to say “it is well called a kingdom, if we consider all the things in a kingdom ... the king, the servants, and so forth.”⁹⁶ The king is God, “whether we understand it of the Father, of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit” while the servants are “the prelates of the Church, to whom the care of souls has been committed.”⁹⁷ The latter can be extended to all men, “because every single man has his soul entrusted to him.”⁹⁸ A similar parallel is drawn when it comes to the debt spoken of in the parable: “If we refer these talents to the prelates, we understand the sins of their subordinates, because as often as those under him sin because of his negligence, he becomes a debtor of ‘talents’. ... Hence this signifies a man who has many of the worst crimes.”⁹⁹ The importance of humility recurs in this parable, where Thomas that the servant’s “humility is commended; also his discretion is commended; also, his justice is commended.”¹⁰⁰ The latter two factors refer to the servant’s lack of presumption and willingness to make restitution; rather than beg for full forgiveness, he merely asks for time for repayment. God thus goes beyond what we ask; “hence the sorrow of the penitent does not cause remission, but the mercy of the Lord.”¹⁰¹

95 “... est lex regni: ipsum verbum Dei est iustitia et veritas ... Istud ergo assimilatum est homini Regi, quando *Verbum caro factum est*. Vel per regnum praesens Ecclesia designatur, ut supra XIII, 41.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1532, 152.

96 “Et bene dicitur *regnum*, si consideremus omnia quae sunt in regna...rest, servi, et huiusmodi” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1532, 152.

97 “... sive intelligatur de Patre, sive de Filio, sive de Spiritu Sancto. ... praelati Ecclesiae, quibus commissa est cura animarum.” *Commentary on Matthew* C.18 L.3 ¶1532, 152. Cf. Origen and Remigius, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.18 L.7.

98 “Quia etiam unicuique anima sua commissa est,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1532, 152.

99 “Si ad praelatos referimus haec talenta, peccata subditorum intelligimus: quia quoties peccat subditus per negligentiam suam, efficitur debitor talentorum ... Unde significatur homo habens multitudinem maximorum criminum” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1533, 153.

¹⁰⁰ “Commendatur autem huius humilitas; item commendatur discretio; item commendatur iustitia.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1535, 154.

¹⁰¹ “Unde dolor poenitentis non causat remissionem, sed misericordia Domini.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1536, 154. Cf. also “quod Dominus plura dat, quam homo audeat petere,” almost immediately following in that

All these factors are undone by the ingratitude of the servant; Thomas explicitly describes the humility as “pretense,”¹⁰² and by noting the smallness of the debt that the servant holds bound, and his cruelty in pursuing it, it seems that Thomas would agree that any discretion and justice were similarly feigned. The punishment of the ungrateful servant is eschatological, consisting of both separation from God and the torments of the demons. Thomas also highlights that the punishment “will be infinite. For if the pain ought not cease until satisfaction is made for the debt, and satisfaction cannot be made without grace, one who dies without charity will not be able to make satisfaction.”¹⁰³ This interpretation of the parable highlights the interrelation of humility, charity and grace that Thomas has been emphasizing in his exegesis of Matthew 18, and highlights their importance for entry into the Kingdom by pointing out the consequences of their absence. While this is the ordinary way of entering the Kingdom, Thomas does not neglect the more excellent way, but discusses it in the next chapter, focusing on elements that parallel the new mendicant movement that Thomas did so much to defend and encourage.¹⁰⁴

The Way of Perfection: Chastity and Poverty

In dealing with the “way of perfection,” Aquinas speaks first of chastity, demonstrating its value by word and deed.¹⁰⁵ Those “who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:12) are those who “have dedicated themselves to continual chastity ... for the reward of eternal life.”¹⁰⁶ The welcoming of the children in the passage immediately

paragraph.

¹⁰² “... ex simulatione”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1537, 154.

¹⁰³ “... hoc erit in infinitum. Si enim poena cessare non debet, donec fiat satisfactio debiti, et nullus sine gratia potest satisfacere qui decedit sine caritate, non poterit satisfacere.”, *Commentary on Matthew*, V.2 C.18 L.3 ¶1541, 156.

¹⁰⁴ For more on this, see the section on “Works on the Mendicant Controversy” in Chapter 4, below.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.19, L.1 ¶1564, 166.

¹⁰⁶ “... continuae castitati se dederunt ... propter praemium vitae aeternae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.19 L.1 ¶1569, 167.

following is taken by Thomas as a demonstration of this blessedness, for “the Lord had commended chastity, and because there is chastity and purity in children, therefore seeing that purity was pleasing to him.”¹⁰⁷ The children are also commended as examples of humility, judging from the fact that Thomas cross-references this verse with both Matthew 18:3 and Job 22:29. Perfection thus builds on the common way, rather than replacing it, just as grace perfects nature.

When discussing poverty, Thomas discusses the texts about a rich man entering into the kingdom of Heaven, with the conclusion that

Hence understand that [entering into the kingdom of Heaven] is difficult for a rich man who has riches but does not love them, but it is impossible for one who loves them, and has confidence in them, to enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Because that a camel is unable to pass through the eye of a needle, that is from nature, while that a rich man who loves riches is unable to enter the kingdom of Heaven, that is of divine justice, but all things could first be overturned, but the divine justice is unchanging.¹⁰⁸

Thomas does not emphasize the relationship between the perfect way and the Kingdom as much as the ordinary way, since the Kingdom is open to all and not just the elite of the mendicant orders.

The Feast of the Kingdom

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet given in Matthew 22 is distinguished from the similar parable in Luke 14, following the authority of St. Gregory.¹⁰⁹ Part of the argument is that

107 “Dominus commendaverat castitatem, et quia in parvulis est castitas et puritas, ideo videntes quod puritas placeret ei.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.19 L.1 ¶1574, 168.

108 “... unde accipiter divitem, qui habet divitias, et non amat, difficile est; illum autem qui amat, et in eis confidit, impossibile est intrare in regnum caelorum. Quod enim camelus non posuit intrare per foramen acus, hoc est ex natura; quod autem dives qui amat divitias non posuit intrare in regnum caelorum, hoc est ex divina iustitia; sed prius possent omnia subverti, quam divina iustitia immutari.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.19 L.1 ¶1602, 176. Cf. Chrysostom, Hilary, Rabanus, Remigius and Jerome, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.19 L.6.

109 Cf. Gregory, *Hom. in Ev.*, xxxviii, 2, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.22 L.1.

Luke speaks of a feast (*de coena*) and Matthew of a wedding (*de nuptiis*), but more significantly, “no one is excluded from that feast, but here one some is excluded from the other.”¹¹⁰ Thus, the Lucan parable is earthly, while the Matthean parable here is treated as heavenly and eschatological. Thomas admits that the Matthew parable could be an expansion of the Luke version, but that he believes them to be two separate parables.

The king, of course, “is God, and the person of the Father is understood, because he speaks of *his son*.”¹¹¹ This is one of the only places where the person of the Father specifically is invoked in the exegesis of a parable, which raises some issues for the use of the ‘king’ imagery, which Thomas more typically applies to Christ, and specifically in His Humanity. To explain this, Aquinas cites Origen that “a king is called so from ruling. However, we cannot, nor are we able to be ruled according to his own mode, but he rules us according to our fashion.”¹¹² At the moment, the Father rules us “in a human mode. But when we see Him as He is, then He will be a king, because He will rule us as Himself.”¹¹³ It appears that this is used to support the eschatological interpretation.¹¹⁴

Again, a kingdom is described as containing “the king, the kingdom, and those who serve.”¹¹⁵ The marriage that is at the heart of this parable is explained in numerous ways. “First,

110 “... nullus exclusus est ab illa coena, hic autem est aliquis exclusus.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1754, 232.

111 “... iste est Deus, et intelligitur persona patris, quia dicit *filio suo*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1755, 233. Cf. Gregory, “Tunc autem Deus pater ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.22 L.1.

112 “... quia rex dicitur a ‘regendo.’ Nos autem non possumus, nec sumus capaces regni eius secundum quod est, sed regit nos secundum modum nostrum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1755, 233. . Cf. Origen, “Regnum autem caelorum simile est ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.22 L.1.

113 “.... nos humano modo. Sed cum videbitur sicuti est, tunc erit rex, quia tunc secundum se reget.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1755, 233. . Cf. Origen, “Regnum autem caelorum simile est ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.22 L.1.

114 Pseudo-Chrysostom favors this as well; cf. “Vel aliter. Cum resurrectio ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.22 L.1

115 “... rex, regnum, et qui serviunt.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1755, 233. Cf. Origen, “Regnum autem caelorum simile est ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.22 L.1.

by the union of human nature with the divine, that human nature might be the bride.”¹¹⁶ This interpretation is dubious, according to Thomas, because it risks confusing the Father and the Son. Instead, he prefers the interpretation that “the groom is the incarnate Word; the bride the Church. ... It is also the union of that very Word to our soul. ... Also, there will be a marriage at the general resurrection. Christ is the way of this resurrection.”¹¹⁷ Thus, the three meanings of the wedding feast parallel three of the four interpretations of the Kingdom in Chapter 3—the earthly Church, the soul in a state of grace, and the eschatological Church. And the fourth meaning, Sacred Scripture, is subordinate to the other three as the ‘vessel’ or ‘medium’ of justice or Church authority, as discussed in Chapter 21. However, “if we speak following Gregory, it must be explained concerning the present, following that the Church is espoused to Christ and our soul to God by faith.”¹¹⁸

Conclusions on the Internal Dimension

This brings us full circle on the meaning of the Kingdom—the presence of the King in the soul, which is caused by grace and manifests in various ways, such as contemplation, virtue, good works, and faithfulness in tribulation and suffering. This leads to the second sense of the Kingdom, wherein the King and His law are proclaimed and made known to those who wish to become citizens of the Kingdom.

116 “Primo per unitatem naturae humanae ad divinam, ut humana natura sit sponsa.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1756, 233. Cf. Gregory, “Tunc autem Deus pater ... “ in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C. 22 L.1, including similar caveats and the alternative explanation favored by Thomas.

117 “... iste sponsus est Verbum incarnatum; spona Ecclesia; ... Item ipsius Verbi ad animam nostram. ... Item nuptiae erunt in communi resurrectione. Huius autem resurrectionis Christus est via” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1756, 233. Cf. Origen, “Vel coniunctionem sponsi et sponsum ... “ in *Catena Aurea* C.22 L.1.

118 “Sed si loquamur secundum Gregorium, oportet exponere de praesentibus, secundum quod Ecclesia Christo, et anima nostra Deo per fidem desponsatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.22 L.1 ¶1756, 233.

The Second Aspect of The Kingdom: Preaching and Scripture

Parables of the Evangelical Doctrine

Chapter 13 of Matthew contains a set of parables about the Kingdom of Heaven, making it central to the themes under consideration here. Although the Gospel uses the phrase ‘the Kingdom of Heaven’ repeatedly, Thomas describes the parables as dealing with “the power of the evangelical doctrine.”¹¹⁹ This is consistent with Matthew’s Gospel, which continuously refers to the “gospel (*evangelium*) of the Kingdom of Heaven”, but it also highlights the emphasis on Christ as preacher and teacher that we find in Thomas and other medieval Dominicans¹²⁰ and adds another dimension to Thomas’ multifaceted understanding of the Kingdom. This is where we find much of the material that supports the doctrinal dimension of the Kingdom, which connects to the second definition from Matthew 3, where he describes the Kingdom as Scripture.

Aquinas’ comments on the Parable of the Sower speaks much of the preaching, but contains little material directly relevant to the Kingdom. This is not surprising when one notes that for Thomas, this parable is concerned primarily with the “impediment of the evangelical doctrine.”¹²¹ His comments on Matthew 13:8 (“And they produced fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold”) are applied to various states in earthly life—martyrs, virgins,

119 “virtutem evangelicae doctrinae,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1077, 3 Cf. Remigius in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.2.

120 Cf. Richard Newshauser, “Jesus as the First Dominican? Reflection on a Sub-theme in the Exemplary Literature of Some Thirteenth-Century Preachers” in *Christ Among the Medieval Dominicans*, edited by Kent Emery Jr. and Joseph P. Wawyrkow, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 238-57, Michael Sherwin, O.P., “Christ the Teacher in St. Thomas’ *Commentary on the Gospel of John*” in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas*, edited by Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 173-93. For an examination of this same theme in Romans, see Hans Boerma, “*Ressourcement* of Mystery: The Ecclesiology of Thomas Aquinas and the Letter to the Romans” in *Reading Romans with St. Thomas Aquinas*, edited by Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 61-63.

121 “... impedimentum evangelicae doctrinae,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1084, 5

and married folk, respectively—which are the same divisions of the earthly Church mentioned by Hugh of St. Cher.¹²² This also works in conjunction with the passages about John the Baptist in the last chapter.

The mention of the Kingdom of Heaven in 13:11 provides some more material. “In these words three things are set forth.”¹²³ The first is that “there are some understanding, and some not.”¹²⁴ This is relevant to the Kingdom when set in conjunction with the discussion in Matthew 21. Aquinas attributes this to “the divine ordination”, but also considers it a sign of divine love and “of great use, since it is a certain sign of blessedness.”¹²⁵ This is the second factor. That third is that such understanding “from gift, not from merit.”¹²⁶ Although Aquinas goes on in his commentary on 13:12 to explicate factors that make one apt to receive such a gift—desire, zeal, charity, and faith—he concludes with the note that even these are gifts from God.¹²⁷

The exegesis of the Parable of the Mustard Seed opens with another examination of the Kingdom’s contents: “In a kingdom there is the king, the prince, the subjects, and likewise the imprisoned. Similarly, there are riches and other things. Therefore, we can liken the kingdom to all of these things.”¹²⁸ While the prior two parables were exegeted primarily in regard to the reception of and impediments to the Kingdom, Aquinas understands this parable as relating more to the Kingdom itself.

Following Jerome, as well as the ideas he established back in the first lecture, St. Thomas

122 See Chapter 5, below.

123 “... in quibus verbis tria ponuntur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1101, 9.

124 “... quidam sunt intelligentes, quidam non.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1101, 9.

125 “... divina ordination. Item magnae utilitatis est, quia est quaedam notification beatitudinis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1101, 9.

126 “... ex dono, non ex merito.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1101, 9.

127 *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1102-6, 9-10.

128 “In regno est rex, princeps, subditi, et etiam incarcerate. Item divitiae et cetera. Ideo ad haec omnia possumus assimilare regnum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1159, 27.

identifies the grain of mustard as the evangelical teaching, which produces the ‘heat’ of faith and drives away the poison of error.¹²⁹ The smallness, likewise, is in the way that it “preached a God who suffered, was crucified and so forth. And who could believe such a thing?”¹³⁰ The largeness, of course, is in the way that the preaching spread to and bore fruit among every nation, and “greater in solidity, in generality and in utility.”¹³¹ The solidity comes from the teaching’s grounding in the Divine Word, the generality, from its applicability to all states and issues of life, and usefulness “because the birds dwell in its branches, that is, all who have their spirit in heaven.”¹³²

Although Thomas follows Jerome’s interpretation, he also gives space to two other Fathers. Chrysostom identifies the Apostles as the mustard seed, and Hilary applies it to Christ.¹³³ This same diversity of explanations will be repeated in the Parable of the Leaven, with the three Fathers mentioned cited again as giving the same explanations as the mustard seed. Aquinas adds Augustine to the parable of the leaven as well; according to him, “the fervor of charity is signified by the leaven.”¹³⁴ Unlike in the Parable of the Mustard Seed, Aquinas does not seem to give preference to any one of these interpretations, but states from the beginning that “four things are signified.”¹³⁵ The diversity of patristic explanations on this and other parables is

129 *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1159, 27. Cf Jerome in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.5, as well as Augustine, who is there cited in reference to the warmth of faith and the antidote to poison.

130 “... praedicabat Deum passum, crucifixum et huiusmodi. Et quis posset hoc credere?” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1160, 28.

131 “... maior est ergo in soliditate, in generalitate et in utilitate.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1162, 28.

132 “... quia volucres habitant in ramis eius, idest omnes qui habent animum in caelis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1162, 28.

133 The *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.5 includes these citations, as well as citations from Gregory that identify the mustard seed with Christ.

134 “... per fermentum fervor caritatis significatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1167, 30. Cf. *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.6. All four interpretations mentioned in this lecture of the *Commentary* can be found in the *Catena*.

135 “Significantur quatuor.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1166, 29.

a clue to understanding why Aquinas' understanding of the Kingdom is so multidimensional.

The last set of parables in Chapter 13 deals with the dignity of the evangelical teaching, which "is shown in three ways: with regard to its abundance, with regard to its beauty, and with regard to its commonality."¹³⁶ The abundance is described by the parable of the treasure hidden in a field, and Thomas once more refers to the evangelical teaching, which "is like a treasure, because just as a treasure is a plentitude of riches, so is the evangelical teaching: *riches of salvation, wisdom and knowledge: the fear of the Lord is his treasure* (Is. 33:6)."¹³⁷

However, Thomas provides numerous differences of detail in exactly how to understand the treasure and the field in which it is hidden, again referring to the Fathers. Chrysostom describes it as the evangelical doctrine, "which is hidden in the field of this world, namely from the eyes of the unclean."¹³⁸ Gregory, by contrast refers to the same verse from Isaiah as Thomas did, but identifies the treasure as "heavenly desire" and the field as "spiritual discipline, because it seems contemptible outside, but truly has sweetness within."¹³⁹ Jerome, interestingly enough, provides the interpretation that the treasure is the Word Himself, hidden in flesh, but "in another way, it is understood as sacred teaching, which is hidden in the field of the Church."¹⁴⁰

Thomas continues with the idea of the treasure of the Kingdom as evangelical teaching

136 "... ostenditur quantum ad tria: quantum ad copiositatem, quantum ad pulchritudinem, quantum ad eius communitatem." *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1187, 36. Aquinas is again following Chrysostom here; cf. *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.9.

137 "... est in similitudine thesauri, quia sicut thesaurus est copia divitiarum, sic doctrina evangelica; Is. XXXIII, 6: *divitiae salutis sapientia et scientia; timor Domini ipse est thesaurus eius.*" *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1188, 36.

138 "... qui absconditus est in agro huius mundi, scilicet ab oculis immundorum." *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1189, 36. Cf. Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.9.

139 "... caeleste desiderium ... disciplinae spiritualis; quia exterius videtur contemptibilis, interius vero dulcedinem habet." *Commentary on Matthew* C.13 L.4 ¶1189, 36. Cf. Gregory, Hom. in Ev., xi, 1, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.13 L.9.

140 "... aliter intelligitur sacra doctrina, quae absconditur in agro Ecclesiae." *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1189, 37. Cf. Jerome in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.9. Aquinas does not here cite Augustine, whom he quotes in the *Catena Aurea* as referring to this as "despising temporal things."

when he turns to the passage about how “a man, having found it, hides” the treasure. He takes this, however, in a more personal and interior direction than any of the Fathers he cites. The treasure “is found in all through faith ... but it is necessary that it be hidden, following what is said in Ps. 118:11: *in my heart I have hidden your words.*”¹⁴¹ This hiddenness within the heart increases fervor, prevents vainglory, and guards a newborn faith from being discovered by “he who steals it away.”¹⁴²

The last part of this parable, about how the subject “out of joy goes, and sells all that he has, and buys that field,” is interpreted as about the progress of the spiritual life.

When he by faith finds it, *out of joy goes*, and begins to progress *and sells everything*, that it has contempt for it, that he might have spiritual [goods], *and buys that field*, that is, either he seeks out good company for himself, or gains for himself the rest which he does not have, namely, spiritual peace.¹⁴³

The parable of the “pearl of great price” demonstrates “beauty, or charity.”¹⁴⁴ Aquinas again turns to the Fathers here, and this time, Jerome and Chrysostom are in agreement that the pearl refers to the evangelical doctrine, in contrast to false teachings which “are not pearls”.¹⁴⁵ Further emphasis is placed on the oneness and uniqueness of this teaching, drawing on [Pseudo-]Dionysius, who “says that power divides, but truth gives unity.”¹⁴⁶ Gregory, by contrast, argues that the pearl represents heavenly glory, “because the good is naturally desirable, and man

141 “Invenitur in omnibus per fidem. ... Sed oportet quod abscondatur, secundum quod dicitur Ps. CXVIII, 11: *in corde meo abscondi eloquia tua.*” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1190, 37.

142 “... qui rapit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1190, 37.

143 “Quando per fidem invenerit *prae quadio vadit*, et incipit proficere *et vendit omnia*, idest contemnit, ut spiritualia habeat, *et emit agrum illum*, hoc est vel bonam societatem sibi exquirat, vel emit sibi otium quod non habet, scilicet pacem spiritualem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1192, 37.

144 “... pulchritudo, vel caritas.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1193, 37.

145 “Istae non sunt margaritae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1193, 38.

146 “... dicit quod virtus dividit, sed veritas unitatem dat.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1193, 38. Cf. also Chrysostom in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.10. Jerome also refers to the Law and the Prophets as “goodly pearls” in a section cited in the *Catena*; the Gospel is so precious that the others appear as “dung” by contrast.

always wishes to exchange a lesser good for a greater one. The supreme good of man is heavenly glory; when he has found it, he ought to abandon everything for it.”¹⁴⁷

Thomas also provides three different interpretations from Augustine, which all hinge on the merchant as representing a seeker, and emphasize the excellence and supremacy of the ‘pearl’ among many other things of similar species. The pearl of great price could thus be taken as Christ among virtuous men, charity among the virtues, and the Word of God among the sciences.¹⁴⁸

Unlike most of the other parables, Thomas does not set out his own explanation before surveying the Fathers, although the use of “beauty, or charity” to describe what this parable symbolizes is suggestive. He moves on to the ‘fishing parable’, which depicts the *communitas* of the evangelical doctrine. The net, he says “can signify either doctrine or the Church, since the first teachers (*doctores*) were fishermen.”¹⁴⁹ The sea represents the world, and so this parable demonstrates the commonality of the Gospel. “The law was only given to one nation (*non erat data nisi uni genti*) ... The evangelical law gathers all together.”¹⁵⁰ The formulation *Lex evangelica* recalls the established theme of the Gospel as the New Law, as distinct from the Old Law.

“By the shore is signified the end of the world, because there will be no turbulence

147 “... quia bonum est naturaliter desiderabile, et homo semper vult commutare minus bonum pro maiori bono. Summum bonum hominis est Gloria caelestis; hanc cum invenerit, debet omnia dimittere pro ista.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1194, 38.

148 Cf. Augustine, *Quaest. in Matt.*, q. 13, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.10.

149 “... potest per eam significari vel doctrina, vel Ecclesia: quia primi doctores fuerunt piscatores.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1197, 39. Cf. *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.11; Gregory, Hom. in Ev., xi. 4, is cited in support of the Church, while Jerome says that “they made for themselves a net of evangelical dogma from the Old and the New Testament.” (“contextuerunt sibi ex veteri et ex novo testamento sagenam evangelicorum dogmatum.”)

150 “Lex enim non erat data nisi uni genti ... Lex evangelica congregat omnes.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1197, 39.

among the saints, but they will be in good peace,”¹⁵¹ adding an eschatological dimension to the end of the parable, which is fairly obvious from Jesus’ own interpretation of it in the following verses. The vessels for the good likewise signify heavenly dwelling places, the ‘many mansions’ of John 14:2.

An ecclesiological note is sounded in the discussion of the separation of the wicked from the just, “For a time the evil are among the good ... but they will be separated from the communion of the good, and according to this the evil are excommunicated; for this is a sign of that, but also different, for the Church is often deceived, but then there will be no deception.”¹⁵² The difference between this parable and that of the Wheat and Tares, according to Thomas¹⁵³, is that “here by the net is understood both the good and the evil; hence it signifies those who are not cut off (*praecisi*) from the Church. But the weed signifies those who are cut off by diversity of dogma, and these are not of the Church.”¹⁵⁴ This will fit in well with the parallel Scripturally-focused and ecclesiological dimensions of the Parable of the Vineyard in Matthew 21.

Thomas concludes his examination of these parables with an exposition on what Christ meant by speaking of “every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven,” which he describes as the office promised to the apostles. “If you understand, you can know that the treasure is sacred

151 “Per littus finis mundi significatur, quia non erit apud sanctos turbulentia, sed erunt in quiete bona.” *Commentary on Matthew V.2 C.13 L.4* ¶1198, 39. Cf. Gregory, Hom. in Ev., xi. 4, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.11.

152 “Modo mali sunt inter bonos ... sed separabuntur ex communion bonorum; et ex hoc est mala excommunication; ista tamen signum illius, sed tamen alia, quia Ecclesia saepe decipitur, sed tunc non erit deception.” *Commentary on Matthew V.2 C.13 L.4* ¶1199, 39-40. Again, cf. Gregory, Hom. in Ev., xi. 4, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.11.

153 Who appears to be taking a hint from Chrysostom here; cf. Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.11.

154 “... hic per sagenam intelliguntur et boni et mali; unde significant eos qui non sunt praecisi ab Ecclesia. Sed per zizaniā significantur illi qui sunt praecisi per diversitatem dogmatum, et hi non sunt de Ecclesia.” *Commentary on Matthew V.2 C.13 L.3* ¶1200, 40.

doctrine. From this treasure you will be able to bring forth things new and old.”¹⁵⁵ The reason Christ calls them scribes is “because they are able to confer regarding the kingdom of heaven, and regarding sacred doctrine, where things new and old are contained.”¹⁵⁶ The ‘things new and old’ are primarily the New Law, which “adds senses over the old,”¹⁵⁷ and the Old Law, which prefigures the New. Aquinas does also refer to Gregory’s explanation, that the old things refer to things attributed to sin and the new things to those attributed to grace, so that the ‘things new and old’ refer to eternal reward and punishment.¹⁵⁸

Understanding how a commentator reads Matthew 13 is key to understanding their concept of the Kingdom, given the number and variety of parables. Here, Thomas highlights how central the preaching mission and message of the Church are to the Kingdom, which not only establishes this second dimension of the Kingdom, but explains the value of that teaching and how it relates to the other dimensions mentioned in Matthew 3. The next mention of how preaching relates to the Kingdom is the question of when the message should *not* be proclaimed, as discussed after Peter’s confession in Matthew 16.

When to Preach, When Not to Preach

Aquinas also raises an interesting question regarding the narrative in Matthew 16:20, where Jesus enjoins his disciples not to share this revelation. “Since above, the Lord sent the disciples to preach the kingdom of God, how does he prohibit it here?”¹⁵⁹ The simple answer is

155 “Si intelligitis, potestis scire quod thesaurus est sacra doctrina. De isto thesauro poteritis proferre nova et vetera.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1204, 40-1.

156 “... quia possunt conferre in regno caelorum, et in doctrina sacra, ubi nova et vetera continentur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1204, 41. Cf Gregory, Hilary and Jerome in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.12.

157 “... sensus addit super veterem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.4 ¶1204, 41.

158 Cf. Gregory, “Vel aliter ...”, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.12.

159 “Quia supra Dominus miserat discipulos ad praedicandum regnum Dei, quomodo hic prohibet?” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.3 ¶1394, 105.

that it is the announcement of Christ that is forbidden, but Thomas answers that “because the announcement of the Kingdom of God includes in itself the annunciation of Christ, therefore it seems that what He prescribes above, He prohibits here.”¹⁶⁰

Aquinas provides three answers, two of which are attributed to patristic sources. Jerome makes a distinction between preaching Jesus the savior and Christ, because “Christ is a name of dignity,”¹⁶¹ while Origen says that the prohibition was to give the Apostles time to reflect on this new understanding, for Peter (according to Aquinas, at least) had recognized not only the human dignity of Christ, but His very divinity.¹⁶²

The third, unattributed explanation is that the command in Matthew 10:7 should be referred to the post-Passion preaching, especially since that section of the Gospel makes reference to the Apostles being taken before kings and governors, which did not happen during Christ’s earthly ministry. It could, however, be associated with the aftermath of the Crucifixion hinted at in Thomas’ reading of Matthew 21, our next topic.

Vineyards, Exegesis, and Ecclesiology

Moving on to Matthew 21, we turn to the Parable of the Vineyard, which Thomas treats as one of the most multifaceted of the ‘Kingdom parables.’ Even the target of the parable can be interpreted in two ways: “some say that he speaks against the vineyard [following a similar parable in Isaiah] ... but here [he speaks] against the farmers.”¹⁶³ Thomas again turns to two of his favorite patristics sources, Jerome and Chrysostom. Jerome says that “the Jewish people are

160 “... quia annuntiatio regni Dei includit in se Annuntiationem Christi, ideo quod praecepit supra, videtur hic prohibere.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.3 ¶1394, 105.

161 “Christus enim est nomen dignitatis,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.3 ¶1394, 105.

162 Cf. Jerome and Origen, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.16 L.4.

163 “Dicunt aliqui quod ibi invehitur contra vineam ... Hic autem contra agricolas.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1734, 224-5.

called the vine,” following the Isaian parable, “insofar as this present evil proceeds not from the people, but from the leaders. ... Therefore this parable is not against the vine.”¹⁶⁴ A second explanation (given without transition, suggesting a failure in our manuscript tradition of the *Commentary on Matthew*) says that “this vine is not the house of Israel, but the justice of God, which is handed down hiddenly in Sacred Scripture.”¹⁶⁵ This note on the 'justice' or righteousness of God could also be taken as referring to the soul's justification, which connects this meaning to the internal dimension of the Kingdom, or to God's universal judgment, which would bring in a link to the eschatological dimension.

Similary, the hedge around the vineyard is either “what is set up for protection, whether they be the prayers of the saints or the protection of the angels”¹⁶⁶ or the words of Scripture, “because following a mystical understanding the hidden meaning of Scripture should not be opened to everyone.”¹⁶⁷ The mystical explanation is not pursued beyond the establishment of the vineyard and its accoutrements; rather, the parable expounds salvation history from Moses, through the prophets, up to the coming of Christ. This sense of connection and yet distinction¹⁶⁸ between the Old Testament and the New is a recurring theme in Thomas, and will be discussed in more detail below.

164 “... quantum ad praesens huius malitia non processit ex populo, sed exp principibus. ... Ideo non contra vineam.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1734, 225. Cf Jerome, “Plantavit autem...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.21 L.6.

165 “Haec vinea non est domus Israel, sed iustitia Dei, quae occulte tradita est in Sacra Scriptura.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1734, 225. Origen also gives this as an interpretation in “Sed forte in Evangelio...”, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.21 L.6.

166 “... quae ponuntur ad custodiam, sive sint orationes sanctorum, vel custodia angelorum” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1735, 225. Aquinas’ patristic sources in the *Catena Aurea*—Jerome, Pseudo-Chrysostom, and Origen—favor some form of this explanation.

167 “Secundum enim mysticum intellectum occulta Scripturae non sunt pendenda cuilibet,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1735, 225. Origen also gives this as an interpretation in “Sed forte in Evangelio...”, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.21 L.6.

168 “Distinction” is highlighted in the conclusion of the parable, with the transfer of the Kingdom.

The conclusion, *Therefore I say to you that the kingdom of God will be taken from you* (Mt 21:43) is taken in two ways. The first, as mentioned back in Chapter 3, is that the kingdom is Sacred Scripture, following the interpretation of the vineyard as Scripture and the vine as divine justice given at the start of the parable. Scripture is said to be taken from them “because [they] have forsaken the understanding of Sacred Scripture.”¹⁶⁹ The use of the term 'forsaken' suggests an active culpability on the part of the Jewish leadership, which Thomas will describe elsewhere, such as in the Passion section of the *Summa Theologiae*, as affected ignorance.¹⁷⁰ The other interpretation is that the removal of the Kingdom refers to “prelationship over the Church of the faithful, because their glory has been transferred,”¹⁷¹ referring to Isaiah 55:4-5. This interpretation is used again in the *Commentary on John*, where Aquinas cites this verse when discussing the Cleansing of the Temple in the second chapter of that Gospel. “By this evicting of these things from the temple, He gave understanding that the time approached when the sacrifices of the law ought to cease, and the true worship of God be transferred to the Gentiles.”¹⁷² He returns to it at the climax of John’s Gospel, when the Jewish leaders call for Christ’s crucifixion, which “was done in desire by the Jews, because they caused it and by threatening made it happen. By this it is signified that the Jews would lose the benefits of the Cross of Christ, and the Gentiles would succeed them. (Matthew 21:43).”¹⁷³

169 “quia amittetis intellectum Sacrae Scripturae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1750, 228. Cf. Origen, “Regnum Dei dicit mysteria regni Dei ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.21 L.6.

170 Cf. *Summa Theologiae* III.47.5, Resp.

171 “praelationem super Ecclesiam fidelium, quia translata est gloria eorum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1750, 228.

172 “Per hoc etiam quod huiusmodi eiecit de templo, dedit intelligere quod appropinquabat tempus quo sacrificia legis cessare debebant, et verus Dei cultus ad gentes transferri.” St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John, Chapters 1-8* (hereafter *Commentary on John* V.1), trans. by Fr. Fabian Larcher, OP (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2013), C.2 L.2 ¶386, 152.

173 “Iudaei vero voto: quia ipsi fecerunt, et quidquid factum est extorserunt. Per quod signatur quod Iudaei amittere debebant utilitatem crucis Christi, et gentiles eam consequi; Matth. XXI, 43.” St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on*

In any event, while these two interpretations apply to two dimensions of the Kingdom as identified in Chapter 3—the Scriptural and the ecclesiastical—the ultimate conclusion is the same: a change in the Kingdom from in the 'possession' of the Jewish nation to the community of the faithful. The fundamental issue, based on Thomas' exegesis of the surrounding passage, hinges on the relationship to Christ, who is “the stone the builders rejected, [which] has become the cornerstone.”¹⁷⁴ This is reinforced by Matthew 21:44, and Thomas' account that “when a man stumbles over the rock Christ, then he is broken according to the greatness of sin; when he is truly faithless, he is totally crushed.”¹⁷⁵ With the Christocentric dimension that has come to the fore, we can see that those who are not made into “living stones” (1 Peter 2:5) in the household of the kingdom, by becoming like to Christ, would be broken against the same stone.

Conclusions on the Scriptural and Evangelical Dimension

Thomas thus concludes his treatment of the Scriptural or preaching dimension of the Kingdom—the idea that the Kingdom is constituted in part in its being made known. This serves as a hinge between the personal dimension of the Kingdom, where one knows what constitutes the Kingdom and participates in it, and the ecclesiological side, which for Thomas is deeply connected with the mission of the Church. Therefore, having moved from the individual dimension to the proclamation or revelation of the Kingdom, the next step is naturally the means by which the individual is enlightened and brought into the Kingdom—the Church Militant.

the Gospel of John, Chapters 9-21 (hereafter *Commentary on John* V.2), trans. by Fr. Fabian Larcher, OP (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2013), C.19 L.3 ¶2412, 436.

174 Cf. *Commentary on Matthew*, V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1749, 228.

175 “... homo cum cadit super lapidem Christum, tunc confringitur secundum magnitudinem peccati; quando vero fit infidelis, totaliter conteritur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1751, 229.

The Third Aspect: The Kingdom and the Church

Water and Salt of the Kingdom

Some of the first material on the ecclesiastical dimension of the Kingdom can be found immediately after the definitions of the Kingdom in Matthew 3, where Aquinas turns to the rest of John the Baptist's mission. Aquinas also discusses John's preparatory role with regard to the kingdom, which may help us understand it better. "The preparation is indeed baptism,"¹⁷⁶ but John's baptism is understood as preparatory for Christ's mission and baptism in His name. John's baptism, and its preparatory role, are directly connected to the entrance of catechumens into the Church, "that there should be a kind of preparation, and they should receive a kind of sign, through which they are seen to be prepared."¹⁷⁷

Aquinas then goes on to say, "following this he deals with the kingdom. And first he shows its dignity, second its office."¹⁷⁸ But the remainder of this lecture deals with Christ and His baptism and judgment. This further reinforces what was said above about the identity of Christ and the Kingdom, and the emphasis on baptism further connects the ecclesiastical or sacramental dimension with the underlying Christological meaning.

Aquinas makes an interesting side reference in explicating 5:13, regarding what happens to 'salt that loses its savor.' For Aquinas, "these things properly lose [savor] which lose their potency, such as strong wine when it loses its strength."¹⁷⁹ In this context, it refers to those

176 "Preparatio quidem est baptismus. Et primo ostendit dignitatem ipsius, secundo officium eius." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶275, 89.

177 "... ut fiat quaedam preparation, et accipiant quoddam signaculum, per quod idonei reputantur" *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶275, 89.

178 "Consequenter agitur de regno." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶277, 90.

179 "Illa proprie evanescent quae amittunt virtutem suam: sicut vinum forte quando amittit virtutem," *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.4 ¶453, 148.

spiritual men who fall into sin or away from the Church. He describes being cast out as expulsion, “namely, from the Church ... And thus the dignity of the priestly office is taken from such; Hosea 4:6 “because you have rejected knowledge ...” and below, 21:43 “The kingdom of God will be taken from you.”¹⁸⁰ The ecclesiological dimension of the Kingdom appears to be assumed here. The word *magisterii* could be translated as “teaching office” here, as Holmes does, which would also parallel the interpretation of Matthew 21:43 as well as the earlier comment that “For if the people sin, they can be corrected, but if a prelate does, nothing can amend it.”¹⁸¹ This connects us against to the centrality of preaching mentioned above, thus interrelating the evangelical and ecclesiological dimensions. This connection is also highlighted by the inclusion of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares among the parables of Matthew 13.

Wheat and Tares

While most of the parables of Matthew 13 have a predominantly evangelical bent in Thomas’ reading, the Parable of the Wheat and Tares is more ecclesiological. The parable opens with a description of the most basic structure of the Kingdom: “In a kingdom are contained the king, and those who are ruled: and those are heavenly men, who have been made equals of the angels.”¹⁸² The Kingdom here, based on Thomas’ exegesis of the parable, is the Church, with the Apostles as the servants, faithful Catholics as the wheat and heretics as the tares.¹⁸³ The opposition of two kingdoms is also continued implicitly, where Thomas says that the devil

180 “... de Ecclesia scilicet ... Item ut auferatur ei dignitas sacerdotalis magisterii, Osee IV, 6: *quia scientiam repulisti*, infra XXI, 43: *auferatur a vobis regnum Dei*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.4 ¶455, 148. Cf. Glossa and Hilary, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.10.

181 “Si enim plebs peccat potest corrigi, sed si praelatus, nullus potest emendare,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.4 ¶453, 148.

182 “In regno continetur rex, et hi qui reguntur: et isti sunt homines caelestes, qui facti sunt aequales Angelis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.2 ¶1134, 19.

183 Cf. *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.2 ¶1134, 1136, 1138.

“seeing the extension of the Church, is envious”¹⁸⁴ and that he “cares not that some are heretics among the Gentiles, because he possesses them all.”¹⁸⁵ The end of the parable, speaking of the ‘gathering of the crops’, is not applied directly to the Kingdom, but Aquinas does state that “there is a twofold collection: one in the present Church, and another in the heavenly.”¹⁸⁶ The first harvest is referred to the preaching of the Apostles, and the second to the Last Judgment. However, Aquinas applies the separation and final disposition of the wheat and tares solely to the latter here.

Returning to the Kingdom in Jesus’ explanation of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares, Aquinas confirms that here, Kingdom is “understood as the present Church, because in the Church Triumphant there are no scandals.”¹⁸⁷ However, he also notes that Chrysostom “exposits that the kingdom is the heavenly homeland. And he says that *all scandals* is not understood as that there are there, but that there are not.”¹⁸⁸

Keys of the Kingdom

Thomas' reading of Matthew returns to the Kingdom in Matthew 16. The kingship of Jesus is also brought up implicitly, according to Aquinas, when Peter declares Him to be “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Christ, of course, means ‘Anointed’ “and it is understood that he is anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit. ...Kings were anointed, as it is held of Saul. ...

184 “... videns Ecclesiam dilatari, invidit,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.2 ¶1139, 20.

185 “... quod aliqui sint haeretici inter gentiles, quia omnes possidet” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.2 ¶1140, 20.

186 “Duplex est autem collectio: una in Ecclesia praesentis, alia in caelesti.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.2 ¶1153, 24. Cf Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, *et al.* in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.13 L.4.

187 “... intelligitur praesens Ecclesia, quia in triumphant non sunt scandala.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1182, 33. Cf Chrysostom in Mattheum, “Vel potest intellegi de regno caelestis Ecclesiae ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.8.

188 “... exponit per regnum caelestem patriam. Et quod dicitur *omnia scandala*, non intelligitur quod ibi sint, sed quod non sint.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.3 ¶1182, 33.

And all these things [king, prophet, and priest] are conveyed by the name Christ, because He is called a king, as in Jeremiah 23:5: *A king will reign, and will be wise.*¹⁸⁹

By the gift of the keys, “Christ instituted Peter as His vicar, that he might lead [others] into Heaven, hence He gave that ministry, hence he gave the keys.”¹⁹⁰ Why keys? Because “when a house is locked, it impedes entry; a key removes the impediment.”¹⁹¹ In this case, the impediment is sin. “Christ removed this impediment by His passion ... and He communicated this so sins could be taken away by a ministry.”¹⁹²

Here, therefore, it appears that the Kingdom is understood as eternal beatitude¹⁹³, and the keys are interpreted not as the Papal ministry¹⁹⁴, but as the sacrament of confession.¹⁹⁵ He reinforces this through consideration of the details of this promise. The promise is in the future tense because “[the keys] were not yet made; a thing cannot be given before it exists. These keys were made in the Passion, hence in the Passion they became effective.”¹⁹⁶ The reason for the plural is because for absolution to remove an obstacle, both knowledge (“here a habit of the

189 “Et constat quod unctus est oleo Spiritus Sancti. ... Ungebantur reges, ut habetur de Saule ... Et omnia haec in nomine Christi importantur: quia et rex dicitur, ut Ierem. XXIII, 3: *regnabit rex, et sapiens erit.*” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1374, 97.

190 “Christus vicarium suum Petrum instituit, ut introduceret in caelum, unde illud ministerium dedit, unde claves dedit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1386, 101.

191 “Domus quando est serata impedit introitum; clavis vero removet impedimentum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1387, 101.

192 “Ista impedimenta removet Christus per suam passionem ... Et hanc communicavit ut per ministerium peccata tollentur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1387, 101.

193 Cf. Mitchell, 51, who describes Thomas' understanding of the keys as “the gift of a ministerial role towards the kingdom in the totally eschatological sense.”

194 Thomas has affirmed the importance of the Pope and the indefectibility of the Roman Church in the previous passage on the rock; see *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1384-5, 100

195 Cf. Chrysostom and Rabanus in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.16 L.3. For an analysis of the ecclesiological dimensions of the keys and the sacrament of penance, see Thomas Joseph White, O.P., “The Priesthood Makes the Church: Ecclesial Communion and the Power of the Keys.” *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, 9:1 (2011), 209-36, especially pp. 232-5. Interestingly, Thomas' early commentary on Isaiah 22:22 seems to identify the key of David as the key to the Temple; see *Super Isaiah*, C.22.

196 “... nondum enim erant fabricatae; res autem non potest dari antequam sit. Fabricandae autem hae erant in passion; unde in passion fuit eorum efficacia.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1387, 101.

intellect is not meant by knowledge, but the authority to discern is so called”¹⁹⁷) and power.

It seems at first glance that the reference to binding is inappropriate here, “because the use of a key is not to bind, but to open. I say that this is a fitting use of a key. For heaven itself is open ... Thus it is not necessary that it be opened, but the bond of who wishes to enter must be loosed.”¹⁹⁸

Aquinas concludes this lecture by dealing with several erroneous interpretations of this passage. Most of these deal with the minister or effect of the sacrament, but one of them does relate to our topic. “In another way, it is said that by heaven is designated the present Church; hence *whatever you bind* by excommunication *or loose* will be bound or loosed as to the administration of the sacraments of the Church.”¹⁹⁹ Aquinas declares that this binding extends to both the living and the dead, suggesting not only the eschatological dimension mentioned earlier, but a continuation between the Kingdom on earth and in the life to come—“the sense is *whatever you will bind on earth* (I say existing then on earth) *will also be bound in heaven*.”²⁰⁰

Conclusions on the Ecclesiological Dimension

The ecclesiastical dimension of the Kingdom receives little attention in Matthew, perhaps because so much of it is assumed in the previous two subjects, especially in regard to the preaching of the Gospel message. The material considered here also has a natural connection to

197 “Non dicitur hic scientia habitus intellectus etc., sed dicitur auctoritas discernendi.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1388, 101.

198 “... quia usus clavis non est ligare, sed aperire. Dico quod clavium conveniens iste usus est. Ipsi enim caelum apertum est ... Unde non est necessarium ut aperiatur; sed ligatus qui debet introire, oportet quod solvatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1389, 101-2.

199 “Aliter dicitur, quod per caelos praesens Ecclesia designatur; unde *quodcumque ligaveris*, excommunication, *vel solveris*, erit solutum vel ligatum, quoad administrationem sacramentorum Ecclesiae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1392, 103.

200 “sensus est: *quodcumque ligaveris super terram*, tunc dico existens super terram, *erit legatum et in caelis*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.2 ¶1392, 103.

the first dimension of the Kingdom, since Thomas has treated primarily of the sacramental dimension that binds the individual soul to the Kingdom. Indeed, Thomas places more emphasis on the Church as a community of individuals brought into a state of grace and both teaching and following the “evangelical doctrine”; the Church as a distinct institution almost fades into the background. This also reflects the fact that Thomas is a very teleologically oriented thinker, and the Church Militant is a means to an end, whether that end be the sanctification of souls, the proclamation of the Word, or the final and overarching dimension of the Kingdom, the attainment of mankind’s final end in the Beatific Vision.

The Fourth Aspect: The Kingdom at the End

Judgment and Division

The second lecture on Matthew 7 includes the discussion of one of Christ’s most frightening statements—that “not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven, he will enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (7:21) “It ought to be noticed that, because he says *kingdom*, eternal rewards are touched on; therefore he says *will enter*. That kingdom exists in spiritual benefits, not in exterior ones, so he says *will enter*.”²⁰¹ The context of the Gospel passage makes it clear that it is the eschatological dimension of the Kingdom that is under discussion here; this is supported by some of the patristic citations assembled in the *Catena*, where Chrysostom (and Pseudo-Chrysostom) apply this text to the Last Judgment.²⁰² Thus, many of these themes will be

201 “Sed notandum, quod per hoc quid dicit *regnum*, tangitur remuneration aeterna; unde dicit *intrabit*. Illud enim regnum in bonis spiritualibus est, non in bonis exterioribus; ideo dicit *intrabit*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.7 L.2 ¶665, 246.

202 Cf. *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.7 L.9.

highlighted again in Matthew 25.

Seeing the Coming Kingdom

The last verse of Matthew 16—“Amen, I say to you, there are some of those who stand here who will not taste death until the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”—has been a puzzle to exegetes for centuries,²⁰³ but Aquinas appears to take it in stride, indeed telling his students “do not be astonished. Why? I want to show you.”²⁰⁴ After distinguishing between sinners who are “swallowed up by death”, and the just who merely “taste” it,²⁰⁵ Thomas identifies those spoken of as Peter, John and James. “This was a sign of future glory”—apparently, the Transfiguration, which follows immediately upon this statement by Christ. Indeed, in his introduction to Chapter 17, Thomas draws an explicit connection between Chapter 16, which “showed the power of the evangelical teaching”, and the revelation of its end, “which is future glory,” in the Transfiguration.²⁰⁶ The reason Christ did not name those who will receive this gift, according to Aquinas, is because “of the jealousy of the others. They could have harbored envy, because [He gave] more to these than to the others.”²⁰⁷ Although Thomas prefers the eschatological meaning of the Kingdom here, he also allows for a more earthly, ecclesiological one. “In another way, it can be that that the Kingdom of God is the Church: therefore there is one who will not taste, that is, John, *until he sees the Son of Man coming in His kingdom*; that is until

203 A sample of the various explanations that Thomas would have been familiar with can be found in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.16 L.7.

204 “Sed nolite mirari. Quare? Volo vobis ostendere.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.3 ¶1416, 111. Thomas is again following Remigius here; cf. *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.16 L.7.

205 “Peccatores absorbentur morte, sed iusti gustant mortem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.3 ¶1416, 111. This appears to be drawn from Origen; cf. Origen in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.16 L.7. Rabanus, cited just after Origen, says something similar, but states that it is the saints who only “taste” of death while “truly holding the soul in possession.”

206 “... ostendit virtutem doctrinae evangelicae ... qui est gloria futura” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.17 L.1 ¶1417, 114.

207 “... propter invidiam aliorum. Potuissent autem habere invidiam, quia magis his, quam aliis.” *Commentary on Matthew* C.16 L.3 ¶1416, 111 . Cf. Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.16 L.7.

the Church is spread out, because he lived so long that he saw the spreading of the Church, and many churches established.”²⁰⁸

The teaching on the Kingdom in Chapter 17 is distinguished by its absence—while Thomas speaks of the Transfiguration as a prefigurement of future glory, nothing is said about the Kingdom, or the future state in general. The text may be corrupt or incomplete here; we must remember that the best text we have, or can even expect in the future, may not be the fullness of what the Angelic Doctor had to say on the topic. However, it should be noted that the eschatological kingdom does not play as large a role in the *Commentary on Matthew* as the internal and preaching dimensions of the Kingdom. It is far from absent, though, especially when Thomas considers the great eschatological parables and discourse of Matthew 25.

Ten Virgins and the Kingdom

The penultimate Kingdom parable in Matthew’s Gospel brings us to the Kingdom as applied to the Last Judgment.²⁰⁹ The ‘ten’ in the ten virgins refers to universality, to the Ten Commandments (according to Hilary) or to the five senses, whether combining them as different in men and women, as Gregory says, or interiorly and exteriorly, as Jerome has it.²¹⁰ As for the virgins, Chrysostom understands it literally; “therefore, because virginity is so great a good that it falls not under precept, but under counsel ... if they are condemned, then others will be to an

208 “Aliter potest dici, quod regnum Dei est Ecclesia: ideo est aliquis qui non gustabit mortem, sicut Ioannes, *donec videat Filium hominis venientem in regno suo*; idest donec dilatetur Ecclesia, quia tantum visit, quod vidit Ecclesiam dilatari, et multas Ecclesias aedificari.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.16 L.3 ¶1416, 111. This appears to be drawn from Gregory, but made more specific; Gregory, cited in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.16 L.7, speaks only of “some of the disciples” (“nonnulli ex discipulis”).

209 Although Gregory, in *Hom. in Ev.*, xii, 1, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.25 L.1, refers the Kingdom here to the Church.

210 Cf. Gregory, “In quinque ...”, Jerome, “Sunt enim quinque sensus”, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

even greater extent.”²¹¹ Jerome and Origen take it in a broader sense; “they are called virgins who abstain from any allurements of the senses.”²¹²

Thomas presents two interpretations of the lamps, as well, which are intriguingly complementary to those of us who live in the aftermath of the Reformation debates. “Following Hilary we can understand [the lamps as] souls illuminated by the light of faith, which they received in baptism. ... Or the lamps signify works, according to Augustine, because your works should be a light.”²¹³ These interpretations will be revisited in a few verses, when the parable turns to oil.

The marriage for which the virgins are preparing is interpreted in much the same way as the wedding feast of Chapter 22. “One [explanation] is the [marriage of] divinity to flesh, which was celebrated in the womb of the Virgin. ... The groom is the Son himself, the bride is human nature; hence to go on the way to the bride and groom is nothing other than to serve Christ.”²¹⁴ This matches to the personal/salvific dimension of the Kingdom; the other interpretation, “the marriage of Christ and the Church,”²¹⁵ corresponds to the ecclesiological dimension.

211 “Ideo cum virginitas sit tantum bonum quod non cadit sub praecepto, sed sub consilio ... si isti damnatur, multo magis et alii.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2012, 323. Cf. Chrysostom, “Ideo autem ponit parabolam ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

212 “Vel virgines dicuntur qui ab illecebris quinque sensuum abstinere.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2012, 323. Jerome in “Similitudinem autem decem ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1 applies it to the whole human race, while Origen, in “Vel sensus omnium ...”, *ibid.*, suggests a reading that applies to all Christians in the sense that they have been purified from idolatry.

213 “... secundum Hilarium possumus intelligere animas illuminatas lumine fidei, quod in baptismo receperunt. ... Vel per lampades opera signantur, secundum Augustinum: opera enim vestra debent esse lucerna.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2013, 323. Cf. Hilary, “Vel sponsus atque sponsa”, and Augustine, *Lib. 83 Quaest. Q59*, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

214 “Unum divinitatis ad carnem, quod celebratum est in utero virginis ... Sponsus ipse Filius est, sponsa humana natura; unde nihil aliud est exire obviam sponso et sponsae, nisi servire Christo.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2014, 323. Cf. Hilary, “Vel sponsus atque sponsa” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1. Hilary also applies the marriage imagery to the general resurrection in a passage cited later in this section of the *Catena*, “Nuptiae autem, immortalitatis assumptio est.”

215 “... matrimonium Christi et Ecclesiae,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2014, 323. Cf. Augustine, “Vel quod dicit...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

The oil of the lamps likewise has four significations, depending on various authorities. The first comes from Jerome, that the oil is “good works ... [because] faith is the light of souls by which the lamps are lit. Faith is nourished by good works.”²¹⁶ Chrysostom explains it as charity,²¹⁷ referring it to his interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Mark and anticipating his emphasis on almsgiving at the end of the parable. Origen takes it as sacred doctrine,²¹⁸ and a fourth unsourced interpretation²¹⁹ refers to the Psalms that mention the oil of gladness and joy. “There are many who abstain from external things and seek inner joy, namely that of conscience, and they have oil with them there. Others, though, seek not the joy of conscience, but human glory, and these do not have oil.”²²⁰ Combining all these, Aquinas concludes that the virgins of the parable are those “who remain continent, who act with mercy, who seek inner joy, who take up correct teaching.”²²¹

The coming of the bridegroom is almost universally agreed, at least by Thomas’ sources, to refer to the Last Judgment,²²² except by Origen, who actually takes it more literally and refers it to the present life “when a man is held back by false glory, and when a clamor is made by a preacher or by an inner inspiration, then he returns to Christ.”²²³ Later on, when referring to the admonition to the foolish virgins to seek oil, Aquinas seems to favor Origen’s reading, at least

216 “... bona opera. ... Fides est lumen animarum quo accendiuntur lampades. Per bona opera fides nutritur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2017, 324. Cf. Jerome, “Oleam ergo habent virgines ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

217 Cf. Chrysostom, “Vel oleam hic vocat caritatem ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

218 Cf. Origen, “Vel oleam est verbum doctrinae ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

219 Although you can find it drawn from Augustine in “Vel per oleum ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.1.

220 “Multi sunt qui exterius absinent et quaerunt intus gaudium, scilicet conscientiae, et ibi habent secum oleum. Alii vero non quaerunt gaudium conscientiae, sed gloriam hominum, et isti non habent oleum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2017, 324.

221 “... qui continentiam servant, qui faciunt misericordiam, qui gaudium interius quaerunt, qui rectam doctrinam assumunt.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2017, 324.

222 Cf. *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.25 L.1.

223 “... quando homo detinetur inani gloria, et fit clamor per praedicatorem, vel per internam inspirationem, tunc revertitur ad Christum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2022, 325-6.

saying that “the letter is plainer, because he would hold that all this happens in this world,”²²⁴ and those who have wasted their life in vain pursuits and then recognize it are encouraged to seek wisdom from the teachers of the Church. Aquinas also mentions an interesting turn of phrase by Chrysostom, possibly taken from Hugh of St. Cher, that those selling oil are “the poor, because they trade in (*mercantur*) the kingdom.”²²⁵ This theme of the treasure of the Kingdom as wisdom is one of Thomas’ favorites, and it also relates to the next parable in this chapter.

Earning the Treasure of the Kingdom

The second and last Kingdom parable also relates to the Judgment, although here Thomas takes it in a primarily moral dimension, speaking of it as “the judgment” of those who “do not multiply the goods received.”²²⁶ The man, of course, is Christ, who “departed in three ways; for He traveled in place, for although He is in his own place with regard to His divinity, namely in heaven, He had departed according to the flesh, because no flesh had ascended there.”²²⁷ The second meaning is the counterpoint, referring to the Ascension where “being a wanderer in the world, he departed into Heaven.”²²⁸ Finally, “it can be understood spiritually, for now He is far from us, because we are distant from Him. ... For when we see Him, then we will not be like

224 “... plana est littera, quia vult quod totum in mundo isto contingat.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.1 ¶2026, 327. With that in mind, this parable could have fit under either this aspect or the first one; in light of the emphasis on the Last Judgment throughout Matthew 25, I have chosen to treat of it here.

225 The citation in the *Catena* is clearer: “You see, therefore, how great a business is done by the poor to us; but the poor are not there, but here, so it is necessary to gather oil here, that we may use it there when the time comes.” (“Vides ergo quanta nobis sit a pauperibus negotiatio; pauperes autem non sunt ibi, sed hic; ideoque hic oleum congregare oportet, ut illic utile sit, cum tempus nos vocet.”), *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.25 L.1.

226 “... de iudicio ... in qua quis bona suscepta non multiplicat”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2031, 330.

227 “... proficiscebatur tripliciter, quia pergebat in locum, qui quamvis sit sibi proprius per divinitatem, scilicet in caelum, tamen peregrinus erat secundum carnem, quia nulla caro ibi ascenderat.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2032, 331.

228 “... quia in mundo peregrinus existens in caelum proficiscebatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2032, 331. Cf. Gregory, *Hom in Ev.*, xi., 1, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

wanderers, but like citizens and dwellers with God.”²²⁹

The talents of the parable, according to Aquinas, represent God’s gifts not only in the sense of grace and virtue, but also “the eloquence of God, words of wisdom, for wisdom is often compared to riches.”²³⁰ He cites numerous patristic authorities to this affect, especially regarding the numerological symbolism of the varied amounts. Origen said that “He gave five talents to one who referred everything said in Scripture to the spiritual sense,”²³¹ while the two talents refers to material knowledge. Gregory and Jerome, by contrast, favor application of the five talents to the five physical senses, while two talents refers to “sense and intellect” and one to “intellect alone. Hence he receives one who receives the grace of understanding, but not the grace of acting.”²³² Hilary is similar to Origen, yet distinct; according to him, “one receives five who finds Christ in the five books of Moses; and he receives two who honors the grace of the Old and New Testaments, who venerates in Christ the divine and human natures, and the Jews, who glory in the law alone, receive one.”²³³

Regarding the multiplication of the talents, Thomas says that “one can profit in two ways: in one way in himself, in another way in another. In himself, if he has understanding of the

229 “Item potest intelligi spiritaliter; nunc enim peregrinatur a nobis, quoniam nos peregrinamur ab eo Quando autem videbimus eum, tunc non erimus sicut peregrini, sed sicut cives et domestici Dei.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2032, 331. Cf. Origen, “Secundum enim divinatis ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

230 “... eloquia Dei, verba sapientiae: frequenter enim sapientia divitiis comparatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2037, 332. Cf. Jerome, “Vocatis autem apostolis ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

231 “... illi dedit quinque talenta, qui omnia quae in Scriptura dicuntur, ad spiritualem intellectum refert”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2038, 332. Cf. Origen, “Tamen tres sunt proprii servi ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

232 “... sensus et intellectus ... intellectus solum. Unde ille unum recepit, qui gratiam intellectus recipit, non gratiam operandi.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2038, 333. Cf. Gregory, “Vel aliter ...” and Jerome, “Acceptis enim terrenis sensibus ...”, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

233 “... ille recipit quinque qui Christum invenit in quinque libris Moysi; ille autem duo, qui gratiam Novi et Veteris Testamenti veneratur, qui in Christo veneratur naturam divinam et humanam; unum autem recipit Iudaeus, qui in solis legalibus gloriatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2038, 333. Cf. Hilary, “Vel servus ille ...” and “Vel ille servus cui duo talenta ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

Scriptures, so that he profits; if he has charity, so that he profits others. He has profited that he might profit in others, so that what he receives, he might give.”²³⁴ Thomas thus applies the message of the parable to the ideal he sets forth in the famous passage of the *Summa Theologiae*, where he says that “as it is greater to illuminate than only to shine, so it is better to hand on things contemplated to others rather than only contemplate.”²³⁵ Indeed, Origen is cited by Thomas as speaking of the man who buried his talent in the ground as “someone who has the gift of understanding, and nonetheless wishes to live religiously and live only for himself, when he could benefit many.”²³⁶ Similarly, Chrysostom condemns the unworthy servant as one “who had the grace of teaching and did not exercise it, so that he lost it.”²³⁷

The parable ends with the return of the master to judge his servants, which “first is set out in particular ... because everyone is bound to give account first at his death, second in the day of judgment, when it will be necessary for us to stand before the tribunal of Christ.”²³⁸ Thus, the parable can be referred to either, with the ‘long time’ of the master’s departure referring either to the interval between the Ascension and the Second Coming, or to the length of life given to man to make use of his gifts. Those who do well are rewarded for “security, fidelity, humility, and

234 “Dupliciter proficit aliquis: uno modio in seipso, alio modo in alio. In se, si habeat intelligentiam Scripturarum, ita ut proficiat; si caritatem, ut proficiat aliis. Profectus est, ut proficiat in alio, ut quo accepit, communicet.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2045, 334.

235 “Sicut enim maius est illuminare quam lucere solum, ita maius est contemplata aliis tradere quam solum contemplari.” *ST* II-II.188.6.co, Textum Leoninum Romae, 1899, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9th, 2016.

236 “Secundum Origenem habet aliquis donum intellectus, et tamen vult religiose vivere, et sibi solum vivere, cum tamen multis possit proficere.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2047, 335. Cf. Origen, “Vel aliter. Si quando videris ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

237 “... qui habet gratiam docendi, et non exercitat se, amittit illam.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2074, 343.

238 “Et primo ponitur in speciali ... quia quilibet tenetur reddere rationem primo in sua morte, secundo in die iudicii, quando oportebit nos adstare ante tribunal Christi.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2048, 335. Cf. the Parable of the Ungrateful Servant in Matthew 18.

effort or solicitude”²³⁹ by entering into the joy of the Lord, “that is concerning the Lord, for the Lord is truth. Hence beatitude is nothing other than the joy of truth. Or *enter into the joy of your Lord*, that is, rejoice in that by which He rejoices, and over which your Lord rejoices, namely in enjoyment of Himself.”²⁴⁰ Regarding the unworthy servant, Hilary, perhaps connecting it to the parable of Matthew 21, “explains it as of the peoples of the Jews and of the Gentiles, because the Jews seemed to have God’s law, and did not wish to obey it, hence they were cast out, but the people of the Gentiles received what they had not, and entered into the blessing of the olive.”²⁴¹ This should be kept in mind when discussing the relationship between the Old and New Law and the Kingdom, below. This “joy of truth ... [or] enjoyment of [God] Himself” also hints at the contemplative nature of the Kingdom, which has been a subtext here in Matthew but still present, and will be emphasized more in the *Commentary on John*.

Judgment and Division Revisited

The final mention of the Kingdom in this chapter is the great discourse on the Last Judgment that ends the chapter and Christ’s teaching ministry in the Gospel according to Matthew. Christ is called King here because “it is a king’s to judge.”²⁴² The Kingdom is here mentioned as the reward, although Thomas makes it clear that “it will not be given to us according to our merit, but according to how we are grounded in (*confirmamur*) the merits of

239 “securitatem, fidelitatem, humilitatem et strenuitatem, sive sollicitudinem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2051, 336.

240 “... idest de Domino, quia Dominus veritas est. Unde nihil aliud est beatitudo, quam gaudium veritatis. Vel sic: *intra in gaudium domini tui*, idest de eo gaude quo gaudet, et de quo gaudet Dominus tuus, scilicet de fruitione suiipsius.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2054, 337. Cf Augustine, *De Trin.*, i, 8 in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

241 “Hilarius autem exponit de populo Iudaeorum et gentilium, quia Iudaei videbantur habere legem Dei, et noluerunt obedire, unde facti sunt alieni; populus autem gentilium recepit quod non habebat, et intravit in benedictionem olivae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.2 ¶2074, 343. Cf. Hilary, “Vel per hunc servum intelligitur populus Iudaeorum ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.2.

242 “... quia regist est iudicare;” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2092, 350.

Christ.”²⁴³ This seems to imply a more complete union with Christ, since he brings up the objection “are not the good even now in some way joined to God? I say yes, through charity, but not the fullness of charity, and through a mysterious (*aenigmaticam*) faith; but then they will be gathered in the fullness of charity and in faith which is not enigmatic.”²⁴⁴ Similarly, he states that in the judgment, “the cause of damnation is from man, the cause of salvation is from God.”²⁴⁵ That cause is twofold: “the temporal is the application of glory ... the other cause is the predestination of God.”²⁴⁶

The reward itself is “the kingdom of heaven ... Who possesses God, possesses the Kingdom.”²⁴⁷ And you cannot have one without the other, as Thomas rebukes those who just want to ‘scrape by’ and avoid Hell. “But some may say: *I do not wish to rule, it suffices for me that I be not damned*. This cannot be. Either you will be a king and have a kingdom, or you will be damned.”²⁴⁸

The ‘possession’ mentioned here,”i.e., enter into possession ... is fitting and proper to him who has the right. Thus, we have this right by divine order, namely from its acquisition by Christ, who earned it for us, and by His grace.”²⁴⁹ It also contains the sense of fullness and

243 “Quia non erit nobis secundum nostrum meritum, sed secundum quod confirmamur merito Christi.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2092, 350.

244 “Sed numquid boni modo non sunt coniuncti Deo? Dico quod sic per caritatem non plenam, item per fidem aenigmaticam; sed tunc congregabuntur in caritate plena, in fide non aenigmatica.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2093, 350. Cf. Augustine, *De Civitatis Dei*, XX.9 in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.3.

245 “... causa damnationis est ex homine, causa salutis ex Deo.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2094, 351.

246 “... temporalis est appositio gloriae ... Item alia cause est Dei praedestinatio;” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2094, 351.

247 “Istud regnum est regnum caelorum ... Qui possidet Deum, possidet regnum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2095, 351.

248 “Sed diceret aliquis: *nolo regnare, sufficit mihi quod non damner*. Hoc non potest esse. Vel eris rex et habebis regnum, vel eris damnatus.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2095, 351. Cf. Augustine, *Sermon 351*, 8 in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.3.

249 “idest intrate in possessionem. .. in possessionem proprie convenit ei, qui ius habuit. Istud autem ius habuimus ex ordinatione divina; item ex acquisitione Christi, qui nobis hoc acquisivit; item ex gratia sua;” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2095, 351.

security, “ ‘what is had peacefully.’ ... We have God in a way now, but not quietly, because man is disturbed in multiple ways, but then one will possess it in peace.”²⁵⁰ And again, we see the Kingdom is the possession of and participation in God Himself, as mentioned in the second parable above, as well as the emphasis on grace merited by Christ, who is about to win the Kingdom through the tribulation of the Passion.²⁵¹

Anticipating the Coming Kingdom: The Eschatological Kingdom in the Passion and Resurrection Narratives

Christ’s last use of the term “kingdom” in this Gospel comes in Matthew 26, in the words of institution, where He promises that “I will not drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I will drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father.” (Matt. 26:29) And again, Aquinas synthesizes numerous Fathers and predecessors to explain what ‘kingdom’ means in this context. Chrysostom argues that this is a message of consolation to soften the blow of the Passion, and thus “this *kingdom* means the kingdom of the resurrection. Then he received a new kingdom, in a new way.”²⁵² The use of the past tense indicates the reference to Christ’s resurrection rather than the general resurrection.

Jerome, reading the vine as the Jewish people, says that Christ means “my soul will not be joyful regarding this people *until in that day when I will drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father*. *Kingdom* signifies the present Church; *new*, they are made new by faith, because

250 “‘pacifice habetur’ ... Modo habemus Deum, sed no quiete, quia inquietatur homo multis modis; sed tunc quieta erit possessio;” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.25 L.3 ¶2095, 351. Cf. Augustine, *De Civitatis Dei*, XX.9 in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.25 L.3.

251 Another theme that will be emphasized more in the *Commentary on John*.

252 “Hoc *regnum* appellat regnum resurrectionis. Tunc accepit regnum novum, idest novo modo.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.4 ¶2203, 385. Cf. Chrysostom, “Quia vero de passione ... “ in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.26 L.8.

they will then be converted, and then I will rejoice with them.”²⁵³ Remigius “says that this ought to be referred to the Paschal ceremonies, i.e. I will not celebrate other ceremonies of this type until the establishment (*statum*) of the Church, when I will rejoice over the renewal of the Church.”²⁵⁴

Augustine, like Chrysostom, applies this parable to the immediate historical situation, but adds a moral dimension. The “oldness” or “old wine” he takes as referring to “two sorts of oldness, penalty and culpability, and this is passed down from Adam,”²⁵⁵ although in Christ, only the punishment was found. Thus, the wine will not be drunk until it is new “because he was going to dispose of that body and assume a glorified body in the resurrection, and he promised the Apostles that they would assume the same,”²⁵⁶ with the implication, drawing on St. Paul, that the penalty and guilt inherited from the old Adam have been done away with. What Augustine does briefly in this selection, Aquinas has done in more detail here: interpreting the text in historical (the Resurrection of Christ), allegorical and ecclesiological (the establishment of the Church), and analogical/eschatological (the General Resurrection) senses.

Another brief reference to the kingship of Christ is found in His trial before the High Priest, where his statement “You will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the Power

253 “... idest non gaudebit anima mea de populo isto, *usque in illum diem, cum illud bibam vobiscum novum in regno patris mei*. *Regnum* signat praesentem Ecclesiam; *novum*, idest innovatum per fidem, quia tunc convertentur, et tunc gaudebo cum eis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.4 ¶2203, 385. Cf. Jerome, “Vel aliter. De carnalibus dominus transit ad spiritualia ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.26 L.8, where Jerome says that “I suppose the Father’s kingdom to be the faith of believers.” (“Regnum patris fidem puto esse credentium.”)

254 “... dicit quod hoc referendum est ad caeremonias Paschales, idest: non celebrabo de caetero huiusmodi caeremonias usque ad statum Ecclesiae, cum gaudebo de innovatione Ecclesiae.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.4 ¶2203, 385. Cf. Remigius, “Vel aliter. Non bibam ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.26 L.8.

255 “Veterus autem duplex est, poenae et cuplae, et haec derivata est ab Adam,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.4 ¶2203, 386.

256 “quia depositurus erat corpus istud, et assumpsit in resurrectione corpus glorificatum, et promittit apostolis quod ipsa etiam assumerit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.4 ¶2203, 386. Cf. Augustine, *Quaest. Ev.* i, 43 in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.26 L.8.

of God” is taken, again following Chrysostom, as signifying “the dignity of a king.”²⁵⁷ In this context, the seeing “is able to be referred to the last coming, or the daily coming”²⁵⁸ The meaning of the last coming is self-evident; the daily coming apparently refers to the preaching of the Gospel and the Church hierarchy, since “this advent is in clouds, that is in apostles and holy teachers. ... They are called clouds, because they ascend into the heights. Also, clouds are fruitful. The first pertains to the exaltedness [*altitudinem*] of their life, the second to the fertility of their teaching. And they are the clouds of heaven, that is heavenly, because they bear the heavenly image”²⁵⁹ While Thomas speaks here of clouds as opposed to mountains, there is a strong connection between the imagery, adjectives and interpretation here to that used in *Rigans montes*, his inaugural sermon on teachers of the Gospel.²⁶⁰

Christ opens His last statement to His disciples in this Gospel with the statement “all power is given to me in heaven and in earth.” (Matthew 28:18) While Thomas first refers this to the manifestation of divine omnipotence in Christ’s person, he says that “we can also say otherwise, that *power* signifies some kind of honor of leadership, and thus we say men are in power, and so power is taken here.”²⁶¹ The Resurrection marks the dawn of Christ’s open possession and execution of that power, and is referred to the Kingdom by a reference to Daniel

257 “... dignitatem regiam.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.7 ¶2283, 413.

258 “... potest referri ad adventum ultimum, vel quotidianum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.7 ¶2284, 413.

259 “... iste adventus est in nubibus, idest in apostolis et sacris doctoribus. ... Isti dicuntur nubes, quia in altum ascendunt. Item nubes foecundae sunt. Primum pertinet ad altitudinem vitae, secundum ad foecunditatem doctrinae. Et sunt nubes caeli, idest caelestes, quia portaverunt imaginem caelestem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.26 L.7 ¶2284, 413.

260 Cf. *Rigans Montes*, translated by Ralph McInerny in *Thomas Aquinas, Selected Writings* (Penguin, 1998), revised and html-edited by Joseph Kenny, O.P., hosted at dhspriority.org/thomas/Principium.htm, accessed on April 10, 2016, Caput 1-3.

261 “Possumus et aliter dicere, quod *potestas* significat quondam honorem praesidentiae, sicut dicimus homines in potentatibus, et sic accipitur hic potestas.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.28 L.1 ¶2461, 469. Cf. Bede, “Non enim hoc de coaeterna patri divinitate ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.28 L.4, who says that Christ speaks “concerning the assumed humanity.” (“sed de assumpta loquitur humanitate”).

7:26-28. “Thus a certain active (*actualis*) leadership is understood: as if the Son were raised to the exercise of the power which he had naturally.”²⁶²

Conclusions on the Eschatological Dimension

The eschatological kingdom is, as noted, the end towards which all the other forms of the Kingdom have been driving, so it is natural that most of the points where Thomas deals with that form of the Kingdom relate it back to judgment, especially given his association of judgment with the fulfillment of royal power. This material also highlights the novelty of Christ’s teaching on the kingdom, and its otherworldly nature, which brings us to the topic of how the Kingdom of Heaven relates to the present age, the kingdoms of the world, and specifically the historical kingdom of Israel. Thus, it is natural to proceed from this last dimension to how the Kingdom as a whole fits into the structure of God’s plan for the world, as unfolded both in natural reason and in His revelation through history.

The Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdoms of the World, and the Kingdom of Israel

Now that we have analyzed Thomas’ treatment of the kingdom *in se*, we can turn to how that kingdom relates to other factors, and what makes it such a new, radical and otherworldly reality for Thomas. In addition, there is a certain tension that needs to be addressed, with the Kingdom as both the fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel and something dramatically different from what the people of Israel were expecting.

262 “Unde intelligitur quaedam praesidentia actualis: sicut si exaltaretur Filius ad exercitium potestatis quam naturaliter habebat;” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.28 L.1 ¶2461, 469. Cf. Chrysologus, *Sermon* 80, Jerome, “In caelo autem et in terra ...” and Remigius, “Quod ergo Psalmista ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.28 L.4.

To explore this, we should return to the very beginning of the text in question. Aquinas opens his commentary with St. Jerome's prologue to Matthew's Gospel, providing commentary on that introduction before moving on to the Gospel text itself. Aquinas breaks down Jerome's intent as describing “the author himself ... the mysteries of the Gospel ... [and] his own intention.”²⁶³ The material Aquinas draws from Jerome relates primarily to the genealogy of Matthew 1, and thus the relationship between Christ and the Old Testament.

Jerome principally discusses the relevance of Abraham and David, and of the three sets of fourteen in Matthew's genealogy; Aquinas notes them briefly, but will discuss them more in depth in the next two lectures. What does not appear in the study of the Gospel itself is the fact that “by this is mystically designated, that in the Trinity there is a Father and a Son, just as in this genealogy there are many fathers and many sons.”²⁶⁴

The text of the exposition of the Prologue, unfortunately, breaks off near the start of the third section, after Thomas explains that Jerome “shows his intention, namely that he intends that these things which are spoken of are true in history and still must be understood spiritually.”²⁶⁵ If it had continued, this might have given us more insight into Thomas' approach to Scriptural commentary, although we see here hints of Thomas' tendency to emphasize the literal or historical without neglecting the spiritual dimension. We will see this in the chronicle of Christ's descent in Matthew 1, where Thomas takes the genealogy as both historically accurate and spiritually symbolic of Christ.

263 “... ipsum auctorem ... Evangelii mysteria ... suam intentionem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 Prologue ¶1, 1.

264 “... Per hoc autem mystice designatur, quod in Trinitate est Pater et Filius, sicut in hac genealogia sunt quidam patres, quidam filii.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 Prologue ¶8, 3.

265 “... ostendit intentionem suam, scilicet quod intendit quod ea quae hic dicuntur, vera sunt in historia, et tamen spiritualiter intelligenda.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 Prologue ¶10, 4.

From Earthly to Heavenly Kingdoms: Lineage and Inheritance of the King in Matthew 1

One of the two themes that Thomas associates with Matthew in his inaugural sermon *Hic est liber*, Christ's royal descent, is addressed in his comments on the first verse of Matthew's Gospel, where he discusses the opening of the book as "the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of Abraham, the son of David". Following other commentators like Hugh of St. Cher and Albert the Great,²⁶⁶ he connects the name Jesus to the successor of Moses. Thomas adds his own note, however, by also noting the name of the high priest in Zechariah.²⁶⁷ This relates to the Kingdom because Thomas says that "that Jesus [Joshua of the Exodus period] led the people of Israel into the promised land; but this Jesus, that is our savior, leads us not into a carnal land, but into a celestial one."²⁶⁸ This is the first mention of a theme that will be made explicit in the discussion of the kingdom in Chapter 3 and will recur throughout the commentary. For Aquinas, as for many Fathers of the Church and medieval theologians, the Kingdom of Israel is a 'carnal' or 'earthly' foreshadowing of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the distinction between it and the Church is drawn rather sharply, to the point of suggesting that the latter kingdom of Heaven is something new to Christ's preaching and not mentioned explicitly in the Old Law.

The title of Christ, which distinguishes him from those other Jesuses and which means

266 See Chapter 5 for further discussion of Hugh and Albert's commentaries.

267 These two are more often rendered as Joshua in modern translations, but the Vulgate uses "Iesus" in both Ecclesiasticus 46:1 and Zechariah 3:1, and Aquinas follows Jerome. The attention to the nomenclature is borrowed from Pseudo-Chrysostom's *Commentary on Matthew* 1:17; see the reference in the *Catena Aurea* on Matthew, Chapter 1, Lecture 8. The material we have from Thomas lacks the "first of the Judges, first King, and first High Priest in the Exilic and post-Exilic period" theme mentioned by Pseudo-Chrysostom, but its inclusion in the *Catena* makes it quite clear he was familiar with it. Since this connection to the later Joshua is unique to Aquinas in the three 13th-century commentaries under consideration, it appears that only Thomas had access to Pseudo-Chrysostom on this point, or at least judged it as worth citation.

268 "Ille Iesus introduxit populum Israel in terram promissionis; sed iste Iesus, idest salvator noster, non in terram carnalem, sed introducit nos in caelestem." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.1 L.1 ¶ 18, 7.

“anointed”, also connects him to the Old Law, which contained three anointings.²⁶⁹ Jesus possesses all three of those anointings—royal, priestly, and prophetic—but in a higher way, according to Aquinas’ comments on Matthew 1:16. “He is simply called Christ, without addition, to denote that he was anointed with invisible oil, not material, as were kings or prophets under the Law. Ps. 44:8 *God, your God has anointed you, with the oil of gladness above all your fellows.*”²⁷⁰ This understanding may reflect the same dichotomy as that between the two kingdoms mentioned above, or the general sense of the New Testament (reinforced by the profoundly influential works of Pseudo-Dionysius) that spiritual and immaterial things are superior to their earthly, material counterparts.²⁷¹

The third part of Matthew’s opening verse, “the son of David, the son of Abraham,” also reflects the threefold dignity of Jesus according to Aquinas. While both Abraham and David qualify as prophets, in Aquinas’ readings, Abraham was a priest but not a king, and David likewise was a king but not a priest. “Therefore since Christ was king, and prophet, and priest, hence it is rightly said that he is the son of both of them. If only Abraham had been named, it would not have been shown that Christ was a king. Likewise, if only David, the priestly dignity would not have been denoted.”²⁷² Thomas also cites Ambrose to the effect that the promise regarding Headship was made to David, and that regarding members to Abraham, which gives David a priority of dignity. This is reminiscent of the ‘whole Christ’ from Augustine and other

269 “Nota autem tres unctiones in veteri lege.”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.1 L.1 ¶ 19, 7.

270 “Simpliciter dicitur Christus sine additione, ad denotandum quod oleo invisibili unctus est, non materiali, sicut reges, vel prophetae in lege. Ps. XLIV, 8: *unxit te Deus, Deus tuus oleo laetitiae prae consortibus tuis*”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.1 L.4 ¶ 97, 31.

271 See 2 Corinthians 4:18 and Thomas’ *Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, C.4 L.5.

272 “Quia ergo Christus fuit rex, et propheta, et sacerdos; ideo recte dicitur filius istorum. Si enim solum Abraham nominasset, non signaretur quod Christus rex fuisset. Item si solum David, non denotaretur in Christo sacerdotalis dignitas,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C. 1 L. 1 ¶ 20, 7 This is almost directly taken from Chrysostom; cf. *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.1 L.1.

Fathers, and also suggests that kingship in some fashion entails more than genealogy or leadership of a people, or else Abraham would be just as ‘kingly’ as David. Abraham, though, was never anointed as king, while David was.²⁷³ The kingly anointing of David is a point which Thomas will return to when Matthew’s genealogy reaches David.

The symbolic connection between the Davidic kingdom and the kingdom of God is reinforced at the end of Lecture 2. Every member of the genealogy symbolizes Christ in some way, according to Aquinas,²⁷⁴ but the connection to the kingdom is made here as well, when it reaches David. David is the prototypical king, Thomas says, “because all of them reign according to the merits of David himself.”²⁷⁵ In the moral dimension, David signifies the “fruit of perfection,” while those who immediately preceded him—those born in the Promised Land--symbolized the fruits of beginning or of progression. Fortitude is symbolized by Boaz, three generations back, humility by his grandfather Obed, and the fervor of charity by Jesse. “And from this one comes to the kingdom and to glory, for Jesse generated David the king.”²⁷⁶ Although the second phase of the genealogy is traced through the kings, Aquinas draws no conclusions about Christ’s kingship or the kingdom of God from this phase of His ancestry, although like most commentators, he provides explanations for why three kings were excluded. The next part of the commentary that deals with these topics²⁷⁷ comes at the start of Chapter 2,

273 This is supported by citations in the *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.1 L.1, from both Chrysostom’s and Pseudo-Chrysostom’s commentaries on Matthew. The latter stresses the superiority of David’s “royal” dignity to Abraham’s “natural” dignity, stating that “nam etsi Abraham praecedat in tempore, David praecedebat in dignitate.”

274 Who is repeating numerous patristic sources here, including the Glossa, Remigius, and Pseudo-Chrysostom. See *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.1 L.3.

275 “quia alii propter meritum ipsius David regnaverunt”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.1 L.2 ¶ 51, 16.

276 “Et ex hoc pervenitur ad regnum, et ad gloriam: quia Iesse genuit David regem” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.1 L.2 ¶ 53, 17.

277 Aside from a passing reference in Lecture 4 which repeats the distinction between the spiritual and earthly kingdoms.

with the coming of the Magi.

Adoration and Opposition of Kings

Aquinas refers to the Magi as kings, but only in passing (“It appears, according to the gifts, that there were three kings (*tres reges*),”²⁷⁸ and referring to them as a fulfillment of Psalm 71:11. Rather, in this section of the Commentary, the focus is on the heavenly King and the earthly king. Christ’s kingship is the explanation for why the Magi came to Jerusalem—“they sought the king of the Jews in the kingly city.”²⁷⁹ However, having been guided by the star, they were “not rendering homage to an earthly king, but a heavenly one, in whom divine power was shown, otherwise, if they had sought an earthly king, they would have abandoned all devotion, having found him weak in common clothes.”²⁸⁰

Yet Aquinas also hints at a conflict of Christ’s kingship with Herod’s, asking “since they had heard there was a king in Jerusalem, in what way were they asking this? For any who profess another king in the city of a king expose themselves to danger.”²⁸¹ Thomas takes this as a sign of the great faith of the Magi, but these two passages in the first lecture suggest both the different nature of Christ’s kingship and the roots of its conflict with Herod and earthly kings.

Lecture 2 strikes these notes at its very start. “And he significantly calls Herod a king, to show that he is another king than the one they were seeking. Therefore, he was troubled, for

278 “Videtur autem, secundum munera, quod fuerunt tres reges,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.1 ¶164, 52.

279 “... regem Iudaeorum in regia civitate quaerebant,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.1 ¶166, 53 Cf. Remigius, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.2 L.1.

280 “... quod non praestaverunt obsequium regi terreno, sed caelesti: in quo virtus divina ostenditur affuisse; quia aliter si terrenum regem quaesissent, totam devotionem amisissent, quando vilibus pannis invenerunt involutum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.1 ¶174, 56. Cf Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.2 L.5.

281 “Cum ipsi audissent regem esse in Ierusalem, quomodo ista dicebant? Omnis enim qui alium regem profitetur in civitate regis, se exponit periculo.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.1 ¶168, 53. Cf. Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.2 L.1.

three reasons.”²⁸² The first reason, of course, is his concern over the loss of his old kingdom—but “in this he was deceived, for that kingdom was spiritual.”²⁸³ Thomas gives John 18:36 as the reference for this, which raises a question as to whether or not the Jews should have known about the nature of the Kingdom—a point of ambiguity that will continue throughout the Commentary. Thomas builds on the spiritual nature of the Kingdom by borrowing a motif from Leo the Great about how Herod symbolizes the Devil here. “Therefore Herod was troubled, fearing the loss of his kingdom, but the Devil was more troubled, fearing the total destruction of his kingdom.”²⁸⁴ This is the first reference to the conflict between the kingdoms of God and Satan, which will recur both explicitly and implicitly throughout Aquinas’ teaching on the Kingdom. We will see this again in the temptation in the desert in Chapter 4, as well as at other points in the Commentary.

Aquinas places the blame for the misunderstanding of the Kingdom here on the scribes and priests, who “truncate the last part of the authority, namely *And his going forth is from the beginning, to the days of eternity*. By this it is insinuated that he was not to be an earthly, but a heavenly king.”²⁸⁵ He goes so far as to state that if they had properly understood the Messianic prophecy they cited, Herod would not have committed the Massacre of the Innocents.

Returning to the relationship between the Kingdom of God and the earthly kingdom of Israel, Thomas has a strong sense of the differentiation between the two, but they are not

282 “Et signanter vocat Herodem regem, ut ostendat esse alium a rege, quem quaerebant. Fuit autem triplex causa turbationis.”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.2 ¶177, 57.

283 “Sed in hoc decipiebatur, quia regnum illud spirituale erat”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.2 ¶177, 58.

284 “Unde Herodes turbabatur timens amissionem regni sui; sed magis turbabatur Diabolus timens regni sui destructionem totalem”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.2 ¶177, 58. Cf. Leo, Sermon 36, 2, and Pseudo-Chrysostom, in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.2 L.2.

285 “... truncant caudam auctoritatis, scilicet *et egressus eius sicut ab initio, a diebus aeternitatis*. Per quod insinuatur quod non debebat esse rex terrenus, sed caelestis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.2 ¶185, 60. Cf. Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.2 L.2.

completely disconnected from each other. Despite the differentiation between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of God that we will see in Chapter 3, as well as in other places in this commentary and the *Commentary on John*, the condition of the nation of Israel plays a role in the timing of the Messianic mission, according to Aquinas. He applies the prophecy of Genesis 49:10 to this point in history, stating that “Herod was the first of alien race who reigned in Judea.”²⁸⁶ This suggests that Thomas understands the ‘until’ here as referring to a conclusion of the Davidic kingdom in two ways. Temporally, it is removed by Herod, who claims the kingship for himself. In the greater scheme of things, the coming of Christ takes that kingship and elevates it to a new and eternal level. In addition, the fact that the people of Israel were under foreign domination meant that “because of the magnitude of the affliction, the Lord of the prophets was sent to them.”²⁸⁷ When we turn to Thomas' commentary on John, especially John 3, we will reinforce that the Kingdom under the Old Law was distinct from and inferior to the new Kingdom that John the Baptist announced and Jesus inaugurated, but still a foreshadowing of that kingdom rather than a completely different entity.

Lecture 3 covers the visit of the Magi to the infant Christ, and contains references that reinforce his themes of spiritual kingdom and the symbolism of faith. He repeats what he said earlier about the state of the child—“And so I say that if they had been seeking an earthly king, they would have been scandalized by seeing these things [the unremarkable child, humble mother, and poor surroundings], but seeing the common things and considering the highest

286 “Herodes enim fuit primus alienigena, qui regnavit in Iudaea.”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.1 ¶163, 52 Cf. Rabanus and Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.2 L.1.

287 “... propter magnitudinem afflictionis mittebatur eis prophetarum dominus”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.1 ¶163, 52.

things, they were moved to admiration and adored Him.”²⁸⁸ The other reference to Christ’s kingship in this lecture is the traditional referent to gold as a gift corresponding to His royal dignity. Thomas cites Jeremiah 23:5 in this context—“A king shall reign, and shall be wise”—and goes on to apply gold to wisdom when considering the relation of the three gifts to our actions. He also makes a passing reference to the three gifts symbolizing the three persons of the Trinity, but does not elaborate.²⁸⁹ Since wisdom is appropriated to the Son in medieval theology, perhaps the gift of gold links all three of these factors—kingship, wisdom, and sonship—in a single symbol.²⁹⁰

Lecture 4, which covers the remainder of Chapter 2—the Flight into Egypt, the Massacre of the Innocents, and the return to Nazareth—includes a statement that Herod “was deceived, because he sought to destroy one who wished to share His kingdom. . . . and who was not seeking worldly glory.”²⁹¹ The Kingdom is not only spiritual and distinct from worldly glory, but is not possessed solely by Christ, although like the Resurrection, everyone else’s possession of it comes through Him—Aquinas cites here Luke 22:29: “And I give to you, as my Father has give to Me, a kingdom.”²⁹² This is one of the first appearances of participation, which is a key dimension of Thomas’ theology of the kingdom, and it foreshadows the new Kingdom that will

288 “Et hoc ideo dico, quia si isti quaesivissent regem terrenum, videndo ista scandalizati fuissent; sed videntes vilia, et considerantes altissima, moti sunt ad admirationem, et adoraverunt eum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.3 ¶196, 64.

289 Neither do his sources. The *Catena Aurea* (Matthew C.2 L5) cites Augustine on the correspondence of gold to kingship and Gregory on that to wisdom, but only mentions the Holy Trinity in a citation from the Gloss (and, unattributed, to Anselm) about the various threes signified by the three gifts.

290 This is, unfortunately, only speculative, but Thomas does identify the Kingdom of God with contemplation and the Beatific Vision in Matthew 8 and John 3, and the mission of the Son with intellectual graces in *ST* I.43.5. Ad 1. Such a unifying symbol of the three, though not found explicitly in his thought, would arguably be in keeping with it.

291 “Deceptus fuit Herodes, quia voluit perdere qui venerat regnum suum communicare. . . . Secundo, quia eum qui non gloriam mundanam quaerebat.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.2 L.4 ¶212, 69.

292 In the *Catena Aurea*, Luke, C.22 L.8, Thomas cites numerous Fathers, including Bede and Ambrose, to the effect that the Kingdom promised is communion with God and likeness to Him through Christ.

be proclaimed at the start of the public ministry

First News of a New Kingdom

In commenting on Matthew 3 and the preaching of John, Thomas says “They had never heard anyone make mention of the kingdom of heaven, and so they marveled . . . John first taught that the kingdom of heaven will not be set forth on earth.”²⁹³ This raises some questions about the preparation for the Kingdom by the prophets, when the Jews have been awaiting the Messiah for so long. This point is reiterated in the commentary on 13:19, where Aquinas describes “the word of the kingdom” as “Christ preaching the kingdom of Heaven, because Christ only preached the kingdom of God; Moses preached an earthly kingdom.”²⁹⁴

Christ Himself proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew 4:17. Here, Thomas takes the opportunity to further develop his distinction between the promises of the Old Testament and the New Testament:

This promise differs in two ways from the promise of the Old Testament, because that was temporal, while this is heavenly and eternal. . . . Likewise, that was of the kingdom of the Canaanites and Jebusites, while this is of the kingdom of Heaven. . . . And therefore the teaching of Christ is called the New Testament: because he has made there a new pact between us and God concerning the kingdom of Heaven. . . . Secondly, because the Old Law also had threats with the promises. . . . And this is because the Old was a law of fear, but the New a law of love. . . . And so he says “the Kingdom of Heaven is approaching”, namely eternal beatitude. And he says “coming”, because the one who was giving it descended to us, for we had not the power to ascend to God.²⁹⁵

293 “Numquam audiverant fieri mentionem de regno caelorum, et ideo mirabantur . . . Ioannes primo docuit quod ratio regni caelorum non esset ponenda in terra.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶258, 83. This reading goes strongly against Viviano’s assumption that the kingdom was fundamentally a coming earthly promise, and may, as he suggests, be linked to Thomas’ general reaction against Joachite speculations on the New Age.

294 “... *verbum regni*, idest Christi praedicantis regnum caelorum, quia Christus solum regnum Dei praedicavit: Moyses enim terrenum regnum praedicavit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.13 L.1 ¶1123, 15 Cf. Glossa from Anselm, and Remigius, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.13 L.3.

295 “Ista promissio in duobus differ a promissione Veteris Testamenti; quia ibi temporalia, hic caelestia, et aeterna; . . . Item ibi regnum Chanaanorum et Iebusaeorum; hic regnum caelorum. . . . Et ideo doctrina Christi dicitur Novum Testamentum: quia facta est ibi nova pacto inter nos et Deum de regno caelorum; . . . Secundo quia vetus lex simul cum promissione habebat comminationem; . . . Et hoc ideo est, quia vetus erat lex timoris, nova vero amoris. . . . Et

We see a sharp distinction between the Old Law and the New Law here, based again on the distinction between earthly and heavenly things, and between fear and love.²⁹⁶ The statement about an absence of threats in the New Law may sound strange when we recall Christ's warnings about Hell, but it makes more sense if we understand this as applying to the eschatological and heavenly kingdom in its fullness. There was the possibility of falling away and of trials in the earthly kingdom, but one who enters into the heavenly kingdom has passed all trials and is at no risk for punishment. The distinction is thus between the Jewish kingdom and the Eternal kingdom, rather than the Jewish kingdom and the inchoate form of the heavenly kingdom that we know as the Church, where “the wheat and tares grow together until the harvest.”

Interwoven Kingdoms

Matthew 5:17-20 returns to the question of how the Old and New Law relate, and the meaning of the kingdom of Heaven in 5:19 is somewhat problematic in that “following this, it seems that one who loosens [the commandments] will be in the kingdom of Heaven.”²⁹⁷ As is typical, Aquinas provides varying authorities here. Augustine argues that this means that only the great by this standard will be in the kingdom of Heaven, which he identifies as eternal life; “hence whoever is too small will never enter.”²⁹⁸ Rabanus favors a contrast with earthly glory—men seek fame on earth, but such fame does not exist in heaven; “there, one is called poor who

ideo dicit *appropinquabit regnum caelorum*, scilicet beatitudo aeterna. Et dicit *appropinquabit*, quia ille qui dabat, ad nos descendit, quia nos non poteramus ascendere ad Deum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.4 L.2 ¶362, 117.

296 Thomas is citing Remigius again here—see *Catena Aurea* C.4 L. 6—but the distinction is not unique to either of them. See Augustine, *de Serm. Dom. In Mont.* 1.1, cited in *Catena Aurea*, C.5 L.1.

297 “Et secundum hoc videtur quod qui solvit erit in regno caelorum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.6 ¶475, 157.

298 “... unde qui nimis parvus numquam intrabit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.6 ¶475, 157. Cf Augustine de Serm. Dom. in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.12.

transgresses the laws, and least who teaches to transgress.”²⁹⁹ St. Thomas seems to mildly favor this interpretation, with the placid approbation “and this is good enough.”³⁰⁰ Mitchell understands Thomas' comments here as an example of the principle that he “equates kingdom with the operative presence of God's rule in man rather than with the visible church as such,”³⁰¹ and it does fit in with the juxtapositions between earthly and heavenly kingdoms that he has already established. He also mentions the opinions of John Chrysostom, who applies “kingdom of heaven” to the final judgment, “and there will be diverse places there, but least those who taught to transgress the law.”³⁰² Other readings of the passage, according to Chrysostom, would include even those in Hell in the Kingdom of Heaven. The last Father cited is Gregory, who applies this to the Church, “because when the life of one is despised, it remains that his teaching is condemned.”³⁰³

Aquinas returns to this topic in Lecture 7, following up on 5:20, where Jesus says “unless your justice exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of Heaven.” Aquinas again cites Chrysostom, who says “it is one thing to be in a kingdom and another to enter it; those properly enter the kingdom who have a part in lordship of the kingdom; there are those who dwell in it in another way; hence those who are held in prison are said to be in the kingdom.”³⁰⁴ Augustine, meanwhile, is adduced for another explanation—the two senses

299 “... parvus enim reputatur ibi qui transgreditur mandatur, minimus qui docet transgredi.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.6 ¶475, 157.

300 “Et haec satis bona est.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.6 ¶475, 157.

301 Mitchell, 52.

302 “... et ibi erunt ordines diversi, sed minimus qui docet transgredi mandata.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.6 ¶475, 157. Cf. Chrysostom in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.12, where he identifies the kingdom with the General Resurrection and Final Judgment.

303 “... quia cuius vita despicitur restat ut eius praedicatio contemnatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.6 ¶475, 157. Cf. Gregory, Hom. in Ev. 12, 1, in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.12.

304 “... aliud est esse in regno et aliud intrare: illi enim propriae intrant qui in dominio regni partem habent, illi sunt qui in quibuscumque morantur; unde etiam illi qui detinentur in carcere dicuntur esse in regno.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.7 ¶481, 160. Cf. Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.13.

of the Kingdom, “one into which no one enters without having justice, and this is eternal life; the other into which those ‘unbound’ (*solventes*) enter, and that is the present Church.”³⁰⁵

Continuing with Matthew 5:20, Aquinas starts by defining ‘justice’ in this context as what Aristotle would call “legal justice, which is in regard to the keeping of the law.”³⁰⁶ This allows him to admit the plain sense of the ‘justice of the scribes and Pharisees’ in regard to the Old Law, while upholding “the excellence of the New Testament, [for] Christ shows that it transcends their justice.”³⁰⁷ At this point, the Kingdom of Heaven in the context of 5:19-20 is explicitly made out to be the Church: “Therefore it is said that who is lesser in the Kingdom of Heaven, that is the Church, is greater than them. Therefore, the sense is *unless* [your justice] *should abound*, that is if *your justice* is not more perfect than *that of the Scribes and Pharisees*, *you will not enter*, etc.”³⁰⁸

But here again we have not only the distinction between the Old Testament and the New, but between the present state and the eschatological state. “And it must be known that the state of the Gospel is a middle status between the law and glory.”³⁰⁹ Drawing on Galatians, Aquinas compares the Law to childhood and the Gospel to advanced age. “And this is natural, for none can arrive an end without completing another step; thus, no one can arrive at old age without transcending childhood; therefore the Lord says that one cannot reach the state of the Kingdom

305 “... quoddam in quod non intrant non habentes iustitiam, et haec est vita aeterna; aliud in quod intrant solventes, et haec est praesens Ecclesia.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.7 ¶481, 160. Cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Book 20 Ch. 9 in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.5 L.13.

306 “... iustitiam legalem, quae est quantum ad impletionem legis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.7 ¶478, 159.

307 “... excellentiam Novi Testamenti, ostendit quod etiam illorum iustitiam transcendit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.7 ¶478, 159.

308 “Ideo dicitur qui minor est in regno caelorum, id est Ecclesia maior est illo. Est ergo sensus: *nisi abundauerit*, id est nisi perfectior sit *vestra iustitia quam scribarum et Phraisaeorum*, *non intrabitis*, etc.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.7 ¶478, 159.

309 “Et sciendum quod status Evangelii est medium inter statum legis et gloriae,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.7 ¶479, 159.

of Heaven without completing the others.”³¹⁰ The distinction between the earthly rewards of the Old Law and the heavenly rewards promised by the New Law is also repeated, with another citation of Isaiah 1:19. “Here heavenly things are promised, therefore, the justice in us ought to abound, because a greater pay (*merces*) is expected.”

The relationship between the two kingdoms recurs in Matthew 11:11-12, which contains some of the most puzzling statements about the Kingdom in the whole Gospel. The first, about John the Baptist and the “least in the kingdom [being] greater than he,” contributed to a disparagement of the patriarchs that was apparently so pervasive that St. Thomas felt the need to correct it. “Occasioned by these words, some have found an opportunity for calumny: they wish to damn all the Fathers of the Old Testament”³¹¹ by the reasoning that if John, greatest of all those, was outside the kingdom of Heaven, so are all the others. The premise is that “by the kingdom of heaven the present Church is designated.”³¹² Thus, what we have here is the perennial temptation to define *extra Ecclesia nullam salus* in a narrow fashion.

St. Thomas provides three alternative ways of interpreting this that avoid the narrow and condemnatory reading of the passage. The first is that “by the kingdom of heaven is to be understood the order of the blessed, and whoever is less among these is greater than any wayfarer.”³¹³ This is especially true because ‘comprehensors’³¹⁴ are more fully in act than those

310 “Et hoc naturale est quod nullus potest pervenire ad terminum unum nisi transcendat alium: nullus enim potest pervenire ad senectutem nisi transcendat pueritiam; ita dicit Dominus non posse pervenire ad statum regni caelorum nisi transcendat etc.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.5 L.7 ¶479, 159.

311 “Occasione istorum verborum quidam locum calumniandi invenerunt: volunt enim omnes patres Veteris Testamenti damnare;” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶918, 340.

312 “... per regnum caelorum praesens Ecclesia designatur.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶918, 340. Cf. Augustine, *Contra Adversus Legis et Prophet.*, ii, 5, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.11 L.4.

313 “... per regnum caelorum ordo beatorum intelligatur: et qui inter illios est minor, maior est quolibet viatore.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶919, 340. Cf. Augustine, *Contra Adversus Legis et Prophet.*, ii, 5, and Jerome in *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.11 L.4.

314 Aquinas’ favored term for those who have attained the Beatific Vision.

who are wayfarers—an interesting application of Aristotelian philosophy to a theological distinction.

The second explanation grants the opposition's premise that the Kingdom refers to the present Church, but argues that "it is not called *lesser* universally, but lesser in the temporal sense. See above, III, and John 1:15: *who comes after me, was before me ...*."³¹⁵

The third way of reading this passage distinguishes between two different types of greatness: "either insofar as regards merit ... or by comparing state to state."³¹⁶ Thus, any in the state of the New Law are in a superior condition to the patriarchs and others under the Old Law, but the merits of Abraham and the like are still greater than those of the typical Christian. Or, as Thomas puts it, "just as virgins are greater than wedded people, but a given virgin is not necessarily superior to a given wedded person."³¹⁷ This meshes well with the distinction between the state of the Old Law and that of the New Law, which recurs in Thomas' discussions of the two categories and the Kingdom of Heaven.

False Roads to the Kingdom

The introduction to the first lecture on Chapter 20 provides interesting context to Chapters 18 and 19. "Above the Lord deal with arrival to the kingdom through the common way of salvation and through the way of perfection"—suggesting that the Kingdom in this section of the Gospel is to be identified with "future glory" and "eternal life."³¹⁸ This, of course, can relate

315 "... et hoc est, quod *minor* non dicitur universaliter, sed minor tempore. Supra III et Io. I, v.15: *qui post me venit, ante me factus est.*" *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶919, 340.

316 "... vel quantum ad meritum ... aut comparando statum ad statum." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶919, 340.

317 "... sicut virgines meliores sunt coniugatis; non tamen quaelibet virgo melior quolibet coniugato." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.11 L.1 ¶919, 340.

318 "Supra Dominus egit de perventione ad regnum per viam communis salutis, et per viam perfectionis" *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1620, 184; cf. C.18 L.1 ¶1485, 136; C.19 L.1 ¶1543, 159.

to all of the meanings of the Kingdom mentioned back in Chapter 3, especially since purely nominal membership in the Church or a purely intellectual relation to Scripture would not have fit Aquinas' understanding of those two activities as forms of the Kingdom.

It is interesting that Thomas uses the term Kingdom here, when describing those who “expected to arrive unworthily.”³¹⁹ The two categories of such are those who “intend to come because of antiquity of time, secondly, those who [intend to come] on account of fleshly origin.”³²⁰ Both of these could be applied to those Jews who were hostile to Jesus' message and expected to enter the Kingdom of Heaven on account of their descent from Abraham or their position as the first (if not only) recipients of God's call. Aquinas' use of Kingdom here, therefore, may reflect not only the parable but the fact that the Kingdom was so often misunderstood by those same critics, a misunderstanding that will recur in the Passion narratives, especially in John when Jesus speaks of his Kingdom “not being of this world” and the exegesis of Pilate's famous *Ecce, homo*. Indeed, John as exegeted by Aquinas speaks so much of the misunderstanding of the Kingdom and its otherworldliness that a whole subsection of this chapter will be devoted to the topic.

In exegeting this parable, Thomas follows two strands of the tradition. One, going back to Pseudo-Chrysostom, says that the vineyard “is justice, and it produces as many virtues as it sends forth branches.”³²¹ The other is sourced to Gregory and states that “the holy Church is signified by the vineyard,”³²² with reference to Isaiah's use of the same image for the house of Israel.

319 “... credunt indebite pervenire,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1620, 184.

320 “... qui intendunt venire propter temporis antiquitatem; secundo qui propter carnis originem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1620, 184.

321 “... iustitia est, et quot virtutes producit, tot palmites emittit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1623, 185. Cf Pseudo-Chrysostom in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C. 20 L.1.

322 “... per vinea significatur sancta Ecclesia.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1623, 185.

These two interpretations match well to two of the interpretations of the Kingdom given in Chapter 3—Chrysostom’s applies to the soul united to Christ by grace, in which virtues are cultivated; the Gregorian tradition, obviously, speaks of the Church, and as Thomas develops it, specifically the earthly Church.

This same division can be seen in the workers. First, it is applied to “those who are descended from Adam; hence, all mankind,” citing Genesis 2 where humanity is commissioned to tend the Garden of Paradise.³²³ Thus, “every man ought to do justice, and cultivate it, and have care for his neighbor.”³²⁴ However, Thomas goes on to say that “likewise, prelates are the workers,”³²⁵ providing a second interpretation in keeping with Gregory.

“Just as a wage-earner (*mercenarius*) does not immediately receive a wage, but expects one, so it is for us in this life.”³²⁶ We labor “in the vineyard of the Church” and just as the hireling “first grows, and then consumes, so it is fitting that we first cultivate and prepare the salvation of others, and then seek after temporal things.”³²⁷ The statement that we must cultivate the salvation or well-being of others (*aliorum salutem*) is interesting. Pseudo-Chrysostom says that “we should not work only for our own good, but for the glory of God.”³²⁸ Gregory simply refers to those who “join good action with right faith.”³²⁹ The addition of the concern for the salvation of others appears to be Thomas’ own development of the latent idea here.³³⁰ This is in

323 “... sunt qui ab Adam descenderunt, unde omnes homines.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1624, 185.

324 “Debet enim unusquisque operari iustitiam, et excolere eam, et habere curam de proximo.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1624, 185.

325 “Similiter praelati sunt operarii.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1624, 185. Cf. Gregory, *Hom. in Ev. XIX, 1*, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.1.

326 “Sicut enim mercenarius non statim accipit mercedem, sed expectat, sic nos in vita ista.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1625, 185.

327 “... in vinea Ecclesiae ... Item primo excolit, et post comedit: et sic oportet quod primo excolamus et praeparemus aliorum salute, post temporalia quaeramus.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1624, 185.

328 “... solum operemur quae ad nostrum pertinet usum, sed ad gloriam Dei”, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.1.

329 “.. cum fide recta bonae actionis extitit,” *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C. 20 L.1.

330 Although only in the application of this specific text, of course.

keeping with the Dominican emphasis on evangelical preaching and working for the salvation of souls, and is also interesting given that some theologians have accused Thomas of neglecting the communal dimension of the kingdom. Indeed, this may argue against Germain Grisez' reading of Thomas as possessing a notion of beatitude that is overly static and focused solely on the Beatific Vision, to the exclusion of community,³³¹ as well as Viviano's complaint that Aquinas and other medievals neglect the this-worldly dimension of the Kingdom.³³² If the way to the Kingdom of Heaven is through charity towards our neighbors as well as God (for what is working for *salutem aliorum* if not the most perfect expression of charity?), then the fulfillment must incorporate both, as the final end is here constituted by the means of attaining it. Given the centrality of contemplation to the Kingdom, which requires not only knowing but loving what is known, this further supports the idea that the Kingdom requires not only knowledge but *caritas* as well. Taking it a step further, this concern and labor makes us more Christ-like, and given that Thomas at numerous points identifies the Kingdom with the King, we can see here a hint at how the Kingdom is attained by our Christoform deification.

After applying the various groups of workers to both the stages of salvation history up to Christ, and the stages of human life,³³³ Aquinas turns to the payment. He has already established that the denarius signifies eternal life, "because this denarius had the value of ten usual denarii. Also, it was marked with the likeness of the ruler. Thus, what is signified by that denarius consists in observation of the Decalogue ...Also, it has the likeness of God: I John 3:2 *When He*

331 Grisez., esp. pp. 50-53.

332 Viviano, *Kingdom of God in History*, 65.

333 Again following his patristic sources; see the extensive entries in this regard in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.20 L.1.

appears, we will be like Him.”³³⁴ The wages, therefore, combine moral and eschatological meanings—both eternal life and the means to reach it through grace and virtue. The evening when the payment is made can be interpreted “either as the end of man’s life, or the end of the ages,”³³⁵ so the twofold interpretation continues, relating the time of payment to the personal or the Final Judgment.

Those who had come at the eleventh hour, “either Christians or men [who had converted] in decrepit old age, received a single denarius. ... *But the first coming*, not referring to the temporal age, because they were Jews, *who thought that they would receive more*, because they had more in another age. *They also received a single denarius.*”³³⁶ The reward, Thomas says, will be equal in one way, but not another: “because beatitude can be considered with regard to the object, and thus there is one beatitude for all; or with regard to participation in the object, and in this way all will not participate equally, because they will not all see it clearly.”³³⁷

One note connects the divine mercy to God’s kingship and supreme power. “It is lawful for any man to do what he wills concerning what is his own. If he were a debtor to another, it would not be lawful to do such, likewise if he were under another; but since he is the master, he therefore can give more. A bailiff can only give to another according to merit, while a king can

334 “... quia denarius ille valebat decem denarios usuales. Item habebat impressam similitudinem regis. Unde quod significatur per istum denarium, consistit in observatione decalogi ... Item habet similitudinem Dei; I Io. cap. III, 2: *cum appareuerit, similes ei erimus.*” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1627, 186. Cf. Origen and Remigius, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C. 20 L.1.

335 “... vel de fine aetatis, vel de fine saeculi.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1636, 188. Pseudo-Chrysostom favors the ‘end of life’ interpretation, Remigius seems to favor the final judgment. Cf. *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.1.

336 “... vel Christiani, vel homines in decrepit aetate receperunt singulos denarios. ... *Venientes autem et primi*, non retorqueatis ad tempus saeculi, quia Iudaei, *arbitrate sunt quod plus essent accepturi*, eo quod plus habebant in alio saeculo.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1639, 189.

337 “... quia beatitudo potest considerari quantum ad obiectum, et sic est una omnium beatitudo; vel quantum ad participationem obiecti, et sic non omnes aequae participabunt, quia non ita clare videbunt.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1640, 189. Cf. Augustine, *de Sanc. Virg.*, in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.1.

give without merit; thus God, who is Lord of All, can do”³³⁸ whatever He wills, as Psalm 113:11 states.

The request of James and John’s mother Salome, that her sons sit at Christ’s right and left hands in the kingdom, is interpreted in multiple ways. One tradition, from Chrysostom’s commentary, treats it as a misunderstanding of the kingdom as “something carnal, that [Christ] ought to be in Jerusalem with glory immediately.”³³⁹ The second, again attributed to Chrysostom but bearing more in common with Pseudo-Chrysostom and Origen, takes this as praiseworthy seeking after spiritual things, but combines it with the allegorical reading that “Spiritual things are hence signified by the right, earthly things by the left. Or we are able to understand by the right and left the active and contemplative life; therefore she petitioned that they be made perfect in either life.”³⁴⁰

Christ’s response, *You do not know what you ask*, can be applied to either. “You ought not ask for temporal things, but spiritual excellence. Or if they were thinking of spiritual things, they thought to have eminence over all other creatures, because to sit at the right hand is fitting to no creature.”³⁴¹ Hilary offers an interesting alternative: “*you know not what you ask for*, because I

338 “... licet unicuique facere voluntatem suam de suo. Si enim esset debitor alterius, non liceret ei facere, similiter si esset sub altero; sed ipse est dominus, ideo potest plus dare. Balivus enim non potest dare aliquid, nisi secundum merita; rex autem potest sine meritis; sic Deus, qui est omnium Dominus, potest, Ps. CXIII, 11: *omnia quaecumque voluit fecit*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.1 ¶1645, 191.

339 “... aliquid carnale ... quod statim cum gloria deberet esse in Ierusalem.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1656, 196. Cf. Chrysostom in Mattheum in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.3.

340 “Unde per dexteram spiritualia significantur, terrena per sinistram. Vel possumus intelligere per dexteram et sinistram activam vitam et contemplativam; ideo petit istos perfici in utraque vita.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1655, 196. Cf. Pseudo-Chrysostom super Mattheum and Origen in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.3.

341 “... temporalia non debetis petere, sed excellentiam spiritualem. Vel si intelligerent spirituale, petebant quod super omnem creaturam haberent eminentiam, quia sedere a dextris nulli creaturae convenit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1658, 197. Cf. Chrysostom, “this place seems to be unapproachable for all, not only men, but even angels.” (Videtur invius omnibus esse locus ille, non solum hominibus, sed etiam Angelis) in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C. 20 L.3.

have already granted to you what you ask for.”³⁴² Or, it may be that they seek the wrong things, following the right/left dichotomy expressed above, with the suggestion that “the devil, just as he had drawn man to the left by a woman, sought to return these men to the left through a woman.”³⁴³ The last possibility is that they “contend for a reward without preceding merit. Therefore I wish you to consider first if you are able to suffer these things.”³⁴⁴ As mentioned under the first dimension of the Kingdom, Thomas makes much of the value of tribulation and the endurance thereof in making one suitable for the Kingdom.

What a King Should Be

The discussion of Jesus’ reproach also gives us a glimpse of Aquinas’ theory of government, when he discusses the statement that “the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them” (Matt. 20:25), asking the question “is it evil to rule?”³⁴⁵ In response, he says that the phrase “lord it over” (*dominari*) is taken not in the sense of rulership, but “in a way that it has a correlative to ‘slave,’ hence it is like subjecting a slave to oneself in a slavlike fashion, and here it is taken so.”³⁴⁶ Following the Aristotelean distinction between good and bad government, Aquinas argues that “princes are instituted in order that they procure the good of their subjects; if they wish to reduce those to servitude, then they abuse their power, because they would use free men as

342 “... *nescitis quid petatis*, quia iam concessi vobis quod petitis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1658, 197. Cf. Hilary in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.3.

343 “Vel diabolus sicut per mulierem ad sinistram traxerat hominem, volebat istos per mulierem reducere ad sinistram.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1658, 197. Fears of misogyny may be assuaged by the statement immediately following: “sed non hoc potuit, ex quo salus per mulierem facta est.”

344 “... quia de praemio contenditis sine merito praecedente. ... ideo volo vos primo examinare si potestis pati et cetera.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1658, 197. Cf. Rabanus, Jerome, Pseudo-Chrysostom, and Chrysostom in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.3.

345 “... numquid dominari est malum?” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1667, 199.

346 “... aliquando prout correlative se habet ad ‘servum,’ unde idem est quod serviliter sibi servum subiicere; et sic sumitur hic.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1667, 199. Cf. Origen in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.4.

slaves.”³⁴⁷ Such a use of power “was the custom among the Gentiles, and is so among some.”³⁴⁸ One of the reasons Christ pointed this out, according to Aquinas, was that “He does not wish this to be the custom in His Church.”³⁴⁹ In contrast, rather, “if anyone desires to have primacy in the Church, he should know that that is not to have dominion, but slavery. A slave devotes all of himself to the service of a master; so prelates of the Church ought to give whatsoever they have, whatsoever they are, to their subjects.”³⁵⁰ This even applies to Christ, who, though ministered to at points in the Gospels, “did not come for this. But for what? That He Himself might minister, that is, to bestow an abundance of glory on others.”³⁵¹ This recalls the opening parable of this chapter, and strengthens the unifying theme of the Kingdom being an extension and reflection of the King. The two strands—the Old Kingdom and the New, and the proper nature of kingship—will be brought into unity when Jesus enters Jerusalem and begins the final act of His ministry and the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven among men on earth.

Coming into His Kingship

The second lecture on Matthew 20 concerns the first mention of a theme that will recur in Aquinas’ treatment of the Kingdom. Jerusalem is the destination “because it was the place of the law and the priesthood, and both were fitting to Christ ... For by His passion he acquired a Kingdom.”³⁵² This leads into Chapter 21 of Matthew’s Gospel, which begins what Aquinas

347 “Principes enim institute sunt ad hoc ut bonum procurent subditis; si ver ovolunt eos in servitutem redigere, then abutuntur, quia utuntur liberis ut servis.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1667, 199.

348 “... consuetum est apud gentiles et adhuc est apud aliquos.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1667, 199.

349 “... illam consuetudinem non vult in Ecclesia sua,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1668, 200.

350 “... si aliquis desiderat habere primatum in Ecclesia, sciat quod illud non est habere dominium, sed servitutem. Servi enim est quod totum se ad servitium domini impendat; sic praelati Ecclesiae totum quicquid habent, quicquid sunt, subditis debent.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1669, 200.

351 “... non tamen ad hoc venit. Sed ad quid? Ut ipse ministraret, idest abundantiam gloriae aliis impenderet.” *Commentary on Matthew* C.20 L.2 ¶1670, 200.

352 “Quia erat locus legalis et sacerdotalis: et utrumque convenienbat Christo ... Item per passionem regnum acquisivit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.20 L.2 ¶1651, 195.

identifies as the third and final part, the departure from the world. Relevant to the question of kingship and kingdom is the citation from Zechariah in Matthew 21:5. ‘Zion’ here has the literal sense of the people of Jerusalem and the Jews, and the allegorical meaning of the king. Aquinas breaks the statement of Zechariah down into four parts, corresponding to “four things which commend the dignity of the king”³⁵³ and, by contrast, four things found in tyrants. “First is affinity, for a man cares more for those connected to him. ... Hence he says *Behold your king*.”³⁵⁴ This is also placed in contrast to the Law of Deuteronomy, which forbids a foreigner from being chosen as king; hence Christ, as son of David, fulfills the Old Law in contrast to the foreign tyrants who had dominated the people, as Aquinas mentioned in his commentary on the Nativity. The second factor is that the king *comes to you*; that is, he seeks the good of the people. “Sometimes kings degenerate into tyrants, who seek their own benefit, which is contrary to the character (*morem*) of a king.”

The Davidic connection is highlighted by Thomas in the third quality, meekness—here understood as mercy and reluctance to punish: “Meekness (*mansuetus*, or gentleness/mildness) pertains to a king because to inflict pain belongs to ferocity. Proverbs 20:28: *Mercy and righteousness guard the king*. Thus David was loved by the people, because he was meek.”³⁵⁵ The fourth quality, humility, is symbolized by riding on the ass, and “humility is required because the Lord rejects the proud (*superbos*).”³⁵⁶ Given that kingship is the destiny of all those who follow Christ, this humility, and other qualities, that are identified in Christ are also

353 “... quatuor, quae dignitatem regis commendant,” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.1 ¶1689, 210.

354 “Primo affinitas, quia magis afficitur homo ad magis coniunctos .. Unde dicit ‘*ecce rex tuus*’.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.1 ¶1689, 210.

355 “Mansuetudo pertinet ad regem, quia infligere poenam ferocitatis est. Prov XX, 28L: *misericordia et iustitia custodiunt regem*. Ideo David a populo dilectus fuit, quia mansuetus fuit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.1 ¶1689, 210.

356 “... requiritur humilitas, quia Dominus superbos respuit.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.1 ¶1689, 210.

commended to those who follow Him.

Note that Aquinas does not see the Davidic descent as primary for Christ's mission.

'Hosanna' is read as a request for salvation,

and they ask this of the Son of David. Thus it is written (Jeremiah 23:5): *I will raise up a just seed to David*, and it follows: *In those days Judah will be saved*. And will he have the ability to do this because he is the Son of David? No, but because *he comes in the name of the Lord*. Why? Because he comes confessing the Lord. ... And therefore, one salvation is freedom from sins. ... However there is another salvation, by which they are freed from all pains. ... And this is *in the highest*, that is, may you give the first salvation on earth, the latter in heaven.³⁵⁷

An Inverted Kingdom Structure?

In the dialogue with the "chief priests and elders," where Jesus says that publicans and harlots will enter the Kingdom ahead of them, Thomas says that this sets out "the preeminence of Gentiles over Jews, or laypeople over clerics."³⁵⁸ This is because, while publicans and harlots represent avarice and *luxuria* (which can be translated either 'luxury' or 'lust'), "the worst is one who does not repent of his deed."³⁵⁹ We saw this same emphasis on impenitence and ingratitude in the parable of the Ungrateful Servant back in Matthew 18, and setting barriers to understanding and repentance also figures into Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees.

Barriers to the Kingdom

The Kingdom of Heaven is mentioned in Christ's condemnation of the Pharisees, where

357 "Et istam petunt a Filio David. Ita scriptum est Ier. XXIII, 5: *suscitabo David germen iustum*, et sequitur, *in diebus illis salvabitur Iuda*. Et poterit hoc facere, quia Filius David? Non, sed quia *venit in nomine Domini*. Quare? Quia venit confitens Dominum ... Est ergo una salus, liberatio a peccatis. ... Item alia salus, per quam liberantur ab omni poena. ... Et hoc *in excelsis*, idest, des primo salutem in terris, et postea in caelis." *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.1 ¶1693, 211-2.

358 "... ponit praeeminentiam gentilium ad Iudaeos, vel laicorum ad clericos;" *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1730, 223. Cf. Rabanus in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.5.

359 "Ille enim est pessimus, qui de facto suo non poenitet." *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.21 L.2 ¶1732, 224. Cf. Pseudo-Chrysostom, "Puto autem..." in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.20 L.5 for the symbolic meaning of harlots and publicans.

He condemns them for “shutting the kingdom of heaven against men” (Matt. 23:13). Two of the existing explanations for the Kingdom are used here: “the beatitude of eternal life ... also Sacred Scripture.”³⁶⁰ “Christ is the door to either kingdom,” Aquinas continues, so “what therefore is shutting the kingdom, if not that they were shutting it by bad teaching and bad living?”³⁶¹ The ‘bad teaching’ refers to obscuring the teaching concerning the Messiah, by denying the meaning of Christ’s works, as in Luke 11:15.³⁶² “Likewise, they barred entrance by their bad lives, when by their evil example they led others into sin.”³⁶³ Jesus makes a similar point on Matthew 24, where prophecies that “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world” (Matt. 24:14). Aquinas describes that gospel as “the new law, [which] is not limited to one people, as the old law was,”³⁶⁴ a point that emphasizes the expansion of the Kingdom and the New Law that governs it.

False Understandings of the Kingdom

Jesus’ kingship is brought up by Pilate in Mathew 27, although this dialogue will be discussed in much more detail when we get to the Gospel of John and Thomas’ commentary on that work. Here, Thomas says that the accusation of claiming kingship “was false according to their intent, because they meant it concerning a temporal kingdom, but He said ‘My kingdom is

360 “... beatitudo vitae aeternae ... Sacra Scriptura.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.23 L.2 ¶1858, 267. Both interpretations come from Pseudo-Chrysostom; cf. “Regnum caelorum dicuntur Scripturae ... “ in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.23 L.3.

361 “Quid est ergo claudere regnum, nisi quod isti claudebant per malum doctrinam et malum vitam?” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.23 L.2 ¶1858, 268. Cf. Origen, “Pharisaei ergo et Scribae ... “ in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.23 L.3.

362 Cf. Pseudo-Chrysostom, “Regnum caelorum dicuntur Scripturae ... “ in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew V.2 C.23 L.3.

363 “Item ipsi claudebant per malum vitam, quando per per malum exemplum inducebant ad peccandum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.23 L.2 ¶1858, 268.

364 “... lex nova determinata est uni popula, sicut lex vetus.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.24 L.1 ¶1921, 291.

not of this world.’ (John 18:36)”³⁶⁵

This misunderstanding of Christ’s kingship is also taken by Aquinas as grounds from the mockery later in the chapter. “It should be noted that though they had accused him of many things, yet he did not suffer according to any except that He called Himself a king.”³⁶⁶ Aquinas also picks up on the fact that in their mockery, there was an ironic recognition of the truth:

“‘Genuflecting before Him, they mocked Him.’ (27:29) And while they did this in mockery, still it signified that every knee should bow before Him.”³⁶⁷ The same applies to the words placed on the Cross: “And it should be noted that what they did for the sake of shame fell to His glory. Hence *they placed the cause*, that is, the cause for which he suffered; in Revelation 19:16 it is written: *King of kings and Lord of lords*. Therefore, where it says *King of the Jews* this pertains to honor, because he was going to be king over all nations.”³⁶⁸ Similarly, when the passers-by scoff at his kingship, saying “If he is the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.” (27:42), Thomas answers that “they make a false promise and a bad conclusion (*malam consequentiam*), because if he is the king of Israel, he ought not descend, because he ought to ascend by the cross.”³⁶⁹ Thomas references both Psalm 95:10 and Isaiah 9:6

365 “... est falsum secundum intentionem suam, quia intendebant de regno temporali; sed ipse dicit, Io. c. XVIII, 36, *regnum meum non est de hoc mundo*.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.27 L.1 ¶2326, 427. Cf. Chrysostom, “Confessus est se esse regem ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.27 L.3.

366 “Notandum quod licet accusassent eum de multis, tamen non propter aliud patiebatur, nisi quia regem se dicebat.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.27 L.2 ¶2348, 435. Cf. Jerome, “Quia enim rex Iudaeorum ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.27 L.5.

367 “... *et genu flexo ante eum, illudebant ei*. Et licet hoc fecerint illudendo, tamen signabat quod omne genu ante flecti debebat.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.27 L.2 ¶2352, 436.

368 “Et attendendum quod illud quod ad ignominiam fecerunt ex ordinatione, cessit ad honorem eius. Unde *imposuerunt causam ipsius*, idest causam pro quo patiebatur; Apoc. c. XIX, 16 habetur scriptum: *Rex regum ex Dominus dominantium*. Quod ergo dicit *Rex Iudaeorum*, hoc pertinet ad honorem, quia futurus erat rex super omnes gentes.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.27 L.2 ¶2366, 440. Cf. Remigius, “Divinitus autem procuratum” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.27 L.7, who takes the sign as an act of divine providence which “corroborated his power” (“potius corroboravit”).

369 “... *et faciunt falsam promissionem, et faciunt malam consequentiam, quia si rex Israel est, non debet descendere, quia per crucem debet ascendere*.” *Commentary on Matthew* C.27 L.2 ¶2373, 442.

here. He concludes that “he did something greater, because he rose from the dead, and they did not believe, hence they were lying.”³⁷⁰

Earthly and Heavenly Kingdoms Revisited

The Kingdom of Heaven is, as Christ says and Thomas emphasizes here and even more in John, “not of this world.” The relationship between earthly kingdoms and the Kingdom of Heaven is something like that between the natural and supernatural orders in traditional Thomism. The natural has a certain likeness to the supernatural in its structure and ends, but the supernatural order is also radically transcendent and cannot be anticipated from within the natural order. Thus, earthly kingdoms have a certain resemblance to the Kingdom of Heaven in their overall ends and construction, but the Kingdom raises that end to a wholly new level and is structured in a dramatically different way. Similarly, the Old Law foreshadows the New Law, but the New Law is of such profundity that one could say that the dissimilarity is as great or greater than the similarity.

There is one other kingdom that Thomas addresses in the Gospel commentary, in keeping with the tradition. This is a kingdom that is in one sense most like the Kingdom of Heaven, and in another sense most fully opposed to it—the kingdom of the Devil, which is ever at war with the Kingdom of God.

370 “Item fecit quod maius est, quia surrexit de sepulcro, et tamen non cediderunt, unde mendaces erant.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.2 C.27 L.2 ¶2373, 442. Cf. Jerome, “Fraudelenta autem est promissio ...” in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.27 L.8.

The Kingdom at War

Christ the Warrior-King

Thomas makes an interesting comment when discussing the descent of Christ from the tribe of Judah in Matthew 1: “Here it is noted that among all the tribes the tribe of Judah was multiplied the most, because from them the kings were to come, who were obliged to fight.”³⁷¹ This suggests a martial element to Thomas’ conception of kingship, which can be connected to the traditional teaching that Christ conquered the devil by the Cross³⁷², and Aquinas’ later statements that Christ merited the Kingdom through His Passion. Given the distinction and parallels that are drawn between the earthly kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of God, it appears that the wars of the Kings of Israel against the pagan nations, to establish and secure the kingdom in the Promised Land, could be read allegorically as a foreshadowing of Christ’s spiritual combat with and conquest of the devil to establish the Kingdom, both in His earthly ministry and in His Second Coming. Throughout Aquinas’ reading of Matthew, and in his overall theology of the Kingdom, we will see elements of this conflict between the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of the Devil.³⁷³

Coming to verse 6 (“And Jesse begot David the king”), we see this same martial theme developed in the parallel of Christ to David: “‘David’ is interpreted as strong of hand and desirable in appearance; all of this fits Christ, as is evident. For He is strong who conquered the

371 “Ubi nota quod inter omnes tribus magis multiplicabatur tribus Iuda: et hoc quia ex ea erant reges futuri, qui debebant pugnare.”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C. 1 L. 2 ¶ 42, 14.

372 Reiterated at several points throughout Thomas' corpus.

373 This is a theme that goes back to Origen, in a text Aquinas was familiar with: “Two kings contend earnestly for a kingdom; The King of Sin over sinners, the Devil, and the King of Justice over the just, Christ.” (“Duo reges certatim regnare festinant: peccati rex peccatoribus Diabolus, et iustitiae rex iustis Christus”, cited in *Catena Aurea*, Luke, C.4 L.2).

devil.”³⁷⁴

First Clash: The Temptation in the Desert

Although the narrative of Jesus’ temptation in the desert in Chapter 4 does not explicitly mention Christ’s kingship or the kingdom of Heaven, Aquinas’ commentary does strike some notes that are related to these themes.

On Matthew 4:8, where the Devil offers Christ all the kingdoms of the world, Thomas says “It must be understood that the kingdom of the world is taken in two ways. The first is spiritually, and in this way the Devil is said to rule in it. ... The second is that the kingdom of the world is said literally, according to which one rules over another.”³⁷⁵ Although St. Thomas will return to the spiritual meaning of the “kingdom of the Devil” later in this chapter and elsewhere in the Gospel, he favors the literal meaning when explicating the third temptation.

The first way in which he favors the literal is that he says the Devil’s promise “is a lie because these things were not in his power [Prov. 8:15, Daniel 4:14] ... for no one evil rules if not by divine permission.”³⁷⁶ Also, the temptation is one of greed, for the Devil “promises a kingdom, by which is understood an abundance of wealth and supremacy of honor.”³⁷⁷ This corresponds more to earthly kingdoms than a spiritual kingdom. It also makes an interesting parallel to other statements in the Gospel of Matthew about the Kingdom of Heaven. At many points in this Gospel, a contrast is drawn between earthly and heavenly rewards; here, the

374 “David interpretatur manu fortis et aspectu desiderabilis; quae omnia competunt Christo, sicut patet. Ipse enim fortis est qui Diabolum superavit”, *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.1 L.2 ¶ 51, 16.

375 “Sciendum quod regnum mundi dupliciter accipitur. Primo spiritualiter: et sic diabolus dicitur regnare in eo ... Secundo ad litteram dicitur regnum mundi, secundum quod unus regnat super alium.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.4 L.1 ¶336, 108. Cf. Origen, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.4 L.4.

376 “... mendax est quia haec non erant in potestate sua ... nullus enim malus regnat nisi permissione divina;” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.4 L.1 ¶338, 108-9. Cf. Jerome, *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.4 L.4.

377 “... promittit regnum, in quo intelligitur abundantia divitiarum, et excellentia honorum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.4 L.1 ¶339, 109. Cf Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea* C.4 L.4.

identification of the Devil's third temptation with riches and glory helps underscore this theme of Matthew's Gospel, as well as the conflict of the two kingdoms

A final interesting point in the temptation narrative comes with Aquinas' exposition of Matthew 4:11, in which "the victory of Christ is set down ... And just as it was the practice among the ancients that, when one of them had a victory, he was venerated, thus here the triumph of Christ is celebrated by the angels."³⁷⁸ Aquinas presents us with the image of a Jesus who has just won his first confrontation with the Enemy and is being celebrated for it, rather than someone worn out by fasting and spiritual conflict who needs angelic comfort. "Indeed, it was fitting that he should go into the desert, as though for a single combat with the Devil."³⁷⁹ This theme, with its implications of Christ as warrior king, will be continued in Lecture 3 when Aquinas discusses the sending of the disciples.

Marshalling the Church Militant

Lecture 3 opens with an analogy to kingship that reinforces the martial dimension we saw ascribed to it back in Chapter 1, and the conflict between kingdoms hinted at in the temptation narrative. "It is a custom that kings, when they have gathered together the army, proceed to war; thus Christ, having gathered the army of apostles, proceeds to warring against the Devil through the office of preaching, to drive him from the world."³⁸⁰ Since the kingdom is to be established

378 "Et sicut consuetudo erat apud antiquos, quod quando aliqui victoriam habebant, venerabantur; ita hic celebratur triumphus Christi ab angelis." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.4 L.1 ¶345, 111. Note that here, Thomas differs from one of his perceived authorities; Pseudo-Chrysostom says on this passage that "We are unable to know in what ways they ministered to him, whether in the healing of diseases, or the correction of souls, or the expulsion of demons." *Catena Aurea* Matthew C.4 L.4.

379 "Conueniens enim era tut exiret is desertum, quasi ad singulare certamen cum diabolo." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.4 L.1 ¶309, 101.

380 "Consuetudo est apud reges, quod congregato exercitu procedunt ad bellum: ita Christus, congregato exercitu apostolorum, procedit ad pugnandum contra diabolum per officium praedicationis, ad expellendum eum de mundo." *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.4 L.3 ¶383, 123.

by preaching and baptism, its establishment goes hand-in-hand with the expulsion of the devil, and thus the destruction of the kingdom of darkness. The use of the term “office of preaching” is worth noting, considering the mission of the Dominicans and the ideal of Christ as preacher that shows up in their work.³⁸¹

The Kingdom as a Community of Defense—and of Triumph

Thomas uses Christ’s response to the Pharisees in Chapter 12 as an opportunity to explore the nature of kingdoms, as well as elaborating on both the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of the Devil.

Following Aristotle’s political model, as well as the commentaries by Chrysostom and Hilary,³⁸² Aquinas identifies the kingdom as the third and most perfect form of community, after the household and the city. “For where there should be a fear of enemies, a city will not be able to survive by itself; therefore, because of fear of enemies, a community of many cities is necessary; which makes a kingdom.”³⁸³ This once more suggests a vision of ‘kingdom’ that is strongly oriented towards protection against enemies, which fits not only the tone of this Gospel passage but Aquinas’ treatment of the Kingdom throughout this commentary. This is reinforced by the treatment of peace as analogous to health in the human body, to the point that “just as how, health receding, man tends to death, so it is with peace that, if it withdraws from a kingdom, [that kingdom] tends to destruction.”³⁸⁴

381 Cf. Sherwin, 173-193.

382 Chrysostom, Hom. XLI and Hilary on Matthew in *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.12 L.5.

383 “Ubi enim esset timor hostium, non posset per se una civitas subsistere; ideo propter timorem hostium necessaria est communitas civitatum plurium, quae faciunt unum regnum.” *Commentary on Matthew*, V.1 C.12 L.2 ¶1011, 370.

384 “Et sicut, recedente sanitate, tendit homo ad interitum; sic de pace; si a regno discedit, tendit ad interitum.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.12 L.2 ¶1011, 370. While the citation supporting this point is drawn from Aristotle, the same theme will be familiar to any reader of St. Augustine’s *City of God*.

Though “How will his kingdom stand?” (Matt. 12:26) may be a rhetorical question, Aquinas follows several Fathers in offering answers. Jerome says that “the kingdom of the devil stands in sinners until the day of judgment, for then every power will be made empty.”³⁸⁵ Rabanus takes it as a sign that the devil must now protect his kingdom, while Hilary understands it as Christ’s assertion of power over and against the reign of Satan.

This defeat of the Evil One is a sign of the kingdom of God, “that is, the dominion of God in man. ... If, therefore, the demons are beginning to be subjected to Him, then the kingdom and dominion of God have come among you.”³⁸⁶ We thus return from this last part of the kingdom—which may have seemed superfluous—to the first, the internal kingdom that consists of Christ reigning in the soul. This once more highlights the interconnected nature of all these various facets of the Kingdom, and how they all support and lead into one another.

Conclusions on the Kingdom and Kingship in the *Commentary on Matthew*

The Kingdom in the *Commentary on Matthew* is a multifaceted reality. Rather than being a confused collection of various ideas that are thrown together out of unthinking regard for the traditions of the Church, Thomas has brought together numerous ideas and visions to make a structure that, while not always fully developed, is fundamentally coherent and built around a set of interlocking themes and concepts.

The fourfold division of the Kingdom in Matthew 3 provides Thomas’ most explicit

385 “... regnum diaboli stat in peccatoribus usque ad diem iudicii, quia tunc evacuabitur omnis potestas.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.12 L.2 ¶1013, 371 In the *Catena*, Thomas cites Jerome as stating that “if Satan fights against himself, and demon is an enemy to demon, then the world must be coming to an end.” *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.12 L.5. Further on, in Lectio 6, Aquinas cites Jerome as defining three kingdoms: Christ, the kingdom which John and Jesus preached, and the Holy Scripture.

386 “... idest dominium Dei in hominibus ... Si ergo daemones iam suppeditari incipient, iam pervenit in vos regnum et dominium Dei.” *Commentary on Matthew* V.1 C.12 L.2 ¶1016, 372 Cf. Augustine, *Quaest. Ev.* i. 5, and Gloss, *Catena Aurea*, Matthew C.12 L.6.

definition of this structure, which can be summed up as dividing the kingdom into interior or moral, Scriptural, ecclesiological and eschatological dimensions, all under the governance of a Christological focus. This has provided the structure for this section of the chapter, as we have considered how Thomas divides the Kingdom texts in Matthew according to this scheme, while maintaining their relation to an overall whole. Several other themes also recur in the *Commentary*; some of these are relevant to only a couple of senses of the Kingdom, while others apply to all facets of the reality. Many of these were highlighted earlier, but merit revisiting as underlying elements of the unified Kingdom.

One interesting point is how often Thomas uses the language of riches for the rewards of the kingdom. One reason for this may be the emphasis on earthly poverty in the Dominican order that Thomas finds in the Gospel, combined with his keen awareness of the ironies and reversals of the Gospel narrative. That reversal shows up everywhere from the adoration of the Magi in Chapter 2 to the mockery of the soldiers in Chapter 27; the emphasis on heavenly riches may be a way of highlighting the contrast to the earthly poverty that makes up the way of perfection. Another reason is that the treasure of heaven is wisdom, a point that Thomas makes at numerous points throughout his work, and the Kingdom has a distinctly contemplative and sapiential dimension for Thomas, being bound up both with the understanding of Scripture in this life and the Beatific Vision in the next.

Another of Thomas' key points is the novelty of the Kingdom. While he uses the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel to set Christ in relationship to the fulfillment of the Davidic line and the prophecies of the Messiah, even there, he points out that the Kingdom is not of this world and not what was expected, and from Chapter 3 onward, he makes the point that the Kingdom of God was not revealed in the Old Testament and is something different than the "Old Kingdom"

promised to the people of Israel and possessed by David and Solomon. This is a commonplace of medieval commentary, and Thomas will return to it in the Commentaries on John and several of the Epistles. Those commentaries also make the relationship between the Old Law, the New Law and the eschatological Kingdom clearer.

Related to this is the idea of an 'unfolding' kingdom, one that manifests in stages, that shows up at several points in the Matthean commentary. Some examples of such an unfolding include the discussion of the Kingdom of God coming upon mankind in Chapter 4, with the institution of Christ's ministry shortly after his first victory over the Devil in the desert, Chapter 6, where Aquinas discusses the Augustinian reading of *thy kingdom come* as beginning with the Redemption, and Chapter 12, where the defeat of the demons demonstrates the kingdom of Heaven coming among men. This climaxes, of course, with the Passion and Resurrection, by which Christ merits the Kingdom and institutes it in its ecclesiological and sacramental form.

These examples also point to another dimension of the Kingdom in Aquinas' understanding, which could be called the *martial* dimension. As discussed in the section on "The Kingdom at War," Aquinas makes numerous reference to the warlike nature of kingship, such as in discussing Christ's descent from the tribe of Judah, or the meaning of the name David as 'strong of hand', in Matthew 1, the sending of the Apostles as if for war in Matthew 4, or the idea that kingdoms are organized for mutual defense in Matthew 12. The theme of conflict and triumph also appears the two key times Jesus comes face to face with the powers of Evil—the Temptation in the Desert and the Passion itself. However, this warfare, like the kingdom itself, is 'not of this world', and so the martial dimension leads us into another side of Aquinas' understanding of the kingdom—the *evangelical*, which ties heavily into all the dimensions of the Kingdom elaborated in Matthew 3

As a member of the Order of Preachers, Thomas saw preaching as central to the Church's activity and to Christ's own mission.³⁸⁷ The Kingdom parables in Chapter 13 of Matthew's Gospel are all interpreted in this light, with the message of the Kingdom being not only the seed sown, but the 'pearl of great price' and the Kingdom itself. This also connects with the understanding of Scripture—the message—as a key dimension of the kingdom, as seen in the exposition of the Kingdom in Matthew 3 and the discussion of the Kingdom in the Parables of the Tenants in Matthew 21 and of the Talents in Matthew 25. The latter also helps lead us to a further step—the qualities needed for entry into the Kingdom.

Aquinas notes several qualities necessary to make one worthy of the kingdom, but the two that recur most often in this commentary are charity and humility. Charity's importance is obvious, but humility's is less so, to the point that Thomas explains in Chapter 18, Lecture 1, why the two are inherently interconnected—humility counters pride and makes one capable of possessing charity, as well as receiving the teaching of the Gospel.

This joining of charity and humility takes on a new and intriguing dimension when read in conjunction with the Parable of the Talents. According to Thomas' reading of that parable, understanding of Scripture profits oneself but charity profits others by sharing the fruits of one's understanding. Thus, one receives the teaching of Scripture in humility, and passes on one's understanding in charity—a restatement of Thomas' famous dictum about passing on the fruits of contemplation to others. This brings us back to the evangelical dimension of the Kingdom, and ties it into the contemplative dimension.

The *contemplative* dimension is only mentioned briefly and obliquely in the Commentary

387 Cf. Torrell, *Christ and Spirituality in St. Thomas Aquinas*, 159-73.

on Matthew, primarily in Chapter 8, where the wealth or treasures of the Kingdom (one of Aquinas' favorite images) is described as contemplation. This dimension will be more fully developed in some of the other works we examine, but the passage in Chapter 8 shows that it is not foreign to Aquinas' thought here.

The penultimate dimension of the Kingdom I wish to discuss here is the *participatory* dimension of the Kingdom. Thomas explicitly states in Chapter 10, Lecture 1, that the Kingdom “is founded in them [the Apostles] by the participation of grace,” and this theme of participation runs through the commentary in numerous ways. It shows up first in a foreshadowing in the discussion of Christ's lineage in Chapter 1, where Aquinas repeats a common medieval idea that all the kings of Israel reign thanks to David's merits—a theme that Thomas will return to in a more universal and Christocentric way in the *Commentary on John*, below. Even in Chapter 2, Thomas points out that that Christ comes to *share* His Kingdom.

This also ties into the idea of the Kingdom as continuously unfolding, as highlighted in Chapter 5 when Thomas says that the rewards of the Beatitudes come in an inchoate form in this life and a perfect form in the next life. The Kingdom is a sharing in Christ's kingship, and that takes time and progression. This also means that the ecclesiastical dimension of the Kingdom is divided by laity who are responsible for their own souls, and clergy who are responsible for both their souls and the souls under their care, in imitation of Christ's servant-kingship. In the discussion of the Last Judgment in Chapter 25, this participatory and progressive dimension comes to a head, as Thomas says that souls are joined to God by 'enigmatic' faith and imperfect charity now, but will eventually be perfectly joined through perfected charity and clear sight—and in that joining, all will share in the kingship of God in Christ.

And that element of the Kingdom as a journey into perfection as conformity to Christ³⁸⁸ highlights the final dimension of the kingdom found in Matthew—this kingdom is fundamentally *Christocentric*. It is Christ who merits it by His Passion and Resurrection, Christ who vanquishes the opposing kingdom of the Devil, and Christ who distributes the kingdom to His followers. The personal dimension involves the indwelling of Christ and the union of the soul with Christ, the ecclesiological dimension derives all its authority from Christ, and the eschatological dimension begins with Christ as Judge and will end with him turning over the Kingdom to the Father (as we will see when we come to Thomas' commentary on 1 Corinthians). This is grounded both in St. Thomas' concept of kingdom, which can be said to be contained in the king, and in the element of participation, where we share in the vision of God and the glory of God through Christ. This may be why Thomas has no patience with the Joachite concept of an 'Age of the Holy Spirit'--for him, everything is grounded in Christ, and the only transition will be from imperfect union with Christ who rules in His humanity and through the Church, to the perfect union when Christ as God rules us 'in himself' and all the elect share in the divine vision and rulership.

The Commentary on St. John

For our purposes, the relationship between the two Gospel commentaries parallels that between the two Gospels themselves. The *Commentary on Matthew*, like the Gospel it treats, is the earlier work and more directly relevant to the questions of the Kingdom and Christ's kingship. The *Commentary on John*, again like John's Gospel, is the later work, more profound

388 Cf. Mitchell, 51.

and refined, and provides some interesting new light on these topics.

Thomas' *Lectura super Ioannem* is dated by Torrell “with sufficient certitude” to the second period of Thomas' teaching at Paris, probably from 1270 to 1272.³⁸⁹ This dating places it, in Torrell's reconstruction, just after the completion of the Paris lectures that formed the basis of the Matthew commentary. Torrell concludes that

to all appearances, Thomas took the books of the New Testament in their canonical order. In passing directly from Matthew to John, he must have thought that Matthew took the place of the other two Synoptics, while John had something special to say. Furthermore, he is clear enough on this subject in his *Prologue*: “The other evangelists deal principally with the mysteries of Christ's humanity; in his Gospel, John puts first and in a special way Christ's divinity.”³⁹⁰

This same distinction can be observed with regard to the Kingdom of Heaven. Much of what we saw in Matthew dealt with the Kingdom “in the world”--the responsibilities of the moral life, the role of the Church, and the need to proclaim the kingdom against opposition. Those themes are not absent in John, as we will see, but the primary points considered here will be the soul's ascent to the Kingdom through contemplation and participation in Christ's divinity, as well as the otherworldliness of the Kingdom.

The Contemplative Kingdom

Contemplation as a Fundamental Theme of John's Gospel

One of the key themes of John, according to Aquinas' reading, is the idea of contemplation. We discussed some of Thomas' thought on contemplation in Chapter 1 of this dissertation; here, we will consider what he has to say on the matter in his prologue to the

389 Torrell, I.198. For a brief assessment of this commentary's composition and quality, see Torrell, I.198-201. For more detail on the commentary, and a sampling of current scholarship on it, see the collection *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology*.

390 Torrell, I.199-200.

Commentary.

Thomas takes Isaiah 6:1 as the relevant text, and states that “these are the words of a contemplative, and if they are taken as coming from the mouth of John the Baptist, they pertain well to the declaration of this Gospel.”³⁹¹ Aquinas follows Augustine in seeing John as the contemplative, and the verse from Isaiah applies to “the threefold way he contemplated the Lord Jesus. It is described as high, full and perfect.”³⁹² Thomas continues that “the height and sublimity of contemplation maximally consists in contemplation and cognition of God,”³⁹³ ascending from creatures to Creator through consideration of the heights “of authority ... eternity ... dignity or nobility of nature ... and incomprehensible truth.”³⁹⁴ Indeed, Thomas ascribes knowledge of God in this way to the philosophers of metaphysics, and the ways to God here bear strong resemblance to the famous Five Ways of the *Summa Theologiae*.³⁹⁵

The fullness of contemplation is “when one can in the cause consider all the effects of the cause itself,”³⁹⁶ so John's contemplation of the Word extends to creation. Thomas takes John 1:1-3 as demonstrative of this fact. Contemplation's perfection, meanwhile, is “when the one contemplating is led and elevated to the height of the thing contemplated ... adhering and

391 “Verba proposita sunt contemplantis, et si capiantur quasi ex ore Ioannis Evangelistae prolata, satis pertinent ad declarationem huius Evangelii.” *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶1, 1.

392 “... quod Dominum Iesum est tripliciter contemplatus.” *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶1, 1. For further discussion of Thomas' approach to this, see Leget, 156-68.

393 “... altitudo et sublimitas contemplationis consistit maxime in contemplatione et cognitione Dei.” *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶1, 1.

394 “Auctoritatis ... aeternitatis ... dignitatis, seu nobilitatis naturae ... et incomprehensibilis veritatis,” *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶2, 1.

395 Authority, “the most effective way” (*Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶3, 1) corresponds to the Fifth Way on the ordering of creatures. Eternity similarly resembles the Fourth Way, on grades of excellence, drawing on the superiority of unchangeable being to changeable being. Dignity, which Aquinas ascribes to the Platonists, likewise has parallels to the Fourth Way. The fourth quality, incomprehensibility, does not correspond directly to any of the Five Ways, but has some resemblance to the Fourth in that “it is necessary that the first and supreme truth, which surpasses every intellect, be incomprehensible and infinite” (“necesse est primum et summam veritatem, quae superat omnem intellectam, incomprehensibilem et infinitam esse”), *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶6, 3.

396 “... in ausa potest aliquis considerare omnes effectus ipsius causae,” *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶7, 3.

assenting by affection and intellect to the contemplated truth.”³⁹⁷ This reinforces that for Thomas, contemplation is a matter of love as well as intellect, especially since in his philosophy, it is love that moves us to the level of the thing loved, while the intellect moves the thing understood to the level of the intellect.³⁹⁸ The parallel in the opening of the Gospel is John 1:16, where John moves to the order of grace.

Thomas makes a couple of interesting moves at the end of this portion of the prologue. First, he assigns the three characteristics of contemplation to three branches of philosophy—perfection to moral science, fullness to natural science, and height to metaphysics. “But the Gospel of John contains all together what these sciences have in division, and therefore it is most perfect.”³⁹⁹ This is a form of the famous statement that “philosophy is the handmaid of theology”, but it also demonstrates that the principle that “grace perfects nature” can be applied to the contemplative as well as the active life. As Janet Smith puts it,

What Aquinas means here is that it is the job of moral science to discover the end of men, which has been found to be contemplation. Here surely is an echo of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which we learn both that man's ultimate end is contemplation and that one needs the moral virtues; one needs to have one's passions under control, in order to engage in contemplation, which, Christianity tells us, is perfected in seeing God.⁴⁰⁰

We can draw out a further strand of this for application to the Kingdom—if natural society, according to Aristotle, reaches its end and perfection in philosophical contemplation, then the Kingdom of God, which is ordered to a more perfect contemplation, is a graced and

397 “... quando contemplanis perducitur et elevatur ad altitudinem rei contemplatae ... inhaerendo et assentiendo per affectum et intellectum veritati contemplatae.” *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶8, 3.

398 See *Commentary on John* V.2 C.14, L.4, as cited by Bruce D. Marshall, “What Does the Spirit Have to Do?” in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology*, 67-68

399 “Sed Evangelium Ioannis, quod divisim scientiae praedictae habent, totum simul continent, et ideo est perfectissimum.” *Commentary on John* V.1 Prologue ¶9, 4.

400 Janet E. Smith, “ ‘Come and See’ ” in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas*, 196.

elevated society.

Seeing the Kingdom

In the main text of the commentary, Aquinas makes his first passing reference to the kingdom by applying Matthew 21:43 to his interpretation of the Cleansing of the Temple in Chapter 2.⁴⁰¹ However, it is in Chapter 3 that the Kingdom receives its first major focus, in the famous dialogue with Nicodemus. Thomas uses this to set out the contemplative nature of the Kingdom, as well as the unfolding of this heavenly Kingdom within a history that cannot fully contain it.

The starting point is Verse 3 and Jesus' declaration that "unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Aquinas explains this as "one is unable to know these divine secrets, unless he has achieved spiritual regeneration."⁴⁰² 'Seeing' is interpreted in a very literal (but not literalistic) sense, as Thomas says that "with vision being an act of life, following diverse life, there are diverse sorts of vision. ... If, therefore, spiritual vision is only through the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is infused in us by a washing of spiritual regeneration, thus we cannot see the kingdom of God unless by this washing of regeneration."⁴⁰³ Thomas goes on to point out that seeing and entering are the same thing, for "No one sees the things of the kingdom of God unless he enters the kingdom of God, and he sees insofar as he enters."⁴⁰⁴

The Kingdom, Aquinas goes on to explain, consists not only of "the royal throne (*regale*

401 See above on Matthew 21, on pages 62-65.

402 "... illa secreta divinitatis non potest aliquis scire, nisi adeptus fuerit spiritualem regenerationem." *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶431, 166. Cf. Chrysostom, "Vel littera talis est ..." in *Catena Aurea*, John C.3 L.1.

403 "... cum visio sit actus vitae, secundum diversas vitas, diversae sunt visiones. ... Si ergo visio spiritualis non est nisi per Spiritum Sanctum, et Spiritus Sanctus infunditur nobis per lavacrum regenerationis spiritualis: ergo non possumus videre regnum Dei, nisi per lavacrum regenerationis." *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶432, 166-7.

404 "Nam quae regni Dei sunt, nullus videt, nisi regnum Dei interet; et tantum videt quantum intrat." *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶441, 169.

solium), but also what pertains to the government of the kingdom, namely the royal dignity, the blessings of grace and the way of justice by which the kingdom is established.”⁴⁰⁵ Therefore, the kingdom of God referred to here is “the glory and dignity of God, i.e. the mysteries of eternal salvation, which are seen through the righteousness of faith.”⁴⁰⁶

The Multistage Kingdom

The threefold division between the Old Law, the New Law, and the future state of glory which we saw several times in the *Commentary on Matthew* returns here. Aquinas admits that there was spiritual regeneration under the Old Law, “but it was imperfect and figurative. .. And therefore they saw the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but only figuratively.”⁴⁰⁷ The New Law provides “a manifest spiritual regeneration, but it is imperfect, insofar as we are renovated internally by grace, but not outwardly by incorruption.”⁴⁰⁸ Thus, “we see the kingdom of God and the mysteries of eternal salvation, but imperfectly.”⁴⁰⁹ In “the homeland (*patria*), there is perfect regeneration, for we will be renewed internally and externally. And therefore we will see the kingdom of God most perfectly.”⁴¹⁰

Thus, as before, we see the eschatological Kingdom as the most perfect expression of the Kingdom, and two imperfect, derivative senses. Unlike in Matthew 3, though, the distinction is not between the personal and the ecclesiological, but between the Old Law and the New Law.

405 “... regale solium, sed etiam quae sunt ad regni gubernationem, scilicet regia dignitas, beneficia gratiarum et via iustitiae, quia solidatur regnum.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶432, 167.

406 “... gloriam et dignitatem Dei, idest mysteriae salutis aeternae, quae per fidei iustitiam inspicuntur.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶433, 167.

407 “... sed imperfecta et figuralis ... Et ideo mysteria regni Dei videbant quidem, sed figuraliter tantum.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶433, 167.

408 “... manifesta renegeratio spiritualis, sed tamen est imperfecta, quia renovamur interius tantum per gratiam, sed non exterius per incorruptionem.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶433, 167.

409 “Et ideo videmus regnum Dei et mysteria salutis aeternae, sed imperfecte” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶433, 167.

410 “In patria vero est perfecta regeneratio, quia renovabuntur interius et exterius. Et ideo regnum Dei perfectissime videbimus.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶433, 167.

That distinction was not absent from the *Commentary on Matthew*, but here, Thomas highlights the idea of the Old Law as prefiguratory, and not simply inferior to the New Law. It remains a lesser manifestation, since it does not produce the spiritual regeneration of the New Law, but it would be a mistake to see it as valueless or not truly a participation, however imperfect, in the Kingdom.

One more interesting point made at the end of this lecture is the implication that entry into the Kingdom is more a case of “enter *unless* ...” than “only enter *if* ...”, and Aquinas draws this from Augustine. “Because, following what Augustine said in the book *On the Baptism of Infants*, it is unfitting that the image of God, namely man, should be removed from the kingdom of God unless on account of some obstacle, which can be nothing if not sin. Therefore, it must be that in children who are removed from the kingdom, there is some sin, namely original sin.”⁴¹¹ This suggests a scheme in which the end of man, while supernatural, is part of the Divine intent for man and lost through some culpable defect, more than an alien addition to an already perfectly planned ‘pure nature’.⁴¹²

Thomas also makes a passing reference to the kingdom of Heaven when commenting on John 6:45, “they will all be taught by God.” The kingdom is the third sense in which the ‘all’ of this statement of Jesus’ can be understood. “In one way so that *all* stands for all men in the world, in another way that it stands for all who are in the Church of Christ; in a third way for all

411 “... quia, secundum Augustinus dicit in Lib. *de baptismo parvulorum*, inconveniens est quod imago Dei, scilicet homo, subtrahatur a regno Dei, nisi propter aliquod impedimentum; quod esse non potest, nisi peccatum. Oportet ergo quod in pueris qui subtrahuntur a regno, sit aliquod peccatum scilicet originale.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.3 L.1 ¶446, 171.

412 However, discussing this at any length would risk delving into a topic that is not only unrelated to this dissertation, but is also the subject of one of the thorniest Thomistic controversies of the past century. The relationship of the Kingdom to sin, nature and grace, and to the whole question of man’s natural and supernatural ends, is definitely worth attention, but I lack the space to give it proper consideration here.

who will be in the Kingdom of Heaven.”⁴¹³ It is subsequently clear that here, for Aquinas, the Kingdom is understood in an eschatological sense, as he clarifies that this is “because they will see His essence immediately.”⁴¹⁴

A Kingdom “Not of This World”

The King The People Want, The King They Need

Chapter 6 gives us some insight into Christ’s kingship primarily through His denial of a misunderstanding of it, when He refuses the popular urge to make Him king, which again showcases how the Kingdom is not what many, then and now, would expect. “It was true that the plan of God the Father from eternity was to manifest the kingdom of Christ, but manifesting it was not fitting for this time,”⁴¹⁵ since Christ had not come to reign in the way that we pray for in the Our Father. That kingdom is reserved for “when the saints will appear in their glory, after judgment is made by Him.”⁴¹⁶ This is also the kingdom the Apostles were seeking at the opening of Acts.

The reason for the popular acclaim is the feeding of the multitude; “men frequently want such a one as ruler who will feed them temporally.”⁴¹⁷ Christ refuses this for three reasons, despite the fact that He is in fact a king. The first is “because it would have derogated his dignity

413 “Uno modo ut ly *omnes* supponat pro omnibus hominibus mundi; alio modo ut supponat pro omnibus qui sunt in Ecclesia Christi; tertio modo pro omnibus qui erunt in regno caelorum.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶943, 357. Cf. Augustine in Ioannem, “Vel aliter. Omnes regni illius homines ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.6 L.6.

414 “... quia eius essentiam immediate videbunt.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.6 L.5 ¶945, 358.

415 “Verum autem erat quod dispositio Dei patris ab aeterno fuerat de regno Christi manifestando, sed manifestatio haec nondum opportuna erat secundum tempus.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.6 L.2 ¶870, 330.

416 “... quando scilicet erit aperta claritas sanctorum eius, post iudicium ab eo factum.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.6 L.2 ¶870, 330.

417 “... homines frequenter talem in Dominum volunt qui eos in temporalibus pascat.” *Commentary on John* V.1 C.6 L.2 ¶870, 330. Cf. Bede, “Turbae, viso tanto miraculo ...” and Chrysostom, “Vide autem quanta est gulae virtus ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.6 L.2.

if he had received a kingdom from men, for He is such a king that all kings are kings by participating in His [kingship].”⁴¹⁸ Similarly, to have received a kingdom by popular acclaim would have been a distraction from His teaching and its divine origin. Finally, it provided an example to Christians to scorn worldly dignity and acclaim.⁴¹⁹

Entering the Kingdom Revisited

These themes, as well as the theme of triumph that we saw in Matthew 4, are also addressed in the entry into Jerusalem in John 12:

Now the palm, since it preserves its freshness, signifies victory; hence among the ancients it was given to the triumphant as a sign of victory. And so it is read of the triumphant martyrs (Revelation 7:9) that *there were palms in their hands*. Therefore the branches of palms, according to Augustine, were praises, signifying victory, because the Lord was to conquer death by dying, and triumph over the devil, prince of death, with the trophy of the cross.⁴²⁰

The people further “praise [Christ] for two things, namely for his coming and for the power of his kingdom.”⁴²¹ The second part, however, is based on a misunderstanding: “they praise the power of His kingdom when they say *King of Israel*. According to the letter, the Jews believed that He had come to reign over them temporally, and redeem them from Roman slavery, and therefore they applauded him as a king.”⁴²² Indeed, this blindness has reached the point

418 “... quia derogasset eius, si regnum ab homine recepisset, qui sci rex erat ut eius participatione reges omnes essent.” *Commentary on John* C.6 L.2 ¶871, 331. Cf. Augustine, “Erat autem rex ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.6 L.2.

419 Cf. Chrysostom, “Vide autem quanta est glorie virtus ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.6 L.2.

420 “Palma enim, quae viriditatem suam conservat, significat victoriam, unde et apud antiquos triumphantibus in signum victoriae dabatur. Et de martyribus triumphantibus legitur Apoc. VII, 9, quod *palmae erant in manibus eorum*. Rami ergo palmarum, secundum Augustinum, laudes sunt, significantes victoriam, quia Dominus erat mortem moriendo superaturus, in trophaeo crucis de diabolo mortis principe triumphaturus.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.3 ¶1620, 134. Cf. Augustine in Ionnaem, “Quantus autem fructus ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.12 L.2.

421 “Laudant autem quantum ad duo, scilicet quantum ad eius adventum, et quantum ad potentiam regni eius.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.3 ¶1622, 134.

422 “Potentiam vero regni eius laudant cum dicunt *Rex Israel*. Ad litteram enim credebant Iudaei quod venisset regnurus temporaliter super eos, et redempturus eos a servitute Romanorum, et ideo applaudebant ei tamquam regi.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.3 ¶1623, 135. Cf. Theophylactus, “Iudaei autem regem ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.12 L.2.

where Aquinas, following Jerome, accuses them of citing Psalm 118 but downgrading and misunderstanding it. “This which they added, *King of Israel*, is not in the Psalm, but there is *The Lord is God, and He has illuminated us*. In this, from their blindness, they have diminished his glory, because the Psalm praises him as God, but they do so as a temporal king.”⁴²³

This does not mean that Christ is not King, of course. The themes that Aquinas mentioned when commenting on the prophecy of Zechariah in Matthew’s rendition of the entry into Jerusalem are repeated here—Christ as king is from among the people, for their benefit, and in humility and mercy.⁴²⁴ He concludes with the admonition “Have no fear, therefore, of oppression by the king. The Old Law was given in fear, because the law generated slaves. In this also is signified the power of the king, insofar as coming in humility and weakness, He attracted the whole world.”⁴²⁵

The Prince of the World and the True King

Some similar themes recur in the commentary on 12:31, where Jesus speaks of judgment and the “prince of the world” being cast out. This judgment, Aquinas says, is judgment “for the world, insofar as the world is liberated from slavery to the devil,”⁴²⁶ as distinct from the “judgment of condemnation.” “Hence he says *now will the prince of this world be cast out*, by virtue of the passion of Christ. Hence His passion is His glorification, so as to by this explain

423 “Sed hoc quod subdunt *Rex Israel*, non est in Psalmis, sed est ibi: *Deus Dominus, et illuxit nobis*. In quo ex eorum caecitate minuunt eius laudem, quia Psalmus laudat eum tamquam Deum, ipsi vero tamquam regem temporalem.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.3 ¶1624, 135.

424 Cf. Chrysostom, “Vel aliter. Quia regem eorum iniusti fuerant ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.12 L.2.

425 “Noli ergo timere regni oppressionem. Vetus autem lex in timore data est, quia lex servitutem generabat. Item signatur in hoc regis potentia, inquantum in humilitate et infrimitate veniens, totum mundum attraxit.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.3 ¶1627, 137.

426 “... iudicatur pro mundo, inquantum mundus a servitute diaboli liberatur.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.5. ¶1667, 152. Cf. Augustine, “Iudicium enim quod in fine expectant ...” and Chrysostom, “Sed quale istud iudicium ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.12 L.4.

what God said *and I will glorify it*, namely insofar as *the prince of this world will be cast out*, because Christ by His passion has victory over the devil.”⁴²⁷

Aquinas notes three difficulties raised by this point, but it is the first—the implications of calling the devil “prince of the world”—that concerns our topic. “On this it must be said that the devil is called prince of this world, not by natural lordship, but by usurpation, insofar as worldly men, despising the true Lord, subject themselves to him. ... Therefore he is the prince of this world insofar as he rules in worldly men.”⁴²⁸

Jesus and Pilate: More Misunderstanding of the Kingdom

Of the four Gospels, John 18 gives us the most detail on the discourse between Jesus Christ and Pontius Pilate, and according to Thomas, one of the reasons Christ had this discussion was “so we would know what opinions the Jews and Gentiles held, and at the same time, to instruct us concerning his kingdom.”⁴²⁹

The point of saying that “My kingdom is not of this world” was to correct Pilate, “who believed Christ aimed at an earthly kingdom, in which he would reign physically, as in the way of earthly men, and therefore he ought to be punished by death, for illicitly aspiring to a kingdom.”⁴³⁰

After establishing that the kingdom is not “of this world”, and correcting the Manichean

427 “... unde dicit *nunc princeps huius mundi elicietur foras*, per virtutem passionis Christi. Unde sua passio est eius clarificatio, ut quasi per hoc exponat quod dicit *et clarificabo*, inquantum scilicet *princeps huius mundi elicietur foras*, quasi per passionem victoriam de diabolo habeat.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.5 ¶1668, 153.

428 “Ad hoc dicendum, quod diabolus dicitur princeps mundi huius, non naturali dominio, sed usurpatione, inquantum homines mundani, contempto vero Domino, se sibi subdiderunt ... Est ergo princeps mundi huius, inquantum in mundanis hominibus principatur.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.12 L.5 ¶1669, 153. Cf. Augustine, “Iudicium enim quod in fine expectant ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.12 L.4.

429 “... ut sciamus quam opinionem habebant Iudaei et gentiles, ac simul de illo regno instruamur.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2347, 416. Cf. Augustine *In Ioannem*, “Sciebat utique dominus ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.18 L.10.

430 “... qui credebat Christum affectare regnum terrenum, quo corporaliter, sicut et homines terreni, regnaret; et per hoc esset morte plectendus, quod illicitum affectaverit regnum.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2350, 417.

interpretation that would condemn the material world as the creation of an evil god, Aquinas turns to the many ways in which this statement can be understood, for “ ‘kingdom’ is said insofar as those people who rule, or regarding the ruling power.”⁴³¹

Regarding the first sense, Thomas first offers an interpretation drawn from Augustine, where the kingdom refers to the faithful, who are “ ‘not of this world’ by affection and imitation, because they have been snatched away from it by the election of grace. Thus God has picked us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his love.”⁴³²

The second source, once again, is Chrysostom, who takes the ‘unworldly’ nature of the kingdom as referring to the origin of its power, “that is, my power and authority by which I am king *is not of this world*; that is, it does not have an origin in mundane causes and human choice, but from elsewhere, namely from the Father Himself.”⁴³³

This interpretation appears to be supported by the interpretation of the rest of the verse: “If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews.” Earthly kings, whether they rule by law or force, require ministers to keep their thrones, “but the heavenly king, because he is powerful of himself, gives power to his servants; therefore he does not need ministers for his kingdom.”⁴³⁴ Therefore, referring back to Chrysostom’s interpretation, he states “because [Christ] does not require such ministers, it

431 “... quod ‘regnum’ quandoque dicitur ille populus qui regnat, quandoque ipsa regia potestas.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2351, 417.

432 “... *non est de hoc mundo*, per affectum et imitationem, ereptus quidem per gratiae electionem. Sic enim nos Deus eruit de potestate tenebrarum, et transtulit in regnum caritatis suae.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2351, 417. Cf. Augustine, “Hoc est quod bonus magister ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.18 L.10.

433 “... idest potestas mea et auctoritas qua rex sum, *non est de hoc mundo* idest, non habet originem ex causis mundanis et electione hominum, sed aliunde, scilicet ab ipso Patre.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2351, 418. Cf. Chrysostom, “Vel hoc dicit, quoniam non tenet regnum ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.18 L.10. Theophylactus holds a similar opinion; cf. “Vel ideo non dicit ...”, *Catena Aurea*, John C.18 L.10.

434 “Sed rex supernus, quia potens est per seipsum, servis suis potentiam tribuit; ideo non indiget ad regnum suum ministris.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2353, 418.

follows that *his kingdom is not of this world*; that is, it does not have its origin (*principium*) from this world.”⁴³⁵ This does not mean that the kingdom is wholly otherworldly, though; by contrast “it is here, because it is everywhere,”⁴³⁶ citing Wisdom 8:1, Psalm 2:8 (a key text on kingship for Aquinas, which will be addressed shortly) and Daniel 7:14.

After this, “the Lord reveals the truth about His kingdom,”⁴³⁷ in response to Pilate’s misunderstanding that “he had a kingdom according to the flesh, but it was in distant parts.”⁴³⁸ “Following this, in response he says *you say that I am a king*. where first he admits himself to be a king.”⁴³⁹ The elliptical nature of the response was “because he was not a king in the way that Pilate understood it, but he did not deny it, for spiritually He was the King of kings.”⁴⁴⁰

The key statement here, for Thomas is John 18:37b: “For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth.” This passage “shows the nature and rationale of his kingdom.”⁴⁴¹ As usual, there are multiple interpretations.

For the first, Aquinas again returns to Augustine and the interpretation that the Kingdom is the faithful, “and so Christ rules over the faithful, and came into the world for gathering the faithful to Himself and acquire a kingdom for Himself.”⁴⁴² The ‘coming into the world’ is a reference to the Incarnation, and since Christ Himself is the Truth, “insofar as I manifest myself,

435 “... quia non quaerit tales ministros, concludit quod *regnum suum non est hinc*, idest, non habet principium de hoc mundo.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2354, 418.

436 “... est tamen hic, quia ubique est” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2354, 418.

437 “Hic Dominus manifestat veritatem de regno suo” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2355, 418.

438 “... quod regnum quasi carnale esset de partibus illis” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2356, 418.

439 “Consequenter respondens dicit *tu dicis quia rex sum ego*, ubi primo se esse confitetur regem,” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2357, 419.

440 “... cum rex non esset eo modo quo Pilatus intelligebat, nec negaret, cum spiritualiter esset Rex regum.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2358, 419.

441 “Modum autem et rationem regni sui ostendit” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2359, 419.

442 “... et sic Christus super fideles regnat; et ad hoc venit in mundum ut congregans sibi fideles, regnum sibi acquirat.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2359, 419. Cf Augustine, “Cum autem Christus testimonium ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.18 L.10.

the Truth, to that degree I establish my Kingdom. For this cannot be done without the manifestation of the truth, which should only be done by myself, who am the Light.”⁴⁴³

The second interpretation likewise continues Chrysostom’s tradition. “You ask if I am a king, and I say that I am, but by divine power, because *for this I was born*, from the Father by an eternal nativity, so just as I am God from God, so I am King from King.”⁴⁴⁴ This distinction between the eternal generation of the Son and the Incarnation is maintained by taking *and for this I have come into the world* as referring to the latter. “It is as though He said ‘Although I am an eternal king, I have come into the world for this, *that I might give testimony to the truth* namely, to myself, that I am a king by God the Father.”⁴⁴⁵

Following that, “he shows over whom he reigns.”⁴⁴⁶ Chrysostom’s work, as cited by Aquinas, connects this passage to Christ’s statements about His sheep and Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10, “because the relation of a king to his subjects is as that of a shepherd to his sheep.”⁴⁴⁷ Chrysostom then brings his thought into harmony with Augustine by reminding us that “he especially said in that passage *my sheep hear my voice* (John 10:27), and thus here he says *who is of the truth hears my voice*, not only externally, but believing internally and loving this and implementing it in action.”⁴⁴⁸ Aquinas follows this up with his own distinction between the

443 “Et in quantum manifesto me Veritatem, intantum regnum mihi paro. Hoc enim non potest fieri nisi per manifestationem veritatis, quam manifestationem non decebat fieri nisi per me, qui sum lux.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2359, 419.

444 “... tu quaeris si rex ego sum, et ego dico quod sic: sed potestate divina, quia *in hoc natus sum*, nativitate aeterna a Patre, sicut Deus ex Deo, ita rex ex rege.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2360, 419.

445 “... quasi diceret: *etsi sum rex aeternus, tamen ad hoc veni in mundum, ut testimonium perhibeam veritati, mihi scilicet quod rex a Deo Patre.*” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2360, 419-20.

446 “Hic ostendit super quos regnet.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2361, 420.

447 “... quia eadem est proportio regis ad subditos et pastoris ad oves.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2361, 420.

448 “Et specialiter inter alia dixit *oves meae vocem meam audiunt*; unde et hic dicit *qui est ex veritate, audit vocem meam*, non solum exterius, sed credendo interius et amando ac opere implendo.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2361, 420.

way in which we are all from God by virtue of creation, and the way described here, in which we are of God Who Is Truth “according to affection ... therefore he who hears this voice and believes and loves it *is of the truth*, that is, who has accepted this duty of loving the truth.”⁴⁴⁹ Aquinas reads Pilate’s response sympathetically--the famous question “What is truth?” meant that he was “not asking what was the definition of truth, but what was the truth whose power would make him a member of this kingdom”⁴⁵⁰---a hint towards the contemplative side of the Kingdom that has been recurring throughout Thomas' exegesis of John. However, “Pilate did not wait for a response.”⁴⁵¹

The mockery by the soldiers in John 19 is a parody of kingship, of course, and their mocking acclamation of Christ as “King” by the soldiers in 19:3 is given a spiritual interpretation as well: “They salute Christ falsely who confess him with the mouth but *negate this with their deeds*. (Titus 1:16).”⁴⁵²

In the last stages of the trial, Aquinas considers the fear of Caesar that the Jewish leaders invoked in Pilate. “But he was agitated wrongly, because it was not of such a kind.”⁴⁵³ Indeed, “Christ had not purple, nor diadem, nor scepter, not chariot, nor soldiers to make it believable that he would seize a kingdom.”⁴⁵⁴ Despite this, Pilate still sought to appeal to the Jewish people.

449 “... scilicet secundum affectum ... ille ergo audit vocem credendo et amando, *qui*, scilicet, *est ex veritate*, idest, qui accepit hoc munus ut veritatem amet.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2362, 420.

450 “Non quaerens quae sit definitio veritatis, sed quid esset veritas cuius virtute de regno eius efficeretur.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2364, 420. Aquinas once more appears to be following Chrysostom here; cf. Chrysostom, “Haec autem dicens, attrahit ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.18 L.10.

451 “Pilatus responsionem non expectavit.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.18 L.6 ¶2364, 420.

452 “... illi illusorie Christum salutant qui eum confitentur ore, *factis autem negant*, Tit. I, 16.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.1 ¶2377, 425.

453 “Sed frustra propter eos movetur, quia non erat talis.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.3 ¶2402, 433. The Latin *talis* could be referring to either the threat to Caesar’s power, or to the Kingdom as a whole—being “not of this world”, it was not “of such a kind” that Caesar should fear it.

454 “Non enim a purpura, non a diademate, non a sceptro, non a curru, non a militibus quos Christus haberet, credere poterat quod regnum affectaret.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.3 ¶2402, 433. This passage is almost a

The statement “Behold your king!” is read “as if he said: I wonder that you fear to have as king one abject and humiliated, for none seek a kingdom without having wealth and might, and he is not such a one.”⁴⁵⁵ Similarly, the question “Shall I then crucify your king?” is an appeal “to your sense of shame, that I would crucify one who seeks your kingdom: it is greatly ignominious, that this be done by a foreigner.”⁴⁵⁶

The True Kingship Shown

Yet it is the mystery of the Crucifixion that shows forth the true kingship of Christ.

“Christ bore his cross as a king his sceptre, as a sign of the glory which is his dominion over all things in the universe: *The Lord will reign from the wood* (Ps 95:9); *the government will be set upon his shoulder, and He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, God of Might, Father Forever, Prince of Peace*. And he bears it as a victor does the trophy of his victory.”⁴⁵⁷

The theme continues through the inscription on the Cross,

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. These three terms are most fitting to the mystery of the cross. ... where it says *King of the Jews*, it pertains to the power and dominion which Christ merited through His Passion. Phil 2:9 *Therefore God has highly exalted him*; Jer. 23:5: *The Lord will reign and be wise*; Isa. 9:7 *He will sit on the throne of David and over his kingdom*.⁴⁵⁸

direct lift from Chrysostom; cf. Chrysostom *in Ioannem*, “Sed unde habetis hoc demonstrare? ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.19 L.4.

455 “... quasi dicat: mirum est quod hunc formidatis habere regem, sic humiliatum et abiectum: regnum non nisi divites et fortes affectant, hic autem non est talis,” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.3 ¶2407, 435. Cf. Augustine, “Hinc apparet non ignorante Pilato ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.19 L.1.

456 “... vestrum opprobrium, quod eum crucifigam qui regnum vestrum affectavit: quod valde ignominiosum est, si ab extraneis fiat.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.3 ¶2409, 435.

457 “Portat Christus crucem ut rex sceptrum, in signum gloriae quae est universale rerum omnium Dominium. Ps. XCV, 9: *Dominus regnabit a ligno*; Is. IX, 6: *et factus est principatus super humerum eius, et vocabit admirabilis, consiliarius, Deus fortis, Pater futuri saeculi, princeps pacis*. Portat eam ut victor trophaeum suae victoriae.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.3 ¶2414, 436. Cf. Augustine, “Grande spectaculum ...” and Chrysostom, “Et sicut victores ...” in *Catena Aurea*, John C.19 L.5.

458 “Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum. Quae quidem tria verba satis conveniunt ad crucis mysterium ... Hoc vero quod dicit *Rex Iudaeorum*, pertinet ad potestatem, ad dominium quod ex passione promeruit. Phil II, 9: *propter quod et Deus illum exaltavit*; Jer. XXIII, 5: *regnabit Dominus, et sapiens erit*; Is. IX, 7: *super solium David super regnum eius sedebit*.” *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.4 ¶2420, 439.

And the title also carries the note of universality, since

the Gentiles were grafted into the abundance of the olive like a wild olive tree. ... And just as the wild olive is made a participant in the abundance of the olive, rather than the olive made a participant in the bitterness of the wild olive, so those gentiles converted to the faith are called in effect spiritual Jews by confession, not by circumcision of the flesh, but of the spirit.⁴⁵⁹

Thomas thus continues a tradition that runs from Paul through Augustine and other Fathers, and anticipates Pius XI's famous statement that "spiritually, we are Semites."⁴⁶⁰

Conclusions on the Kingdom and Kingship in the *Commentary on John*

Aquinas' *Commentary on John* does not feature nearly as much discussion of the Kingdom, but it does help us develop several of the kingdom themes identified in Matthew.

John 3 is the key text for much of this, as it helps develop the contemplative and historically developing elements of the Kingdom. Here, Thomas begins to develop the Johannine theme of 'seeing' as entering the Kingdom, which implies contemplation. Unfortunately, Thomas never wrote a commentary on 1 John specifically, but he does make use of the concept that "we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is" at several points, including Matthew 22 and 25. This could also be connected with the evangelical dimension highlighted by Christ's words in John 18, where the Kingdom is grounded in giving testimony to the Truth, and membership comes by loving the Truth.

459 "... quod gentiles intromissi sunt in pinguedinem olivae sicut oleaster. ... Et sicut oleaster particeps fit pinguedinis olivae, non autem oliva fit particeps pinguedinis olivae, non autem oliva fit particeps amaritudinis oleastri, ita ipsi gentiles ad fidem conversi spiritualiter Iudaei confitentes dicuntur effecti, non circumcisione carnis, sed spiritus." *Commentary on John* V.2 C.19 L.4 ¶2421, 439. Cf. Augustine, "Sed Iudaeorum tantum rex Christus est ..." in *Catena Aurea*, John C.19 L.6.

460 Pope Pius XII, reflections offered on September 6, 1936, hosted at <http://www.ccjr.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/1255-pius-xi1938sept6>, accessed on April 25, 2016.

John 3 also highlights how the Kingdom unfolds in history, through a series of stages that lead to deeper participation in Christ. The Old Law prepared the way, the New Law leads to internal regeneration and the soul's attachment with Christ, and the full Kingdom will provide both internal and external regeneration, leading to a body and soul that are both fully glorified by full sharing in Christ's glory. This provides us with a reason that the Church can be considered a form of the kingdom, while the Old Testament was considered merely a symbol or foreshadowing of it. The Old Law foreshadowed Christ, while the New Law actually produces what it also foreshadows—in a sense, it is sacramental in that it effects what it signifies.

Participation is also highlighted in John 6, where Christ's kingship is placed on a level above all other kingship to the point that all other kings receive power by their participation in His rulership. This takes the New Testament theme of submission to the governing authorities ("Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's", the admonition in Romans) and develops it in a more firmly Christological and participatory direction. It also fulfills what was hinted at in the *Commentary on Matthew 1*, where all the other kings of Israel receive their kingdom on the grounds of David's merits. Christ's headship, according to Thomas, is that of both priest and king, and while the participation of priests in Christ's High Priesthood is well-developed in Catholic theology, the participation of kings in His kingship has been less considered. Thomas will make numerous points in other works that suggest a stronger relationship between the New Law and the priesthood, drawing closer parallels to the Old Law and the kingship, which suggests that the emphasis on the priestly role is actually more proper to us in the era of the Gospel.

The rest of John's Gospel highlights the fact that the Kingdom of God is 'not of this world'. This means that kingship is harder for us in the world to properly understand and attribute

to Christ, since earthly kingdoms more obviously fall short of the Christlike ideal. Since one of the key functions of the kingly role is judgment, Christ's kingship will be emphasized once more come the end of the world and the Final Judgment.

Overall Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the Gospel commentaries of St. Thomas Aquinas, especially the *Commentary on Matthew*, contain a deep and rich theology of the Kingdom of God that integrates numerous Scriptural, patristic and philosophical insights into a multifaceted but fundamentally coherent whole, contrary to Viviano's description of it as a confused and misguided amalgamation of patristic ideas. That description fails to do justice to either Aquinas as a thinker or to the inspiring structure of the Kingdom he deduces from Christ's teaching.⁴⁶¹

However, these are not the only texts where Thomas speaks of the Kingdom. The next two chapters will examine other works by Aquinas where the topic comes up; first, we will move to his other Scriptural commentaries in Chapter 3, followed by a survey of the topic of the Kingdom of God in his other works in Chapter 4. These chapters will allow us to flesh out and supplement the structure established here.

⁴⁶¹ Edwards does more justice to Thomas as a thinker, but her focus on the *Summae* means that her work focuses on the 'big picture' of divine providence and the ultimate end of humanity; the Scriptural approach used in this dissertation helps complement that by emphasizing the various ways in which the Kingdom manifests in the world, and both the demands it makes and the rewards it offers its members.

Chapter III: The Kingdom and Kingship in Thomas Aquinas' Other Scripture Commentaries

The Gospels, especially Matthew, are the portions of Scripture where the doctrine on the Kingdom is most central and most developed, but the theme recurs in various forms in other books of Scripture. Thomas commented on several such books throughout his career, and this chapter examines what he has to say about the Kingdom and the concept of kingship in those works. This chapter steps through many of those works, considering the various mentions of 'kingdom' therein and highlighting what Aquinas says as a Master of the Sacred Page on the topics of kingdoms and kingship in general, and the Kingdom of God in Christ in particular.

After a brief look at Aquinas' commentaries on Isaiah and Jeremiah from the start of his career, the bulk of this chapter will examine what Aquinas has to say about the Psalms and the Pauline Epistles (including Hebrews). In doing so, we will add some support and details to the concept of the Kingdom constructed from the text of the Gospel commentaries. While some of these have been discussed in the literature on Aquinas and the Kingdom, there has been no systematic analysis of the concept, and these commentaries, like the Gospel commentaries, have always been subordinated to the *Summae* and other texts. Viviano does not cite them at all, Edwards makes minimal use of them, and while Mitchell treats them more extensively, his focus remains the relationship between the Kingdom and the Church.

By contrast, since Aquinas treats Scripture as a unity, and his approaches to both Scripture and the Kingdom are fundamentally Christocentric, consideration of his Scripture commentaries in the light of the Gospel commentaries can help highlight the Kingdom. The relation of the Pauline letters to Christ is obvious, and Aquinas' reading of the Psalms, as will be shown, is not only Christocentric but focused heavily on Christ's kingship as foreshadowed in the

figure of David. Isaiah and Jeremiah, as prophetic works, also foretell Christ in Aquinas' reading. Approaching the Kingdom through the lenses of Aquinas' Scripture commentaries, and reading his other commentaries in the light of those on the Gospels, can highlight new dimensions of the Kingdom revealed in the previous chapter, and demonstrate the unity of Aquinas' thought on the subject.

Expositio super Isaiam ad litteram

The *Literal Exposition on Isaiah* is one of Thomas' earliest works—indeed, the Leonine commission's introduction identifies it, along with the commentaries on Jeremiah and Lamentations, as “the first theological work by St. Thomas.”¹ It is also one of the only works where we have Thomas' original autograph, apparently the notes he used for lecturing on the text.² The *Literal Exposition on Isaiah* is very much a work of and for the classroom—the training of a bachelor in study of the *sacra pagina*, who practices by lecturing on the literal sense of the text to undergraduates.³ Just as Isaiah provides, for the medieval mind at least, a ‘proto-Gospel’, so too can the *Exposition on Isaiah* provide a precursor to the Gospel commentaries on various points. Most of it is simply cross-references and brief comments on various verses, but the concept of the Kingdom and kingship comes up at several points in the earlier, more developed chapters.

Chapter 2, Lecture 2 (covering Isaiah 2:4-9) provides another note on the role of the king

1 Leonine, Vol. 28, p. 20, cited by Torrell, I.28. For more discussion, see Joseph Wawyrkow, “Aquinas on Isaiah” in *Aquinas on Scripture*, 43-71. A recent study on “Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great and Hugh of St. Cher on the Vision of God in Isaiah Chapter 6” by Bruce McNair (*The Downside Review* 124, 435:79, 2006) may also highlight all three thinkers under consideration here when it comes to both Scriptural exegesis and contemplation.

2 Torrell, I.29.

3 Cf. Torrell, I.27.

when commenting on Isaiah 2:4, “The judgment of the king is the making [*effectivum*] of peace; therefore he says first *He will judge the nations*.”⁴ This allows the connection of Christ's role as Judge not only with His kingship, but with the title of “Prince of Peace”. Similarly, Chapter 3, Lecture 1 comments on how “the power to govern the wars of a people is necessary in a prince or king.”⁵

An prophetic/allegorical reading of Isaiah 4, where the seven women are understood as the Church and the one man as Christ, contains the statement that “before Christ it was not given that they should lead into the kingdom.”⁶ Isaiah 8:15 is referred to Christ in that many will “*fall*, from the dignity of the kingdom. Matthew 8:12, *the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness*.”⁷

Isaiah 5:1-10 contains the canticle of the vineyard echoed in Matthew 20:1-16 and 21:33-46; Thomas uses Lecture 1 to apply it mystically to Christ and His passion. Thomas appears to have drawn on this material when commenting on those passages in Matthew, but this lecture is a *divisio texti* and cross-reference to other Old Testament passages, as is typical of the commentary, so we cannot draw any solid conclusions beyond what is warranted by the resemblances of the two texts.

The opening portion of Chapter 9 of Isaiah has been applied to Christ since the very beginning of Christianity, of course.⁸ Thomas, while he appears to allow for a partial, pre-

4 “Effectivum pacis est iudicium regis; et primo enim dicit: *judicabit gentes*.” St. Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio super Isaiam ad litteram* (hereafter translated as *Commentary on Isaiah*), Leonine Edition, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9·2016, C.2 L.2.

5 “Potestas ad regenda bella populi requiritur in duce vel rege,” *Commentary on Isaiah*, C.3 L.1.

6 “Ante Christum enim dona non perducabant ad regnum.” *Commentary on Isaiah* C.4 L.2.

7 “... *cadent*, a dignitate regni. Matth. 8: *fili regni ejicientur in tenebras exteriores*.” *Commentary on Isaiah* C.8 L.3.

8 According to Joseph Wawrykow, St. Thomas is fairly moderate when it comes to the prophetic reading of Isaiah; he sees Christ clearly in Chapter 7, for example, but reads the child of Isaiah 8:4 as literally the prophet's son, and

Christian fulfillment, follows that tradition. The phrase “prince of peace” is applied here to Christ's role as Mediator, rather than as Judge, and “the government will be upon his shoulder” describes “the cross, by which he is exalted in ruling.”⁹ Isaiah 9:7 “describes his power; first regarding the magnitude of the kingdom, secondly regarding its nobility, *upon the throne*, third regarding its eternity, *from this time forth and forevermore*.”¹⁰ The throne of David, indicating the kingdom of David, is taken as a signifier of the Church. The kingdom will be established with justice, which Thomas connects to Jeremiah 23,¹¹ and at the time of the Incarnation to last forever.

Chapter 11 is likewise Christological, and references to the Kingship come primarily in the exegesis of 11:3b-5, which speak of the judgment of the coming Messiah, since he will be “particular in judging, for this is the work of a king.”¹² This king will judge without regard to appearances, and will judge the poor—who, Thomas says, citing Matthew 5, possess the Kingdom of Heaven. Isaiah 12:3 is also referred to the Kingdom in a connection to the one point where the term is used in John's Gospel.¹³

In Jeremiam prophetam expositio

The *Commentary on Jeremiah* is contemporary with the Isaiah commentary, and even more cursory, to the point that “Sixtus of Siena in the sixteenth century denied the authenticity of

only allegorically Christ. See Wawyrkow, “Aquinas on Isaiah” in *Aquinas on Scripture*, 49.

9 “... idest crux, per quam in principatum exaltus est.” *Commentary on Isaiah*, C.9 L.1.

10 “Hic describit eius potestatem: et primo quantum ad regni magnitudinem; secundo quantum ad regni nobilitatem, *super solium*, tertio quantum ad aeternitatem, *amado, et usque*.” *Commentary on Isaiah* C.9 L.1.

¹¹ One of Thomas’ favorite Old Testament verses regarding the Kingship of Christ, as noted below under *In Jeremiam prophetam expositio*.

12 “... praecipue in iudicando, quia hoc est opus regis.” *Commentary on Isaiah* C.11.

13 “...*haurietis aquas* ... tertio baptismalis munditiae. Joan. 3: *nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto, non potest intrare in regnum Dei*.” *Commentary on Isaiah* C.12.

these commentaries precisely because of their doctrinal poverty.”¹⁴ While this commentary lives up to the description of *commentarium cursorium*, it still contains a couple of points that are worth attention.

One verse that recurs throughout Thomas' discussions of kingship in his Biblical works is Jeremiah 23:5b: *A king will reign, and be wise, and do justice and judgment in the land*. Chapter 23, Lecture 2 of the 'cursory' commentary on Jeremiah takes this verse, as well as the surrounding verses, and applies it explicitly to Christ and His Church. The flock of vs. 3-4 is explained as the Church, for “none of the number of the Church will fear, or suffer from the neglect of the Apostles.”¹⁵ The days prophesied in v. 5 are the 'acceptable time' referred to in 2 Corinthians 6, and the king is identified with the Son of Man in Daniel, and both with Jesus, who will reign “not only over Judea, but even over all kings.”¹⁶

Chapter 33 also has a Messianic theme, so it is not surprising to find mentions of the Kingdom and the kingship of Christ therein. The “righteous shoot” that springs from David is, of course, Jesus, who “*will do justice* for the world in his first advent, on the world in his second advent.”¹⁷ This is ordered to the salvation of the people: “*in those days Judah will be saved*, with regard to those who believed in His first coming and who will believe in His second coming.”¹⁸

Lecture 5 unites this promise to the promise made regarding the priesthood in Jeremiah 33:18, 21b. “And just as the kingdom will be restored in Christ himself, and in His members, so

¹⁴ Torrell, I.27.

¹⁵ “... nullus de numero Ecclesiae timebit, vel deficiet ex negligentia apostolorum. “ St. Thomas Aquinas, *In Jeremiam prophetam expositio* (hereafter translated as *Commentary on Jeremiah*), Parma Text, 1863, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9 2016, C.23 L.2 .

¹⁶ “... non solum super Judaeos, sed etiam super omnes reges.” *Commentary on Jeremiah*, C.23 L.2.

¹⁷ “*Et faciet iudicium*, in primo adventu pro mundo, in secundo de mundo.” *Commentary on Jeremiah* C.33 L.4. See this same distinction in the discussion of John 12:31, above.

¹⁸ “*In diebus illis salvabitur Juda*, quantam ad eos qui crediderunt in primo, et credent in secundo adventu.” *Commentary on Jeremiah* C.33 L.4.

also will the priesthood.”¹⁹ The unity of the kingship and the priesthood encompasses both Christ and his members. This may be one of the first examples, chronologically, of participation in Christ in Thomas' theological work. While the theme is hardly original to Thomas, it allows us to highlight the continuity of his thought on this matter from his student days to to the conclusion of his career.

In Psalmis Davidis exposito

While the cursory commentaries on Isaiah and Jeremiah belong to the beginning of Aquinas' career, the commentary on the Psalms is generally agreed to belong to the end—indeed, the incompleteness of the text suggests that it was interrupted by Thomas' illness and death, although that remains only a hypothesis.²⁰ Even incomplete and in the form of a *reportatio*,²¹ the text contains a satisfying amount of theological material on the theme of the Kingdom. This is not surprising, since the commentary covers Psalms 1-54. The first fifty Psalms were identified by Thomas as those which “pertain to the penitent state, and therefore deal figuratively with the trials and enemies of David, and his deliverance.”²² Since David is a type of Christ, especially Christ as King, there is much to be mined here.

19 “Et sicut regnum restauratur in ipso Christo, et in membris eius, ita et sacerdotium.” *Commentary on Jeremiah* C.33 L.5.

20 For details on the question of dating, see Torrell, I.257-59. For a more intensive study of Aquinas' thought on the Psalter, see Thomas Ryan, *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000). Literature on the medieval use and reading of the Psalms is a vast field; one point of introduction is *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, edited by Nancy Van Deusen, (New York: State University of New York, 1999).

21 Torrell, I.258-59

22 “... pertinet ad statum poenitentiae, et ideo figuraliter tractatur in ea de tribulationibus, et impugnationibus David, et liberatione eius.” St. Thomas Aquinas, *In Psalmis Davidis exposito*, Parma Text, 1863, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomicum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, (hereafter referred to as *Commentary on Psalms*), Prooemium. “Figuraliter” is a difficult term to translate in this context; it seems to mean something closer to 'for figurative purposes' rather than 'non-literally', as 'figuratively' is often used in modern English.

Psalm 2: The Kingdom of David and of Christ

Psalm 2 is, according to Aquinas, “a psalm of David, because it was composed by him, and treats his kingdom as a figure of the reign of Christ.”²³ Aquinas’ reading of this Psalm is heavily allegorical and Christocentric, and provides some additional insights into His kingship and kingdom.

On the question of kingdom, Thomas says here that “a populace is a mass of men joined by harmony of the law.”²⁴ This gives further support to the theory of the relationship between the Law and the Kingdom drawn from the Gospel commentaries—that the Law can be called the Kingdom in the sense that it is constitutive of the Kingdom. This is reinforced by the later comment on this Psalm that the yoke is symbolic of royal power, and “spiritually, in Christ the yoke is the law of charity.”²⁵ Further, when turning to the relation of the king (David and Christ) to the people, Thomas says that “*I have been made king by him over Zion, his sacred mountain, not for my own sake, but in order that I might rule the people in accord with the law of God.*”²⁶

The exposition of the Psalm further says that “*The Lord said to me*, which is not always completed in David, and therefore should be understood of Christ, who has dominion over the Gentiles by a double right, according to inheritance and to merit.”²⁷ The inheritance comes from being the Son, in reference to Hebrews and Galatians; the “giving of the Gentiles is purely a gift”²⁸ which were received in the same way we receive gifts from God, “by petitioning and

23 “Est ergo psalmus David, quia ab eo compositus, et de regno eius in figura regni Christi agit.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.1.

24 “Populus est multitudo hominum iuris consensu sociata.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.1.

25 “Spiritualiter in Christo est iugum lex charitatis.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.2.

26 “*Sum autem constitutus rex super Syon montem sanctus eius non propter me, sed ut regam populum secundum legem Dei.*” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.4.

27 “*Dominus dixit ad me, hoc non usquequaque completur de David; et ideo intelligitur de Christo cui competit dominium super gentes duplici iure, scilicet haereditario et meritorio.*” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.5.

28 “*Datio autem gentilium est pure donum.*” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.6.

praying”²⁹—indeed, God “wished to show this example through Christ, because He wished him to petition for what he held by hereditary right.”³⁰ Thomas makes a further statement that the Psalm speaks of “*the ends of the earth* because the Church has been built throughout the whole world”³¹—although subsequently, parts “returned to disbelief through Nicholas the heretic and Mohammed.”³²

The governing of the nations with a rod of iron is also referred both historically to David and spiritually to Christ, “because it is necessary that one who rules have a rod. ... For this, kings are necessary, that they have a rod of discipline by which they punish lawbreakers [*delinquentes*].”³³ The rod is iron “to designate the inflexible discipline of justice ... It is an iron rod which rules the nations, because they will not depart further from the dominion of Christ, when the fullness of the nations has entered.”³⁴

In the last part of the Psalm, vs. 10-11, “it is shown how this is related to kings,”³⁵ as the Psalmist “restrains them by admonishing them and drawing them to the service of God.”³⁶ The admonishment relates “to the truth of doctrine, to the humility of deference, and to openness to correction.”³⁷ Doctrine can be either discovered by understanding or received by docility to teaching. The former is proper to those “to whom universal government is committed, who are

29 “... recipiamus dona petendo et orando.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.6.

30 “... hoc exemplum voluit ostendere per Christum, quia voluit quod peteret, quod sibi iure haereditario competeat.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.6.

31 “*Terminos terrae*, quia per totum mundum aedificata est ecclesia.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.6.

32 “... per Nicolaum haereticum et Mahumetum ad infidelitatem redierunt.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.6.

33 “... necesse est enim quod qui regit, habeat virgam Ad hoc enim necessarii sunt reges, ut virgam habeant disciplinae qua puniant delinquentes.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.7.

34 “... ad designandum inflexibilem iustitiae disciplinam ... Sed haec est virga ferrea qua regit gentes, quia non recedent amplius a domino Christi, quando plenitudo gentium intraverit.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.7.

35 “... ostenditur quomodo se habet ad reges.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.8.

36 “Reprimit autem eos admonendo et attrahendo ad servitutem Dei.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.8.

37 “Ad doctrinae veritatem, ad obsequii humilitatem, ad correctionis susceptione.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.8.

called kings. To others particular judgment is committed, and these are called judges,”³⁸ who “should receive the form of justice from others.”³⁹

After such understanding comes service, “and it must be noted, following Augustine, that a king serves God, insofar as he is a man, by living justly in himself, but insofar as he is a king, by producing laws against those things which are contrary to the justice of God.”⁴⁰ Thus, this psalm’s address to kings is again taken as prefigurative of the Church and perhaps of the new era of Christian kings since “at the beginning, the kings of the earth made laws against Christ and Christians, but afterwards, they added laws for Christ.”⁴¹ Much of this will be familiar to readers of the *De Regno*; by this point in his career, Thomas has developed a clear vision of Christian kingship as distinct from but in service to man’s supernatural end, and not just the natural end.

A final reference to the kingdom is found in Aquinas’ reading of the final benediction, “Blessed are those who trust ...” (Ps 2:12b), where he says that they need have no fear of the divine vengeance mentioned immediately prior, “but they will be blessed, because they have attained to the kingdom, which blessedness or glory appears greater from the punishment of the evil ones.”⁴² The use of the term “kingdom” to refer both to the Church and to final glory in this earlier commentary, and within the same Psalm nonetheless, suggests that the multivalent meaning of the Kingdom seen in the *Commentary on Matthew* was still a constituent part of Thomas’ thought.

38 “Quibusdam enim committitur universalis gubernatio, qui dicuntur reges. Quibusdam aliquod speciale iudicium, et hi dicuntur iudices.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.8.

39 “... ab aliis formam iudicii accipiant.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.8.

40 “Et notandum secundum Augustinum, quod rex servit Deo in quantum homo, in se iuste vivendo, sed in quantum rex leges ferendo contra ea, quae sunt contra Dei iustitiam.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.9.

41 “... a principio reges terrae faciebant leges contra Christum et christianos, sed postea condiderunt leges pro Christo.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.9.

42 “... sed beati erunt, quia ad regnum pervenient: quae beatitudo, vel gloria maior apparebit ex poena malorum” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 2, n.10.

Psalm 3: Prayer for the Kingdom

Aquinas reads Psalm 3 in continuity with Psalm 2: “The above Psalm showed the attempts of his enemies; here he implores divine aid against their efforts. ... In this psalm we can set forth the historical foundation, and after that the allegorical sense, and lastly a moral sense.”⁴³ The historical sense refers to Absalom’s rebellion against David; Aquinas reads the allegorical sense as Judas’ betrayal of Jesus, and links that to the moral sense through a discussion of Christ’s kingship. “By death Christ reigns in peace, because He rose in glory. And this can be referred to all the tribulations of the Church, and it can be referred morally against tribulations which it suffers from either material or spiritual enemies.”⁴⁴ This shows an example of the reign of Christ as inherently connected in some way to the Passion and Resurrection, as well as its connection to the Church, even referring 3:6 (“I am not afraid ...”) to the Church in the moral sense by allegory to the Resurrection: “In this it is signified that the Church of Christ cannot be wholly suppressed. For after the Resurrection the mass of people who had surrounded the crucifix could do nothing to harm Christ.”⁴⁵

Psalms 11, 16 (15): Brief Notes on the King

Psalm 11 (10) does not refer to the kingdom directly or in Aquinas’ reading of it, but it does reiterate the identification of a king with his kingdom that was found in the Gospel commentaries: “because anything is, as it were, what is preeminent in it, just as a king is called

43 “Superior Psalmus ostendit conatum adversariorum, hic contra eorum conatum implorat auxilium divinum. ... In quo psalmo possumus ponere fundamentum historiae, et postea ponere sensum allegoricum, et ulterius moralem.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 3, n.1.

44 “Quo mortuo Christus in pace regnavit, quia in gloria resurrexit. Et potest ad omnes tribulationes ecclesiae referri. Potest et moraliter contra tribulationes, quas quis ab inimicis sive temporalibus sive spiritualibus patitur.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 3, n.1.

45 “In quo signatur, quod Christi ecclesia non potest omnino deprimi. Christo etiam post resurrectionem multitudo populi, quae crucifixum circumstetit, nihil nocere potuit.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 3, n.4.

the kingdom.”⁴⁶ Similarly, the introduction to Psalm 16 (15) refers to Christ receiving the title of King of the Jews in several ways, including “by triumph, just as Rome had: and this is a title of Christ, who triumphed by the Cross.”⁴⁷

Psalm 18 (17): The King as Liberator and Conqueror

Psalm 18 (17) is an extensive treatise on the Psalmist “giving thanks for his liberation.”⁴⁸ The Psalm’s attribution to David is supported by its presence in 2 Samuel 22⁴⁹, and “since Christ is signified by David, all these things can be referred to Christ either according to the head or to the body, namely, the Church, because it has been liberated from Saul, that is, death.”⁵⁰ Aquinas’ reading of this Psalm has several resonances with his commentary on Matthew. The triumph theme that we saw in Matthew 4 recurs in commenting on 18:2b, “my supporter”⁵¹—“With regard to the third, *and my supporter*, when one conquers, he is received with a triumph.” In addition, the martial element recurs in the commentary on vv. 17-19 and 29-42, although with an emphasis on the moral sense and application to the members of Christ’s Body, rather than to Christ the Head. Aquinas applies the enemies spoken of in the Psalm both to historical enemies of Israel and of the Church, and to the enemies of the soul. He understanding the gifts of God for battle mentioned in the Psalm in a similar fashion. Regarding v. 32, he says “this is strength, namely power which is given to me by God, not only in corporeal battles, but in spiritual ones,”⁵²

46 “... quia quaelibet res est illud quod est praecipuum in ea, sicut rex dicitur regnum”, *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 11(10), n.4.

47 “... pro triumpho, sicut Romae fiebat: et hic titulus Christi est, qui triumphavit per crucem”, *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 16(15), n.1.

48 “... liberatus gratias agit.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 18(17), n.1.

49 2 Kings in the Vulgate.

50 “Et quia per David significatur Christus, omnia ista referri possunt ad Christum, vel secundum caput, vel secundum corpus, scilicet ecclesiam quia liberata est a Saule, idest morte.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 18(17), n.1.

51 *stronghold* in the RSV, which, oddly enough, also supports the association with a triumphal entry.

52 “Haec est fortitudo, scilicet virtus quae data est mihi a Deo, non solum in corporalibus bellis, sed et in spiritualibus.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 18(17), n.19.

and likewise on v. 34, “*he teaches*, etc., that is, against vices and demons, he teaches us to act for conquering enemies who try to close the gates of heaven.”⁵³

The penultimate part of the Psalm, vs. 43-45, refers to the Psalmist’s establishment as King, and Aquinas says that “this pertains more specifically to Christ than to David,”⁵⁴ although both suffered strife [*contradictionibus*] with the Jews and received loyalty from other nations.

The last part of this Psalm is a praise that both analogizes God to a king—“he speaks of God after the manner of a king. In ancient times the way of saluting a king was ‘May the king live!’ [*Vivat rex*]. This is fitting to God, because He Himself is life eternal.”⁵⁵—and praises God for the gifts given to the king.

And he sets forth two things: one to the state of the kingdom, the other to the person, because each is made great. With regard to the first he says, *making great the salvation of the king*, because he has raised me to the kingdom. Or, *king*, that is, Christ, through whose name all are saved ... With regard to the person he says *and showing mercy to His Anointed, David, and to his seed in eternity*, because He has multiplied his seed as He promised.⁵⁶

Psalm 19 (18): The Old and New Law

Psalm 19 (18) is read both literally and Christologically, and contains a discussion of the divine Law and the difference between the Old Law and the New Law that we saw in the commentary on Matthew 3: “The Old Law worked imperfectly, but the New Law perfectly; because the Old Law works through temporal pains, which coerce the hand, while the New Law

53 “... vel, qui docet etc., idest contra vitia et daemones, docet nos operari ad superandos hostes, qui caeli portas claudere conantur.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 18(17), n.20.

54 “Hoc magis specialiter pertinet ad Christum, quam ad David. Et ideo circa hoc duo facit.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 18(17), n.25.

55 “Et loquitur ad modum regis de Deo. Antiquitus modus salutandi regem fuit. Vivat rex. Hoc convenit Deo: quia ipse est vita aeterna.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 18(17), n.27.

56 “Et ponit duo: unum ad statum regni, aliud ad personam, quia utrumque magnificatum est. Quantum ad primum dicit, magnificans salutes regis ejus, quia promovisti me ad regnum. Vel, regis, idest Christi, per cujus nomen omnes salvantur ... Quantum ad personam dicit, et faciens misericordias Christo suo David et semini ejus usque in saeculum, quia multiplicavit semen suum sicut promisit.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 18(17), n.28.

works through eternal pains, which coerce the heart.”⁵⁷

Psalms 21 (20) and 24 (23): Rejoicing in Conquest and the Crown

Psalm 21 (20) is another ‘royal psalm’ that, like others, “speaks of Christ who is king, and of David who was a figure of Him, and therefore it can be expounded concerning either, of Christ according to the truth, or of David according to the figure.”⁵⁸ The rejoicing of the king in God’s strength is related to “when he conquered the death and devil by His death, when He performed miracles, and when He ascended into Heaven.”⁵⁹ Another interesting bit of symbolism is in the crown (v. 3b) which is given several interpretations: “of divinity, since His kingdom is not of this world,”⁶⁰ or the Apostles—“or the precious gems of the crown are the Apostles, who are called precious stones according to the preciousness (*pretiositatem*) of doctrine”⁶¹—or the Church. A moral interpretation, which fits in with what was said about receiving the Kingdom in Matthew, is that “it could be said with regard to the saints that the crown, or reward, is God Himself.”⁶²

Another point is that the Psalm also “declares the merit of this [Christ’s kingship], and this merit was because Christ, according to His humanity, like any just person, placed His hope in nothing but God.”⁶³ Thus, the merit of the Kingship is here linked to the Humanity of Christ,

57 “Sed lex vetus hoc faciebat imperfecte, lex nova perfecte: quia lex vetus cohibet per poenas temporales, quae coercent manum; sed lex nova cohibet per poenas aeternas, quae coercent cor.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 19 (18), n.5.

58 “... exponitur de Christo qui est rex, et de David qui fuit eius figura; et ideo de utroque potest exponi, de Christo secundum veritatem, de David secundum figuram.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 21 (20), n.1.

59 “... quando vicit diabolum, et mortem morte sua; et quando fecit miracula, quando ascendit in caelum.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 21 (20), n.1.

60 “... de divinitate: quia *regnum suum non est de hoc mundo*.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 21 (20), n.3.

61 “Vel corona de lapide pretioso sunt Apostoli: qui dicuntur lapides pretiosi propter pretiositatem doctrinae.” *Commentary on Psalms* 21 (20), n.3.

62 “Vel potest dici hoc de quolibet sancto: quia corona, sive merces, est ipse Deus” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 21 (20), n.3.

63 “... hic autem meritum huius declarat, et hoc meritum est, quia Christus secundum quod homo, et quilibet iustus non ponit nisi in Deo spem suam.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 21 (20), n.5.

not just the Divinity.

The final part of Psalm 24 (23) speaks of “the King of glory” and, in Aquinas’ translation, renders 24:7a and 24:9a as “Lift up your gates, you princes.”⁶⁴ This provides us with another point where Thomas defines elements of kingship, commenting on Ps. 24:8b.

Any king appears glorious for three reasons. Because he acquires greatness through force, hence he says *Strong*. ... Second, on account of power, and this is shown when he says *the mighty Lord*, because He is most potent in domination. ... Third, that he be good in battle; hence he says, *The Lord, mighty in battle*, in which he conquers death and the devil in all ways.⁶⁵

The ‘princes’ are understood as the denizens of the spiritual realm; Thomas favors the reading that understands this portion as referring to two groups, first the demons and then the unfallen angels.

Psalm 26 (25): Sharing in the Kingship

Another passing reference to the kingdom is made in the introduction to Psalm 26 (25), which is titled “To the End. Psalms before he was anointed.”⁶⁶ The anointing, as with so many other elements in the Psalms, is referred to David, to Christ, and to Christ’s members.

And this anointing is drawn down on to us. ... Therefore first we are anointed with the oil of priesthood as a figure of the future kingdom; for we will be kings and free. And because we yet suffer enemies, afterwards we will be anointed with actual glory in two ways, namely with the robe of glory of the soul and the body.⁶⁷

64 “Attollite portas principes vestras”, *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 24 (23), n.1.

65 “Aliquis rex apparet gloriosus ex tribus. Quia acquirit primo per robur magna; unde dicit, fortis: Prov. 12: Manus fortissima dominabitur: ... Secundo propter potestatem; et hanc ostendit, cum dicit, Dominus potens, quia potentissimus est ad dominandum: Tertio, quod sit bonus praeliator; unde dicit: Dominus potens in praelio, quo contra mortem et diabolum vicit in omnibus.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 24 (23), n.5.

66 “In finem Psalmus priusquam liniretur.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 26 (25), n.1.

67 “Et haec unctio derivatur usque ad nos ... Primo ergo ungemur sacerdotali unctione in figura futuri regni: erimus enim reges et liberi. Et quia adhuc patimur hostes, postea ungemur dupliciter actuali gloria, scilicet stola gloriae animae et corporis.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 26 (25), n.1.

Psalm 33 (32): The Nature of Worldly Kingship

Psalm 33 (32) gives us another bit of Thomas' understanding of kingship, where he says, in reference to 33:16, "worldly power is threefold: one which consists in a multitude of subjects, another in strength of body, and another in external riches ... And the first is the primacy of power, and this is kingship [*regia*]."⁶⁸

Psalms 42-51 (41-50): Prayers for the Kingdom

The introduction to Ps. 42-51 (41-50 in the Vulgate) in Thomas' commentary describes these psalms as a set "in which [David] speaks specifically of things which pertain to the kingdom. And he prays in these ten for divine help against the enemies of his kingdom. And these are thus referred in a mystical sense, to the just man who prays against those who oppose the kingdom of the Church."⁶⁹

The division of these ten psalms is such that it would almost appear that Thomas is forcing them into the 'five sets of ten' structure that he lays out, although a link is present or at least established. The first nine "make petition for the state of the kingdom"⁷⁰; Psalm 50, by contrast, "seeks pardon for sin, because the kingdom seems to be troubled by sin."⁷¹ Of that first set, "first, it sets out petitions against the enemies of the kingdom; secondly, it gives audible thanks for the glory of the kingdom, at [*my heart*] *has brought forth*."⁷² The Christological and ecclesiological interpretations of the Psalms continue in this set; the "sons of Korah" are

68 "... potestas saecularis est triplex: una quae consistit in multitudine subditorum, alia in robore corporis, et alia in divitiis exterioribus; ... Et primo de prima potestate, et haec est regia" *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 33 (32) n.15.

69 "... in qua loquitur specialiter de his quae pertinent ad regnum. Et petit in ista deca contra impugnatores regni auxilium divinum. Et ut ad mysterium referatur, petit justus homo contra illos qui regnum Ecclesiae impugnant." *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 42 (41), n.1.

70 "... format petitionem pro statu regni," *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 42 (41), n.1.

71 "... secundo, quia regnum videtur esse turbatum per peccatum, ideo petit veniam pro peccato" *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 42 (41), n.1.

72 "Primo proponit petitionem contra hostes regni; secundo exauditus gratias agit de gloria regni, ibi (Psal. 44), *eructavit*." *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 42 (41), n.1.

understood allegorically based on the premise that “Korah is interpreted as Calvary. Hence, they are called *sons of Korah* who suffer mockery because of the Cross.”⁷³

Psalms 42-44 (41-43): Prayers for the Members of the Church

Under this reading, Psalm 42 (41) is allegorically related to catechumens desiring baptism and initiation into the Christian faith, as well as the state of the Church wandering here on earth. Similarly, Psalm 43 (42):3b is applied to entering into “the present Church or the heavenly Church.”⁷⁴ The commentary on 44 (43): 4, *Thou art my king and my God* speaks of “what pertains to the care of man, such as this: where it says *my king*, who defends and governs, *and my God*, who provides for me.”⁷⁵ This Psalm speaks of hope for God’s help against enemies, their current sufferings, and a plea for divine assistance. The allegorical application is to the suffering of the martyrs. One interesting point is how these Psalms, like the others in this block, connect the Kingdom explicitly to the Church on Earth. While that connection is not at all alien to Thomas’ thought, it is one of the less emphasized elements of the Kingdom in his Gospel commentaries.

Psalm 45 (44): The Glory of the Kingdom

Psalm 45 (44) begins the group of Psalms which “sets forth the glory of the king and kingdom, from divine blessing,”⁷⁶ with this particular Psalm “declaring the glory of the king and the magnificence of his kingdom.”⁷⁷ This Psalm is a ‘nuptial Psalm’, “so therefore, the material of this Psalm is about a certain spouseship of Christ and the Church, which was first initiated

73 “Core interpretatur Calvaria. Unde illi dicuntur filii Core qui patiuntur irrisiōem propter crucem.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 42 (41), n.1.

74 “ecclesia praesens designatur, vel ecclesia caelestis.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 43 (42), n.2.

75 “etiam pertinet cura hominis sicut tunc: unde dicit: rex meus, qui defendis et gubernas: et Deus meus, qui provides mihi.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 44 (43), n.2.

76 “proponit gloriam regis et regni, ex divino beneficio.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.1.

77 “proponit gloriam regis et magnificentiam regni.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.1.

when the Son of God united human nature to himself in the womb of the Virgin.”⁷⁸ According to legend, Thomas commented on the Song of Solomon on his deathbed; did he perhaps draw on his work on this Psalm, one of the last he commented on?

The Psalm is divided into three parts—a prologue, a portion which “sets forth the commendation of the male spouse [*sponsi*] ... third, it sets forth the commendation of the female spouse [*sponsae*].”⁷⁹ The Psalmist “commends Christ for His similarity to a king, namely David, in four things: namely for agreeability or kindness [*gratiositate*], for strength in war, for power in judgment, and for a multitude of charms [*deliciarum*].”⁸⁰ These four qualities are described in vs. 2, 3-5, 6-7, and 8-9.⁸¹

The second part, speaking of Christ’s power in war, contains the statement that “the sword of Christ is His teaching,”⁸² which connects to the emphasis on Christ’s teaching and its role as establishment of the king and war against the Devil. The war as establishment of the kingdom is affirmed when Thomas says that the end to which he proceeds (cf. 45:4) is the kingdom, “His end is his kingdom; Ps. 46, *God will reign over all the nations*. His end is that he reign in the hearts of all by faith; Luke 1, *and He will rule over the house of Jacob*. And thus it is said, *and reign*. The cause of his procession is on account of the truth, and this is either the dispositive cause or the final cause.”⁸³ This is connected to the prosperity of the kingdom, “for a

78 “Est ergo materia hujus Psalmi de quibusdam sponsalibus Christi et Ecclesiae, quae quidem primo initiata fuerunt quando filius Dei univit sibi naturam humanam in utero virginali.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.1.

79 “... ponitur commendatio sponsi,... Tertio ponitur commendatio sponsae.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.1.

80 “... commendat Christum secundum similitudinem regis, scilicet David, a quatuor: scilicet a gratiositate, a bellica virtute, a judiciaria potestate, et a deliciarum multitudine.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.2.

81 Verse divisions based on the RSV and Thomas’ use of terms; for the Vulgate, increase the verse numbers by 1.

82 “Gladius Christi est doctrina eius.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.3.

83 “Finis ejus regnum ejus: Psalm. 46: *regnabit Deus super omnes gentes*. Finis ejus quod regnet per fidem in cordibus omnium: Luc. 1: et regnabit in domo Jacob. Et ideo dicit, et regna. Causa processus est propter veritatem. Et hoc vel causa dispositiva, vel finalis.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.4.

king to be able to prosper in his work, he ought to have three things: namely truth, gentleness and justice. And these three were made to succeed in Christ; namely, truth in teaching, gentleness in suffering, and justice in acting.”⁸⁴

The section on judgment gives us a refresher on Thomas’ political philosophy: “It is necessary that the king judge offenses, for, as the Philosopher said, if the souls of men had been designed by God that they should obey parental warnings, kings and judges would be not be necessary; hence, so that the tumultuous might be corrected, kings are necessary, hence they hold the scepter.”⁸⁵ However, the purpose of the scepter, as mentioned above,⁸⁶ is “not that the people be punished, but that they be made virtuous, and this is the end of politics, and this is fitting to Christ.”⁸⁷

The last Christological portion of the Psalm speaks of “the delights of the king, and it describes these delights in four ways: from his clothing, his dwelling place, his attendant and his wife.”⁸⁸ The ‘clothing’ of Christ “can be understood in two ways: namely His body ... also, the vestments of Christ are all the saints.”⁸⁹ Similarly, “the house signifies the faithful.”⁹⁰ Third, there are the “daughters of kings” spoken of in v. 9, which can be interpreted literally: “the daughters of worldly kings delight us for the honor of Christ, because they dedicated themselves

84 “... ad hoc ut rex possit prosperari in negotiis suis, debet habere tria: scilicet veritatem, mansuetudinem, et justitiam. Et ista tria fecerunt prosperari Christum: quia fuit verax in docendo, mansuetus in patiendo, justus in operando.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.4.

85 “Necesse enim est quod rex cohibeat delicta: quia, ut philosophus dicit, si animi hominum essent a Deo ordinati quod obedirent monitioni paternae, non essent necessarii reges et iudices: unde ut inquieti corrigantur, necessarii sunt reges, unde habent sceptrum.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.5.

86 See Chapter 2, on Matthew 3.

87 “... ut non exorient, sed ut faciant virtuosos: et haec est finis politicae, et hoc convenit Christo.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.5.

88 “... de deliciis regis, et describit has delicias ex quatuor: ex vestitu, ex habitaculo, ex ministerio, et ex conjugio.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.6.

89 “... possunt esse duplicia: scilicet corpus ejus ... Item vestimentum Christi sunt sancti omnes.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.6.

90 “Domus signat fideles.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.6.

to Christ, and died for Christ, and this, *in your honor*, that is, to your honor, as it were, namely, not only of one king, but indeed the daughters serve Christ the King.”⁹¹ Alternatively, the kings can be understood as the Apostles or teachers, in which case the daughters are “the souls of the faithful ... [or] the faithful Christian people.”⁹²

The last portion of the Christological part is where “he is praised on account of his spouse,”⁹³ and “the spouse of Christ is the Church; the spouse of the king is called the queen ... and this queen is the Church.”⁹⁴ This spouse “is described in four ways: namely, regarding her presentation to her spouse, her dignity, her glory, and her ornamentation.”⁹⁵ The presentation appears to be covered by the mention of the queen itself, and similarly “her dignity is that she is queen. She stands always cleaving and conjoined to God.”⁹⁶ The glory is that she stands at the king’s right hand; that is, she cleaves to spiritual things.⁹⁷ The ornamentation is *in clothing of gold*. This is, “according to our letter, the twofold vestments of the Church. One is the teaching of the two testaments ... and these vestments are not only gold, but of gold [*deauratus*], which is the shining of the divine wisdom, which this teaching is filled with.”⁹⁸ Another explanation is that “it could be referred to the diverse types of languages, or the more profound way of

91 “Filiae regum mundanorum delectant nos ad honorem Christi, quia dedicaverunt se Christo, et mortuae sunt pro Christo, et hoc, in honore tuo, idest ad tuum honorem: quasi scilicet non solum unius regis, sed etiam filiae regum serviunt Christo.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.6.

92 “... filii eorum sunt animae fideles. ... Filiae eorum sunt populus Christianus et fidelis.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.6.

93 “... autem laudat eum dum ex sponsa.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.7.

94 “Sponsa Christi est Ecclesia; sponsae regis dicuntur reginae: ... Et haec regina est Ecclesia” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.7.

95 “... quam describit ex quatuor: scilicet quantum ad sponsi praesentiam, quantum ad dignitatem, quantum ad gloriam, et quantum ad ornatum.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.7.

96 “Dignitas ejus est, quod est regina. Haec astitit semper inhaerens Deo et conjuncta.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.7.

97 Recall the use of the ‘right hand’ to refer to spiritual things in the commentary on Salome’s request in Matthew 20, above, Chapter 2.

98 “... secundum nostram litteram est duplex vestimentum Ecclesiae. Unum est doctrina duorum testamentorum. ... Et iste vestitus non est aurum solum, sed deauratus, quia est refulgens divina sapientia, qua haec doctrina est plena.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.7.

wisdom,”⁹⁹ or to the acts of virtue, with gold signifying charity. Finally, we get a Mariological dimension: “And it is possible to exposit all of this about the Blessed Virgin, who is queen and mother of the king, who stands above all choirs in garments of gold, that is of the gold of divinity, not that she is God, but because she is the Mother of God.”¹⁰⁰

Moving to the part of the Psalm addressed directly to the queen, Aquinas continues the division into fours: “the spouse is commended in a fourfold way: namely, for beauty, for the excellence of glory ... for her society ... and for her offspring.”¹⁰¹ The spouse is identified as “the future Church, called daughter for two reasons.”¹⁰² In one way, if the Psalm is being spoken by David, “just as, insofar as we are joined to Christ the son of Abraham, we are children of Abraham; so too are we children of David, whose son is Christ.”¹⁰³ In another, if spoken “in the person of the Apostles, from this we have been born into Jesus Christ through the Church.”¹⁰⁴

Verse 11, “the king will desire your beauty”, is where the Psalm “promises to this sponse the graciousness of the king. First, from the king, and this is love. Second, from the people, and this is honor.”¹⁰⁵ And the love of the king “ought to be desired, because this king is great in power, in nature and in honor.”¹⁰⁶ The first comes from His lordship, the second from His

99 “Et potest referri quantum ad diversa genera linguarum, vel quantum ad profundiores modos sapientiae. Alius vestitus est operatio virtuosa.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.7.

100 “Et potest exponi totum hoc de beata virgine, quae regina et mater regis est, quae astat super omnes choros in vestitu deaurato, id est deaurata divinitate: non quod sit Deus, sed quia est mater Dei.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.7.

101 “... commendatur sponsa quadrupliciter: scilicet a decore, ab excellentia gloriae.... A societate.... Et a prole.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.8.

102 “Vocat futuram Ecclesiam filiam duplici ratione.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.8.

103 “... quia sicut in quantum adhaeremus Christo filio Abrahae, sumus filii Abrahae; ita et filii David cujus filius est Christus.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.8.

104 “... in persona apostolorum, ex quibus sumus propagati in Christo Jesu per Evangelium.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.8.

105 “... promittit ipsi sponsae gratiositatem regis. Primo, a rege; et hoc est amoris. Secundo, a populo; et hoc est honoris” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.8.

106 “... est desiderandum, quia iste rex est magnus in potestate, in natura, in honore.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.8.

divinity, and the third, “because those far away, namely, all the people of the world, adore Him.”¹⁰⁷ The glory of the queen is both internal—based on purity of conscience, justice, and hope of eternal life—and external. The latter, demonstrated by the “gold-woven robes,” is the understanding of Church doctrine. “Therefore in the wisdom of sacred doctrine, which is designated by gold, is great glory.”¹⁰⁸

The society of the Church, as she and her companions are led into “the palace of the king” (v. 15), is her connection to Christ, “because no one comes or is led to Christ unless he follows the doctrine of the Church.”¹⁰⁹ The Mariological interpretation is also mentioned here.

And the sons of the spouse are, of course, likewise understood in a manner centered on the Church. “About them four things are set forth: the origin, dignity, office and fruit of the sons. ... The sons of the primitive Church are the apostles and their successors. The sons are said to be born of the Church through the teaching of Christ her spouse, and others through the teaching of the Apostles, and other sons of the preaching of others.”¹¹⁰ This respect for the Apostles carries through into the section on dignity, where “they are called princes because they first received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Hence just as no woman can be compared to the Blessed Virgin, so no one can be compared to or equal the Apostles in holiness. Hence they are called princes because they were and are governing the Church.”¹¹¹ The office is that of apostle, “that is to proclaim the

107 “... quia adorabunt eum scilicet remoti, et omnes populi totius mundi.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.8.

108 “Ergo in doctrina divinae sapientiae, quae per aurum designatur, est magna gloria.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.9.

109 “... quia nullus veniet nec adducetur ad Christum nisi sequatur doctrinam Ecclesiae” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.10.

110 “Circa quam quatuor ponit: scilicet prolis originem, dignitatem, officium et fructum. ... Filii Ecclesiae primitivae sunt apostoli et eorum successores. Filii dicuntur esse nati Ecclesiae per doctrinam Christi sponsi ejus, et alii per doctrinam apostolorum, et alii filii aliorum praedicantium. Et ideo non est inconveniens quod idem sint filii et patres: quia apostoli ipsi sunt patres eorum quos converterunt.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.11.

111 “... principes dicuntur, quia primi dona spiritus sancti acceperunt. ... Unde sicut beatae virgini nulla mulier comparatur, ita nec aliquis sanctus potest apostolis comparari nec adaequari. Item dicuntur principes, quia fuerunt et sunt Ecclesias gubernantes.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.11.

name of God,”¹¹² (drawing on v. 17a, *I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations*) and the fruit is that “all people will acknowledge you, Christ.”¹¹³ The centrality of the Apostles here highlights two of the four key dimensions of the Kingdom that we saw in Matthew. The obvious one is the ecclesiological, but Thomas also points out their preaching, which connects the evangelical dimension to this Psalm. This is, of course, no surprise, since for Thomas, the Church is very strongly grounded in and oriented to the preaching of the Gospel.

Psalm 47 (46): The Greatness of the King

Psalm 47 (46):2b describes the Lord as “a great king over all the earth;” Aquinas explains that “He is great by the universality of His dominion, because His kingdom is over all ages, and by duration, which is for eternity, and by authority, for He is King over all kings.”¹¹⁴ Further, His greatness is shown by “what things He has done for us, and these are the benefices of God; first in the subjection of others, and second in the gathering of goods.”¹¹⁵ The first refers to v. 3, which “are the words of the Church, whose enemies are subjected to her temporally.”¹¹⁶ They can also be taken as the words of the Apostles, with the ‘enemies’ referring to the Jews. While this might appear to be an anti-Semitic reading, I think it is far more likely to refer to Matthew 19:28 and Luke 22:30, where the Apostles are foretold to judge the tribes of Israel. This is

112 “... quod est praedicare nomen Dei.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.11.

113 “... quia omnes populi confitebuntur tibi Christe.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 45 (44), n.11.

114 “Magnus est universalitate dominii, quia regnum omnium saeculorum. Item duratione, quia in aeternum. Item auctoritate, quia rex omnium regnum.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 47 (46), n.2.

115 “... quae nobis fecit, et haec sunt beneficia Dei. Primo in subiectione aliorum. Secundo in collatione bonorum.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 47 (46), n.2.

116 “Haec sunt verba ecclesiae, cui etiam temporaliter sui inimici subiiciuntur.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 47 (46), n.2. *Temporaliter* could refer either to the state of affairs on Earth or to a limited duration. The Gloss from Augustine that Aquinas cites on this verse, “Quanti enim modo currunt ad ecclesiam nondum Christiani, rogant auxilium ecclesiae, subvenire sibi temporaliter volunt, etsi nobiscum in aeternum regnare adhuc nolunt” is similarly ambiguous, and could refer either to a temporary truce or to those who seek earthly benefit from the Church while ignoring the heavenly goods she offers. The latter reading may be supported by the comments on v.4, below, and would fit with some of the Dominican skepticism of secular clergy that we will see demonstrated in Hugh of St. Cher when we consider his Matthew commentary in Chapter 5.

supported by the third reading Thomas gives to the verse. “Some are converted to the faith, and these are subjected by their own will. Others are not converted, but live as gentiles, and these are subjected underfoot because they will finally be thwarted [*oppressi*] by our judicial power.”¹¹⁷

The gathering of goods is covered by v. 4, where Aquinas says that the Lord chose the inheritance of the just by offering them God Himself—His own inheritance, for “God chooses spiritual goods for Himself”¹¹⁸—instead of temporal goods, which “impious sinners take for the part falling to them.”¹¹⁹

Verse 8, *Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!* are both addressed to Christ, referring to His divinity and His humanity. The Psalmist “first foretells the kingship of Christ over all nations; secondly, over all the princes of the nations. It is as though he says, I say that He is king of all the earth, because, although now king in the whole of Judea, He will rule over all the nations, because all the nations will be converted to God.”¹²⁰

Conclusions on the Psalms

The Psalms commentary is a work of the mature Thomas, and contains rich depths of teaching on the Kingship and Kingdom of Christ, especially through the reading of David as a type of Christ. David's life is used to demonstrate the role of the king as judge and warrior, the relation of law and kingdom and the role of the king as lawgiver and shepherd of the people, and the connection of Christ's Kingship to His Sacred Humanity and the Passion and Resurrection.

117 “Quidam convertuntur ad fidem, et isti subiiciuntur propria voluntate. Alii non convertuntur, sed gentiliter vivunt; et isti subiiciuntur sub pedibus, quia finaliter erunt oppressi sub nostra iudiciaria potestate.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 47 (46), n.2.

118 “Deus autem elegit sibi bona spiritualia.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 47 (46), n.3.

119 “Impii autem peccatores accipiunt pro parte eos contingente temporalia.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 47 (46), n.3.

120 “Et primo praedicat regnum Christi super omnes gentes. Secundo super omnes principes gentium. Quasi dicat, dico quod est rex omnis terrae: quia licet nunc in Iudaea tantum, regnabit tamen super omnes gentes, quia omnes gentes convertentur ad Deum.” *Commentary on Psalms*, Psalm 47 (46), n.4.

Similarly, the kingdom of Israel is identified not only with the Church, but with teaching (which is connected to law and guidance) and to the eschatological Kingdom. The martial dimension of the Kingdom comes through even more clearly here than in Matthew, and Aquinas' reading of Psalm 45 (44), which is especially rich, strengthens the idea of the Kingdom's militant dimension as a matter of preaching, teaching and faith rather than armies and temporal power, as well as emphasizing the glory of sanctity not only in the head, but in shining members such as the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles.

However, Psalm 45 and 47's references to subjugation of the Church's enemies and ruling over all nations introduces a caveat to this fact.¹²¹ In conjunction with what he says about king's relationship to the Church in the commentary on Psalm 4, *De Regno* and elsewhere, we can conclude that Thomas believes in a Church that does not rule directly over the nations, but is not oppressed or opposed by them, and guides them in their mission of making virtuous citizens, just as she herself makes men participants in Christ and thus members of the heavenly Kingdom. This emphasis on participation and conformity to Christ will also show up in the final group of Scripture commentaries we have to consider, as we turn to Thomas' works on the letters of St. Paul.

121 Relations between Church and State were a vexed problem in the Middle Ages, as always, and the relationship between the two was a matter of much discussion. See Chapter 1 for some of Thomas' general thoughts on political authority, as well as Walter Ullman, *A History of Political Thought: The Middle Ages* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1965), 182-5. For examples of other thinkers of the time on this and other subjects, see *Medieval political theory : a reader : the quest for the body politic, 1100-1400*, edited by Cary J. Nederman and Kate Langdon Forhan (London, New York: Routledge, 1993); for general discussion of the topic, see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957) and Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church & State: 1050-1300* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964); see pp. 165-71 of the latter for a discussion of Thomas' treatment of the subject.

Commentaries on the Pauline Letters

According to Torrell, the most recent research places the lectures on the Pauline letters as contemporary with the lectures on the Psalter, in the last year of Thomas' life, and thus following the Gospel commentaries just as the letters follow the Gospels in the canon of Scripture. This is most certain concerning the commentary on Romans; the other commentaries are less clear, especially since 1 Corinthians 7:10-10:33 appears to be lost to us.¹²² If they do not date from the Neapolitan period, the most likely alternative seems to be the Roman period (1265-68).¹²³ In either case, they are either roughly contemporary with the Gospel commentaries or shortly after them.

Thomas opens the *Commentary on Romans* with a survey of the Pauline corpus as a whole, laying out his understanding of each letter's purpose.

For he wrote fourteen letters, of which nine instructed the Church of the Gentiles, four to the prelates and princes of the Church (that is, kings), and one to the people of Israel, namely, the one to the Hebrews.¹²⁴

Thomas associates these with the Body of Christ—the Head (Christ, treated in the Epistle to the Hebrews), the chief members (prelates), and the overall members. However, the analogy can also be drawn to the Kingdom of God, with the King, the chief ministers, and the general population. Aquinas goes on to speak of the letters to the Gentiles as addressed to the Mystical Body. The epistles to the Romans, Corinthians and Galatians deal with grace and the sacraments, while the epistles to the other churches speak of the founding, consolidation and protection of the

¹²² See Torrell, I.250-55. For studies on the Pauline letters, see various essays in *Aquinas on Scripture*.

¹²³ Torrell, I.255.

¹²⁴ “Scripsit enim quatuordecim epistolas quarum novem instruunt ecclesiam gentium; quatuor praelatos et principes Ecclesiae, id est reges; una populum Israel, scilicet quae est ad Hebraeos.” St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans* (hereafter *Commentary on Romans*), translated by F.R. Larcher, OP, edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), Preface ¶11, 4.

Church in unity. 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus describe the spiritual government of the Church, while Philemon is addressed to temporal lords. These letters deserve more attention for the purpose of understanding Thomas' soteriology and ecclesiology, but here, we will limit our attention to references to the Kingdom of God.

Commentary on Romans

The *Commentary on Romans* is at present the most extensively studied of Thomas' Pauline commentaries,¹²⁵ and both internal evidence and external references suggest it is the first of them to be written.¹²⁶

Romans 13: "Subject to the Higher Powers"

The primary subject of interest for our purposes comes near the end, as Paul turns from matters of 'high theology' to practical guidelines for Christian life. Romans 13:1-7 contains St. Paul's admonition to Christians to "be subject to the higher powers"; that is, governing authority. Aquinas uses this passage to support the idea that total freedom in Christ is eschatological; "in the interim, while we bear corruptible flesh, it is fitting that we are subject to rulers in the flesh."¹²⁷ This is part of the order of justice, and Paul "says indefinitely higher powers, that we might subject ourselves to them on account of the height of their office, even if they should be evil."¹²⁸

125 For discussion of the textual scholarship, see Torrell, I.250-55. For studies of Thomas as exegete, see the collection of essays *Reading Romans with St. Thomas Aquinas*, edited by Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais (Washington DC: CUA Press, 2012). For an example of a study on a specific topic, and Aquinas brought into dialogue with another theologian, see Charles Raith II, *Aquinas and Calvin on Romans: God's Justification and our Participation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

126 See Torrell, I.250-55 and the *Commentary on Romans*, Preface, 1-5.

127 "Interim autem dum corruptibilem carnem gerimus, oportet nos dominis carnalibus subiacere." *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1017, 348.

128 "Dicit autem indefinite *potestabius sublimioribus*, ut ratione sublimitatis officii eis subiiciamur, etiam si sint mali." *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1018, 348.

When considering the possibility of royal power opposed to God, as mentioned in Hosea 8:4, Aquinas explains that “royal power, or that of any other dignity, can be considered in three ways. In one way, with regard to the power itself, and this is of God, *by whom kings reign*, as it says in Prov. 8:15.”¹²⁹ The second way is in regard to how it is obtained; “and power is sometimes from God, namely when someone attains to power rightly ... and sometimes indeed not from God but from a perverse appetite of man, who obtains power by ambition or in some other illicit way.”¹³⁰ The third way is in how it is used, which similarly can be of God or not, depending on whether the usage conforms to divine justice. Thomas explicitly connects the political theory here with his metaphysics and moral theology:

It is asked whether the power to sin is also from God. To this it must be said that the very power by which one sins is from God. For it is the same power by which one sins and by which one does good, but that which is ordered to the good is from God, while that which is ordered to sinning is from a defect in the creature, insofar as it is from nothingness.¹³¹

This supports his conclusion that “if the power of princes, insofar as it is, is from God, and nothing from God is without order, it follows that this order, by which the inferiors are subject to the powers of the superior, is from God.”¹³² This reinforces the idea that the Kingdom of God is no threat to earthly kingdoms, at least insofar as they are properly ordered. The inherent assumption here is that earthly kingdoms *can* be properly ordered, at least to some

129 “... regia poteestas, vel cuiuscumque alterius dignitatis potest considerari quantum ad tria. Uno quidem modo quantum ad ipsam potestatem, et sic est a Deo, *per quem reges regnant*, ut dicitur Prov. VIII, 15.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1022, 349.

130 “... et sic quandoque potestas est a Deo: quando scilicet aliquis ordinate potestatem adipiscitur ... Quandoque vero non est a Deo sed ex perverso hominis appetitu, qui per ambitionem, vel quocumque alio illicito modo potestatem adipiscitur.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1022, 349.

131 “Dubitatur etiam de potestate peccandi, utrum sit a Deo. Ad quod dicendum est quod ipsa potentia qua peccatur, a Deo est. Eadem enim potentia est qua peccatur et qua recte agitur: sed quod in bonum ordinetur, a Deo est; quod autem ordinetur ad peccandum, est ex defectu creature, in quantum est ex nihilo.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1023, 349.

132 “Si enim potestas principum, in quantum talis est, a Deo est, et nihil est a Deo sine ordine, consequens est, quod etiam ordo, quo inferiores potestatibus superioribus subiiciuntur, sit a Deo.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1025, 350.

degree.

This is supported when Thomas entertains an objection to his reading of this passage. “But against this, it seems that the the apostles and martyrs resisted princes and authorities, and from this received from God not damnation but reward.”¹³³ In response, Thomas points out that those rulers had been in fact defying their own superior—namely, God—and encouraging those subject to them to do the same. Since “even in human things a proconsul ought not be obeyed against an emperor, nor a bailiff against a king,”¹³⁴ the apostolic disobedience to human authorities was part of proper order.

Thomas also repeats and expands on his theory of why human rulers were established: “Princes were instituted for this reason, that those who are not moved by love of virtue to avoiding evil and doing good, might be constrained by fear of punishment.”¹³⁵ The fear of punishment does not apply to the good who suffer under evil rulers, though; “for even if they at times unjustly persecute those doing good, those who do good have no reason to fear, for if they endure patiently, it turns to their good.”¹³⁶ Rulership is also established that “it might lead men to good through reward,”¹³⁷ and similarly, even evil rulership fills this role, for “their unjust persecution, when endured patiently by the good, leads to glory.”¹³⁸

All of this pertains to the proper order of the universe, where earthly rulers are “under the

133 “Sed contra hoc videtur esse quod apostoli et martyres principibus et potestatibus restiterunt et ex hoc non damnationem a Deo sed praemium acquisiverunt.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1028, 350.

134 “... etiam in rebus humanis ut proconsuli non obediatur contra imperatorem, nec balivo contra regem.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1028, 350.

135 “Ad hoc enim sunt instituendi principes, ut illi qui amore virtutis non provocantur ad vitandum malum et faciendum bonum, cogantur ad hoc timore poenae.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1030, 351.

136 “... quia et si interdum iniuste persequuntur bene operantes, non tamen illi qui bene operantur, causam habent timendi, quia hoc ipsum, si patienter sustinent, in eorum bonum cedit.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1030, 351.

137 “... etiam ut ad bonum per praemia alliciant,” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1033, 352.

138 “... quorum iniustam persecutionem, dum boni patienter sustinent, laudantur.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1033, 352. The Latin may be a little ambiguous, but the reference to James 5:11 that follows makes it clear that it is the steadfastness of the confessors, not the persecutors themselves, who are being praised.

rulership of God, who is like a supreme prince, them being ordained as His ministers.”¹³⁹

Ministers work for the same ends as their superior, “and just as God acts for the good of those who do good, so do princes, if they implement their ministry rightly.”¹⁴⁰ Wicked rulers serve as God’s unwitting ministers for inflicting punishment or for the profit of good men.

The relation between secular and spiritual ministers is addressed in a section where Aquinas deals with the legitimacy of taxation. “Clerics are free from this debt [of taxation] by a privilege of the princes, which has a certain natural equity,”¹⁴¹ since it has precedent even among the Gentiles. The reason for the equity is “because just as kings have care for the public good in temporal goods, so do the ministers of God in spiritual goods, and so by this ministry to God in spiritual things, they recompense the king who labors for their peace.”¹⁴²

Romans 14: “Justice and Peace and Joy”

Thomas also addresses the Kingdom of Heaven directly in the commentary on Romans 14:17, “For the kingdom of God is not food and drink; but justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Viviano identifies this verse as “the closest the Bible ever comes to a definition”¹⁴³ of the Kingdom of God, although Thomas understands it in a more internal way than Viviano would favor: “Here what is called the Kingdom of God is that by which God reigns in us and through which we attain to His kingdom.”¹⁴⁴ This supports and expands on the derivative meanings of the

139 “Sunt enim sub regimine Dei, quasi supremi principis, tamquam ministri ordinati.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1034, 352.

140 “Et ideo sicut Deus operatur in bonum his qui bonum agunt, ita et principes si recte ministerium suum impleant.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1034, 352.

141 “Ab hoc tamen debito liberi sunt clerici ex privilegio principum, quod quidem aequitatem naturalem habet.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1040, 354.

142 “... quia sicut reges sollicitudinem habent de bono publico in bonis temporalibus, ita ministri Dei in spiritualibus, et sic per hoc quod Deo in spiritualibus ministrant, recompensant regi quod pro eorum pace laborat.” *Commentary on Romans* C.13 L.1 ¶1040, 354.

143 Viviano, *Kingdom of God in History*, 18.

144 “Regnum autem Dei dicitur hic id per quod Deus regnat in nobis et per quod ad regnum ipsius pervenimus.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1127, 384.

Kingdom that we saw in the *Commentary on Matthew*, where those things which lead us to the eschatological Kingdom—grace, Scripture, the Church—are taken as the Kingdom itself, albeit in a derivative sense. The meaning here corresponds most closely to the first sense from Matthew 3, that of interior grace, for “we are conjoined and subjected to God by the interior intellect and affections ... and thus the Kingdom of God is principally considered according to things internal to man, and not according to external things.”¹⁴⁵ Food and drink, therefore, only relate to the Kingdom “insofar as the affections of man are ordered or disordered concerning them.”¹⁴⁶ As Mitchell points out, “the kingdom pertains principally to what is interior to man and to what is exterior only insofar as it be ordered to the interior.”¹⁴⁷

Those interior things in which the kingdom exists are, as the Apostle says, “justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Justice relates to “external works, by which a man renders to each person what is his, and the intention of doing such works.”¹⁴⁸ For Thomas, justice concerns both rendering to God what is His due, and doing right by others—a manifestation of the two great commandments, and a further development of the concern with the salvation or well-being of others.¹⁴⁹

Justice leads to peace, since “peace is most disturbed when one man does not offer another what he ought to give him.”¹⁵⁰ If peace is the effect, joy is the animating spirit of justice;

145 “Deo autem coniungimur et subdimur per interiorem intellectum, et affectum ... Et inde est quod regnum Dei principaliter consideratur secundum interiora hominis, non secundum exteriora.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1127, 384-5.

146 “...inquantum affectus hominis circa hoc ordinatur, vel deordinatur.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1127, 385.

147 Mitchell, 54.

148 “... ad exteriora opera, quibus homo unicuique reddit quod suum est et ad voluntatem huiusmodi opera faciendi.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1128, 385.

149 A full study of justice in Thomas is, of course, outside the scope of this work, but it bears noting that the extensive section on justice in the *Secunda Secundae* includes virtues and sins related to human beings *and* to God.

150 “... pax maxime perturbatur, quod unus homo non exhibet alteri quod ei debet.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1128, 385.

Aquinas cites both Aristotle and the Psalms to the effect that joy in doing just acts is necessary to be truly just. “The cause of this joy is expressed by saying *in the Holy Spirit*. For it is the Holy Spirit who diffuses the love of God in us.”¹⁵¹ Thomas concludes by connecting this present form of the kingdom to the eschatological Kingdom: “These three things touched on here are possessed imperfectly in this life, perfectly when the saints will possess the kingdom of God prepared for them ... There, there will be perfect justice without any sin ... There, there will be peace without any disturbance of fear.”¹⁵²

The following verse is exegeted in support of this reading. “That man seems to belong to the kingdom of God who pleases God and is praised by holy men; but this pertains to him in whom are found justice, peace and joy; therefore the kingdom of God is in these.”¹⁵³ As Romans 14:18 says, the man who does these things “*serves Christ*, who is king of this kingdom ... *pleases God*, who is the author of this kingdom ... *and is praised by men*, that is, approved by those who participate in this kingdom.”¹⁵⁴ The Kingdom contains both God and men, and, as noted in the discussion on justice, involves service and honor to both God and men—and of course, since the King is identified with the Kingdom at several points in Thomas' work, this is most perfectly summarized in the God-Man Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

151 “Causam autem huius gaudii exprimit dicens *in Spiritu Sancto*. Est enim Spiritus Sanctus quo caritas Dei diffunditur in nobis.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1128, 385.

152 “Haec autem tria quae hic tanguntur, imperfecte quidem in hac vita habentur, perfecte autem quando sancti possidebunt regnum Dei sibi paratum ... Ibi erit perfecta iustitia absque omni peccato ... Ibi erit pax absque omni perturbatione timoris.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1128, 385-6.

153 “Ille enim homo videtur ad regnum Dei pertinere, qui placet Deo et a sanctis hominibus approbatur; sed hoc illi contingit in quo invenitur iustitia, pax et gaudium: ergo in his est regnum Dei.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1129, 386.

154 “... *servit Christo*, qui est rex huius regni ... *placet Deo*, qui est huius regni auctor ... *et probatus est hominibus*, id est ab eis approbatur, qui sunt huius regni participes.” *Commentary on Romans*, C.14 L.2 ¶1129, 386.

Commentary on I Corinthians: Faith, Charity and Hope

Paul refers briefly to the Kingdom when criticizing the Corinthians, according to Thomas. “Hence he says *without us you have become kings*, that is, it seems to you that the kingdom pertains to you, not to us. For they had been deceived by pseudo-apostles, so that they believed they alone had the true faith, in which the kingdom of God consists, and that the Apostle and his followers were in error.”¹⁵⁵ This reiterates the doctrinal and Apostolic dimension of the kingdom that we saw in Matthew and Romans, with a strong subtext of proper preaching and teaching as constitutive of the Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10, by contrast, emphasizes the eschatological and spiritual dimension, where Paul warns about those who will not inherit the Kingdom. “[Paul] continues that sins contrary to charity exclude one from the kingdom of God, into which charity alone allows one to enter [*introducitur*].”¹⁵⁶ This continues the emphasis on charity we saw in Romans 14, and as Mitchell points out, this section also connects the Kingdom to the Church “by mention of the sacraments as insufficient of themselves for the future kingdom.”¹⁵⁷

Finally, we have one of the most famous eschatological passages in the Pauline corpus in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28. “The final end [of the resurrected faithful] will not be to live a life of bodily pleasures [*vita corporis et voluptatibus*], as the Jews and Saracens imagine, but that they will join themselves [*inhaeraent*] to God by an immediate vision and happy enjoyment: and this

155 “Unde dicit *sine nobis regnatis*, id est, ita vobis videtur, quod regnum ad vos pertineat, non ad nos. Sic enim erant decepti a pseudo-apostolis, ut crederent se solos habere fidei veritatem, quae in regno Dei consistit, apostolum autem et sequaces eius errare.” *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (Super I Epistolam B. Paulo ad Corinthios lectura)* in St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón, translated by F.R. Larcher, OP, B Mortensen and D. Keating (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), C.4 L.2 ¶206, 79.

156 “Et ideo subdit quod peccata contraria charitati a regno Dei excludunt, in quod sola charitas introducitur.” *Commentary on I Corinthians*, C.6 L.2 ¶285, 108. Cf. *Commentary on Galatians*, C.5 L.5.

157 Mitchell, 54.

is to hand over the kingdom to God the Father.”¹⁵⁸

The kingdom is here identified first with the faithful, whom Christ will bring “before the sight of God, that is of His Creator insofar as He is man, and the Father, insofar as He is God. ... But He will hand this over so that He will not take this from Himself, for indeed, He will reign, one God, with the Father and the Holy Spirit.”¹⁵⁹ A second explanation is that the delivery of the kingdom is associated with the public manifestation of the Father’s reign, “for in Scripture something is said to be done when it first becomes known, and in this way it is made known by Christ.”¹⁶⁰

In either case, the manifestation of the kingdom “shall have brought to nought all principality and power and virtue” (1 Cor 15:24b), which Aquinas says means that “all dominion, whether human or angelic, will have ceased, then we will be immediately under God.”¹⁶¹

How does this work with the following verse, that Christ “must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet”? “It must that said that in some way the enemies of Christ are under his power, but in a twofold way”¹⁶²—either by conversion, as in the case of Paul, or “insofar as Christ does his will, even concerning those who do their will against the will of Christ.”¹⁶³ The future tense, by contrast, refers to when “he will put them under his feet, that is, under the

158 “Et finis huiusmodi non erit, ut vivant vita corporis et voluptatibus, ut Iudaei et Saraceni fingunt; sed quod inhaereant Deo per immediatam visionem et beatam fruitionem: et hoc est tradere regnum Deo et patri.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, C.15 L.3 ¶937, 354.

159 “... ante conspectum Dei, id est Creatoris sui, inquantum est homo, et Patris, inquantum est Deus. ... Sed sic tradet, ut sibi non adimat, imo ipse unus Deus cum Patre et Sancto Spiritu regnabit.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, C.15 L.3 ¶937, 354.

160 “In Scriptura enim tunc dicuntur aliqua fieri, quando primo innotescunt, et huiusmodi innotescencia fit per Christum.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶937, 354.

161 “... cum cessaverit omne Dominium, tam humanum quam angelicum, tunc immediate erimus sub Deo.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶938, 354.

162 “Dicendum quod modo inimici Christi sunt sub potestate eius, sed dupliciter.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶941, 355.

163 “... inquantum Christus facit voluntatem suam, etiam de his qui faciunt hic contra voluntatem Christi.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶941, 355.

humanity of Christ.”¹⁶⁴ The contrast appears to be that the faithful—human and angelic alike—will be directly under God, while the enemies of Christ—probably the fallen angels as well as sinful men—will be subordinate to the humanity of Christ. Given the strong identification of Head and members in Aquinas’ Christology and ecclesiology, it may imply the subordination of all enemies to the whole Body of Christ, which makes it, in another sense, a Kingdom.

The ‘until’ is understood in two ways. First, “as if he says: It is true, that Christ has a kingdom, and although there are some enemies, while they do not do his will, nonetheless he reigns *until he places*, etc.”¹⁶⁵ The other reading takes the until as a cessation—“truly afterwards he will not reign”¹⁶⁶—but reads it as saying that

‘to reign’ [*regnare*] does not mean to have a kingdom, but to advance in reigning and to spread the kingdom, and this, to that degree, is the perfect manifestation of the kingdom of Chris. It is as though he said: the reign of Christ is accomplished by degrees, namely, insofar as it is manifested and made known, *until he has put all his enemies under his feet*, that is, until all enemies acknowledge him to reign.¹⁶⁷

Thus, once Christ has fully manifested the Kingdom, all his enemies will be submitted to him and acknowledge him as Lord. “So, therefore, the subjection of all adversaries is clear, which will be a most perfect subjugation, because even that which is most opposed will be subjected to him.”¹⁶⁸

The General Resurrection demonstrates this victory by the ultimate defeat of death,

164 “... ponet sub pedibus, id est sub humanitate Christi.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶941, 355.

165 “... quasi dicat: verum est, quod Christus habet regnum, et licet sint aliqui inimici, dum non faciunt voluntatem suam, tamen regnat **donec ponat**, et cetera.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶942, 356.

166 “... postea vero non regnabit.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶943, 356.

167 “... regnare non importat regnum habere, sed in regnando proficere et regnum augeri, et hoc quantum ad manifestationem perfectam regni Christi. Quasi dicat: regnum Christi paulatim proficit, inquantum scilicet manifestatur et innotescit, **donec ponat inimicos sub pedibus**, id est quosque omnes inimici regnare eum fateantur.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶943, 356.

168 “Sic ergo patet omnium adversantium subiectio, quae quidem subiectio perfectissima erit, quia etiam illud quod maxime inimicatur, subiicietur sibi.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶944, 356.

“which is most contrary to life.”¹⁶⁹ However, “the end of this resurrection is not in the humanity of Christ, but rather that rational creatures are guided further to the contemplation of divinity, and in this is our beatitude, and our end is God Himself.”¹⁷⁰ He concludes that “the reason for this subjection is *that God may be all in all*, that is that the soul of man rest fully in God, and God alone will be his beatitude. For in a sense, in one there is life, in another virtue and in another glory, but then God will be life and salvation and power, and glory and all things.”¹⁷¹ Thus, the eschatological Kingdom is the perfection of contemplation; the way to contemplation—both earthly contemplation and the handing on of its fruits—are the way to that perfect Kingdom when God will be all in all. Thus, 1 Corinthians’ treatment of the Kingdom, according to Thomas, reflects the famous statement in 1 Corinthians 13:13 about “three things which abide”: the faith that grounds the Kingdom, the charity that makes one a true participant, and the hope that is fulfilled in it.

Commentary on Colossians: Clarifying the Kingdoms

A couple of references to the Kingdom of Heaven in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians merit attention. In discussing the spread of the Gospel throughout the world, in relation to Colossians 1:5, Thomas reports that “some say that the Gospel of Christ is not the Gospel of the Kingdom. But this is false, because the Lord calls it the Gospel of the Kingdom.”¹⁷² This might be a reference to the ancient heresy of Montanism, or to the Joachite

169 “... quae maxime contrariatur vitae,” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶944, 356.

170 “... finem huius resurrectionis non esse in humanitate Christi, sed ulterius perducetur rationalis creature ad contemplationem divinitatis, et in ea est beatitudo nostra, et finis noster ipse Deus est.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶950, 358.

171 “Et ration huius subiectionis est *ut sit Deus omnia in omnibus*, id est ut anima hominis totaliter requiescat in Deo, et solus Deus sit beatitudo. Modo enim in uno est vita et virtus in alio et gloria in alio, sed tunc Deus erit vita et salus et virtus, et gloria et omnia.” *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶950, 358.

172 “Alqui dicunt quod Evangelium Christi non est Evangelium regni. Sed hoc est falsum, quia Dominus dicit hoc

movements that were in vogue at the time and that Thomas so strongly rejected. “[Aquinas] equates its spread [the Gospel of the Kingdom] with the spread of the church. Where the church is, then, there is the teaching of Christ about the kingdom.”¹⁷³

The second reference returns to the theme of the duality of kingdoms that we saw in the Gospels and that recurs in Paul’s epistles: Colossians 1:13. Thomas again identifies the Kingdom with its possessors: “*And has transferred*, etc., that is, that we might be the Kingdom of God. ... And this happens when we are liberated from our sins. ... Or taken literally, that we might follow into eternal life.”¹⁷⁴

Commentaries on I and II Thessalonians: Meriting the Kingdom, Relating Church and Empire

A brief reference to the Kingdom is found by cross-referencing Acts 14:22 to I Thessalonians 3:3, where the tribulations spoken of are described as the means to enter the Kingdom.¹⁷⁵ The same point is made on commenting on II Thessalonians 1:5, where he says that “the saints endure these [tribulations] for two reasons, namely in order to frighten the wicked ... secondly for the augmenting of their merits.”¹⁷⁶ This makes even more sense when we consider it in the light of two factors. First is the Christocentric nature of the Kingdom and the emphasis

Evangelium regni.” *Commentary on Colossians* in *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. by F. R. Larcher, OP, edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), C.1 L.2 ¶14, 77.

173 Mitchell, 56.

174 “*Et transtuli*, etc., id est, ut essemus regnum Dei. ... Et hoc fit quando liberamur a peccato. ... Vel ad litteram, ut consequeremur vitam aeternam.” *Commentary on Colossians* C.1 L.3 ¶26, 82.

175 Cf. *Commentary on I Thessalonians* in *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. by F. R. Larcher, OP, edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), C.3 L.1 ¶60, 173.

176 “Et haec sancti sustinent propter duo, scilicet propter terrorem malorum ... secundo ad augendum meritum.” *Commentary on II Thessalonians* in *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. by F. R. Larcher, OP, edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), C.1 L.1 ¶11, 209.

placed on participation and conformity to Christ; in conjunction with that, consider Thomas' distinctive perspective in the Gospel commentaries and again in the commentary on Hebrews, below, on Christ meriting the Kingdom through His Passion and death on the Christ.

A more intriguing part of the commentary is the section on II Thessalonians 2:3, where the Apostle speaks of “the revolt” that will reveal “the man of sin, the son of perdition”—that is, the Antichrist. The revolt is described in the Gloss as a revolt against the faith or against the Roman Empire—but the latter, while traced to Augustine and perfectly reasonable for a bishop in Roman Africa during the last days of the Western Empire, makes less sense to a mendicant friar writing at the height of medieval European Christendom. Thomas himself asked “But in what way can this be, because the nations have already withdrawn from Roman rule [*Romano imperio*], and yet the Antichrist has not yet come?”¹⁷⁷

Aquinas response is drawn from the works of Pope Leo the Great, and is the answer that

this [either the revolt or the Empire; the Latin is ambiguous] has not ceased, but has been commuted from temporal matters into spiritual matters ... And therefore it must be said that this dissension from the Roman Empire ought to be understood not only temporally, but also spiritually, namely from the Catholic faith of the Roman Church.¹⁷⁸

Although we've seen Thomas make numerous parallels between the Church and the earthly kingdom of Israel throughout his Scripture commentaries, this is one of the only points where he draws a connection between the Church and the Roman Empire. The key point of

177 “Sed quomodo est hoc, quia iamdiu gentes recesserunt a Romano imperio, et tamen necdum venit Antichristus?” *Commentary on II Thessalonians* C.2 L.1 ¶35, 217.

178 “Dicendum est, quod nondum cessavit, sed est commutatum de temporali in spirituale ... Et ideo dicendum est, quod discessio a Romano imperio debet intelligi, non solum a temporali, sed a spirituali, scilicet a fide Catholica Romane Ecclesiae.” *Commentary on II Thessalonians* C.2 L.1 ¶35, 217-18.

connection appears to be the universality of both, since he concludes that “as it was a fitting sign that Christ came when the Roman Empire dominated all, so conversely dissent from it is a sign of Antichrist.”¹⁷⁹

Commentary on I Timothy: Kingly Power

The introduction to I Timothy, and to the Pastoral Epistles as a group, explains how these epistles deal with leadership roles in the Church. “Regarding [rulers], their institution and use must be shown.”¹⁸⁰ The institution is from God, who is the source of authority, the rule for it, and the one who determines how and when they rule.

“The use of their power is also shown, because it is for the restraining of human iniquity. ... Rulers [*rectores legis*] ought to behave three ways towards evil. First, that their hearts hold hatred for it. ... Second, that they forbid it to be done. ... Third, that they punish it being done.”¹⁸¹ Rulers are similarly “useful for three things”¹⁸²--supporting the brethren in power, directing them by wisdom, and punishing the evil with justice, which roughly correspond to the three qualities traditionally appropriated to the three persons of the Trinity.

The commentary itself discusses the kingship of God in the commentary on 1:17, doing so largely by drawing contrasts with earthly kings. “[God's] dominion is the greatest, because he

179 “Est autem hoc conveniens signum, quod sicut Christus venit quando Romanum imperium omnibus dominabatur, ita e converso signum Antichristus est discessio ab eo.” *Commentary on II Thessalonians* C.2 L1. ¶35, 218.

180 “Circa quod videnda est ista instructio et utilitas.” *Commentary on I Timothy*, in *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. by F. R. Larcher, OP, edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), Prologue ¶1, 241.

181 “Item utilitas eorum ostenditur, quia est ad cohibendam nequitiam hominum, ... Rectores legis tripliciter debent se habere ad mala. Primo ut ea corde odio habeant. ... Secundo ut prohibeant ea ne fiant. .. Tertio ut facta puniant.” *Commentary on I Timothy* Prologue ¶1, 241.

182 “Et ad tria est utilis rector.” *Commentary on I Timothy* Prologue ¶1, 241.

rules alone, and has free power, not according to statutes, as political rulers do.”¹⁸³ Similarly, “the power of other rulers, who are many, does not last more than fifty years, but His is of all ages.”¹⁸⁴ While we have seen numerous parallels between earthly and heavenly kingdoms, as well as a strong emphasis on the unlikeness between the two at several key points in the Gospels, this gives us an example of what might be called the *via eminentia* with regard to understanding God’s kingship.

Commentary on II Timothy: A Multifaceted Kingship

The reference to the Kingdom in II Timothy 4:1 provides Aquinas with another opportunity to break down the various ways in which Christ rules.

He rules over all creatures according to his general power; *Matthew 28: All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me*. But he reigns especially and spiritually in the saints, at present through grace, and in the future through glory. These saints are not of this world; *John 18:36 My kingdom is not of this world*. But this kingdom is inchoate here, and will be consummated in the future, when all kingdoms will be subjugated by him, both willing and unwilling.¹⁸⁵

Commentary on Hebrews: The Royal Dignity and the Glory of the Kingdom

The royal dignity of Christ is the defining topic of Aquinas' fourth lecture on Hebrews,

183 “Dominium suum est maximum, quia solus dominatur, et habet liberam potestatem, non secundum statuta, ut politicus.” *Commentary on I Timothy* C.1 L.4 ¶46, 257.

184 “Item alicuius regis potestas, ut plurimum, non ultra quam quinquaginta annis durat, sed iste est omnium *saeculorum*.” *Commentary on I Timothy* C.1 L.4 ¶46, 257.

185 “Regnat quidem secundum potestatem generalem super omnem creaturam. Matth. Ult.: *data est mihi omnis potestas in caelo et in terra*. Sed specialiter et spiritualiter in sanctis regnat in praesenti per gratiam, et in futuro per gloriam. Qui sancti non sunt de hoc mundo. Io. XVIII, 36: *regnum meum non est de hoc mundo*. Sed hoc regnum hic inchoatur, et in futuro consummabitur, quando omnia regna ei subiicientur et volentia, et nolentia.” *Commentary on II Timothy in Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. by F. R. Larcher, OP, edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), C.4 L.1 ¶131, 396.

commenting on Hebrews 1:8-9. The Apostle¹⁸⁶ uses this passage “to prove the royalty of Christ; thus, he does two things. First, he commends this royal dignity of Christ; second, he shows his suitability for that dignity.”¹⁸⁷

The use of throne in this passage is a springboard for Aquinas to combine various elements of Christ's role:

In this [word] is denoted the majesty of the king. For a throne is the seat of a king, while a *cathedra* is that of a teacher, and a *tribunal* is the seat of a judge. All of these are appropriate to Christ, because He is our king ... Likewise, He is our teacher ... therefore a chair is appropriate to him. He is also our judge ... and so a tribunal is fitting for him.¹⁸⁸

The kingdom belongs to Christ both as God, who is by nature supreme over everything, and as Man; in the latter case, “it is fitting to him from the merit of His passion, victory and resurrection.”¹⁸⁹ In both cases, the kingdom is eternal. In the former case, the reason for this is the eternity of the Divine Nature. In the latter, it is for two reasons:

One, because that kingdom is not ordained to the temporal, but to the eternal. ... For indeed, He reigns so that he might direct men to eternal life. However, this is not so of the kingdoms of men, hence their kingdoms end with the present life. Another reason is because the Church, which is His kingdom, will endure to the end of the world, and then Christ will hand over His kingdom to His God and Father to be completed and perfected.¹⁹⁰

This identification of the Church and the Kingdom, though not unheard of, is more

186 Aquinas, though aware of the doubts surrounding Pauline authorship of this epistle, comes down on the affirmative side. See *Commentary on the Letter of Saint Paul to the Hebrews*, translated by F. R. Larcher, OP; edited by J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón (Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012), Prologue, ¶5, 2-3.

187 “... probare regiam dignitatem Christi; ubi duo facit. Primo enim commendat regiam dignitatem ipsius Christi; secundo eius ad illam dignitatem ostendit idoneitatem.” *Commentary on Hebrews* C.1 L.4 ¶59, 29.

188 “In quo denotatur regia maiestas. Est enim *thronus* regis sedes, sed *cathedra* magistri, tribunal autem sedes iudicis. Quae omnia conveniunt Christo, quia ipse est rex noster. ... Ipse est magister ... ideo copetit ei cathedra. Ipse iudex noster ... et ideo congruit sibi tribunal.” *Commentary on Hebrews* C.1 L.4 ¶60, 29.

189 “... convenit sibi ex merito passionis, victoriae, et resurrectionis.” *Commentary on Hebrews* C.1 L.4 ¶60, 29.

190 “Una, quia regnum illud non ordinatur ad temporalia, sed ad aeterna. ... Ad hoc enim regnat, ut homines diriat ad vitam aeternam. Non autem sic est de regno hominum; unde regnum illorum finitur cum vita praesenti. Alia ratio est, quia Ecclesia, quae est regnum eius, durat usque ad finem mundi, et tunc tradet Christus regnum Deo et Patri consummandum et perficiendum.” *Commentary on Hebrews* C.1 L.4 ¶60, 30.

common in the Psalm commentaries and here than in the Gospel commentaries. However, the inchoate nature of the Kingdom in the Church is implicit in that it will not be completed until the end of the world, and in the fact that it is ordained to direct men to eternal life.

The next part of the passage, speaking of the *scepter of justice*, commends the justice and equity of the kingdom. Aquinas returns to the Aristotelian distinction between a tyranny, which exists for the benefit of the ruler, and a kingdom, which is directed towards the benefit of those under the king.¹⁹¹ Thomas makes a distinction between justice and equity.

But it ought to be known that sometimes some rule in the rigor of the law [*in rigore iuris*], such as when things are observed which are just in their own right. However, it can happen that some things which are just in themselves, can, if observed, lead to detrimental effects regarding other things; that therefore it is fitting that the common law be applied to these, and if this is done, then there is an equitable regime.¹⁹²

The Old Testament law was one of rigorous justice, while the “kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of equity and justice, because in it nothing is imposed that is not of sweet observance.”¹⁹³ The goodness of Christ's dominion is confirmed by the next part of the verse, *you have loved justice*. According to Aquinas, “some preserve equity not because of a love of justice, but more because of dread [*timorem*], or glory, or fear [*metum*], and such regimes do not endure.”¹⁹⁴ The Kingdom of Heaven, by contrast, is founded on a pure love of justice, and furthermore, a condemnation of the wicked; hence, *and hated iniquity*.

¹⁹¹ This distinction may have been known even outside of Aristotle; it is found in Hugh of St. Cher, for example, who makes no other use of the Philosopher when dealing with the Kingdom. See Chapter 5, below.

¹⁹² “Sed sciendum est, quod aliquando aliquis regit in riore iuris, sicut quando servat ea quae iusta sunt secundum se. Contingit autem, quod aliquid de se iustum est, quod tamen comparatum ad aliquid de se iustum est, quod tamen omparatum ad aliquid inducit detrimentum si servetur; et ideo oportet, quod ius commune ad hoc applicetur, et si hoc fiat, tunc est regimen aequitatis.” *Commentary on Hebrews* C.1 L.4 ¶61, 30.

¹⁹³ “... regnum Christi est regnum aequitatis et iustitiae, quia in ipso non imponitur nisi suavis observantia.” *Commentary on Hebrews*, C.1 L.4 ¶61, 30.

¹⁹⁴ “Quidam enim servant aequitatem, non tamen propter amorem iustitiae, sed magis propter timorem, vel gloriam, vel metum, et tale regimen non durat.” *Commentary on Hebrews* C.1 L.4 ¶62, 30.

The commentary on Hebrews 1:9b reiterates the concept of Christ being anointed as king, priest and prophet that was cited in Matthew, and extends that anointing to all Christians. In both cases, Aquinas describes the anointing as spiritual, and reiterates that our anointing derives from that of Christ, who was anointed as man, not as God. Indeed, the passage *God, your God* is best taken “as if to say: God has anointed you with God Himself.”¹⁹⁵ A similar note is struck in the commentary on Hebrew 2:7b, *you have crowned him ...* “A crown is given to victors ... for Christ merits this glory and honor by the struggle of his passion.”¹⁹⁶

The passage about the saints conquering kingdoms in Hebrews 11:33 is given both earthly and spiritual meanings. On the earthly level, Aquinas refers it to David and Joshua. “Nevertheless [*nihilominus*], the saints spiritually conquered kingdoms by faith; namely, the kingdom of the devil ... and that of the flesh ... and also the kingdom of the world. ... These were conquered by faith.”¹⁹⁷

The last mention of the kingdom comes in Hebrews 12:28, where Paul speaks of the immovable kingdom promised to believers. “God promises to us heaven and an immovable earth, by which things are designated immovable and sempiternal future goods.”¹⁹⁸ The goods are future, rather than present, “because we receive these things not in reality [*in re*], but in hope of the promise.”¹⁹⁹ Another way of putting it is that

by receiving [*gratiam*] is understood the gift of grace, which we receive in the present as a pledge of eternal glory. And so he says *therefore, receiving an immovable kingdom*, that is future glory, which is promised to us ... For what we hope for, we have, namely grace, which we have received as inchoate glory.

195 “... ut sit sensus: unxit te Deus per seipsum Deum”, *Commentary on Hebrews* C.1 L.4 ¶66, 33.

196 “... corona datur vincenti. ... Christus autem per certamen passionis meruit hanc gloriam et honorem.” *Commentary on Hebrews* C.2 L.2 ¶113, 54.

197 “Nihilominus tamen sancti spiritualiter per fidem vicerunt regna, scilicet regnum diaboli ... Item carnis ... Item regnum mundi. ... Isti autem vincunt per fidem.” *Commentary on Hebrews*, C.11 L.7 ¶633, 273.

198 “Deus nobis repromittit caelum et terram immobilia, per quae designantur bona futura immobilia et sempiterna,” *Commentary on Hebrews*, C.12 L.5 ¶723, 310.

199 “... quia suscipimus etsi non in re, tamen in spe promissionis.” *Commentary on Hebrews*, C.12 L.5 ¶723, 310.

Because if nature does not lack what is needful, so much less does God. And therefore he gives to us the hope of that kingdom, and following that the grace by which we may attain to it.²⁰⁰

Conclusions on the Pauline Letters

One could theoretically reconstruct most of Thomas' doctrine of the Kingdom from just the commentaries on the Pauline letters *or* the Gospels, for many of the same points are repeated in both. However, there are some points stronger in one set of readings than in another. While the Gospels emphasized Christ's preaching and work in establishing the Kingdom, and the centrality of the internal nature, the Pauline letters focus more on the members than on the head, as mentioned in the introduction to the corpus that opens the *Commentary on Romans*, and thus the participation of others in the Kingdom, whether that be contemplative laity, governing prelates, or even secular rulers who wield a certain lesser form of divine authority.

Any tendency towards finding 'theocracy' or Christian utopianism in Aquinas, though, can be undercut by turning to the commentary on Romans 13, where Thomas gives some of his most extensive discussion of the unfulfilled realization of the Kingdom in the present age, and the need for Christians to be subject to temporal authority. Even that subjection has its limits, though, and Thomas sees nothing wrong with a situation in which clerics have special privileges compared to other citizens. In that passage, he makes more explicit the assumption underlying his political theology—the Church and properly ordered kingdoms are both working for the same end, although on different levels and through different means, since the Church works on the

200 "... per *gratiam* intelligitur donum gratiae, quod in praesenti recipimus tamquam pignus aeternae gloriae. Et ideo dicit *itaque suscipientes regnum immobile*, id est futurae gloriae, quod nobis promittitur. ... Quod enim speramus, habemus, scilicet gratiam, quam tamquam quoddam gloriae inchoativum accipimus. Sicut enim natura non deficit in necessariis, multo minus Deus. Et ideo dat nobis spem illius regni, et per consequens gratiam per quam perveniamus." *Commentary on Hebrews*, C.12 L.5 ¶723, 310.

inner man and through grace and moral suasion, while kingdoms are instituted to regulate external behavior by fear of punishment. This could be said to give examples of cataphatic and apophetic theology on the Kingdom, with the discussion in 1 Timothy providing a sample of superlative or emphatic theology.

What is this end? The commentary on Romans 14:17 provides a key insight: “what is called the Kingdom of God is that by which God reigns in us and through which we attain to His kingdom.”²⁰¹ This not only repeats and supports the multifaceted definition of the Kingdom in Matthew 3, but, in conjunction with the theory of earthly kingdoms developed in Romans 13, provides a key as to why some earthly things are called the Kingdom and others, such as the Old Law and the Kingdom of Israel, are only considered to prefigure it and do not share the name of the Kingdom. Thomas makes the point that the Kingdom is predominantly internal and focused on eternal union with God, and in his view, the Old Law and the Kingdom of Israel—and earthly laws and kingdoms in general—were ordered to external and temporal things.²⁰² Those things which are directly ordered to that union, and which contain in themselves the power to lead us to the ultimate Kingdom—the Church and her sacraments and teachings, the inspired Scriptures, and the inner grace that prepares us for glory—can be considered the Kingdom in an inchoate sense, and not simply types of it.

Thomas also roots the Kingdom in the Holy Spirit and charity, a move he also makes in 1 Corinthians. This comes to a point of fullness in the commentary on 1 Corinthians 15. It supports this by highlighting the ultimate end of the General Resurrection, the victory of Christ, and

201 “Regnum autem Dei dicitur hic id per quod Deus regnat in nobis et per quod ad regnum ipsius pervenimus.” *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1127, 384.

202 As noted on Romans 14:17, however, and in continuity with the use of the phrase *salutem aliorum* in the *Commentary on Matthew*, the internal dimension of the Kingdom for Aquinas gives rise to external acts of justice and charity, rather than excluding it.

indeed all of history as our union to God in the Beatific Vision. This focuses the contemplative dimension of the Kingdom, and suggests that the identification of the Kingdom with contemplation mentioned in the *Commentary on Matthew* is meant to indicate that earthly contemplation is a foretaste of the unfiltered, uninterrupted, unending contemplation of the Kingdom in its fullness. It also asserts the fundamental unity of all in the Kingdom, where faithful angels and men are joined to God, in a sense as equals since all are in immediate and perfect harmony and subjection to the Most Holy Trinity. This unity is joined to triumph over the unbelieving in a way that seems somewhat clumsy at first glance, but suggests the ultimate victory of God not only in His own self and power but as extended to all creation that joins itself to Him in faith and charity, as both summarized in and distributed through the Incarnate Lord.

Colossians also highlights the transfer out of this vanquished kingdom into the triumphant Kingdom of God, as well as the identity of the message of the Kingdom with the preaching of Christ. I and II Thessalonians, by contrast, contain brief passages highlighting the unity with Christ and the victory over the enemy's kingdom not only through preaching and true faith, but suffering and tribulation. The ambiguous passage on the Antichrist in II Thessalonians can fit into this and into the eschatological promise of I Corinthians, with the transfer of power from Empire to Church that Aquinas borrows from Leo being a foreshadowing of how all dominion ultimately comes either to rest in the Kingdom or proves of no avail against it.

This is supported also by the comments on I Timothy, which highlight Divine sovereignty by contrasting it with the limitations and frailties of human rulership. II Timothy provides a clear summation of the dichotomy between the inchoate Kingdom of grace and the realized Kingdom of glory, while maintaining their unity.

Hebrews, last and most unique of the 'Pauline corpus,'²⁰³ provides us with more emphasis on the royal dignity of Christ, which Aquinas continues to connect with both teaching and with judgment. Thomas reiterates his doctrine that the kingship is due to Christ as both God and Man, and highlights again the eternal dimension of this Kingdom—both in duration and in ends—in contrast to the limited time and purpose of earthly kingdoms. Hebrews also reiterates the distinction between the Old Law and the New Law, here highlighting the difference between the exteriorized and strict justice of the Old and the internally oriented, love-oriented equity of the New.

Overall Conclusions

This dissertation has given pride of place to the Gospel commentaries for several reasons, and so looks at the Kingdom as expressed in the other commentaries through the lens that they provide. The differences between the three arguably reflect the differences between the three different types of texts as understood by Aquinas. The Gospels center on Christ's life, and so the Kingdom seen there is heavily Christocentric. The Psalms share that emphasis, but through a largely Davidic or 'Old Testament' filter, since Thomas read the Psalms as prefiguring Christ in David. The commentaries on Isaiah and Jeremiah come from early in Thomas' career, but the brief passages that deal with the Kingdom provide the hint of themes that Thomas will go on to develop in his later work, especially in relationship to themes such as judgment as the proper role of the king, and the Christian life as participation in kingship and priesthood. The Psalms commentary is such a later work, and highlights those elements, as well as giving us examples of the analogy between the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Heaven, David as a type of

203 At least as understood by Thomas and his fellow medievals.

Christ, and the martial dimension of the Kingdom, as well as foreshadowing Christ's Kingship as belonging to His Sacred Humanity.

If the Old Testament works, especially on the Psalms, foreshadow the coming of the Head, the Pauline corpus discusses what flows from the Head, who was of course the focus of the Gospels, to the members, who are Paul's primary concern. The commentaries on the Pauline letters do not detract from Christ by any means—He is especially prominent in the Kingdom material in the commentaries on I Corinthians and Hebrews--but focus more on the application to the individual Christian and the Church community. But for Aquinas, Scripture and the Kingdom are both fundamentally oriented around and to Jesus Christ, just as the Head gives life and purpose to the Body, and so giving priority to the Gospels may be in most keeping with the interests and intent of the Angelic Doctor.

With the Scriptural commentaries having been considered, we have established a strong understanding of Thomas' doctrine of the Kingdom of God. Using the Scripture commentaries has helped us develop a multidimensional understanding of the Kingdom which expands on previous treatments and brings coherence to what some have considered scattered or contradictory treatments in his thought. Instead of several conflicting meanings, we have a Christocentric kingdom that focuses on the individual's conformity to Christ, the proclamation of Christ's message, the continuation of His mission in His church, and the full unification of the cosmos in Christ at the eschaton, where rational creatures come to share in His eternal and all-encompassing kingship.

But Thomas is famous for many other works, and what he has to say about the Kingdom in those is worthy of consideration, especially in light of the framework we have established here. Thus, the next chapter turns to Thomas' other works, ranging from the great *Summae* down

to a handful of his occasional sermons—and valuable material will be found at both extremes of that range.

Chapter IV: The Kingdom and Kingship in Thomas Aquinas' Other Theological Works

While the Scripture commentaries examined in Chapters II and III were key elements of Aquinas' career and corpus, they are far from the only works where he speaks of the Kingdom of God. Indeed, previous dissertations by Joanne Edwards, SJ, and William Vinson on the topic of the Kingdom in Aquinas' theology focused primarily on these other works, so there is definitely material to be mined here.¹

However, the methodology of this dissertation differs from those previous works. Edwards and Vinson, as mentioned, focused on works such as the *Summae* and the *Commentary on the Sentences*² with the Scriptural works in a secondary role. In addition, they approached the question of the Kingdom from the perspective of divine sovereignty and providence. By contrast, this work places the Scriptural texts in prime position, and looks to Aquinas' other works as providing support for the structure outlined therein. It also focuses primarily on the Kingdom as mentioned explicitly in the text, with less attention being paid to those things which can be understood as the Kingdom in a broader or implicit sense.

So far, we have seen that for Thomas, the Kingdom can be understood in multiple ways, as an internal and moral relationship to God, as a message to be preached, as the institution that preaches that message and fosters the relationship, and as the eschatological end to which all these other things are pointing. These other works will support these dimensions of the Kingdom, and often highlight details that the Scriptural commentaries gloss over or only mention in passing.

¹ See Mitchell, 40-49, and Edwards, *passim*.

² And in Vinson's case, the various works that scholars have identified as "political" and "philosophical."

Commentary on the Sentences: First Glances at Kingdom Theology

The *Commentary on the Sentences* was the fruit of “the second stage of [Aquinas] journey to becoming bachelor, follow[ing] his stint as a biblical bachelor in Cologne.”³ As such, it contains some of the first references to bits of “Kingdom theology” that will persist throughout his career.

Book 1

In the commentary on Book 1, references to the Kingdom are few and brief. Thomas mentions the centrality of charity for membership in the Kingdom, based on Colossians 1:13⁴ and Augustine,⁵ and the identification of king and kingdom, although here, the latter is simply used as an illustration of the way in which something can be said to be 'in' that which moves it.⁶ The principle used here is illuminating, though, when one considers it in light of the “Head and members” imagery that Thomas, drawing on St. Paul, often uses for Christ and the Kingdom.

Book 2

The commentary on Book 2 contains an illustration of a different aspect of the Kingdom of Heaven, by comparing the angelic hierarchies to earthly kingdoms. Following the pseudo-Dionysian division of the angelic hosts, Aquinas compares the first triple hierarchy (seraphim, cherubim, thrones) to those ministers who work “directly around the person of the king,”⁷ the

3 Torrell, I.39. For further discussion of this kind of academic career, sources include M. Michèle Mulchahey, *First the Bow is Bent in Study: Dominican Education Before 1350* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1998) and Hastings Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936).

4 “*In regnum filii caritatis suae*, Col. 1, 13” *Scriptum super Sententiis*, Parma text, 1856, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, L.1 D.5 Q.3 A.1 Expos.

5 “... sola enim caritatis dividit inter filios regni et perditionis, secundum Augustinum.” *Super Sent.* L.1 D.17 Q.2 A.5 Arg.3.

6 “... sicut in movente, sicut regnum est in rege” *Super Sent.* L.1 D.19 Q.3 A.2 Arg.1.

7 “... immediate circa personam regis,” *Super Sent.* L.2 D.9 Q.1 A.3 Co.

second (dominions, virtues, powers) to those who handle common elements of the kingdom rather than either the king himself or various provinces, and the third (principalities, archangels, angels) to minor officials responsible for provinces or other lesser regions. The commentary on this section of the *Sentences* does connect the heavenly kingdom in this sense to that which we have been considered by citing Matthew 11:11 when discussing the relative status of men and angels;⁸ the distinction, Thomas points out here as elsewhere, is based on status (*viator* vs. *comprehensor*) or degree of grace, not species.⁹

The theme of attaining the kingdom is mentioned in Distinction 21, where the Lombard deals with the temptation in the Garden, and the commentary turns to the question of whether temptations are necessary to enter the Kingdom is mentioned. Aquinas responds that they are needed in a conditional sense, since “if temptations come, they do not lead to the kingdom unless they are conquered. But it is not absolutely necessary for temptations to come, except on account of the present state of corruption, from which it follows that the flesh struggles against the spirit, which is called temptation.”¹⁰ Another aspect of the same question is mentioned in Distinction 27,¹¹ on the question of meriting eternal life, where Aquinas says that “therefore it is found to be said metaphorically by the saints, that the kingdom of heaven is purchased by good deeds, insofar as God accepts our works.”¹² The idea of meriting the kingdom through both good works and endurance of tribulation will be further developed in the Gospel commentaries, as seen in

⁸ See *Super Sent.*, L. 2 D. 11 Q. 2 A. 4 ad 2.

⁹ Thomas' approach here differs from that of Hugh of St. Cher, who divides the earthly Church based on states of life in parallel to the angelic hierarchy of the Church Triumphant; see Chapter 5, below.

¹⁰ “... si tentationes adveniant, non veniatur ad regnum, nisi vincantur. Sed tentationes advenire non est necessarium absolute, nisi secundum corruptionem status praesentis, ex qua sequitur pugna carnis adversus spiritum, quae tentatio dicitur.” *Super Sent.* L.2 D.21 Q.1 A.3 Ad 4.

¹¹ Wherein the Lombard deals with the topic of virtue and justification.

¹² “... quamvis a sanctis quandoque inveniatur metaphorice dictum, quod bonis operibus regnum caelorum emitur, inquantum Deus accipit opera nostra” *Super Sent.* L.2 D.27 Q.1 A.3 Co.

Chapter 2.

In Distinction 44, the last one in the second book of the *Sentences*, the Lombard focuses primarily on the question of whether the power to sin is from God, but Thomas also uses a reference in Chapter 2 on resisting power to address a question which he also dealt with in Romans—whether Christians are bound to obey secular power. The first argument against comes from the kingship of Christ, Christian union with Him, and His superiority over all temporal powers. Thomas responds that

those prelates which are ordained to the good of subordinates do not take away from the liberty of their subordinates, and therefore it is not unfitting that those who are made sons of God by the Holy Spirit be subjected to such prelates. Or it should be said that Christ spoke of those things and of those disciples who were neither in a condition of servitude nor had temporal concerns, who were obligated to offer tribute to their lord, and therefore it does not follow that all Christians share in this form of liberty, but only those who have been called to the apostolic life, possessing nothing in this world and immune to the condition of servitude.¹³

The end of this section also returns to the question of Christ's kingship when Thomas addresses the relation between secular and spiritual power.

[I]n things which pertain to the salvation of souls ... there ought to be greater obedience to the spiritual power than the secular power. But in those which pertain to the civil good, obedience should be given more to the secular power than to the spiritual, following Matthew 22:21, *Render what is Caesar's to Caesar*. But if by chance the spiritual power is conjoined to secular power, as in the Pope, who holds the highest of either power, namely spiritual or secular, this having been given by He who is priest and king in eternity, according to the order of Melchizedek, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, whose power will not be taken away and His kingdom not corrupted in all the ages to come, Amen.”¹⁴

13 “... quod illa praelatio quae ad utilitatem subditorum ordinatur, libertatem subditorum non tollit; et ideo non est inconveniens quod tali praelationi subiaceant qui per spiritum sanctum filii Dei effecti sunt. Vel dicendum, quod Christus loquitur de se et suis discipulis, qui nec servilis conditionis erant, nec res temporales habebant, quibus suis dominis obligarentur ad tributa solvenda; et ideo non sequitur quod omnis Christianus huiusmodi libertatis sit particeps, sed solum illi qui sequuntur apostolicam vitam, nihil in hoc mundo possidentes, et a conditione servili immunes.” *Super Sent.* L.2 D.44 Q.2 A.2 Ad 1. The hostile reader may view this as Orwellian “slavery is freedom”, while those more familiar with medieval thought and current Catholic use of it may find it an example of “freedom for excellence” as opposed to “freedom from constraint” or “freedom as license.” For an introduction to these concepts, see George Weigel, *The Cube and the Cathedral*, (New York: Basic Books, 2006). 79-86.

14 “... in his quae ad salutem animae pertinent; et ideo in his magis est obediendum potestati spirituali quam

Book 3

Book 3, Distinction 3, on the nature of Christ's humanity, declares that "it was proclaimed that [Christ] was king of men and angels"¹⁵, and Distinction 13, on Christ's grown in wisdom and grace, contains the statement that "Christ, insofar as He is man, is king and priest of the entire human race."¹⁶ Distinction 19 treats of the Redemption, and Thomas uses the metaphor of kingship and kingdoms, comparing the redemption of mankind to a scenario where "a king, by a hard struggle [*laborem certaminis*] redeems a kingdom occupied by an adversary"¹⁷--the adversary in this case being the devil.

Distinction 34, which covers the gifts of the Spirit and specifically *timor domini*, mentions the Kingdom of Heaven in two key places. In the first, Thomas discusses the beatitude of *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, with the explanation "in this beatitude is set forth, with regard to the state of the fatherland, of the Kingdom of Heaven, in which celestial honors and riches are comprehended, and from these considerations, temporal things are held in contempt."¹⁸ This is one of the first instances of Thomas' comparison between heavenly and earthly riches, to the detriment of the former—a comparison that goes all the way back to the Lord's preaching in Matthew, of course, but one that Thomas as a Dominican seems especially fond of.

saeculari. In his autem quae ad bonum civile pertinent, est magis obediendum potestati saeculari quam spirituali, secundum illud Matth. 22, 21: *reddite quae sunt Caesaris Caesari*. Nisi forte potestati spirituali etiam saecularis potestas jungatur, sicut in Papa, qui utriusque potestatis apicem tenet, scilicet spiritualis et saecularis, hoc illo disponente qui est sacerdos et rex in aeternum, secundum ordinem Melchisedech, rex regum, et dominus dominantium, cuius potestas non auferetur et regnum non corrumpetur in saecula saeculorum. Amen." *Super Sent.* L.2 D.44 Q.2 A.3 Expos.

15 "... ille annuntiabatur qui est rex hominum et Angelorum", *Super Sent.* L.3 D.3 Q.3 A.2 qc. 1 co.

16 "Christus, secundum quod homo, est rex et pontifex totius humani generis." *Super Sent.* L.3 D.13 Q.2 A.1 S.C. 2.

17 "... sicut rex regnum occupatum ab adversario, per laborem certaminis redimit", *Super Sent.* L.3 D.19 Q.1 A.4 Qc.1 Co.

18 "... ideo in hac beatitudine ponitur quantum ad statum patriae, dominium regni caelorum, in quo divitiae et honores caelestes comprehenduntur, ex quorum consideratione temporalia contemnebantur. " *Super Sent.* L.3 D.34 Q.1 A.4 Co.

The second deals with the Lord's Prayer, with commentary on the petition "Thy Kingdom Come." Aquinas cites the Gloss as commenting "*that is, to be manifested to mankind,*" and follows this with "namely, that in come in us, and that we might merit to reign in Christ."¹⁹ A follow-up note in the answers highlights the eschatological element, stating that "in the resurrection of the body we will particularly and fully participate in the kingdom of God."²⁰ Thomas has not yet developed the full depth of his reading or multifaceted understanding of the Kingdom, so his explanation of this is simpler than in Matthew, but we see him already sounding the note of participation.

Book 4

The vast majority of references to the Kingdom in the *Commentary on the Sentences* come in the fourth part. Several of those references are in the first four distinctions, where the Lombard lays out sacramental theology in general, and which cite John 3:5 at several points, generally in reference to the necessity of baptism to enter the gates of the kingdom of Heaven. Similarly, Distinction 7, Question 2 points out that as Christ is king, baptism, which conforms us to Christ, makes us ministers of the king.²¹ An interesting point connecting the Kingdom, baptism, and the mysteries of Christ's Passion, Resurrection and Ascension is made in *Super Sentences* L.4 D.4 Q.2 A.2 qc. 6 ad 2:

The approach to the kingdom of heaven is shown in a threefold way. In one way with regard to the glory of the soul, and this is shown in the Passion ... In another way with regard to the glory of the body, and this is shown in the Resurrection. In another way, with regard to the place congruent with glory, and this is shown in the Ascension. And baptism shows these three instrumentally, therefore it acts in the power of the Passion and Resurrection and Ascension, insofar as a man is

19 "Glossa: idest, manifestetur hominibus, ut scilicet in nobis veniat, et in Christo regnare mereamur" *Super Sent.* L.3 D.34 Q.1 A.6 Co.

20 "... in resurrectione corporis praecipue et totaliter participes erimus regni divini" *Super Sent.* L.3 D.34 Q.1 A.6 Ad 7.

21 Although the distinction in the *Sentences* itself is on the subject of confirmation.

configured to the Passion of Christ by immersion, in which he is in a certain way buried with Christ, and to the Resurrection by the brightness which results from the water, and to the Ascension with regard to the elevation of the baptized from the holy font.²²

Thomas makes the historical and sacramental connections here; although he does not make it explicitly, the threefold manifestation of the Kingdom in soul, body, and location could also be applied eschatologically with regard to the Beatific Vision, the General Resurrection, and the entry into the New Jerusalem.

Many of the mentions of the Kingdom in this section of the *Super Sententiis* are citations from Matthew's Gospel, used simply to raise an argument, in the fashion of a scholastic *disputatio*, or to supplement a point. Distinction 18, on the power of the keys, makes a more developed use of one verse in particular: Matthew 16:19, *I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, in explicating the Church's sacramental authority. “The door of the kingdom of Heaven is closed to us on account of sin and the stain thereof, and with regard to our penal state; and therefore the power that can remove such an obstacle to the kingdom is called the keys”²³—an example of the same argument he will use when commenting on the verse in the Matthew commentary and explaining why “binding and loosing” is fitting imagery. Thomas also notes that “the acts of priests are not related to the kingdom directly, but to the sacraments, by which a man arrives at the kingdom.”²⁴ Excommunication can exclude one from the kingdom, but only

22 “aditus regni caelestis aperitur tripliciter. Uno modo quantum ad gloriam animae; et sic in passione apertus est ... Alio modo quantum ad gloriam corporis; et sic apertus est in resurrectione. Alio modo quantum ad locum gloriae congruentem; et sic apertus est in ascensione. Et his tribus modis Baptismus instrumentaliter aperit quo ad istum: agit enim virtute et passionis et resurrectionis et ascensionis, inquantum homo configuratur Christo passo per immersionem, qua quodammodo Christo conspeliatur, et ei resurgenti quantum ad nitorem qui resultat ex aqua, et ascendenti quantum ad elevationem baptizati de sacro fonte.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.4 Q.2 A.2 qc.6 ad 2.

23 “Regni autem ostium nobis clauditur per peccatum et quantum ad maculam, et quantum ad reatum poenae; et ideo potestas qua tale obstaculum regni removetur, dicitur clavis.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.18 Q.1 A.1 qc.1 co. Thomas returns to this theme not only in the *Commentary on Matthew* but in his opuscula *De forma absolutionis*.

24 “... actus sacerdotis non est immediate super regnum, sed super sacramenta, quibus homo ad regnum pervenit.”

indirectly; since “no one is made unworthy of the kingdom unless, through mortal sin, he loses charity, which is the way leading to the kingdom; therefore no one ought to be excommunicated unless for mortal sin.”²⁵ Thomas also uses Distinction 25, on the various problems that can surround ordination (such as simony or ordination by heretics, to address the relation of the sacramental economy to the Kingdom: “The end of all sacraments is the Kingdom of Heaven and the remission of sins.”²⁶

Distinction 19 also gives us some nuances on kingship and kingdom as Thomas moves into the question of who possesses the power of the keys. After discussing whether the priesthood or Christ have the keys, the point arises that “the keys are given to priests when they receive divine power by anointing. But kings have divine power among the faithful people, and this is signified by anointing. Therefore, not only priests have the keys.”²⁷ In response, Thomas states that

kings do not have any power in spiritual matters, and therefore they have not received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but only in temporal things, which cannot be except by God, as set out in Romans 13; nor are they consecrated to any holy order by anointing, but that signifies the excellence of the power itself descending from Christ, and that they reign under Christ among the Christian people.²⁸

While speaking of the question of whether the power is associated with the official

Super Sent. L.4 D.18 Q.1 A.1 qc.2 ad 5.

25 “... nec aliquis reddatur indignus nisi per peccatum mortale amiserit caritatem, quae est via ducens ad regnum; ideo nullus excommunicari debet nisi pro peccato mortali.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.18 Q.2 A.1 qc. 3 co.

26 “... finis omnium sacramentorum est regnum caelorum, et remissio peccatorum.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.25 Q.3 A.2 qc. 1 Arg 1.

27 “... claves sacerdotibus dantur, dum per unctionem potestatem divinitus accipiunt. Sed reges etiam potestatem in populum fidelem divinitus habent, et unctione sanctificantur. Ergo non soli sacerdotes habent claves.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.19 Q.1 A.1 qc.3 Arg.2.

28 “... reges non habent aliquam potestatem in spiritualibus; et ideo clavem regni caelestis non accipiunt; sed solum in temporalibus, quae etiam nisi a Deo esse non potest, ut patet Rom. 13; nec per unctionem in aliquo sacro ordine consecrantur, sed excellentia potestatis ipsorum a Christo descendere significatur, ut et ipsi sub Christo in populo Christiano regnent.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.19 Q.1 A.1 qc.3 ad 2.

priesthood or with personal sanctity,²⁹ and the specific issue of whether evil men can possess the power of the keys, Thomas makes a passing mention of “the treasure of the king of heaven.” “No wise king commits the distribution of his treasure to enemies. But the use of the keys consists in the dispensation of the treasure of the king of heaven, **which is wisdom itself.**”³⁰ Thomas' response is that God cannot be deceived or defrauded of his treasure, and therefore the keys can be used by the wicked, “because he knows how to bring good out of evil, and how to make greater good from evil.”³¹ However, the more interesting portion for our purposes is in the identification, highlighted above, of God's treasure with wisdom, another indicator that for Thomas, the Kingdom is primarily contemplative in its meaning.

Distinction 43 , as we move into the eschatological portion of the *Super Sententii* with the Lombard's consideration of the Day of Judgment, includes one of the earliest identifications of the Kingdom with the Church, but in a context that suggests both an eschatological dimension and with a turn of phrase that promotes a broad reading. The context is speaking of the General Resurrection; the phrasing is “but the Church is called the Kingdom of Christ, in which not only the martyrs, but all the elect, reign with Him, so that by a part is understood the whole.”³²

Distinction 48, speaking of the Final Judgment, connects both the Kingdom and the role of Judge to Christ's humanity: “it is fitting that Christ Himself, according to His human nature, by benefit of the redemption of which we are admitted to the Kingdom, should preside at that judgment.”³³

29 *Super Sent.* L.4 D.19 Q.1 A.2.

30 “... nullus sapiens rex dispensationem sui thesauri suo inimico committit. Sed usus clavium in dispensatione consistit thesauri caelestis regis, qui est ipsa sapientia. “ *Super Sent* L.4 D.19 Q.1 A.2 qc.2 Arg.2, emphasis added.

31 “ ... quia novit ex malis bona elicere, et per malos etiam multa bona facere” *Super Sent* L.4 D.19 Q.1 A.2 qc.2 Ad.2.

32 “Regnum autem Christi dicitur Ecclesia, in qua cum ipso non solum martyres, sed etiam alii electi regnant, ut a parte totum intelligatur.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.43 Q.1 A.3 qc. 1 Ad 4.

33 “... conveniens est ut ipse Christus secundum humanam naturam, cujus redemptionis beneficio ad regnum

And Distinction 49, which addresses the final end, is naturally where we find the most extensive treatment of the Kingdom in the *Super Sententiis*. Quaestincula 5 opens with the arguments for the Kingdom *not* being beatitude. The first objection is that the Kingdom, as the fulfillment of providential governance, “consists in the coordination of things which are ends in themselves. Therefore the kingdom of God does not seem to pertain to beatitude, which is the last end.”³⁴

The second objection, taken from Pseudo-Dionysius, defines the kingdom as “the division of all laws, ends and order.”³⁵ Since this includes all things, and beatitude is unique to rational creatures, the two may overlap, but one cannot define beatitude as the Kingdom of God.

The third objection, like the last two, is concerned with the ordering of things, but takes its cue from earthly kingdoms and Aristotle's *Ethics*. Kingdoms, by this definition, “do not bring about any perfection except in those who preside over them. ... Therefore, the kingdom of God does not mean any perfection except in God Himself. But beatitude does not only mean perfection in God, but in all the blessed.”³⁶

The fourth objection is that there are no evils in the state of blessedness, but Matthew 13 suggests the presence of evils in the Kingdom, therefore, the Kingdom cannot be beatitude.

The first *sed contra* is a citation of Augustine's sermons on the Lord's Prayer—naturally, the petition *thy kingdom come*. According to Augustine, “the first three petitions in the Lord's

admittimur, illi iudicio praesideat” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.48 Q.1 A.1 co.

34 “... consistit in coordinatione eorum quae sunt ad finem ipsum. Ergo regnum Dei non videtur ad beatitudinem pertinere, quae est ultimus finis.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 arg. 1.

35 “... *omnis finis et legis et ordinis distributio*.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2. Albertus Magnus will make extensive use of this definition; see Chapter 5.

36 “... regnum non importat aliquam perfectionem nisi in praesidente. ... Ergo regnum Dei non dicit aliquam perfectionem nisi in ipso Deo. Sed beatitudo non solum dicit perfectionem in Deo, sed in omnibus beatis.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 arg. 3.

Prayer pertain to future beatitude ... therefore, the kingdom of God pertains to beatitude.”³⁷ The second is a similar syllogism: “What is promised to the saints as a privilege is beatitude. But the kingdom of God is promised to them, as Matthew 5:10 sets forth: *Blessed are they who suffer persecution on account of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs*. Hence, the kingdom of Heaven is beatitude itself.”³⁸

In setting out the identification of the Kingdom with beatitude, St. Thomas says that “the name of kingdom is taken from ruling; to rule is to act for care of others [*providentiae*], hence it follows that they are said to have a kingdom who are held under its care, and so it follows that men are said to be in the Kingdom of God who are perfectly under His providence.”³⁹

Providence consists in both the end itself and in providing the means to reach that end and avoid the things that would deflect those under its care from that proper end. Therefore,

the Kingdom of God, as though it were used antonomastically, is spoken of in two ways: when it refers to the congregation of those who walk by faith, and so the Church militant is called the Kingdom of God, and when it refers to those who are stable in their end, and then the Church triumphant is called the Kingdom of God, and in this sense to be in the kingdom of God is to be in beatitude.⁴⁰

This distinction provides the answer to the last objection, as well as a root for the multiple

37 “... tres primae petitiones in oratione dominica ad futuram beatitudinem pertinent. ... Ergo regnum Dei ad beatitudinem pertinet.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc.5 s. c. 1.

38 “... illud quod promittitur sanctis in praemium, est beatitudo. Sed regnum Dei est huiusmodi, ut patet Matth. 5, 10: beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum. Ergo regnum caelorum est ipsa beatitudo.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 s. c. 2. Note also the interchangeable use of the phrases *regnum Dei* and *regnum caelorum*.

39 “... illud quod promittitur sanctis in praemium, est beatitudo. Sed regnum Dei est huiusmodi, ut patet Matth. 5, 10: beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum. Ergo regnum caelorum est ipsa beatitudo.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 co.

40 “Unde et regnum Dei, quasi antonomastice, dupliciter dicitur: quandoque congregatio eorum qui per fidem ambulant; et sic Ecclesia militans regnum Dei dicitur: quandoque autem illorum collegium qui jam in fine stabiliti sunt; et sic ipsa Ecclesia triumphans regnum Dei dicitur; et hoc modo esse in regno Dei idem est quod esse in beatitudine.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 co. For another rendering and for comments on this passage, see Edwards, 8, who uses this passage as the central point of her dissertation on the Kingdom in Aquinas' thought, focusing primarily on his *Summae*, and Chapter 1 of her dissertation for a synthesis of Aquinas' thoughts on God as King of the Universe. See also Mitchell, 40-41, for an examination of the Church Militant in this passage.

senses of the Kingdom that we saw developed in the *Commentary on Matthew*. Joanne Edwards uses this as a key text of her dissertation, and the center of her definition of the kingdom as divine providence, especially in relation to humanity and the Beatific Vision.⁴¹ For Edwards, “St. Thomas's teaching on the Kingdom of God is no more than a concrete application of his teaching on the order of the universe; or, perhaps more correctly, it is the same teaching in other words.”⁴²

As for the other three objections, to the first, Thomas answers that “beatitude is not under providence as if ordered to that end, but because the ends are ordered to each other.”⁴³ With regard to the second objection, Aquinas takes the opportunity to unpack Dionysius a bit. “Dionysius touches sufficiently on those things which are ordered to the kingdom, according to its signification of the multitude governed by providence; three things are required for that purpose, namely end, order to an end, and rule for order.”⁴⁴ Aquinas takes this as holding a twofold meaning; “one in ordaining, and this is law, from which the rightness of order proceeds. The other is in the thing ordained, for which things are done so that right order not be abandoned; and this rule is what causes ordination to an end, either in form, or power, or in some other way, and Dionysius calls this fitness [*ornatum*].”⁴⁵ This applies to creatures in multiple ways, but for rational creatures, it pertains to the most perfect way of knowing their end and order—which, by implication, is the Beatific Vision.

41 Joanne H. Edwards, S.J., *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Kingdom of God*, Excerpts from a dissertation for the Theological Faculty of the Gregorian Pontifical University (Rome: 1958), 8-9.

42 Edwards, 13.

43 “... beatitudo non subest providentiae quasi ad finem ordinata, sed quia ad ipsam alia ordinantur.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 ad 1.

44 “Dionysius sufficienter tangit ea quae ad regnum exiguntur, prout significat multitudinem gubernatam a providentia; ad cuius actum tria requiruntur; scilicet finis, ordo ad finem, et regula ordinis.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 ad 2.

45 “Una in ordinante; et haec est lex, ex qua rectitudo ordinis procedit. Alia est in ipso ordinato, per quam fit ut rectitudo ordinis non deseratur; et haec regula est id quod causat ordinationem in finem, sive sit forma, vel virtus, vel aliquid huiusmodi; et hoc appellat Dionysius ornatum.” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc.5 ad 2.

The third objection answers that the kingdom communicates perfection both in the one who presides and in those subject to him, albeit in different ways. “And therefore [the saints] relate to the Kingdom of God not only in that they exist under a king, but as kings, who are such under the one high king.”⁴⁶

Later in the *Distinction*, Thomas also cites a gloss on 1 Cor. 15, where the point where Christ *hands over the Kingdom to the Father* is explained as “the essence of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit will be seen.”⁴⁷ This repeats the identification of the Kingdom with the Beatific Vision, which we have seen continuing through Thomas’ career and returning near the end of it in the commentary on this verse.⁴⁸

Conclusions on the *Sentences*

The focus in the *Sentences* commentary is strongly on both the eschatological and the political, as Thomas explains the Kingdom as the fulfillment of the divine plan and how it relates to human kingdoms. This gives us some of the strongest material for the idea that, just as grace perfects nature, so the Kingdom of Heaven elevates and perfects the goals of human society, which we discussed in Chapter 1. Book 4 highlights the contemplative nature of the Kingdom, especially as it relates to Thomas’ eschatology, and it also gives us some of the first work on the ecclesiastical dimension of the Kingdom. Specifically, Book 4 treats heavily of the sacramental side of the Church, which provides the instruments by which the merits of the King’s Passion are applied and the Kingdom of Heaven is opened to humanity. This theme shows up in the *Commentaries* on the Gospels—penance is discussed in Matthew 16, and baptism in the third

46 “Et ideo ad regnum Dei pertinent non solum ut existentes sub rege, sed etiam ut reges, qui tamen erunt sub uno summo rege” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.1 A.2 Qc. 5 ad 3

47 “... essentia patris et filii et spiritus sancti videbitur;” *Super Sent.* L.4 D.49 Q.2 A.1 s.c.3

48 As discussed in Chapter 3, above.

chapters of both Matthew and John—and will also recur when we turn to the *Summa Theologiae* and to our next topic, the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

Summa Contra Gentiles: The Wisdom of the Kingdom

Joanne Edwards states that “the *Summa Contra Gentiles* might well be called St. Thomas' first complete work on the Kingdom of God.”⁴⁹ While Edwards approaches the Kingdom primarily from the broad perspective of the order of the universe, it is true that an explicit mention of the Kingdom, and the sapiential dimension Thomas assigns to it, shows up at the very beginning of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, where he says that the pursuit of wisdom is the most useful of all human works “because through this wisdom one attains to the kingdom of immortality: *The desire of wisdom leads to the perpetual kingdom*, Wis 6:21.”⁵⁰ It is almost a shame that the theory that the *Contra Gentiles* was composed as a handbook for missionaries seems so fragile nowadays,⁵¹ since the mention of the Kingdom would harmonize well with Thomas' doctrine in the Scriptural commentaries of the Kingdom as militant through preaching and missionary work.

However, even if it wasn't intended for 'front-line' missionary work, both the title and more recent scholarship, as summed up by Jean-Pierre Torrell,⁵² point to this *Summa* as a work that focuses on wisdom and truth both as the subject of contemplation for the believer and the means by which the Church conquers her opposition. The precise dates of this work are likewise

49 Edwards, 15.

50 “... quia per ipsam sapientiam ad immortalitatis regnum pervenitur: concupiscentia enim sapientiae deducet ad regnum perpetuum, Sap. 6-21.” *Summa Contra Gentiles* (hereafter *SCG*) Book I Chapter 2 n.1, Leonine Text (Taurini, 1961), translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, aided by the Pegis translation.

51 Torrell, I.104-107.

52 Torrell, I.105-7.

open to debate, but it appears to be immediately prior to the *Summa Theologiae* and the bulk of the Scriptural commentaries considered in Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation, having been written in the early or mid-1250s.⁵³

Books 1-3: The Providential King and Kingdom

The structure of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is summed up by Thomas in the ninth chapter of the first book, where he speaks of “the twofold truth of divine things ... for the one task, reason suffices; the other surpasses every effort of reason.”⁵⁴ The first task, which covers the first three books, is natural theology of God, creation and the workings of providence; the second deals with those things that fall into the sphere of revealed theology. This is probably why in the first parts of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, the concept of kingdom and kingship is used primarily to demonstrate God's unity⁵⁵ and supremacy over creation,⁵⁶ the latter of which connects to the overarching theme of divine wisdom and providence identified by Edwards. Edwards also points out the use of the Divine King image to introduce Book III of the *Contra Gentiles*, dealing with providence.⁵⁷ As that book moves into the nature of happiness and the fate of the separated soul, we see the connection between the Beatific Vision and the Kingdom made at several points. The kingdom is not mentioned explicitly in the extensive section on mankind's last end in Book 3⁵⁸, but Chapters 27 and 37 highlight the importance of contemplation in humanity's fulfillment. Chapter 27 does so by dismissing the idea of millenarianism as contrary to a proper understanding of humanity's end⁵⁹, since the physical pleasures associated with that

⁵³ Cf. Torrell, I.101-4.

⁵⁴ *SCG* B.1 C.9, cited in Torrell, I.107. For discourse on the plan and structure of the *SCG*, see Torrell, I.107-111.

⁵⁵ *SCG* B.1 C.42 n. 20.

⁵⁶ *SCG* B.1 C.102 n.8, B.2 C.15 n.4, B.3 C.1 n.1, B.3 C.49 n.10. The association of kings with war shows up in a passing reference in *SCG* B.3 C.18 n.2.

⁵⁷ Edwards, 15; cf. *SCG* B.3 C.1.

⁵⁸ Chapters 25—63.

⁵⁹ Referenced in passing in Mitchell, 47n7.

understanding of the kingdom would impede contemplation.⁶⁰ In Chapter 51, about “In What Way God May Be Seen in His Essence”, Thomas says that “the Lord said *I dispose to you, just as my Father has disposed to me, my table, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom*. This can be understood, not of corporeal food and drink, but of He who is received at the table of wisdom.”⁶¹ The sharing in divine kingship is also highlighted in Chapter 63,⁶² and Chapter 155 highlights the importance of the grace of perseverance by stating “thus this is requested in the Lord's Prayer, especially with saying: *Thy kingdom come*, for indeed, the kingdom of God will not come to us if we have not persevered in goodness.”⁶³ Chapter 64, on the subject of providence as the governance of creatures, speaks of God as king, “for it belongs to a lord and king to reign and govern his subjects by his command,”⁶⁴ as well as drawing another martial parallel, likening rulership to the command of an army.⁶⁵

Book 4: The Kingdom Comes to Earth

The spiritual and communal dimension of the kingdom is supported in Book IV, Chapter 22, where Aquinas cites Romans 14:17 and highlights the role of friendship with God through the Holy Spirit in constituting the Church.⁶⁶

Book IV, Chapter 8 discusses the Kingship of Christ and the Kingdom in the context of

60 SCG B.3 C.27 n.10, 12.

61 “... dominus dicit: ego dispono vobis sicut disposuit mihi pater meus mensam, ut edatis et bibatis super mensam meam in regno meo. Quod quidem non de corporali cibo vel potu intelligi potest, sed de eo qui in mensa sapientiae sumitur” SCG B.3 C.51 n.6.

62 SCG B.3 C.63 n. 4.

63 “Hoc etiam ipsum in oratione dominica petitur, maxime cum dicitur, adveniat regnum tuum: non enim nobis adveniet regnum Dei nisi in bono fuerimus perseverantes.” SCG B.3 C.155 n.8. See also SCG B.3 C.155 n.1.

64 “... regis enim et domini est suo imperio regere et gubernare subiectos.” SCG B.3 C.64 n.12; Edwards (15-16) says that “The *Summa Contra Gentiles* might well be called St. Thomas's first complete work on the Kingdom of God” (15), given the relation of the kingdom to providence and the use of Psalm 94:3 and 93:14 to set the tone of this volume in the prologue.

65 Edwards, 26.

66 SCG B.4 C.22 n.3; cf. Mitchell, 47.

Arius' objections to the equality of the Son with the Father. The Arian objection that the Father's position as "King of Kings" excludes the Son from equality is refuted by Scripture,⁶⁷ and the handing over of the Kingdom to the Father reflects the Son's supremacy over the Kingdom as man rather than as God.⁶⁸ Aquinas also notes here that this passage "shows what kind of kingdom this is, namely that it is fitting that all things be subject to it."⁶⁹

Chapter 50 returns to the end of man, but in a certain sense from his beginning, by discussing the baptism of infants. The occasion for this is that "one might say that baptism is given to infants, not that they might be cleansed from sin, but that they might arrive at the kingdom of God."⁷⁰ Thomas repeats his principle that "no one is excluded from the kingdom of God except on account of some fault. For the end of every rational creature is to arrive at beatitude, and this cannot be except in the kingdom of God."⁷¹ Thomas follows this identification of beatitude and the kingdom with a succinct definition of the latter: "That, indeed, is nothing other than the ordered society of those who enjoy the divine vision, in which true beatitude consists."⁷² The only way something fails to attain its end, Thomas continues, is through some fault, so there must be some fault in infants if they cannot attain the Kingdom without baptism.

The comparison of the sacramental economy with the political order recurs in Chapter 58, where the sacrament of orders is placed in parallel to the role of kings and princes in preserving peace and social order. This reappears in a different way in the section dealing with the

67 *SCG* B.4 C.8 n.3.

68 *SCG* B.4 C.8 n.4.

69 "... ostenso quale sit hoc regnum, quia scilicet oportet ei omnia esse subiecta" *SCG* B.4 C.8 n.4.

70 "... dicatur quod Baptismus infantibus datur, non ut a peccato mudentur, sed ut ad regnum Dei perveniant" *SCG* B.4 C.50 n. 10.

71 "Nullus enim a regno Dei excluditur nisi propter aliquam culpam. Finis enim omnis rationalis creaturae est ut ad beatitudinem perveniat, quae esse non potest nisi in regno Dei." *SCG* B.4 C.50 n.10.

72 "Quod quidem nihil est aliud quam ordinata societas eorum qui divina visione fruuntur, in qua vera beatitudo consistit" *SCG* B.4 C.50 n.10. Cf. Edwards, 24.

sacrament of penance, where St. Thomas makes repeated use of the metaphor of keys to the kingdom for the restoration of men to the state of grace, following the same metaphor he used in the parallel portion of the *Commentary on the Sentences*.⁷³ The two elements combine in Chapter 76, when Thomas says that the power of the keys was given to Peter “in order to show the power of the keys deriving from him through others, for preserving the unity of the Church.”⁷⁴

The rejection of millenarianism also reappears in the section on eschatology. Chapter 83 deals primarily with the proposition that “in the Resurrection there will be no use of food or sexual love.”⁷⁵ The verses that seem to suggest such as explained primarily as spiritual, while the citation of Matthew 26:29 is applied to the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus, who says “‘in the kingdom of my Father’ for in the resurrection of Christ he begins to demonstrate the kingdom of immortality.”⁷⁶ As for the millennium of Revelation 22, “the whole time of the Church is understood, in which the martyrs and other saints reign with Christ, both in the present Church, which is called the kingdom of God, and also in the heavenly fatherland insofar as it relates to souls.”⁷⁷ As Mitchell points out, this is one of the few points where Thomas equates the Church with the Kingdom, “but this must be properly understood according to his own words and in the light of Augustine whom he follows throughout his refutation of the millenarianists.”⁷⁸ With reference to the City of God, Mitchell argues that for Augustine and Aquinas, “the scriptures permit the present church to be designated as kingdom only analogously”⁷⁹--although

73 Cf. Mitchell, 47.

74 “ut ostenderetur potestas clavium per eum ad alios derivanda, ad conservandam Ecclesiae unitatem.” *SCG* B.4 C.76 n.7.

75 “in resurgentibus non erit usus ciborum neque venereorum.” *SCG* B.4 C.83, title.

76 “Et dicit, in regno patris mei, quia in resurrectione Christi regnum immortalitatis demonstrari incoepit.” *SCG* B.4 C.83 n.21.

77 “intelligitur totum tempus Ecclesiae, in quo martyres regnant cum Christo, et alii sancti, tam in praesenti Ecclesia, quae regnum Dei dicitur, quam etiam in caelesti patria quantum ad animas” *SCG* B.4 C.83 n.22.

78 Mitchell, 48.

79 Mitchell, 48.

given the discussion of Matthew 3 in Chapter 2, it might be clearer to say 'by participation'. And as Edwards points out, “the Kingdom of God in its imperfect state, is *truly* the Kingdom of God – for there is but one Kingdom of God – but analogically, inchoatively, and figuratively.”⁸⁰

Chapter 85 avoids a pure spiritualization of the Kingdom by affirming the physical resurrection and explaining 1 Corinthians 15:50 (“Flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God”) as meaning that “in the state of the Resurrection the corruption of flesh and blood will be taken away, with the substance of flesh and blood remaining.”⁸¹

Conclusions on the *Summa Contra Gentiles*

Mentions of the Kingdom are fairly sparse here, as opposed to the preceding *Commentary on the Sentences* or the later *Summa Theologiae*; if one wants to understand the Kingdom in its broader sense in this work, one is advised to turn to Mitchell’s dissertation. Even in the more explicit sense under consideration here, though, the *Summa Contra Gentiles* both repeats some themes, such as the emphasis on sacraments and the rejection of millenarianism, and adds a new dimension—the emphasis on wisdom. Wisdom is described as the treasure of the kingdom in several points in Thomas’ works, and in both the introduction to the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and the *Compendium Theologiae*, he refers to Wisdom 6:21, which praises wisdom as the way to the Kingdom. This can be understood in two interrelated ways. One is to understand it as the Divine Wisdom itself, the providential ordering of the universe towards an end that is God Himself—and under the theory of appropriation, this Wisdom itself became incarnate and saved humanity. Thus, both the kingdom and the way to it are Christ. Secondly, we can understand it as the attainment of this wisdom by humanity, which involves both the study of Scripture—a primary

⁸⁰ Edwards, 40.

⁸¹ “... quod in statu resurgentium corruptio tolletur carnis et sanguinis, substantia tamen carnis et sanguinis remanente. “*SCG* B.4 C.85 n.9.

source of divine wisdom—and contemplation, which unites the mind to Wisdom itself and thus makes the mind wise, until the point where it is perfected in being perfectly joined to that Wisdom in the Beatific Vision.

*Summa Theologiae*⁸²

Prima Pars

As in other works, Thomas uses the example of kingship to demonstrate unity and dignity of power and effectiveness.⁸³ The first mention of the kingdom of God comes in *Prima Pars*, Question 64, in a question about whether the fallen angels are deprived of all truth.⁸⁴ The fourth objection cited in favor of the affirmative position is that “the angels in their [unfallen] condition knew the mystery of the kingdom of God ... but the demons have lost this knowledge, because if they had known, they never would have crucified the Lord of glory.”⁸⁵ Aquinas' response is “all the angels, from the beginning, had knowledge of the kingdom of God, which was fulfilled in Christ, to some degree; most fully when they were beatified by the vision of the Word, which the demons never had. Not all the angels understood perfectly, or equally. Hence the demons much less perfectly understood the mystery of the Incarnation, [even with] Christ existing in the world.”⁸⁶ This brief mention of the Kingdom highlights its Christocentric nature, as well as its

⁸² The *Summa* is, of course, the most studied of Thomas' texts, and the literature on it dwarfs even the work itself. For background and summary of its creation and structure, see Torrell I.145-52 for an introduction, and Jean-Pierre Torrell, OP, *Aquinas's Summa: Background, Structure & Reception*, translated by Benedict M. Guevin, OSB (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

⁸³ Cf. *Summa Theologiae* (ST) I.8.3, I.22.1, I.82.4, I.103.6, I.105.6. Textual selections have been drawn primarily from the Leonine text as corpusthomicum.org, but with translation support from the English Dominican Fathers edition.

⁸⁴ Since the angels are also members of the Kingdom, it seems only fitting that the first discussion of that topic appear here, since this is the first section of the *Summa* to deal with intelligent beings outside the Trinity.

⁸⁵ “Angeli in sua conditione cognoverunt mysterium regni Dei ... Sed Daemones hac cognitione privati sunt, quia si cognovissent, nequaquam dominum gloriae crucifixissent,” ST I.64.1 obj. 4.

⁸⁶ “... mysterium regni Dei, quod est impletum per Christum, omnes quidem Angeli a principio aliquo modo

nature as a 'mystery' that cannot be known perfectly without the grace of revelation.

The issue of angels and the Kingdom reappears in Question 108, where Thomas discusses the concept of hierarchy among the angels by citing Matthew 11:11 and stating that “the lesser angel is superior to the supreme man of our hierarchy,”⁸⁷ at least in regards to power. This seems to contradict what he says elsewhere about the integration of the two orders in the Kingdom. However, based on the context, and the fact that Thomas says that “the minor angel of the celestial hierarchy can not only purge, but also illuminate and perfect, and in a higher way than the orders of our own hierarchy,”⁸⁸ it better applies to power and hierarchical function rather than degrees of grace. This is made clearer by Article 8 of this same question, where Thomas says that “by the gift of grace men are able to merit enough glory to be equal to the angels in each of the angelic grades”⁸⁹ but “holy men, after death, are of the same nature as us. Thus according to general law, they do not administrate human things or intervene in the affairs of the living.”⁹⁰

Prima Secundae

The Kingdom and Happiness (Questions 4, 69)

The Kingdom is mentioned in Question 4, Article 7 of the *Prima Secundae* in response to an overly literal reading, when discussing the question of whether external goods are required for happiness. The first objection in favor of that proposal is that “what is promised to the saints

cognoverunt; maxime ex quo beatificati sunt visione verbi, quam Daemones nunquam habuerunt. Non tamen omnes Angeli cognoverunt perfecte, neque aequaliter. Unde Daemones multo minus, Christo existente in mundo, perfecte mysterium incarnationis cognoverunt. “*ST I.64.1 ad.4.*

87 “... inferior Angelus est superior supremo homine nostrae hierarchiae” *ST I.108.2 ad 3.*

88 “Unde minor Angelus caelestis hierarchiae potest non solum purgare sed illuminare et perficere, et altiori modo quam ordines nostrae hierarchiae. “*ST I.108.2 ad 3.*

89 “... per donum gratiae homines mereri possunt tantam gloriam, ut Angelis aequentur secundum singulos Angelorum gradus.” *ST I.108.8 co.*

90 “Homines autem sancti, etiam post hanc vitam, sunt eiusdem naturae nobiscum. Unde secundum legem communem, non administrant humana, nec rebus vivorum intersunt” *ST I.108.8 ad 2.* See also *ST I.117.2*, where Thomas denies the possibility of men teaching angels.

pertains to beatitude. But the saints are promised external goods, such as food and drink, riches and a kingdom”⁹¹ in Heaven, according to several Gospel passages. Aquinas' response is that “all these corporeal things promised [*promissiones*] which are contained in Sacred Scripture must be understood metaphorically, following the fact that in Scripture it is customary for spiritual things to be designated by corporeal ones.”⁹² The Kingdom, in this context, symbolizes “the exaltation of man to union with God.”⁹³

Question 69 deals with the Beatitudes, so it is only fitting that the Kingdom comes up in relation to them.⁹⁴ The discussion on whether or not the rewards promised for the Beatitudes can be possessed in this life in Article 2 provides a further example of the division between the inchoate and realized Kingdom. “All these rewards are perfectly fulfilled in the future life, but meanwhile, they are begun in a certain way in this life. For the kingdom of Heaven, as Augustine says, can be understood as the beginning of perfect wisdom, by which the Spirit begins to reign in men.”⁹⁵

Although the Kingdom is not mentioned explicitly in Article 3 of this question, Aquinas does use the opportunity to highlight the relationship between contemplation and beatitude: “Happiness of the active life is a disposition to future beatitude. Contemplative happiness, if it is perfect, is essentially future beatitude itself; if it is imperfect, it is, as it were, an inchoate form of

91 “Quod enim in praemium sanctis promittitur, ad beatitudinem pertinet. Sed sanctis repromittuntur exteriora bona, sicut cibus et potus, divitiae et regnum,” *ST I-II.4.7* arg. 1.

92 “Omnes illae corporales promissiones quae in sacra Scriptura continentur, sunt metaphorice intelligendae, secundum quod in Scripturis solent spiritualia per corporalia designari” *ST I-II.4.7*.ad 1.

93 “... exaltatio hominis usque ad coniunctionem cum Deo” *ST I-II.4.7* ad 1.

94 Cf. the discussion of the relationship in the section of Chapter 2 dealing with the interior kingdom, specifically Matthew 5.

95 “... omnia illa praemia perfecte quidem consummabuntur in vita futura, sed interim etiam in hac vita quodammodo inchoantur. Nam regnum caelorum, ut Augustinus dicit, potest intelligi perfectae sapientiae initium, secundum quod incipit in eis spiritus regnare.” *ST I-II.69.2* ad 3.

it.”⁹⁶ The connection is further developed in Article 4, where Thomas inquires about the enumeration of the rewards. The Kingdom is central to the Objections, since it seems to both contain and supersede all the others, and it is used as a reward twice.

In explaining this, Thomas lays out the contrast between voluptuous or sensual happiness, the happiness of the active life, and that of the contemplative life, which he has used throughout this question. “The first three beatitudes are received concerning withdrawal from that in which voluptuous happiness consists ... and therefore the rewards of the first three beatitudes concern those things which are sought in earthly happiness.”⁹⁷ Thus, the Kingdom is set in contrast to the abundance and honors associated with worldly riches, since “both of these are implied in the Kingdom of Heaven, by which a man attains excellence and abundance of good things in God.”⁹⁸ The reward is repeated in the eighth beatitude because, by Thomas' reckoning, that beatitude is largely a recapitulation of the others and “therefore it returns to the head, so that all the other rewards may be understood to consequently follow it.”⁹⁹ Also, all these rewards are one, but they build upon each other, so that 'to possess' the kingdom securely is better than simply having it, and so forth, until one reaches the highest place as being in it as a son of God.

The Kingdom and the Law (Questions 91, 102-108)

Question 91, Article 5, which speaks of various types of law, reiterates the distinction between the imperfect Old Law and the perfect New Law; the former invited men into the Promised Land (or “kingdom of the Canaanites”) while the latter invites men into the Kingdom

96 “Beatitudo vero activae vitae dispositiva est ad beatitudinem futuram. Beatitudo autem contemplativa, si sit perfecta, est essentialiter ipsa futura beatitudo, si autem sit imperfecta, est quaedam inchoatio eius.” *ST* I-II.69.3 co.

97 “Tres enim primae beatitudines accipiuntur per retractionem ab his in quibus voluptuosa beatitudo consistit ... Et ideo praemia trium primarum beatitudinum accipiuntur secundum ea quae in beatitudine terrena aliqui quaerunt.” *ST* I-II.69.4 co.

98 “... quorum utrumque importat regnum caelorum, per quod homo consequitur excellentiam et abundantiam bonorum in Deo” *ST* I-II.69.4 co.

99 “... ideo redit ad caput, ut intelligantur sibi consequenter omnia praemia attribui.” *ST* I-II.69.4 ad 2.

of Heaven. In the reply to Objection 1, Thomas further explains that “God the one king, in his one kingdom, gave one law to men in an imperfect state of being, and another, more perfect law when the prior law had led them to a greater capacity for the Divine.”¹⁰⁰

Thomas returns to the Kingdom of Heaven in Question 102, Articles 4 and 5, where he speaks of the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law. In the reply to Objection 10 in Article 4, he lays out his understanding of the symbolic meaning of the feasts of the Old Testament, which culminate in the Feast of Assembly or Congregation, which “signifies the gathering of the faithful in the Kingdom of Heaven, and therefore this feast is said to be most holy.”¹⁰¹ In the same vein, the reply to Objection 6 in Article 5 explains that sin-offerings foreshadow the Passion which allows us to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and so “the blood of the calf and the goat were brought into the sanctuary by the priest.”¹⁰²

Question 105 speaks much about kingship, as it discusses various issues related to the temporal government of Israel under the Old Law. Objection 2 in Article 1 asks why the Law did not institute a king immediately, given that Aquinas, following Plato and Aristotle, considers kingship the best form of government. Objection 5, following up on this, says that when God did establish a kingship in Israel, he actually established tyranny, which suggests a flaw in the Law. Objection 3 makes a similar and related point, about how the Law failed to forbid the division of the kingdom and other things that turned out poorly for Israel.

The structure of the Old Law's judicial government is given as an example of a 'mixed' regime, where power was vested in one (Moses and his successors), a small group (the seventy-

100 “... unus rex Deus, in uno suo regno, aliam legem dedit hominibus adhuc imperfectis existentibus; et aliam perfectiorem iam manuductis per priorem legem ad maiorem capacitatem divinorum.” *ST* I-II.91.5 ad 1.

101 “... significatur congregatio fidelium in regno caelorum, et ideo istud festum dicebatur sanctissimum esse.” *ST* I-II.102.4 ad 10.

102 “Sanguis autem vituli et hirci infertur in sancta per pontificem” *ST* I-II.102.5 ad 6.

two elders) and the multitude, insofar as the elders could be chosen from among all the people.¹⁰³

As for kingship, the response to Objection 2 is that “on account of the power which is granted to a king, a kingdom easily declines into a tyranny, unless the one to whom this power is granted is of perfect virtue.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, the kingship was delayed on account of the rarity of perfect virtue, “and the Jews were dangerously prone to cruelty and avarice, which are the vices most likely to turn men into tyrants.”¹⁰⁵ The establishment of the monarchy was thus a later concession, and hedged about with numerous restrictions on their behavior regarding their possessions, their subjects, and God. The reply to Objection 5 states that the degeneration of the kings into the feared tyranny was foretold rather than proscribed under the Law, and that to Objection 3 suggests that this may have been a punishment for their sins, as “the division of the kingdom, and many of the kings”¹⁰⁶ were.

Turning to the New Law, Aquinas mentions the Joachite¹⁰⁷ argument in I-II.106.4, Objection 4, that “the Gospel of Christ has been preached in the whole world, but the end has not yet come. Therefore the Gospel of Christ is not the Gospel of the Kingdom, but there will be another Gospel of the Holy Spirit, like unto another law.”¹⁰⁸ Thomas' initial response is to call this “most stupid (*stultissimus*)” on the grounds that “Christ said at the very beginning of the preaching of the Gospel that the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”¹⁰⁹ The preaching of the Gospel

103 *ST* I-II.105.1 co.

104 “... propter magnam potestatem quae regi conceditur, de facili regnum degenerat in tyrannidem, nisi sit perfecta virtus eius cui talis potestas conceditur,” *ST* I-II.105.1 ad.2.

105 “... praecipue Iudaei crudeles erant et ad avaritiam prони, per quae vitia maxime homines in tyrannidem decidunt.” *ST* I-II.105.1 ad.2.

106 “... divisio regni, et multitudo regum,” *ST* I-II.105.1 ad.3.

107 For further discussion of the Joachite controversy, see references in the section on the works on the mendicant controversy, below.

108 “Sed Evangelium Christi iamdiu est praedicatum in universo orbe; nec tamen adhuc venit consummatio. Ergo Evangelium Christi non est Evangelium regni, sed futurum est aliud Evangelium spiritus sancti, quasi alia lex.” *ST* I-II.106.4 arg. 4.

109 “Christus statim in principio evangelicae praedicationis dixerit, appropinquavit regnum caelorum.” *ST* I-II.106.4 ad. 4.

to the whole world, he continues, can be understood in two ways—as a general diffusion of the Word, which goes back to apostolic times and foreshadows the fall of Jerusalem, and the establishment of the Church in all nations, which is not yet accomplished and will be a herald of the end of the world.

Question 108 deals with the things contained in the New Law, and Article 1 asks if outward works fall under the New Law, and the first objection argues against such from the internal nature of the Kingdom, based on Luke 17:21 and Romans 14:17. Aquinas responds by conceding the primarily internal and spiritual nature of the Kingdom, but points out that external acts inconsistent with the interior dispositions and qualities that make up the Kingdom “are repugnant to the Kingdom of God, and therefore must be prohibited in the Gospel of the Kingdom.”¹¹⁰ This reinforces the internal nature of the New Law and the Kingdom, as opposed to the external regulations, structures and compulsions of the Old Law and of earthly kingdoms.

Secunda Secundae

The Kingdom, Virtue and Vice (Questions 24–45)

At various places in the *Secunda Secundae*, dealing with virtue and vice, St. Thomas makes reference to Galatians 5:21 and other verses from the Pauline letters, and to the principle that “nothing but mortal sin excludes one from the kingdom of God,”¹¹¹ which reinforces the spiritual nature of the kingdom. Aquinas also highlights the foundational role of charity for membership in the Kingdom in Question 24, Article 11, Question 28, Article 1 and Question 45, Article 4.

¹¹⁰ “... repugnent regno Dei, et ideo sunt in Evangelio regni prohibendi.” *ST I-II.108.1 ad.1.*

¹¹¹ “Nihil autem excludit a regno Dei nisi peccatum mortale.” *ST II-II.37.1 s.c.* See also *ST II-II.38.1 s.c.*, *ST II-II.41.1 s.c.*, *ST II-II.76.A.3 s.c.*, *ST II-II.154.2 s.c.*. See also *ST I-II*, Question 89, Article 2, on venial sin, where Thomas gives us a passing reference that identifies “obtaining the Kingdom of God” (in a citation from Galatians 5:21) with salvation.

The Kingdom and Religion (Questions 83, 87)

Aquinas also mentions the kingdom in his brief commentary on the petitions of the Lord's Prayer in Question 83, Article 9. Speaking of the first two petitions, Thomas says that

our end is God. Our affections tend to Him in two ways; in one way, just as we will the glory of God, in another, as we will that we enjoy His glory. The first of these pertains to the love by which we love God in Himself, the second pertains to the love by which we love ourselves in God. And thus the first petition is set forth, *Hallowed be thy name*, by which we seek the glory of God. The second is set forth, *Thy kingdom come*, by which we seek to come to the glory of His kingdom.¹¹²

This shows how the Kingdom of God is truly a kingdom under the Aristotelian definition of such: A group of people ruled by one (God) for the good of those ruled over—namely, for their participation in the divine glory.

Thomas does make an interesting point in passing in Question 87, Article 1, when discussing the question of tithing, stating that “the people of the New Law are obliged to more [than those of the Old Law]”¹¹³ and citing Matthew 5:20 in support of that principle. This suggests that the New Law not only goes deeper than the Old Law and lifts its adherent higher, but also binds them to do more, hinting at a proportion between duties imposed and benefits received. However, the interiority of the kingdom is stressed against in Question 93, Article 2, where Thomas follows Augustine in citing Luke 17:21 against those who would do external things that “of themselves do not pertain to the glory of God, or those which do not turn the mind of men to God, or which refer to moderating the desires of the flesh.”¹¹⁴ The same theme recurs

112 “Finis autem noster Deus est. In quem noster affectus tendit dupliciter, uno quidem modo, prout volumus gloriam Dei; alio modo, secundum quod volumus frui gloria eius. Quorum primum pertinet ad dilectionem qua Deum in seipso diligimus, secundum vero pertinet ad dilectionem qua diligimus nos in Deo. Et ideo prima petitio ponitur, sanctificetur nomen tuum, per quam petimus gloriam Dei. Secunda vero ponitur, adveniat regnum tuum, per quam petimus ad gloriam regni eius pervenire.” *ST II-II.83.9 co.*

113 “... tamen populus novae legis ad maiora obligetur” *ST II-II.87.1 co.*

114 “... non pertinet ad Dei gloriam, neque ad hoc quod mens hominis feratur in Deum, aut quod carnis concupiscentiae moderate refrenantur” *ST II-II.93.2 co.*

in Question 100, Article 1, where Thomas treats of simony. Against an argument that “it is licit to buy the kingdom of heaven, for Gregory says in one of his homilies *The kingdom of heaven is worth as much as you possess*,”¹¹⁵ Aquinas makes the obvious point that “this is purchasing in the broad sense of acquiring, by which it is understood as merit.”¹¹⁶ He further emphasizes that “merit does not consist primarily in exterior gifts, actions or dispositions, but in interior affections.”¹¹⁷

The Kingdom and Authority (Question 104)

Question 104, on obedience, returns to the relation between the heavenly and earthly kingdoms in Article 6, on whether Christians ought to be subject to secular authority. A gloss on Matthew 17:25 states that “if, in every kingdom the children of the king who rules over that kingdom are free, then the children of that king to whom all kingdoms are subdued ought to be free in every kingdom.”¹¹⁸ The primary reason given against this is that justice requires the preservation of human society and the order of things, but the response to the objection is interesting. “Servitude which binds a man to a man pertains to the body, not to the soul, which remains free. Now in the status of this life, we are liberated by the grace of Christ from the defects of soul, but not the defects of the body.”¹¹⁹ The interior nature of the kingdom and its spiritual nature is repeated in the discussion of fortitude in the two laws in Question 140, Article 1.

115 “Sed licet emere regnum caelorum, dicit enim Gregorius, in quadam homilia, regnum caelorum tantum valet quantum habes.” *ST II-II.100.1 arg.3.*

116 “... large sumpto nomine emptionis, secundum quod accipitur pro merito.” *ST II-II.100.1 ad.3.*

117 “... meritum non consistit principaliter in exteriori dono vel actu vel passione, sed in interiori affectu.” *ST II-II.100.1 ad.3.*

118 “... si in quolibet regno filii illius regis qui regno illi praefertur sunt liberi, tunc filii regis cui omnia regna subduntur, in quolibet regno liberi esse debent.” *ST II-II.104.6 arg.1.*

119 “... servitus qua homo homini subiicitur ad corpus pertinet, non ad animam, quae libera manet. Nunc autem, in statu huius vitae, per gratiam Christi liberamur a defectibus animae, non autem a defectibus corporis,” *ST II-II.104.6 ad.1.*

The Kingdom and Temperance (Question 146)

And the same point is discussed in another way in the question of abstinence in Question 146, where Thomas returns to one of his key verses, Romans 14:17 “The kingdom of God does not consist in eating and drinking”, which would seem to suggest that abstinence is not a virtue. In response, St. Thomas makes the distinction between the external act, which is irrelevant in and of itself (an interpretation supported by a citation of 1 Corinthians 8:8), and the fact that “insofar as it is done rationally from faith in and love of God, it pertains to the kingdom of God.”¹²⁰

Tertia Pars

Christ and the Kingdom (Questions 5-59)

Moving into the *Tertia Pars*, Aquinas both reinforces the Christocentric nature of the kingdom and avoids overstating the spiritual dimension in Question 5, Article 2. The second objection to Christ assuming a physical body is taken from 1 Corinthians 15:50: “Flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God. But the kingdom of God is in Christ principally. Therefore in him there is not flesh and blood, but more a celestial body.”¹²¹ In response, Thomas denies the implication by a distinction—flesh and blood here applies to the corruption of earthly bodies, which Christ assumed for a time “that he might fulfill the work of our redemption.”¹²²

Question 8, of course, deals with the headship of Christ over the Church, and so relates to his kingship. The king moves the kingdom just as the head gives motive power to the body, “and hence a ruler is called head of the people.”¹²³ Therefore Christ, from whom all grace and thus all

120 “... secundum quod fit rationabiliter ex fide et dilectione Dei, pertinet ad regnum Dei.” *ST* II-II.146.1 ad.1.

121 “... caro et sanguis regnum Dei non possidebunt. Sed regnum Dei principaliter est in Christo. Ergo in ipso non est caro et sanguis, sed magis corpus caeleste.” *ST* III.5.2 arg.2.

122 “.. ut opus nostrae redemptionis expleret.” *ST* III.5.2 ad. 2. Cf. *ST* III.53.3; *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.7 ¶1000.

123 “Unde et rector dicitur caput populi” *ST* III.8.1 co.

membership in the Kingdom is received, is head of the Kingdom as well as the Church.

Summa Theologiae III.20.1 gives us an interesting description of what it means for Christ to “hand over the kingdom to the Father” in the Reply to Objection 3.

As Augustine says in I. *De Trinitate*, then Christ will hand over the kingdom to God and the Father, when the just, in whom he now reigns through faith, will be led to vision, namely, to see the very essence common to the Father and the Son. And then he will be fully subject to the Father not only in himself, but also in his members, through full participation in the divine goodness. Then all things will be fully subject to him by the final implementation of his will for them.¹²⁴

Question 35, Article 7 gives another citation that connects the Kingdom to the Passion, regarding the fittingness of Jesus' being born in Bethlehem.

David was born in Bethlehem, and chose Jerusalem to establish his royal throne there and build the temple of God there, so Jerusalem was both a priestly and royal city. Now the priesthood of Christ, and his kingdom, were completed principally in his passion. And therefore it was fitting that he chose Bethlehem in which to be born, and Jerusalem in which to truly suffer.¹²⁵

The kingship of Christ is brought up in Question 36, Article 2, when Thomas turns his attention to the manifestation of the Nativity. Aquinas reiterates most of the points he made in the *Commentary on Matthew* 2, highlighting that “the very disturbance that followed from the announcement of the nativity of Christ was fitting to it,”¹²⁶ as it manifests Christ's supremacy, his power of judgment, and his coming to destroy the kingdom of the Devil (here again, Aquinas follows St. Leo the Great in seeing Herod as a symbol of the Devil). Similarly, Question 36, Article 8, which deals with the adoration of the Magi, follows the same pattern as the earlier

124 “... sicut Augustinus dicit, in *I de Trin.*, tunc Christus tradet regnum Deo et patri, quando iustos, in quibus nunc regnat per fidem, perducturus est ad speciem, ut scilicet videant ipsam essentiam communem patri et filio. Et tunc totaliter erit patri subiectus non solum in se, sed etiam in membris suis, per plenam participationem divinae bonitatis. Tunc etiam omnia erunt plene ei subiecta per finalem impletionem suae voluntatis de eis.” *ST* III.20.1 ad.3.

125 “... David in Bethlehem natus est, ita etiam Ierusalem elegit ut in ea sedem regni constitueret, et templum Dei ibi aedificaret, et sic Ierusalem esset civitas simul regalis et sacerdotalis. Sacerdotium autem Christi, et eius regnum, praecipue consummatum est in eius passione. Et ideo convenienter Bethlehem elegit nativitati, Ierusalem vero passioni.” *ST* III.35.7 ad.1.

126 “... ipsa turbatio subsecuta ex nativitate Christi manifestata congruebat Christi nativitati.” *ST* III.36.2 ad.3.

Commentary. Question 40, on Christ's manner of life, addresses the questions of solitude, fasting and poverty. The Kingdom is mentioned explicitly in the second, through a reference back to Romans 14:17 and Augustine's comments that "the Kingdom of God is not in food or drink, but in tolerating with equanimity."¹²⁷ This connects well with the emphasis we have seen on the internal dimension of the Kingdom. Similarly, the reply to the third objection in Article 3, on Christ's poverty, emphasizes humility rather than the raw fact of poverty *per se*.

Thomas also connects the Transfiguration to the Kingdom through the Passion in Question 45. "Christ came to this through his passion, in order to attain glory, not only of the soul, which he had from the beginning of his conception, but also of the body ... And to this, he leads those who follow in the footsteps of his passion, according to Acts 14, *through many tribulations it is fitting that we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*."¹²⁸ This echoes comments made in the *Commentary on II Thessalonians*, as seen in Chapter 3, as well as the idea of Christ meriting the Kingdom through His Passion.

The same connection is made more directly in Question 49, Article 5, of course, "Whether Christ opened the gate of heaven to us by his passion?" "The closing of the gate," Aquinas explains, "is the obstacle which is prohibiting men from entering. But men are prohibited from entering the kingdom of heaven on account of sin"¹²⁹--both original and personal. Christ's suffering atones for both, and so "by the passion of Christ the gate of the

127 "... regnum Dei non esse in esca et potu, sed in aequanimitate tolerandi," *ST* III.40.2 re.obj.1. Cf. Ulrich Horst, OP, "Christ, *Exemplar Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*" in *Christ Among the Medieval Dominicans*, edited by Kent Emery Jr. and Joseph P. Wawrykow (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 264.

128 "Christus autem per passionem ad hoc pervenit ut gloriam obtineret, non solum animae, quam habuit a principio suae conceptionis, sed etiam corporis, ... Ad quam etiam perducit eos qui vestigia suae passionis sequuntur, secundum illud Act. XIV, per multas tribulationes oportet nos intrare in regnum caelorum. " *ST* III.45.1 co.

129 "... clausio ianuae est obstaculum quoddam prohibens homines ab ingressu. Prohibebantur autem homines ab ingressu regni caelestis propter peccatum" *ST* III.49.5 co.

kingdom of heaven is opened to us.”¹³⁰ The Reply to Objection 1 makes it clear that “to enter the kingdom of heaven” means “namely, ascending to eternal beatitude, which consists in the full enjoyment of God.”¹³¹ The Reply to Objection 4 makes a distinction between the Passion, which opened the way, and the Ascension, by which “we were, as it were, led into possession of the kingdom of heaven.”¹³²

The last question in the Christological part of the *Summa* deals with Christ's judicial power, and thus is intimately associated with his kingship, for in Thomas' conception, the two naturally go together.¹³³ Aquinas further understands this power of judgment as being due to him as God, as head of the Church, and as merited through the Passion, for “nothing prohibits one and the same thing to be owed to someone from diverse causes.”¹³⁴ Thomas further notes that “Christ, although constituted a king by God, while living on earth did not wish to temporally administer an earthly kingdom”¹³⁵--implying that Jesus could have rightfully assumed an earthly kingdom, but chose not to because it did not fit with his mission.

The Kingdom and the Sacraments (Questions 60—89)

Thomas' emphasis on the internal nature of the kingdom shows up when he turns to the sacraments, where it is raised as an objection to the sacramental economy. “Sacraments pertain to the kingdom of God and the worship of God. But sensible things do not seem to pertain to the worship of God, as is said in John 4, *God is spirit, and those who worship Him out to worship in spirit and truth*, and Romans 14, *The kingdom of God is not food and drink*. Therefore sensible

130 “... per passionem Christi aperta est nobis ianua regni caelestis.” *ST* III.49.1 co.

131 “... intrare ... regnum caeleste, adipiscendo scilicet beatitudinem aeternam, quae consistit in plena Dei fruitione.” *ST* III.49.1 ad.1.

132 “... per suam ascensionem nos quasi in possessionem regni caelestis introduxit.” *ST* III.49.5 ad.4

133 *ST* III.58.1 co., III.59.3 arg.1, III.59.4 ad 1.

134 “Nihil prohibet unum et idem deberi alicui ex causis diversis” *ST* III.59.3 co.

135 “... Christus autem, quamvis rex esset constitutus a Deo, non tamen in terris vivens terrenum regnum temporaliter administrare voluit” *ST* III.59.4 ad.1.

things are not required for sacraments.”¹³⁶ The response is that in and of themselves, sensible things are not part of the worship or kingdom of God, “but only insofar as they are signs of spiritual things, in which the kingdom of God consists.”¹³⁷ As Mitchell summarizes it, “none of the sacraments, and, a fortiori, none of that which makes the church visible, belongs by nature to the kingdom as something accomplished; the sacraments are only signs of the ultimate kingdom's gifts.”¹³⁸ Mitchell may be overstating the matter somewhat here; given that Scripture can be described as the Kingdom in an analogous or participatory sense, the same can be said of the sacraments which constitute or make present the Church Militant.

Most of the remaining references to the Kingdom in the *Tertia Pars* are citations of John 3:5 (“Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”). The central part of the *Summa* on this point is Question 69, Article 7, on whether baptism opens the gate to the kingdom of Heaven. Thomas' answer is a firm yes; as stated, the only obstacles to the kingdom are sin and the debt of punishment, which baptism removes. In reply to the objection that this was accomplished by the Passion, Aquinas says that “baptism opens the gates to the kingdom of Heaven to the baptized insofar as it incorporates them into the Passion of Christ, by applying its power to man.”¹³⁹ Even baptism done by Christ before the Passion has this affect, though only in hope until such time as the Passion was accomplished, at which time it became fully efficacious.¹⁴⁰ The same, interestingly enough, applies to circumcision, which, “if it had a place after the passion of Christ, would introduce one into the

136 “... sacramenta pertinent ad regnum Dei et cultum Dei. Sed res sensibiles non videntur pertinere ad cultum Dei, dicitur enim Ioan. IV, spiritus est Deus, et eos qui adorant eum, in spiritu et veritate adorare oportet; et Rom. XIV, non est regnum Dei esca et potus. Ergo res sensibiles non requiruntur ad sacramenta.” *ST* III.60.4 arg.2.

137 “... sed solum secundum quod sunt signa spiritualium rerum, in quibus regnum Dei consistit.” *ST* III.60.4 ad.2.
138 Mitchell, 43.

139 “Baptismus intantum aperit baptizato ianuam regni caelestis, inquantum incorporat eum passioni Christi, virtutem eius homini applicando.” *ST* III.69.7 ad.1.

140 *ST* III.69.7 ad.2.

kingdom.”¹⁴¹

However, Thomas also maintains a distinction between the present and the eschatological kingdom, and the things key to entering each, when he discusses sacramental character in Question 63. Article 4 discusses whether this sacramental character should be attributed to Christ, and the third objection says that it would be better attributed to the Holy Spirit or even the Father, for “a man receives a certain character that he might be distinguished from others. But the distinction of the saints from others is by charity, which alone distinguishes between the sons of the kingdom and the sons of perdition.”¹⁴² The objection is that, since charity is primarily attributed to the Holy Spirit, and secondarily to the Father (as ultimate cause; Aquinas cites 2 Cor 13:13), attribution to Christ seems inappropriate.

In response, Aquinas returns to the military analogy for character that he used earlier in the question,¹⁴³ stating that just as soldiers from two different armies are distinguished from each other “as ordered to the battle,”¹⁴⁴ likewise the children of Christ and those of the devil are distinguished with regard to a purpose—but here, Thomas makes a movement that states that purpose is twofold. “Similarly, the character of the faithful is what distinguishes the faithful of Christ from the servants of the Devil, either as ordered to the eternal life or as ordered to the worship of the present Church. The first of these is done through charity and grace, as the objection runs, while the second is done by the sacramental character.”¹⁴⁵ The sacramental character provides the means to participate in the present kingdom, while grace and charity,

141 “... si haberet locum post passionem Christi, introduceret in regnum.” *ST* III.70.4 ad.4.

142 “... illud quod ait apostolus, si tradidero corpus meum ita ut ardeam, caritatem autem non habuero, nihil mihi prodest, intelligatur ad regnum caelorum obtinendum,” *ST* III.63.3 arg.3.

143 *ST* III.63.1 co.

144 “... in ordine ad pugnam” *ST* III.63.3 ad.3.

145 “... similiter character fidelium est quo distinguuntur fideles Christi a servis Diaboli, vel in ordine ad vitam aeternam, vel in ordine ad cultum praesentis Ecclesiae. Quorum primum fit per caritatem et gratiam, ut obiectio procedit, secundum autem fit per characterem sacramentalem.” *ST* III.63.3 ad.3.

which are also conveyed by the sacraments,¹⁴⁶ disposes one to the eschatological kingdom.

Hence, in the introduction to Question 62, Thomas describes grace as the primary effect and the character as a secondary effect.

The sacrament of Penance, the last topic in the *Summa* that St. Thomas lived to work on, is also connected to the kingdom, for as Augustine pointed out, “it is indubitable that the forgiveness of sins is done through the keys of the kingdom of heaven,”¹⁴⁷ and doing penance was inherently connected with the kingdom at the beginning of Christ's preaching.¹⁴⁸ The ministry of the sacrament is also connected with the granting of the keys to Peter in Matthew 16:19,¹⁴⁹ as mentioned in the *Commentary on Matthew* in Chapter 2, and in the *Commentary on the Sentences* discussed above

The last point on the kingdom ties into how we should be moved to behave by expectation of its coming. In Question 85, Article 5, Objection 2 states that “men are provoked to penance by the expectation of the celestial kingdom, according to Matthew 4 *Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven approaches*. But the kingdom of heaven is an object of hope. Therefore penitence proceeds more from hope than from fear.”¹⁵⁰ Aquinas' response highlights the eschatological dimension of the kingdom: “When it is said that the kingdom of heaven approaches, it is to be understood that the coming of the king is not only to reward, but to punish.”¹⁵¹ Thus, as Thomas says in the Response, hope and fear are both intimately connected

146 See *ST* III.62.

147 “... per claves regni caelorum non dubitatur fieri remissio peccatorum.” *ST* III.84.3 ad.5.

148 See *ST* III.84.7 arg. 3.

149 See *ST* III.84.7 co.

150 “... ad poenitentiam homines provocantur per expectationem regni caelestis, secundum illud Matth. IV, poenitentiam agite, appropinquabit enim regnum caelorum. Sed regnum caelorum est obiectum spei. Ergo poenitentia magis procedit ex spe quam ex timore.” *ST* III.85.5 arg.2.

151 “... dicendum quod in regno caelorum appropinquante intelligitur adventus regis non solum praemiantis, sed etiam punientis” *ST* III.85.5 ad.2.

with each other and with the coming of the Kingdom.

The last reference to the Kingdom of Heaven in the *Summa*¹⁵² is also eschatological, speaking of the rewards due to good works done in mortal sin. Thomas once more quotes Augustine here, who once again reinforces the supreme importance of charity to entry into the kingdom. “That which the Apostle says, *if I hand over my body that I may be burned, and I have not charity, I gain nothing*, is to be understood as obtaining to the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁵³ It is appropriate that the last mention of the Kingdom in the finished portions of the *Summa* refers to charity; while it may get lost a bit in all the other dimensions and aspects of the Kingdom under consideration, Thomas has been consistent in highlighting the centrality of charity and Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Conclusions on the *Summa Theologiae*

The *Summa Theologiae* highlights the relationship between the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal beatitude at several points. I.108 highlights the Kingdom's unity, as containing all those admitted to the Beatific Vision, whether angels or human beings. The mentions in the *Prima Secundae* highlight the Kingdom's distinction from and relationship to earthly riches and power—the latter being taken as foreshadowings of the former at best, pale imitations at worst. The last mentions in the *Prima Secunda* deal with the relationship between the Old Law, the New Law and the Kingdom, and foreshadow the numerous references focused on the Kingdom's internal nature and the centrality of charity in the *Secunda Secundae*. The *Tertia Pars* bears some of the most obvious resemblances to the *Commentary on Matthew*, as the two cover much the same ground, and Aquinas reiterates his teaching on the Christological focus of the Kingdom, its

¹⁵² Not including the Supplement.

¹⁵³ “... illud quod ait apostolus, si tradidero corpus meum ita ut ardeam, caritatem autem non habuero, nihil mihi prodest, intelligatur ad regnum caelorum obtinendum,” *ST* III.89.6 ad. 3.

acquisition by the Passion of Christ and believers' sharing in those sufferings, and the connection between Christ the King and Christ as Judge. The sacramental portion provides us with some of the clearest material on the ecclesiological and sacramental dimension of the Kingdom, with emphasis on Baptism as the gateway to the Kingdom, Confirmation as preparing us for our role as citizens and soldiers of a militant Kingdom, and Penance as an exercise of judicial power that restores us to that Kingdom, which is united by the bonds of charity and faith.

Disputed and Quodlibetal Questions

Mentions of the kingdom are few and far between in Thomas' various disputations and quodlibetals¹⁵⁴ but there are a few points where the topic arises. *De veritate*,¹⁵⁵ Question 27, Article 5, when discussing whether sanctifying grace (lit. *gratia gatum faciens*, sometimes translated as “ingratiatory grace”) is one or multiple, uses the idea of it as the factor that makes us able to enter the kingdom to explain how it can be spoken of as one in its nature but multiple in its effects: “we can say that every effect which God works in us by his gratuitous will, by which he receives us into his kingdom, pertains to sanctifying grace.”¹⁵⁶ A passing reference in *De Potentia*, Question 6, Article 9 states that “so humility merits exaltation, *and poverty the Kingdom*.”¹⁵⁷ The most references to the Kingdom actually show up in the *De Malo*, primarily in

154 For more details on these topics, see Torrell I.201-12.

155 Dated by Torrell to 1256-59; for details on his dates, textual history and structure, see Torrell I.62-66. Despite the title, this is one of Thomas' more broad-ranging works, “subdivided into two large parts: (1) truth and knowledge (qq. 1-20); (2) the good and the appetite for the good (qq. 21-29)” (Torrell, I.65).

156 “... dicamus omnem effectum quem Deus facit in nobis ex gratuita sua voluntate, qua nos in suum regnum acceptat, pertinere ad gratiam gratum facientem.” *De Veritate*, Leonine edition, 1970, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, Question 27, Article 5, co.

157 “... sicut humilitas meretur exaltationem, et paupertas regnum.” *De Potentia*, Taurini edition, 1953, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, Question 6, Article 9, co.

Questions 13 and 15, where Aquinas addresses the questions of whether avarice and lust exclude one from the kingdom. Here, as in so many other places, Aquinas cites the dictum that “no one is excluded from the kingdom of God except on account of mortal sin.” Question 7, Article 9 raises the point that “a man is obliged by natural law to first be solicitous regarding his salvation, according to Matthew 6:33, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God.*”¹⁵⁸

The kingdom also appears in a few places in the quodlibets. Although most of them repeat what we have seen elsewhere,¹⁵⁹ a couple of them are worthy of note. Quodlibet II, Question 6, Article 2 addresses the question of “whether it is a sin for a preacher to have his eye on temporal things,”¹⁶⁰ and cites Luke 12:31 in favor of the proposition. The Gloss is cited here as identifying the Kingdom as “eternal goods.” In response to this and the apparently contrary advice in the gloss on 1 Corinthians 9:10, Thomas says that “as concerns payment or reward, it is not licit for a preacher to have his eye on earthly things, because this makes the Gospel venal,”¹⁶¹ but attention to stipends for the necessities of life is legitimate. Question 8, Article 2 in this same quodlibet speaks of the kingdom in passing, when discussing the question of what happens to a crusader who 'takes the cross' but dies before he can make the voyage. In addressing the question, Thomas gives a summary of the classic doctrine of indulgences as gifts from “that

158 “... est homo naturali lege obligatus, ut primo sit sollicitus de sua salute, secundum illud Matth. VI, v. 33: primum quaerite regnum Dei.” *De Malo*, Taurini edition, 1953, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, Question 7, Article 10, ad.9.

159 Such as *Quodlibet III*, Taurini edition, 1956, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, Question 5, Articles 3 and 4, which contain citations from the Gospel of Matthew (19:23 and 23:13) and repeat points already discussed in the *Commentary*. The same goes for *Quodlibet IV*, Taurini edition, 1956, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, Question 12, Article 1.

160 “Utrum peccatum sit praedicatori habere oculum ad rem temporalem.” *Quodlibet II*, Taurini edition, 1956, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, Question 6, Article 2.

161 “... ad mercedem vel praemium; et sic praedicatori non licet habere oculum ad terrena, quia sic faceret Evangelium venale.” *Quodlibet II*, Question 6, Article 2.

treasure [which] is in the dispensation of him who is first in the whole Church, for the Lord committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter.”¹⁶²

Quodlibet III, Question 4, Article 1 contains a reference to the Kingdom that should gladden the heart of any theologian. In affirming that it is lawful to seek a teaching license in theology, Aquinas says that “it is manifest that to desire anything which pertains to perfection of oneself is laudable, hence the desire for wisdom is praiseworthy; Wisdom 6:21 says *the desire ... of wisdom leads to a perpetual kingdom*.”¹⁶³ This is the same reference Thomas uses in the introduction to the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, which supports the contention that that work was intended as a handbook for theologians.

Theological Opusculae

Compendium Theologiae

One of Thomas’ last and unfinished works,¹⁶⁴ the *Compendium* speaks of Christ’s kingship and the kingdom briefly when discussing the rewards Christ merited by his Passion. He makes the interesting point that since “according to the divine nature, we understand the Son to be in the Father himself according to the unity of essence, he shares with him one royal set, that is, the same power,”¹⁶⁵ while the humanity is elevated above every other creature in the heavenly

162 “... iste thesaurus est in dispensatione eius qui praeest generali Ecclesiae; unde Petro dominus claves regni caelorum commisit” *Quodlibet II*, Question 8, Article 2.

163 “... manifestum est quod appetere aliquid quod pertinet ad perfectionem sui ipsius, est laudabile; unde appetitus sapientiae est laudabilis: dicitur enim Sapient. VI, 21: concupiscentia (...) sapientiae perducit ad regnum perpetuum.” *Quodlibet III*, Question 4, Article 1, co.

¹⁶⁴ See Torrell I.164-66.

165 “... secundum divinam naturam intelligamus filium in ipso patre esse secundum essentiae unitatem, cum quo habet unam sedem regni, idest potestatem eandem.” *Compendium Theologiae*, Taurini edition, 1954, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, L.1 C.240.

kingdom. Thus, the kingship belongs to the Son both in his divinity (as coequal with the Father) and his humanity (as raised to the right hand of the Father). The *Compendium* also reiterates that “the ultimate end of the intellectual creature is the vision of God in his essence.”¹⁶⁶

More substantially, the unfinished *Compendium* ends with the Kingdom as well. After the first book discussed the articles of faith, the second book was intended to treat of things hoped for by following the petitions of the Lord's Prayer. After several chapters on the virtue of hope, and a brief section on the first petition, *Hallowed be thy Name* (taken by Aquinas here to indicate a request for knowledge of God by men, and thus the glorification of God among them), he turns to the second petition, *Thy Kingdom come*, “it follows that man should desire and request to be made a participant in the divine glory.”¹⁶⁷

Much of this chapter summarizes the famous treatment of the final good of mankind from the *Prima Secundae* and elsewhere, concluding that “it follows that the ultimate perfection and final good of man is that he should join himself to God.”¹⁶⁸ This cannot be mediated, or else the beatitude would be less than perfect, so “perfect beatitude consists in this, that the mind unites itself to God through knowing and loving.”¹⁶⁹

The 'union' is more than just a figure of speech, and this provides the final movement of this chapter *and* the connection to the Kingdom.

It follows that the mind beatified by the vision of God Himself is made one with God in understanding. For it follows that the knower and the known must be one in some fashion. And therefore with God reigning in his saints, they also reign together with God, and in the person of these Revelation 5:10 says *You have made us a kingdom and priests to our God, and we will reign over the earth*. So this

¹⁶⁶ Edwards, 21.

¹⁶⁷ “... consequens est ut homo appetat et requirat particeps gloriae divinae fieri.” *Compendium Theologiae* L.2 C.9.

¹⁶⁸ “... consequens est ut ultima hominis perfectio et finale bonum ipsius sit in hoc quod Deo inhaeret” *Compendium Theologiae* L.2 C.9.

¹⁶⁹ “... perfecta beatitudo sit in hoc quod mens Deo per se inhaereat cognoscendo et amando.” *Compendium Theologiae*, L.2 C.9.

kingdom, in which God reigns in the saints and the saints with God, is called the kingdom of heaven.¹⁷⁰

Works on the Mendicant Controversy (*Contra Impugnantes, De Perfectione, Contra Retrahentes*)

Most students of medieval theology or history are aware of the fervent controversies that surrounded the new mendicant orders in the 13th century, especially in relationship to the University of Paris.¹⁷¹ Thomas would doubtless have been engaged with these controversies in any event, but his appointment to the position of Master at the University of Paris placed him right in the middle of them. The question of the Kingdom was tightly bound up with the issue of evangelical poverty, as well as the speculations of Abbot Joachim of Fiore on the “new age of the Spirit” which some mendicants saw Francis as inaugurating.¹⁷²

We saw Thomas' reaction to this idea that the Gospel and mission of Christ could be superseded by some sort of 'next step' to the Kingdom in his unusually virulent¹⁷³ reaction in *ST* I-II.106.4. As Viviano admits, perhaps with some reluctance, Aquinas “had a strong conviction about the absolute finality and sole sufficiency of Jesus Christ as well as about the present work of the Holy Spirit and those were at least compromised by Joachimism.”¹⁷⁴ Thomas also

170 “Sic igitur per ipsam Dei visionem mens beata fit in intelligendo unum cum Deo. Oportet igitur intelligens et intellectum esse quodammodo unum. Et ideo Deo regnante in sanctis, et ipsi etiam cum Deo conregnabunt, et ideo ex eorum persona dicitur Apoc. V, 10: fecisti nos Deo nostro regnum et sacerdotes, et regnabimus super terram.” *Compendium Theologiae* L.2 C.9.

171 For discussion of that controversy, see Torrell I.75-95, Viviano, *Kingdom*, 57-60, and Kevin Madigan, *Olivi and the Interpretation of Matthew in the High Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 57-61.

172 On Joachim and Aquinas, see Viviano, *Kingdom*, 57-60; for more discussion of the Joachite controversy, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 301-3 for a brief overview, and Madigan, 29-44, 143-44 for more details on Joachim's thought.

173 For Thomas, at least. The controversy appears to have been at its height when this portion of the *Summa* was being composed, for Horst, 261, dates the *Secunda Secundae* to contemporaneous with the *Contra retrahentes*. Torrell, meanwhile, places the *Prima Secundae* and *Secunda Secundae* shortly after the *Contra retrahentes*; see Torrell I.329 for his chronology.

174 Viviano, *Kingdom*, 66.

mentions the kingdom numerous times in his three works—*Contra Impugnantes*, *De Perfectione*, and *Contra Retrahentes*—that address these and other controversies related to the new orders. In the first, in Part 2, Chapter 5 and in support of the contention that not just contempt for riches, but actual lack of them, was the best situation as concerns the fate of the soul, he cites a Gloss on Matthew 19:23 that argues “the best thing of all is neither to have nor love riches.”¹⁷⁵ Many of the other references to the Kingdom in these polemics refer to those parts of Matthew where it is associated with poverty, or in the dispute over the apocalyptic predictions made by the opponents of the mendicant orders,¹⁷⁶ but a few passages stand out as providing new insight into the question of the Kingdom.

Again in *Contra Impugnantes*, when discussing the question of whether religious should study, Aquinas includes a quote from St. Jerome on Sacred Scripture: “I ask you, most beloved brother, to live among these [books], to meditate on them, know nothing else, and seek nothing else. Is it not clear to you that this is the habitation of the kingdom of heaven on earth?”¹⁷⁷ Thomas concludes that “from this it stands that in the study of sacred Scripture one abides in the heavenly conversation”—that is, in the Kingdom and the Beatific Vision. It has already been established that contemplation serves as a foretaste of the vision; here, Thomas clarifies the definition to encompass the study of Scripture.

175 “de omnibus tutius est nec habere nec amare divitias” *Contra Impugnantes*, Leonine text, 1970, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, P.2 C.5 co.

176 Viviano claims that “this situation provided a real threat to the leadership of the church and a challenge to the greatest theologians of the Franciscans and Dominicans, Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas respectively.” (*Kingdom*, 59) In that point, he is on undisputed ground, but to state that “this crisis also helps to explain the relative blindness of these great men to the central of the gospel theme of the kingdom of God” (*ibid.*) overstates the point and seems to presume that a historical-apocalyptic interpretation of the Kingdom is the only legitimate one. We will return to this point in the Conclusion to this dissertation.

177 “oro te, frater carissime, inter haec vivere, ista meditari, nihil aliud nosse, nihil aliud quaerere. Nonne videtur tibi iam hic in terris regni caelestis habitaculum?” *Contra Impugnantes*, Part 3, Chapter 4, co.

Chapter 7 of *De Perfectione* largely repeats the same comments on Matthew 19:23 as are found in the *Commentary*, although Thomas is again careful to distinguish poverty as a *means* to perfection, rather than perfection itself.¹⁷⁸ Chapter 24 also repeats the parallel between bishops and kings, saying that “in the kingdom of the Church bishops are anointed on account of them principally having care of the kingdom,”¹⁷⁹ just as kings are anointed, while lesser ministers in both ecclesiastical and worldly governments are not.

The introduction to *Contra Retrahentes* repeats several favorite themes of Thomas on the Kingdom—the distinction between the earthly kingdom promised by the Old Law and the Kingdom of Heaven promised in the New, and the citation of Matthew 19:21 as a counsel of perfection. Beyond that, little more is said of the Kingdom here.

Collations and Sermons

Expositio in orationem dominicam

We have seen some of Thomas' other references to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer, but this sermon is his most extended treatment. Here, the petition is associated with the gift of piety, “a devout and loving affection for our Father, and for all men in misery.”¹⁸⁰ After so many references to the Kingdom as associated with the intellect, this connection to love makes for an interesting contrast, although given the similar emphasis on charity, it comes as no surprise

178 See *De Perfectione*, Leonine edition, 1970, translated to electronic format by Roberto Busa, SJ, reviewed by Enrique Alarcón, hosted at corpusthomisticum.org, accessed on April 9, 2016, C.7.

179 “... in regno Ecclesiae episcopus ungitur tanquam principaliter habens curam regiminis” *De Perfectione*, C.24.

180 “... dulcis et devotus affectus ad patrem, et ad omnem hominem in miseria constitutum.” *Expositio in orationem dominicam*, Art. 2. Latin text and English translation hosted at www.dhspriory.org/thomas/PaterNoster.htm, accessed on April 9, 2016.

The tension between the present and the eschatological dimensions of the Kingdom is highlighted in Thomas' next point: "It could be asked: since the kingdom of God forever has been, why therefore do we petition that it come?"¹⁸¹ Aquinas gives three answers. The first is that the kingdom is yet to be fully manifested in this world: "sometimes a king has only a right to a kingdom or his dominion, and his dominion over his kingdom is not yet declared, because the men of the kingdom have not yet been subjected to him."¹⁸² Thus, in one sense, this petition is for Christ's final coming and conquest of his enemies at the end of the world, "so that the just might be converted, sinners punished, and death destroyed."¹⁸³ The use of the term 'converted' (*convertantur*) seems odd, but Thomas explains that "men are subject to Christ in two ways, either willingly or unwillingly ... therefore one or the other of two things will be necessary: namely, either that man should do the will of God by subjecting himself to His commands, and the just do so, or that God should exert His will over all things, punishing them, and He does this to sinners and His enemies."¹⁸⁴ The implication is that the just will be brought into full conformity with the divine will, while impenitent sinners will receive their just punishment. This is why "it is given to the saints to ask that the kingdom of God should come, namely, that they themselves should be fully subjected to Him."¹⁸⁵ This triumph of God's will extends to the destruction of death, "for since Christ is life, it is not possible for death to be in His kingdom."¹⁸⁶

181 "Posset autem quaeri: regnum Dei semper fuit: quare ergo petimus quod veniat?" *Expositio in orationem dominicam*, Art. 2.

182 "... aliquando rex habet ius regni solum, seu dominii: et tamen nondum dominium ipsius regni est declaratum, quia nondum homines regni sunt ei subiecti." *Expositio in orationem dominicam*, Art. 2.

183 "... ut iusti convertantur, peccatores puniantur, et mors destruat." *Expositio in orationem dominicam*, Art. 2.

184 "Nam homines dupliciter subiiciuntur Christo: aut voluntarii, aut inviti. ... alterum duorum erit necessarium: ut scilicet aut homo faciat voluntatem Dei subiiciendo se mandatis eius, et hoc facient iusti; aut Deus faciat de omnibus voluntatem suam puniendo eos, et hoc faciet peccatoribus et inimicis suis." *Expositio in orationem dominicam*, Art. 2.

185 "... ideo sanctis est datum quaerere quod adveniat regnum Dei, scilicet quod ipsi totaliter subiiciantur ei" *Expositio in orationem dominicam*, Art. 2.

186 "Cum enim Christus sit vita, non potest in regno eius esse mors." *Expositio in orationem dominicam*, Art. 2.

The second application of the petition is to “the glory of paradise” (*gloria Paradisi*). This is because, Aquinas says, “nothing other than a government can be called a kingdom”¹⁸⁷ and “the best government is where nothing can be found that is contrary to the will of the ruler.”¹⁸⁸ Though this text is not found in Joanne Edwards' dissertation on the Kingdom in Aquinas, it certainly supports her contention that the Kingdom is, in one sense, the providential plan of God.¹⁸⁹ This is buttressed by the next statement, that God's goal is the salvation or well-being of men (*salus hominum*), and “this will be so principally in Paradise, where there will be nothing opposing man's salvation. ... Therefore, when we ask *thy kingdom come*, we pray that we might participate in the kingdom of heaven and the glory of paradise.”¹⁹⁰

There are three qualities, according to this sermon, that make the kingdom desirable: justice, freedom and riches. “For here the evil are mixed in with the good, but there will be no evil and no sinners.”¹⁹¹ All men, according to Aquinas, desire liberty but often fail to find it here on earth; in Heaven, “there will be every kind of freedom, against all servitude.”¹⁹² This is because “all shall be of the same will with God, and God will will whatever the saints will, and the saints whatever God will,”¹⁹³ making Heaven both purely monarchical and purely democratic. The riches are in reference to the promises of Isaiah 64:4 and Psalms 102:5, and the fact that “all things which man seeks will be found more perfectly and excellently in God alone than in the

187 “... nam regnum nihil aliud dicitur nisi regimen.” *Expositio in orationem dominam*, Art. 2.

188 “... est optimum regimen ubi nihil invenitur contra voluntatem regentis.” *Expositio in orationem dominam*.

189 Edwards, 8-9.

190 “... hoc potissime erit in Paradiso, ubi nihil erit saluti hominum repugnans. ... Cum ergo petimus: adveniat regnum tuum, oramus, ut simus participes regni caelestis et gloriae Paradisi.” *Expositio in orationem dominam*, Art. 2.

191 “Hic enim mali sunt mixti bonis; sed ibi nullus malus erit, et nullus peccator.” *Expositio in orationem dominam*, Art. 2.

192 “... sed ibi erit omnimoda libertas contra omnem servitutem.” *Expositio in orationem dominam*, Art. 2.

193 “... quia omnes erunt eiusdem voluntatis cum Deo, et Deus volet quicquid sancti volent, et sancti quicquid Deus voluerit” *Expositio in orationem dominam*, Art. 2.

world.”¹⁹⁴

The last meaning of the kingdom in this sermon returns to the theme of the interior kingdom and the two kingdoms in conflict, “because sometimes sin reigns in this world. And this is when man is so disposed that he immediately follows and pursues a sinful appetite (*appetitus peccati*).”¹⁹⁵ In opposition to this, “we pray that in us not sin but God shall reign.”¹⁹⁶

All three forms of the kingdom—the providential, the eschatological, and the internal—are connected to the Beatitude “blessed are the meek” by Thomas, which involves trusting in God's justice instead of avenging yourself, disdain for earthly things out of confidence in heavenly ones, and the humility needed so that God may reign in your heart.¹⁹⁷

Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum

The sermons on the Apostle's Creed also speak of the kingdom; Thomas first brings it in when speaking of the fourth article, “He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.” Considering this, Thomas turns his attention to the punishments due to sin, and names the fifth as “we incur banishment from the Kingdom.”¹⁹⁸ Thomas actually introduces the analogy to kingship at the start of this article, making analogies to royal garments and proclamations to account for the severity of the crime committed in the Crucifixion, and returns to it here. “They who offend kings are compelled to be exiled from the kingdom. And so man, on account of sin, is expelled from Paradise. ... But Christ by His passion opened that gate and

194 “... quod homo inveniet omnia in solo Deo excellentius et perfectius omni eo quod in mundo quaeritur.” *Expositio in orationem Dominam*, Art. 2.

195 “... quia aliquando in mundo isto regnat peccatum. Et hoc est quando homo est ita dispositus quod statim sequitur et prosequitur appetitus peccati.” *Expositio in orationem Dominam*, Art. 2.

196 “... oramus quod non regnet in nobis peccatum, sed Deus.” *Expositio in orationem Dominam*, Art. 2.

197 *Expositio in orationem Dominam*, Art. 2.

198 “... incurrimus exilium regni.” *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, Art. 4, co. Latin text and English translation hosted at <http://www.dhspriority.org/thomas/Creed.htm>, accessed on April 9, 2016.

recalled the exiles to the kingdom.”¹⁹⁹

The themes of conquest and conflicting kingdoms recur in the section treating of the first part of the fifth article, “He descended to the dead.” Aquinas gives four reasons for Christ descending into the underworld, and the third is to complete his defeat of the Devil, for “one perfectly conquers another in something when, not only does he defeat him on the battlefield, but when one invades his enemy's own home and takes from him his home and the seat of his kingdom.”²⁰⁰ Following Colossians 2:15 and the Creed, Aquinas depicts Christ as despoiling the devil, imprisoning the enemy “in his own house, which is the underworld”²⁰¹ and adding the *Infernum* to His own dominions alongside Heaven and Earth.

The Kingdom is mentioned briefly in the article on the Ascension, as Jesus ascended so that, among other things, “he might restore secure to us possession of the heavenly kingdom.”²⁰² Article 10 speaks of Baptism and Extreme Unction as both preparing the soul, in different contexts, to enter that kingdom, and Article 11 contains a passing reference to the clarity possessed by those who inherit it.

Academic Sermons

The ‘occasional’ academic sermons that fall outside Thomas’ series on the various prayers, commandments and articles of faith are harder to track and authenticate,²⁰³ but as Mark-

199 “Nam qui offendunt reges, exulare coguntur a regno. Sic et homo propter peccatum expellitur de Paradiso. ... Sed Christus sua passione ianuam illam aperuit, et ad regnum exules revocavit.” *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, Art. 4, co.

200 “. Tunc enim perfecte triumphat aliquis de aliquo, quando non solum vincit eum in campo, sed etiam invadit eum usque in domum propriam, et aufert ei sedem regni et domum suam.” *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, Art. 5, co.

201 “in domo sua quae est Infernus.” *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, Art. 5, co.

202 “nos securos redderet de possessione regni caelestis,” *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, Art. 6, co.

203 See *Thomas Aquinas: The Academic Sermons (The Fathers of the Church: Medieval Continuation, Volume II)*, tr. and introduction by Mark-Robin Hoogland, C.P. (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press,

Robin Hoogland points out, this does provide us with a less complicated, albeit less comprehensive, manuscript tradition. The fact that these sermons were originally delivered in Latin, as opposed to the Italian of the other sermons, also makes it likely that more of the ‘original Thomas’ is preserved.²⁰⁴

The occasional sermons make heavy use of Matthew’s Gospel and the Psalter, which provides a point of connection to the main body of this dissertation.²⁰⁵ They also focus substantially on contemplation and charity; “beside the contemplation of God’s love for us and our love for God as a response to it, there is a strong emphasis on active love of the neighbor, relatively more than in his theological works.”²⁰⁶ However, on the latter point, remember Thomas’ development of the Parable of the Vineyard in Matthew 20, where he speaks of the salvation of others as a key component of charity,²⁰⁷ and the discussion of the Parable of the Talents, where contemplation and teaching go hand in hand.

Sermon 1, *Veniet Desideratus*, given on the first Sunday of Advent, speaks of Christ as “the one reigning king of the whole world himself, whose dominion would be universal, whose empire universal, and whose reign eternal.”²⁰⁸ Thomas emphasizes the universality of the response to Christ in the two accounts of the Nativity, and goes on to connect this to the universality of the New Law. “Furthermore, he came so that there would be one law moving the people of the whole world forward.”²⁰⁹ The role of Christ as judge is also highlighted here, and

2010), 3-7. Due to the superiority of the manuscripts that Hoogland was working from to those that are currently available to the public, I will be relying on his translation for this section of the paper.

204 *Academic Sermons*, 5-6.

205 *Academic Sermons*, 10.

206 *Academic Sermons*, 13.

207 See also Sermon 11, *Emitte Spiritum*, ad 1.1; *Academic Sermons*, 143.

208 *Veniet desideratus*, 1.2.1; *Academic Sermons*, 27.

209 *Veniet desideratus*, 1.2.2; *Academic Sermons*, 27.

the aspects of king, judge and warrior are united in a concluding quotation of 1 Samuel 8:20.²¹⁰

Sermon 2, *Lauda et Letare*, is another Advent sermon and contains a passing but intriguing reference: “Therefore the Lord says in Mt 21.5 and Zec 9.9: ‘Say to the daughter of Zion’, that is, to the soul that tends towards contemplating the benefits of God through meditation: ‘Your king is coming for you.’”²¹¹ Thus, all are encouraged to become ‘daughters of Zion’ through contemplation so that they might see the glory of the King.²¹²

The fourth Sermon, *Osanna Filio David*, is dated by Hoogland to December 1, 1269, another First Sunday of Advent. We return in this sermon to Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem, as recounted in Matthew. The kingship in this sermon is understood as the power and authority to set the world free from the oppression of the devil.²¹³ The analogy of servants of a king from Matthew 4 is repeated here in regard to the Apostles, with an emphasis on the courage by which they “conquered kingdoms.”²¹⁴ The parallels between David and Christ—king, warrior, and favored of God—that we saw in Matthew 1 are also repeated here.²¹⁵

Two years later, according to Hoogland, Thomas delivered another sermon on the First Sunday of Advent on another part of the same narrative, this time choosing Matthew 21:5. From that, we get the title of Sermon 5, *Ecce Rex Tuus*. Though most of the sermon speaks of Christ’s coming, it also provides us with a definition of what makes one a king. Citing Romans 13, Thomas says that “authority of dominion” is necessary for a king, but not sufficient. “Four characteristics are required for calling someone a king, and if one of the four is lacking, he is not called king. For a king ought to be first, the only king; second, he ought to have full power; third,

210 *Veniet desideratus*, 1.2.3; *Academic Sermons*, 28.

211 *Lauda et Letare*, 1.1; *Academic Sermons*, 35.

212 *Lauda et Letare*, 1.1; *Academic Sermons*, 36.

213 *Osanna Filio David*, 1.2; *Academic Sermons*, 49-50.

214 *Osanna Filio David*, 1.2.1, quoting Heb 11.33; *Academic Sermons*, 50.

215 *Osanna Filio David*, 2.1—2.1.3; *Academic Sermons*, 58-59.

full jurisdiction; and fourth, the equity of justice.”²¹⁶ The oneness of the King is here identified with the divinity, “for the Son with the Father will be one Lord, our King.”²¹⁷

The fullness of power is demonstrated in Christ’s authority over the Law, for “when Christ came, the Law from God would be changed as for the ceremonial laws. Thus Christ himself is the One who can establish our law.”²¹⁸ The link between lawgiving and kingship that has been implied so many other places in Thomas is made explicit here: “the Lord is our lawgiver, and by consequence he is our king.”²¹⁹

The fullness of jurisdiction is connected with the universality of salvation, and the equity of justice with the ordering of the kingdom for the common good. These two are united in Thomas’ concluding statement in this section that “he who has come to serve surely came to give his life for the redemption of many, and to lead the redeemed to eternal glory.”²²⁰

Thomas returns to the topic of kingship in the *collatio* of this sermon, where he says that “in a special way he is called “your king”, that is, the king of humankind.”²²¹ There are four reasons for this. First, of course, is the image of God in mankind; second is God’s special love for humanity, which is demonstrated by the fact that “God has raised the human being to the rank and equality of the angels”—a thing unique in the created order.²²² The third reason is similar, “human beings are subject to divine providence in a special way,”²²³ being prepared for eternal life, which harmonizes with Joanne Edwards’ argument about the providential nature of the Kingdom. The fourth reason returns to one of the comments on this passage in the *Commentary*

216 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2; *Academic Sermons*, 68.

217 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2.1.1; *Academic Sermons*, 68.

218 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2.1.2; *Academic Sermons*, 69.

219 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2.1.2; *Academic Sermons*, 69.

220 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2.1.4; *Academic Sermons*, 70.

221 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2.2; *Academic Sermons*, 71.

222 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2.2.2; *Academic Sermons*, 72-3.

223 *Ecce Rex Tuus*, 2.2.3; *Academic Sermons*, 73.

on *Matthew*: Christ can be our king because he is also our brother, that is, he shares human nature with us, in fulfillment of the Law's requirements that the king be of the nation of Israel.

Thomas' two All Saints' Day sermons, *Beati Qui Habitant* and *Beata gens*, provide some of his most extensive eschatological work. *Beati qui habitant* opens with a statement emphasizing the unity of the divine kingdom, stating that “no one should rightly be ignorant of knowing that this is one society of God, angels and man.”²²⁴ This community is grounded in the fact that “they share the same end, namely, happiness, for God is happy, and angels attain happiness by effort, and people do, too. But God has it by essence, whereas the others have it by participation.”²²⁵ The participatory element thus reappears here as a foundational aspect of the community of the blessed. Much of this sermon repeats already established points on happiness, including the division between worldly, active and contemplative happiness.²²⁶ Thomas also reiterates the last Beatitude as containing all the others, for “if someone is pulled away from happiness because of persecution, he is not strong in poverty, in mildness and in the other virtues.”²²⁷ All three such forms of happiness are possessed by the saints, according to Thomas—riches in the abode, community in justice, and contemplation of divine things.

Beata gens repeats the point that “the perfect happiness of the saints in their heavenly homeland consists of knowing God,”²²⁸ The two components of this, following 1 John 3:2, are that we shall see God as He is and thus be like unto Him. Thomas further applies the inchoate

224 “Unam esse societatem Dei et Angelorum et hominum nullus recte sciens ignorat.” *Beati qui habitant*, Pars 1., Textum a Th. Kaeppli in Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum 1943 editum, hosted at <http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/pbh.html>. See also *Academic Sermons*, 281.

225 *Beati Qui Habitant*, introduction; *Academic Sermons*, 281.

226 *Beati Qui Habitant*, 2-2.3; *Academic Sermons*, 288-292. The second division is described as ‘political’ here, rather than simply active, but it is in keeping with Thomas’ Aristotelianism to see the political life as the peak of the active life.

227 *Beati Qui Habitant*, 2.3; *Academic Sermons*, 292.

228 *Beata Gens*, 2.3.1; *Academic Sermons*, 303.

nature of this perfection in the present life to his preaching: “If you want to arrive at similarity with God in the homeland, you ought to apply yourself to becoming similar to him in good works here.”²²⁹ This returns to the centrality of charity for the Kingdom and is reminiscent of the focus on justice in Romans 14 and the *salutem aliorum* mentioned in the vineyard parable in Matthew 20.

Overall Conclusions

The approach taken in this chapter favors those parts of Aquinas' other theological work that mention the Kingdom explicitly and harmonize with his Scriptural commentaries. The *Commentary on the Sentences* thus provides us, in this reading, with the first inklings of the concept of the Kingdom that we see in the *Commentary on Matthew, John* and elsewhere.

The explicit mentions of the Kingdom in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*²³⁰ follow a similar pattern, as well as correcting any tendencies towards millenarianism,²³¹ but with a new element added: namely, the focus on wisdom. The *Summa Theologiae* gives us a greater emphasis on charity, the centrality of Christ to the Kingdom, and the application of his merits through the sacraments to make believers into citizens and co-heirs of His Kingdom.

Many of Thomas' *opusculae* also highlight the relation of charity and sacramental penance to the Kingdom, though the *Compendium Theologiae* also contains strong statements about the importance of wisdom and the eschatological Kingdom to which believers are joined through both knowledge and love. The works on the mendicant controversy likewise emphasize

229 *Beata Gens*, 2.3.1; *Academic Sermons*, 304.

230 As opposed to the broader interpretation adopted by Edwards.

231 Perhaps as a reaction against Joachite ideas of the “new age of the Spirit.”

that the Kingdom is a matter of internal disposition and virtue rather than external behaviors and regulations.

Finally, the collations and sermons include examples of how Aquinas applies his theory of the Kingdom for a popular audience. The commentary on the Lord's Prayer explains the present and future dimensions of the Kingdom and how it relates to God's divine plan and its manifestation both within and at the end of history. It also explains the desirability of the Kingdom, and what it fundamentally means to be a part of it. The commentary on the Apostle's Creed, by contrast, focuses on the historical unfolding of the Kingdom in Christ's Passion and Resurrection, and the hints at it contained in the sacraments of the Church. Finally, the “academic sermons” reiterate many of the same points as Thomas' Biblical commentaries, chosen with an emphasis on relation to specific feasts of the Church, events in the life of Christ, and practical application to the life of believers, who are exhorted to pursue contemplation and charity.

Having surveyed these texts and the rest of Thomas' work in the previous chapters, we can safely say that, *contra* Viviano, there is more to Thomas' teaching on the Kingdom than just a repudiation of Joachite ideas or a confused mish-mash of patristic traditions.²³² By contrast, Edwards' survey of the Kingdom through the lens of the *Summae* winds up in general agreement with the Kingdom as seen through the Scriptural works, but with differences of emphasis that allow the two works to exist in parallel. Edwards' primary focus is on divine providence and wisdom, and the Kingdom as the unfolding of that wisdom with a special role for intelligent creatures. This dissertation finds much the same focus in Thomas' scriptural works, but with a greater emphasis on how that plan and wisdom are manifested and received by rational creatures

232 Cf. Viviano, “Kingdom in Albert and Aquinas”, 508-13.

in history and in relation to Christ and his Church.²³³ As an example, Edwards’ dissertation starts with the special role of rational creatures in creation, as discussed in the *Summae*, and discusses their fulfillment with focus on the questions of law in the abstract, nature and grace,²³⁴ while this dissertation began with the centrality of preaching, contemplation and the New Law in Aquinas’ commentaries on the Gospels and emphasizes those as means of conveying grace to attain the status of *comprehensor*. The difference between the two dissertations is like unto the difference between their sources—Edwards surveys things with the philosophical and systematic approach of the *Summa Theologiae*, while this dissertation takes the narrative of Scripture and the commentaries and works to build something from that foundation. The result is the same truth, but seen from different angles and with different features emphasized. This highlights the coherence and depth of Aquinas’ understanding of the Kingdom of God as a reality that even “in its imperfect state, is *truly* the Kingdom of God – for there is but one Kingdom of God – but analogically, inchoatively, and figuratively.”²³⁵

With all of St. Thomas’ works on the Kingdom of God having been considered, we are almost ready to reach some conclusions. Before doing so, however, we should take a moment to set the Angelic Doctor in his historical and theological context. Thus, the next chapter will consider two other Dominican thinkers on this subject—Hugh of St. Cher, representative of an earlier generation of Dominicans and a profound influence on medieval Scriptural exegesis, and Albertus Magnus, Thomas’ mentor and master. Using their commentaries on the Gospel of Matthew, we can gain a better sense of where Thomas is continuing an established tradition, and where he breaks new ground in this understanding of the Kingdom.

233 Cf. Edwards, 35-40, 60-64.

234 Cf. Edwards, 37-38.

235 Edwards, 40.

Chapter V: Aquinas in Contrast to Other 13th-Century Dominican Commentaries on Matthew

Many scholars and teachers of medieval theology have taken pains to remind their students that Thomas Aquinas was not the only theologian of the Middle Ages. While it can be argued that Thomas was the peak of the tradition, he was working within a tradition—and not just the general Catholic tradition as a whole, but a tradition informed by the new university culture and mendicant orders.¹

This chapter will examine the kingdom in Gospel commentaries on Matthew by two other famous Dominicans who, like Thomas, taught at the University of Paris in the 13th century. First, it will examine the *postilla* of Hugh of St. Cher. Following that, we will turn to the *Super Matthaеum* by Thomas' mentor, St. Albertus Magnus. The focus will be on these two commentaries in comparison to Aquinas' own work, so rather than tracing every possible mention of the kingdom and the kingship of Christ in those commentaries, I will examine the verses where Thomas made key points about the Kingdom and look for resemblances or differences in his predecessors. While the three Dominicans are working within the same general parameters and coming to many of the same conclusions, Hugh hearkens back to the patristic era with his emphasis on the moral sense, while Albert and Thomas bear more of the stamp of the university and the scholastic method, focusing more on precise definitions and distinctions of the terms in the literal sense, and avoiding the elaborate allegorical constructs that Hugh tends to

¹The extent of how much these factors influenced Thomas and the other thinkers under consideration here is debatable. Kevin Madigan states that “Thomas Aquinas shows almost no consciousness in his gospel commentaries of writing as a mendicant friar, nor do typically Dominican presuppositions seem to govern his exegesis of the Gospels in any significant way. The same could be said of Albertus Magnus.” (*Olivi and the Interpretation of Matthew in the High Middle Ages*, 5) While the mendicant controversy which Madigan is concerned with makes little appearance in the Gospel commentaries, I believe that Chapter 2 of this dissertation has shown that other elements of Dominican life—such as contemplation and preaching—have a stronger presence in Thomas' commentary than the above statement would admit.

build. In addition, while all three of them draw heavily on Scripture and the Fathers, Albert and Thomas make extensive use of Aristotle as well, while “the Philosopher” features little, if at all, in Hugh’s work on the Kingdom.² The resemblance between the master and the student is very strong on this topic, but even there, there are differences, with Albert drawing more heavily on Pseudo-Dionysius and Aquinas on Aristotle.

Hugh of St. Cher, *In Evangelia Matthaeum*

Hugh of St. Cher enters history and the Dominican order in 1225 and 1226, roughly contemporaneous with Thomas' birth.³ “A bachelor of theology and probably also a doctor of canon law,”⁴ he spent the first half of the 1230s teaching at the University of Paris, afterwards served as Provincial of the Order, and became the first cardinal selected from the Order of Preachers in 1244.⁵ Smalley credits him with playing the leading role in forming the Dominican tradition of Scripture commentary, and his work definitely influenced St. Albert and likely St. Thomas as well.⁶

Torrell thinks it highly probable that Hugh and Thomas met when the latter was a young student of Albert's in Cologne; “he was at the time (1251-53) Innocent IV's legate in Germany and in that role made several trips to Cologne, where he would have had every opportunity to

2 The possible exception may be the distinction between kingdom and tyranny in Hugh’s comments on the Lord’s Prayer.

3 Aaron Canty, *Light & Glory: The Transfiguration of Christ in Early Franciscan and Dominican Theology* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 21; Beryl Smalley, *The Gospel in the Schools, c. 1100—c. 1280* (London: Hambledon Press, 1985), 118-20. For more on Hugh of St. Cher, see *Hugues de Saint-Cher (+1263) : bibliste et théologien* by Louis-Jacques Bataillon, Gilbert Dahan, and Pierre-Marie Gy (Turnhout: Belgium, 2004).

4 Canty, 21.

5 Canty, 21, also Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 270.

6 Smalley, *Study*, 270, 273.

converse with Master Albert as well as with his assistant, Thomas.”⁷ It is documented that a decade later, Thomas consulted with Hugh on the subject of buying and selling on credit in regard to a request from James of Viterbo.⁸

Hugh's commentary on the Gospel of Matthew is a section of his extensive *postilla* on the Bible, which was compiled in the early 13th century at the University of Paris.⁹ The *postilla* appears to have been done as a collaborative work by Hugh and his assistants¹⁰ sometime in the 1230s. As the work of a Paris Dominican only a few years before Thomas' own studies at the University, and the standard for *postillae* going forward,¹¹ it is quite likely that Thomas would have been familiar with it. Smalley identifies numerous quotations and references in Thomas' master Albert, as well as other Parisian Dominicans,¹² and Thomas did make heavy use of Hugh's *postilla* on Isaiah in his own commentary on that work.¹³ However, Smalley also notes that “collation makes it clear that he did not have Hugh's postills as a constant guide to study on his desk”¹⁴ when working on the Gospel commentaries.

Despite its historical importance, study or at least editing of the postills themselves has been somewhat neglected in later centuries; the most recent edition available at present is the Lyon edition of 1669.¹⁵ This may be because, as Kevin Madigan (following Smalley) notes,

7 Torrell, I.37.

8 Torrell, I.122.

9 See Madigan, 13-14, 22; Smalley, 270-75; and Canty, 22.

10 Madigan, 22.

11 Smalley, *Study*, 272-73.

12 Smalley, *Study*, 273, 300.

13 Wawrykow, 49.

14 Smalley, *Gospels*, 258.

15 Even Canty's work is forced to cite this edition. The difficulty has been mitigated for contemporary scholars by the fact that this edition has been scanned and uploaded to Google Books; citations in this dissertation are from the PDF copy available on that site. Even so, readings of and conclusions on Hugh's text must remain somewhat tentative and preliminary, due to the lack of a critical edition. Overall, Hugh of St. Cher does seem to be a neglected figure in the present state of medieval studies; references to him more recent than Smalley appear to be scanty, aside from the collection of French essays referenced above

“Hugh's intention ... was not to produce a work of great invention but something rather like a *Catena Aurea*, with brief comments made for modernizing contemporary (especially moral) interpretation.”¹⁶ However, even if the work is not original, it provides us with a valuable insight into the tradition Thomas was working with and drawing from, and a point of contrast with the Angelic Doctor's personal work.

Prologue

Like Thomas, Hugh opens with commentary on Jerome's prologue to the Gospel of Matthew. Hugh follows Jerome on seeing Abraham as exemplar and source of Jesus' patriarchal role, and David as the same regarding his kingship. Unlike Thomas, Hugh appears to repeat the Gloss verbatim, stating after Jerome's comment *Primus scripsit* that “none [wrote] before him, several [wrote] after him.”¹⁷ Hugh gives the fourteen generations more symbolic significance than Thomas does, saying that “of these fourteen, four pertain to the New Testament, ten to the Old Testament”¹⁸--presumably in reference to the Four Gospels and Ten Commandments. The three periods of fourteen correspond to “before the law, for Abraham, under the law, for David, and after the law, for Joseph.”¹⁹ Hugh goes on to state that “it is shown that all men throughout history [*omnium temporum homines*]--before the law, under the law, after the law—are redeemed by Him”²⁰

A brief note on exegetical priorities can be found in commenting on the third paragraph

¹⁶ Madigan, 22.

¹⁷ “... ante quem nullus, post quem alii.” Hugh of St. Cher, *Tomus Sextus: In evangelia secundum Matthaeum, Lucam, Marcus, & Ioannem*, ed. Ioannis Huguetan & Guilliemi Barbier (Lyon, 1669), Google Books reproduction, hosted at <https://books.google.com/books?id=MmzLtM1FEuIC>, accessed on April 9, 2016, Prologue, 3r, Column B.

¹⁸ “quaterdenario, cuius quatuor ad Novum Testamentum, decem ad Vetus Testamentum pertinent.” *In evangelia*, Prologue, 3r, B.

¹⁹ “ante legem, ut Abrahae, sub legem, ut David, post legem, ut Ioseph.” *In evangelia*, Prologue, 3r, B.

²⁰ “ostendatur, quod omnium temporum homines, ante legem, sub lege, post lege per ipsum saluandi sunt.” *In evangelia*, Prologue, 3r, B.

of Jerome's prologue. Speaking of "the first or middle or perfect things to understand,"²¹ Hugh assigns the first to the historical sense of Scripture, the middle to the allegorical, and the perfect to the moral sense. This emphasis on the moral sense as the most perfect will recur throughout Hugh's commentary.

Chapters 1-2

Aside from noting Chrysostom as a source for David's royal dignity as the reason for naming him before Abraham in Matthew 1:1, and a passing reference to David as king and prophet²², little is said of the kingly role when introducing the genealogy, although the start of Chapter 2 contains the common reference to this point in history as the fulfillment of Genesis 49²³. Hugh's interpretation of the 'skipped' generations in the genealogy is that it fulfills the exclusion of those three generations mentioned in 1 Kings 21, and that the only men set out in the genealogy are those who have some connection to good men--"those set down here were either good men, fathers of good men, or sons of good men."²⁴

A comment on the name Jacob is made in the second place it appears in the genealogy, speaking of Joseph's father. The meaning 'supplanter' is mentioned, and "this designates Christ, who conquered the world and the devil."²⁵

On the visit of the Magi, Hugh uses some of the same sources and traditions that Thomas will later adopt, including seeing Herod in the moral sense as a symbol of the devil,²⁶ who "inquired diligently about the time and place [of the child's birth] so that he could kill him in infancy, that is at the beginning, lest he should bring salvation to man and take away his

21 "prima vel media vel perfecta cognoscere", from Jerome's Prologue as cited by Hugh in Prologue, 3v, a.

22 *In evangelia*, Chapter I, 4v.

23 *In evangelia*, Chapter II, 6v.

24 "quos ponit hic aut boni aut patres boni aut filii bonorum fuerunt." *In evangelia*, Chapter I, 5r, A.

25 "Hic est Christus, qui mundum & diabolum vicit." *In evangelia*, Chapter I, 5r, B.

26 In the section conveniently labeled "Moraliter", *In evangelia*, Chapter II, 7r, B.

kingdom.”²⁷

Chapter 3

As with Thomas, and as we will see again in Albert, Hugh cites Luke 17 that “the kingdom of God is within you.”²⁸ Some of the themes that Thomas develops more fully are included in brief here—the identification of the Kingdom with the Ten Commandments resembles the close ties that Thomas develops between Kingdom, law, and Scripture. There is also the statement that “Christ gives the kingdom in eternal beatitude, with the Gospel leading to the Kingdom,”²⁹ which prefigures Thomas' distinction between the fully realized Kingdom of the Beatific Vision and the eschaton, and the inchoate forms found in the soul, Scripture and the earthly Church.

Chapter 4

Hugh agrees that the offer made by the devil of the kingdoms of the world and all their glory--“riches, delights and honors”³⁰--was “not possible, but [the Devil] said this out of arrogance.”³¹

Hugh mentions Christ as 'victor' over the Devil at the conclusion of the temptation in the desert, but states that “we cannot know in what way [the angels] ministered” to Christ.³² The promise of the Kingdom in Matthew 4:17 is, as with the Baptist's proclamation in the previous

27 “... diligenter inquirat tempus & locum, ut occidat adhuc ipsum in infantia, hoc est in principio, ne si salus cruerit in virum, auferat ei regnum suum.” *In evangelia*, Chapter II, 7r, B.

28 *In evangelia*, Chapter III, 9v, A. And like Thomas and Albert, he uses *regnum caelorum* and *regnum Dei* interchangeably.

29 “Item Christus dans regnum aeterna beatitudo, Evangelium etiam inuitans ad Regnum.” *In evangelia*, Chapter III, 9v, A. Hugh also says that “here the curiosity of preachers is humbled” (“Hic autem suggillantur curiosi praedictores”) with regard speculations on angelic languages, hierarchies, and the like. John's preaching said nothing about these matters, Hugh points out, but told the people to do penance and avoid sin.

30 “... divitas, delicias, & honores.” *In evangelia*, Chapter IV, 12v, B. Thomas will not use *delicias*, but will agree with Hugh in associating this temptation with riches, honors, and the vice of greed.

31 “... non quod hoc possit, sed de arrogantia hoc dicit.” *In evangelia*, Chapter IV, 12v, B.

32 “... in quibus autem ministrabant, scire non possumus.” *In evangelia*, Chapter IV, 13r, A

chapter, interpreted primarily through the lens of the conjoined command to do penance.

Chapter 5

Hugh devotes extensive space to the first beatitude, but the focus is almost entirely on what is meant by “poverty of spirit.” Indeed, for Hugh, “the kingdom of heaven is poverty”³³--all the things symbolized by poverty of spirit, such as openness to divine gifts, humility, and piety, are also the Kingdom. This tendency will continue through Albert and Thomas, who also emphasize humility over literal poverty.³⁴ Hugh speaks more positively of literal poverty than his successors,³⁵ but the focus on “poverty of spirit” as opposed to literal poverty, which the *Catena* cites from Chrysostom (Pseudo- and actual) and Augustine, is present here.

Hugh argues that the statement about “blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake” is “not only the eighth beatitude, but illuminates the preceding, and refers to them singularly, so that blessed are the poor in spirit if they suffer persecution on account of righteousness, blessed are the meek if they suffer persecution on account of righteousness, and so for the others.”³⁶ Thomas will repeat the same theme in his own commentary on this beatitude, suggesting either a direct influence from Hugh or a shared derivation from Augustine,³⁷ but modified by the Fathers and Thomas' own sharper sense of the distinction between the present and future forms of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Hugh follows the Glossa in providing two readings of Matthew 5:19—those spoken of

33 “... ergo regnum caelorum pauperum esse.” *In evangelia*, Chapter V, 15v, A.

34 See Smalley, *Gospel*, 256, 263-64.

35 Smalley, *Gospel*, 141-43.

36 “Non est haec octava beatitudo solum, sed praecedentium illuminatio, & ad singulas referenda. Sic beati pauperes spiritu si persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam, beati mites si persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam, & sic de aliis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter V, 17r, A.

37 See *Catena Aurea* C.5 L.8, “Vel octava beatitudo tamquam ad caput redit ...” Hugh cites the same passage slightly later on in this commentary, so the question is whether Thomas knew it independently or via this commentary of Hugh.

will either be least in the Kingdom of Heaven, or those who are in the Kingdom will call those who break the law the least. In the latter case, those who teach others to do evil “will be most vilified and despised by those who enter in.”³⁸ This second application of the phrase is less present in Thomas—not entirely absent, for one can find echoes of it in the citations of Chrysostom on the Judgment or Gregory on reputation in the Church, but not placed on par with the first, as Hugh does here.

One point to note is that here³⁹, Hugh uses the term “Church of the Saints” (*Ecclesia Sanctorum*) rather than “Kingdom of Heaven” or even “Kingdom of God”; at later points (including commenting on Matthew 5:20), he identifies the kingdom as the Church Triumphant or the Church Militant. Hugh's commentary on Matthew 8 will explain more deeply how these two are related, and may provide a foundation for Thomas' understanding of the kingdom as fully manifest in the former and inchoate in the latter.

Chapter 6

Hugh's commentary on the Lord's Prayer is somewhat scattered, as he jumps about and includes multiple sources. The first part has very little to say about the petition *Thy kingdom come* in the Lord's Prayer, taking it as “may the Church Militant be united in triumph.”⁴⁰ He also includes a second section on the Prayer summarizing Chrysostom, where he speaks of the Kingdom as the Last Judgment. His first reading could be either temporally or eschatologically oriented, or both; the second section, of course, is purely eschatological. A third section speaks of this as meaning “give to us a spirit of understanding”⁴¹ and asks that “we may see you reigning

38 “... vilissimus & despectissimus illic ubi erit.” *In evangelia*, Chapter V, 18v, A.

39 Specifically, in *In evangelia*, Chapter V, 18v, A, when discussing Matthew 5:19. Hugh is drawing on the Gloss here.

40 “... id est, Ecclesia militans uniatur triumphanti.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 23v, B.

41 “... da nobis spiritum intellectus.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 24r, A. This is followed with the clause “quo mundo corde facti.”

in your saints.”⁴²

Hugh takes this opportunity to provide more extended commentary on the Kingdom. He makes the statement that “Sacred Scripture is called the Kingdom”⁴³ and cites Matthew 21 about how “the kingdom will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce fruit.” One of these fruits is understanding, according to Hugh, suggesting a link between the third definition of the petition, as mentioned above, and the idea that the Kingdom is Scripture, which we saw in Thomas connected to the same passage. Indeed, Thomas may be taking what Hugh hints at here and making it explicit.

Hugh goes on to state that “another is to be king and another to reign. Now God is king naturally, but he does not reign in all things, nor are all men in his kingdom, because not all do his will.”⁴⁴ Instead, “in all the wicked, not God but the Devil reigns, in those who do his will.”⁴⁵ Drawing on passages from Ephesians, Hugh speaks of light and darkness, but avoids dualism by pointing out that “the Devil and evil men are in the power of God, but they do not wish to be under God, so they are not in the Kingdom of God.”⁴⁶ The Kingdom is when God wishes to rule over men, and they freely wish to be under him—“when a king thinks for others to be under him by force, it is not in truth a kingdom, but tyranny.”⁴⁷ Since no one truly wishes to do the will of the Devil, he qualifies as a tyrant according to this definition. The distinction between kingship and tyranny goes back to Aristotle, of course, and it would be difficult to determine if Hugh is

42 “... te regnantem in sanctis tuis videamus.” *In evangelia* Chapter VI, 24r, A.

43 “Item regnum dicitur Sacra Scriptura.” *In evangelia* Chapter VI, 24r, A.

44 “Aliud est regnum esse & aliud regnare. Ecce Deus naturaliter rex est, sed non in omnibus regnat, nec omnes homines sunt regnum eius, quia nec faciunt omnes voluntatem eius.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 24r, A.

45 “Nam in omnibus iniquis, non Deus, sed diabolus regnat, qui faciunt eius voluntatem.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 24r, A.

46 “Diabolus & mali homines sunt in potestate Dei, tamen nolunt esse sub Deo, non sunt regnum Dei.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 24r, A.

47 “... quando autem rex cogit per violentiam esse sub se, illud quantum ad veritatem non est regnum, sed tyrannis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 24r, A.

the source for Albert and Aquinas making further use of this distinction, or if all three are pulling from the same Aristotelian framework.⁴⁸ If so, it would be one of the only times that Hugh makes use of Aristotelian thought in his commentary.

Still, “it is said, nevertheless, that there are two kingdoms in the world, of God and of the Devil, that is, of the just and unjust.”⁴⁹ After speaking of the goal that mankind be taken from the kingdom of the unjust and enter into the kingdom of the just, Hugh concludes that “while in a way both justice and wickedness reign, then with the extinction of evil, only justice will reign.”⁵⁰

On the command of Matthew 6:33 to “seek first the kingdom of God”, Hugh starts by distinguishing between three kinds of goods—eternal, spiritual and temporal, in that order of goodness. Therefore, “seek first what is first or greatest.”⁵¹ On the second half of the verse, “and his righteousness”, Hugh anticipates Thomas in following Chrysostom, describing justice, or spiritual goods, as the way to the kingdom.

Chapter 7

The warning of Matthew 7:21 is applied in various ways in Hugh—heretics, hypocrites, and those who otherwise fail to live up to the commandments of Christ all qualify.⁵² Hugh contrasts this to a passage from the prophet Joel that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved”, but to Hugh, that ‘calling’ involves the three virtues of faith, hope and charity, or the three conditions (which he mentioned earlier) of acting with heart, mouth and works.⁵³ While the terminology differs, Hugh and Thomas are fundamentally in agreement here.

48 The absence of this distinction from any of the sources in the *Catena Aurea* suggests that it is not a Patristic idea.
 49 “... dicit quod interim duo sunt regna in mundo, Dei & diaboli, id est iusti & iniqui.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 24r, A.

50 “Modo enim & iustitia & iniquitas regnant, tunc extincta iniquitate sola iustitia regnabit.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 24r, A-B.

51 “Quarite primum id est primo et principaliter.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VI, 26v, B.

52 *In evangelia*, Chapter VII, 29v (apparently misnumbered in the printed edition as 18v), B.

53 “... corde, ore, & opere;” *In evangelia*, Chapter VII, 29v, B.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 includes an interesting passage when commenting on Christ's healing of the centurion's servant. Hugh agrees with Thomas and the Fathers as seeing the “children of the kingdom” as the Jews, for “in them the Lord had ruled before, that is, their God by worship.”⁵⁴ This suggests a very liturgically centered understanding of the Kingdom, which may harmonize with Hugh’s other comments. Hugh follows this with a description of “the fourfold kingdom: the kingdom of the Church triumphant, the kingdom of the Church Militant, the kingdom of the devil, and the kingdom of the world.”⁵⁵ Each of these kingdoms is divided into three “provinces”: The Church Triumphant is divided according to the angelic hierarchies, while the Church Militant is divided into “the married, the continent and the virgins.”⁵⁶ The kingdom of the devil is divided into the 'provinces' of “pride, avarice, lust”, while the kingdom of the world has for its divisions “riches, delights, and honors”--provinces which easily lead to the three provinces of the devil's kingdom.⁵⁷ Hugh concludes this section by applying the “children of the kingdom” to clerics and religious who are “nominally” children of the first two kingdoms, but in reality belong to the latter two. While Smalley points out that “Hugh never mentions either his Order or his founder,”⁵⁸ passages such as this last one suggest a reforming spirit and reinforce Madigan's judgment that “signs of religious identity do flicker through on occasion.”⁵⁹

Chapter 10

Hugh addresses the definition of the Kingdom in his discussion of the Apostolic

54 “... in quibus ante regnabat Dominus, id est, quorum Deus erat per cultum.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VIII, 31v, A.

55 “... quadruplex regnum; regnum triumphantis Ecclesiae, regnum militantis, regnum diaboli, regnum mundi.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VIII, 31v, B.

56 “... coniugatorum, continentium, virginum.” *In evangelia*, Chapter VIII, 31v, B.

57 See *In evangelia*, Chapter VIII, 31v, B.

58 Beryl, *Gospels*, 138.

59 Madigan, 27.

commission. The 'main' flow of the text speaks of the approach as referring to Christ's upcoming Passion, as Thomas does at this same point. The Kingdom is also described as “Christ giving the kingdom, or the Gospel leading to the Kingdom, or eternal beatitude itself.”⁶⁰ This section also contains a fascinatingly enigmatic sidebar on the Kingdom, which divides it into three cities, apparently taking his cue from Romans 14:17. The first is “justice. In this dwell penitent sinners being punished for their sins.”⁶¹ Just men dwell there freely, but apparently move from there into “the city of peace, in which God dwells.”⁶² Hugh also says that “they will be lead from the city of peace to the city of joy,”⁶³ but unfortunately, he provides no details. Given his description of the “city of justice,” it is tempting to see this as one of the first references to the Church Suffering as a distinct part of the Church, with the 'city of peace' as the Church Triumphant and the 'city of joy' as the Eschatological Kingdom. This is, unfortunately, all speculative. As seen in Chapter 3, Thomas follows a similar pattern in commenting on Romans 14, but he points out that “these three things touched on here are possessed imperfectly in this life, perfectly when the saints will possess the kingdom of God prepared for them ... There, there will be perfect justice without any sin ... There, there will be peace without any disturbance of fear.”⁶⁴

Chapter 11

Hugh gives several interpretations of the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew 11:11-12. Regarding “least in the Kingdom of Heaven”, one possible explanation is based on charity, comparing John to “the newest angel in Heaven, and according to this, the kingdom of heaven is

60 “Christus dans regnum, vel Evangelium inuitans ad regnum, vel ipsa beatitudo aeterna.” *In evangelia*, Chapter X, 38v, B.i.

61 “Prima, iustitia. In hac habitant peccatores poenitentis punienda peccata sua.” *In evangelia*, Chapter X, 38v, B.ii.

62 “... ad civitatem pacis pervenitur. In hac habitat Deus.” *In evangelia*, Chapter X, 38v, B.ii.

63 “... de civitate pacis pervenitur ad civitatem gaudii.” *In evangelia*, Chapter X, 38v, B.ii.

64 “Haec autem tria quae hic tanguntur, imperfecte quidem in hac vita habentur, perfecte autem quando sancti possidebunt regnum Dei sibi paratum ... Ibi erit perfecta iustitia absque omni peccato ... Ibi erit pax absque omni perturbatione timoris.” Aquinas, *Commentary on Romans* C.14 L.2 ¶1128, 385-6.

the Church triumphant.”⁶⁵ Another possibility is a temporal priority; “who is less in the kingdom of heaven; that is, Christ, who was less in time, or in the opinion of many. And according to this the Kingdom of Heaven is the Church Militant.”⁶⁶ The Kingdom of Heaven in the second half of the statement, about 'suffering violence', can be understood as either the Church Militant or Church Triumphant, and Hugh favors the explanation from the Gloss that “on earth we are born into and claim and have heaven by virtue, which we cannot [attain] by nature.”⁶⁷ These are basically the same distinctions that Thomas will apply to this passage; given the similarities to the *Glossa*, both of them were probably using that as their source.

In his exposition of the moral sense of this passage, Hugh is clearer and more developed, both in comparison with his own reading of the literal sense and with Thomas. He refers to Romans 14:17 again, and says that “if you cannot seize or earn, at least be open to power and enter, or be compelled.”⁶⁸ Hugh goes on to lay out a series of gates to the kingdom, with each triad associated with a different direction and a different participle. Those who enter “from the East ... acquiring the kingdom of heaven: by works of mercy, by positions of judgment, by study of wisdom. From the West three gates by plundering: by hidden afflictions, by humble confessions, by secret prayers.”⁶⁹ The North is associated with suffering, either from the removal of good things, the imposition of afflictions, or the fear of threats. The South gates cover those

65 “... ut Angelus caeli novissimus, & secundum hoc regnum caelorum est Ecclesia triumphans.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43r, B.

66 “Qui autem minor est is regno caelorum, id est, Christus, qui minor fuit tempore, vel multorum opinione. Et secundum hoc regnum caelorum est Ecclesia militans.” *In evangelia*, Chapter X, 43r, B. Cf. *Glossa Ordinaria*, 11.11, Col. 0120D-0121 in *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 114, hosted at pld.chadwyck.com, accessed on April 10, 2016.

67 “... in terra nasci & caelum rapere & habere per virtutem, quod per naturam non possumus.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43v, A.

68 “Si non potes vel rapere vel emere, saltem vim patere & ingredi vel compulsus.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43v, A. The Latin is admittedly ambiguous; the above is my best rendering.

69 “Ab Oriente ... comparantibus regna caelorum, per opera misericordiae, per officia iustitiae, per studia sapientiae. Ab Occidente portae tres furantibus, per occultas afflictiones, per humiles confessiones, per secretas afflictiones.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43v, A.

who are compelled to enter, “fleeing corruption of will, distance of 'custom' or fragility of nature.”⁷⁰ As is common, where Thomas deals with the moral sense in a short and sober fashion, Hugh expands on it and length and builds an elaborate system based on this and other passages of Scripture.

Another interpretation, however, is that the kingdom only “seems to suffer force.”⁷¹ This is explained as similar to when the scribes and Pharisees saw tax collectors and other sinners entering the kingdom, “Therefore the kingdom of heaven suffered violence when publicans and sinners seized the kingdom of God, and scribes and Pharisees were ejected.”⁷² Similarly, “it is as if it were stolen where we have no right, and that right is for the angels to acquire”⁷³--a strange phrase, but perhaps a reference to the gratuitous nature of God's mercy and justification. Albert will make a similar argument in his own commentary.

Chapter 12

A comment on Matthew 12:25 contains numerous uses of the term *regnum*: “Note the Kingdom of Christ, giving a kingdom, the Gospel, leading to a kingdom, eternal beatitude, the very Kingdom.”⁷⁴ The Latin is a bit puzzling, but Hugh seems to be laying the foundation for the approach that Thomas will take in the Commentary on Matthew 3. The Kingdom is understood as both the Gospel which leads to eternal life, and everlasting life. That phrase *ipsum regnum* at the end could refer either to eternal life—a statement of the idea that all secondary senses of the

70 “... dum pravitas voluntatis, longinquitas consuetudinis, naturae fragilitas fugatur.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43v, A. *consuetudinis* can carry the meaning of an illicit affair, which may be what Hugh is getting at here.

71 “vim pati videtur”, *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43v, A.

72 “Regnum ergo caelorum vim patitur, cum Publicani & peccatores regnum Dei rapiunt, & Scribae & Phariseae eiiciuntur.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43v, A.

73 “Quasi enim rapere est, ubi nullum ius habemus, & quod Angelorum est acquirere.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XI, 43v, A.

74 “Nota regnum Christus, dans regnum, Evangelium, inuitans ad regnum, aeterna beatitudo, ipsum regnum.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XII, 46v, A.

Kingdom derive from the eschatological fulfillment of the Kingdom—or to Christ Himself. In either case, Hugh lays out foundations that Thomas will develop and systematize.

Hugh follows up with another sense of the Kingdom in Matthew 12:28. “Here the Kingdom of God is that power by which the impious are damned and separated from the faithful”⁷⁵--a somewhat distinctive perspective on the Kingdom as the eschatological judgment itself, rather than its fruits. This does, however, align with Thomas' more straightforward reading of the defeat of the demons as a sign of the kingdom.

Chapter 13

Like Thomas, Hugh sees the parables of Chapter 13 as concerned primarily with the Gospel message--“here the Evangelical doctrine is compared to seven things in seven parables.”⁷⁶ The mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven hidden in the parables are also described as “the secret things of Scripture. That is, what the book of the Gospel, kissed by the priest, opens, and is closed to others.”⁷⁷ Hugh identifies the three levels of return from the seed that fell on good ground with virgins, widows, and the married;⁷⁸ Thomas will do the same in his own commentary on this passage. Given that Hugh makes more of that division than Thomas does⁷⁹, it seems quite likely that Thomas is borrowing from Hugh here.

Hugh's exegesis of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares identifies the Kingdom as the Church⁸⁰, while in the parable of the Mustard Seed, he speaks of the Kingdom as the fervor of

75 “Regnum Dei idem est quod potestas, qua damnantur impii, & a fidelibus secernuntur.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XII, 46v, A.

76 “... hic autem doctrinam Evangelicam comparat septem rebus in septem parabolis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XIII, 48v, B.

77 “... abdita Scripturarum. Hinc est, quod codex Evangelicus a sacerdote deosculatur apertus, & ab aliis clausus.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XIII, 49v, A.

78 *In evangelia*, Chapter XIII, 49v, A.

79 See Hugh's division of the Church Militant when commenting on Matthew 8, above.

80 *In evangelia*, Chapter XIII, 50v, B.

charity, the Church, or the Gospel message, in keeping with the same traditions that Aquinas cites on this same parable. Charity is also used for the kingdom in the Parable of the Leaven, while the 'treasure' in the parable about the treasure in the field is the knowledge of Christ, citing Colossians 2, "In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom", and identifying the field with Scripture, although he also cites Augustine's interpretation. Like Thomas, Hugh also provides a multitude of patristic interpretations of the "pearl of great price."⁸¹

The conclusion of this section, on the "scribe instructed in the kingdom of Heaven", is read in the same ways as Thomas—the "kingdom of Heaven" refers to the Church (Hugh simply says *ecclesia* rather than the "office of the Apostles" used by Thomas), and "New and Old" refers either to the two Testaments or to promises and punishments.⁸²

Chapter 16

Hugh precedes and may inspire Aquinas in identifying the keys given to Peter as both the power and judgment regarding entry and entrance into the Kingdom. He also makes an interesting connection between the Kingdom and knowledge when he discusses the phrase "*will be loosed in Heaven*, that is, the Church which those who know this will join. Or *will be loosed in Heaven*, because the judgment of Heaven will confirm it because it is received from the present Church."⁸³ Indeed, Hugh provides extensive commentary on release from the bonds of sin.

As for the last verses of this chapter, Hugh and Thomas say almost exactly the same thing. Hugh concludes his commentary on this chapter by stating "note that this is the kingdom,

81 *In evangelia*, Chapter XIII, 52r.

82 *In evangelia*, Chapter XIII, 52v, A.

83 "*Erit solutum & in caelis*,] id est, Ecclesiae quae hoc scient communicabunt ei. Vel [*solutum erit & in caelis*] quia caelestis sententia confirmabit, ut a praesenti Ecclesia recipiatur." *In evangelia*, Chapter XVI, 58r, B.

heaven, eternal life, the present Church, the clarity which Christ was going to have.”⁸⁴ The last may be in anticipation of the Transfiguration.

Chapter 18

This chapter deals with “what ought to be done in the descent from the mountain of contemplation [in Chapter 17] to the activity of preaching,”⁸⁵ especially when it comes to the question of scandal. The first point on that topic is those “who enter the kingdom without scandal, namely the truly humble,”⁸⁶ by becoming like a child. Hugh's interpretation of the parable takes the centrality of humility as the main meaning, but his annotation on “enter the kingdom of Heaven” uses the phrasing “through the gate of the Church, that is, Christ”⁸⁷ This may be somewhat unusual for Hugh, as it can be read as the Church/Christ is the 'gateway' or 'port' of the Kingdom of Heaven; another possibility is that Christ is the gateway to the Church, which is accurate but reads as less Christocentric than we see in Thomas. Hugh then applies a twofold meaning to the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew 18:4, describing it as “the Church [*Ecclesiastica*] or the teaching of the Gospel.”⁸⁸ Both meanings fit naturally with the context of the dispute among the Apostles. Matthew 18:23-35 is also read in a twofold sense, where the kingdom is “the life of the just or the Church Militant.”⁸⁹

Chapter 19

Like Thomas, Hugh sees the little children of Matthew 19:13-14 as examples of humility;

84 “Nota quod est regnum, caelum, vita aeterna, praesens Ecclesia, claritas quam habiturus erat Christus.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XVI, 59r, A.

85 “... debent esse opera descendendum de monte contemplationis ad activam praedicationis,” *In evangelia*, Chapter XVIII, 60v, B.

86 “... quis possit intrare in regnum, sine scandalo, scilicet vere humilis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XVIII, 60v, B.

87 “... per ostium Ecclesiae, id est, Christum.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XVIII, 61r, A.

88 “... Ecclesiastica vel Evangelica Doctrina.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XVIII, 61r, A.

89 “... vita iustorum, vel Ecclesia militans.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XVIII, 62v, B.

the kingdom of Heaven here is defined as eternal life.⁹⁰ Likewise, Hugh shares the same general conclusions as Thomas about the rich entering the kingdom of Heaven, even to the point of arguing that a camel passing through the eye of a needle is less impossible “because it is not repugnant to the justice and power of God.”⁹¹

Chapter 20

Like Thomas, and following the same sources, Hugh applies the various hours of the first parable in this chapter to the various stages of salvation history or of human life. For Hugh, the subject of the parable is the present Church, and he uses the phrase “work in the present Church”⁹², which he will also use in discussing the Parable of the Wedding Feast in Matthew 22. This is also a point where Hugh gives his own application of the martial metaphor which we saw so much of in Thomas. “The life of man on earth is a battle [*militia*]. In hell he is conquered, in heaven he is the conqueror.”⁹³ The symbolism of the denarius is likewise the same in Hugh as it is in Thomas; much of this interpretation of the parable, as we saw in Chapter II, is drawn from patristic sources and traditions, which Thomas may have learned from Hugh's *postilla* or from independent sources.

Chapter 21

On Christ's statement to the Jewish leaders that “publicans and harlots will enter the kingdom of God before you”, Hugh's interpretation is fairly literal and straightforward—the examples he gives are Matthew and Mary Magdalene, and “the kingdom of Heaven” is described as “the heavenly Church.”⁹⁴

90 *In evangelia*, Chapter XIX, 64r.

91 “... quia hoc non repugnat Dei iustitiae, & potentiae,” *In evangelia*, Chapter XIX, 64v, A.

92 “... negotium quod sit in Ecclesia praesenti,” *In evangelia*, Chapter XX, 65r, A.

93 “Militia est vita hominis super terram. In inferno victi, in caelo victores.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XX, 65r, A.

94 “... caelorum ad Ecclesiam.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXI, 69r, A.

On the Parable of the Vineyard, Hugh brings out one of the traditions that Thomas will continue⁹⁵ in connecting the 'vineyard' imagery to the words of Isaiah, and sees it as the land of Israel, guarded by angels and with an altar established therein. Israel itself is further understood as a figure of the Church. Again, like Thomas, he applies the fates of the 'servants' in the parable to the prophets; the son, of course, is Christ. Hugh differs, though, in applying a more specific historical context to the conclusion of the parable. His comment on Matthew 21:41a ("He will lead those evil men to an evil end") is that "this was through Titus and Vespasian"⁹⁶--i.e., the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. This is a more explicit application of Scriptural prophecy to extra-Scriptural matters than we often see; perhaps Hugh was or would have been a bit more sympathetic to a Joachite reading of history.

Chapter 22

As mentioned earlier, the Kingdom of Heaven in the Parable of the Wedding Feast is described as "the present Church, that is, the work of the Church."⁹⁷ Hugh, like Thomas, uses Chrysostom here to read the King as God the Father and the son as Christ. Attending the wedding is taken by Hugh to mean "believing and acting,"⁹⁸ which is another example of his emphasis on the moral and practical sense of the Gospel message, especially in conjunction with the definition of the Church as its work. On a similar note, Matthew 22:11's comment about the king "seeing a man without a wedding garment" is read by Hugh as "for what one has done to be seen,"⁹⁹ reinforced by later citing Chrysostom's definition of the wedding garment as "true faith

95 And also cites Jerome and Chrysostom in support; see *In evangelia*, Chapter XXI, 69r.

96 "Hoc fuit per Titum, & Vespasianum", *In evangelia*, Chapter XXI, 69r, B.

97 "praesens Ecclesia, id est, negotio Ecclesiae." *In evangelia*, Chapter XXII, 69v, A.

98 "credendo, operando," *In evangelia*, Chapter XXII, 69v, A. This phrase is used twice in this section, one commenting on what it means that the guests were 'unwilling to come', and once when speaking of the repeated command to "come to the wedding".

99 "videri faceret." *In evangelia*, Chapter XXII, 70r, B.

and righteousness.”¹⁰⁰ However, “all that were found, good and evil” is applied to the Church-- “in a way they are both in the Church, because it is the medium between Heaven, where the good are, and Hell, where the wicked are.”¹⁰¹ Hugh cites Gregory's comparison of the Church to the field in Matthew 13 and the Ark, both places where the good and wicked can be found mixed. Another ecclesiastical note, with undertones of Hugh's suspicion of priests, is struck by the interpretation of the king questioning the guest: for “note that the Lord will ask three questions of all prelates in the day of judgment. First he will ask 'O man, in what way did you enter into the prelacy?', that is, what led you to this, money or God? And to what; to a burden, or to honors? And by what gate or port, for I am the gate.”¹⁰² This last does shed some light on that puzzling bit of Chapter 18, making it clearer that here at least, Hugh understands Christ as the gateway.

Chapter 23

Hugh and Thomas both read Jesus' condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees as “shutting the kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew 23:13) as applying to the bad example they set, as well as to the proper understanding of Scripture. This is almost a direct quotation from the *Glossa Ordinaria*.¹⁰³

Chapter 24

When discussing Matthew 24:14, Hugh once more explains the Gospel of the Kingdom as “the Church, or leading to the kingdom.”¹⁰⁴ The preaching of the Gospel throughout the whole

100 “Vestimentum nuptiae est fides vera, & iustitia.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXII, 70r, B.

101 “... qui modo simul sunt in Ecclesia, quia media est inter caelum, ubi boni, & infernum, ubi mali.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXII, 70r, B.

102 “Nota tres quaestiones quas faciet Dominus in die iudicii omnibus Praelatis. Prima erit quaestio O homo, quomodo in praelationem intrasti, id est, quis introduxit te, nummus, vel Deus. Et ad quid; ad onus, vel ad honores. Et per quam portam sive ostium, quia ego sum ostium.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXII, 70r, B.

103 *Glossa Ordinaria* 23.13, Col. 0158A-B, in *Patrologia Latinae*, Vol. 114, hosted at pld.chadwyck.com, accessed on April 10, 2016.

104 “... id est, Ecclesia, vel ducens ad regnum.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXIV, 75v, A.

world is taken as fulfilled by the Apostles, and predating the fall of Jerusalem, with Chrysostom again cited in support. This is supported by stating that “and then the end will come” applies “to the city or the world.”¹⁰⁵

Chapter 25

Hugh's interpretation of the parable of the virgins is in agreement with Thomas, but is less multifaceted. For Hugh, as is often the case, the Kingdom is the Church, and the marriage is the wedding of Christ and the Church. He cites Chrysostom on the lamps as faith, but his own interpretation is, again, good works. One interesting note is Hugh's description of the five foolish virgins, whom he says “in the present work for glory, at the coming of the bridegroom strive for the testimony of praise from the wise, expecting thus to enter into the wedding, and after the closing of the gates strive to enter, saying 'Lord, Lord, open for us.’”¹⁰⁶ The wise virgins, by contrast, are “serving God in body and mind.”¹⁰⁷

The sleep of this parable is either death or mortal sin, and the coming of the bridegroom is “the day of the Lord”, according to a cross-reference with 1 Thessalonians 5.¹⁰⁸ Hugh identifies the sellers of oil as the priests, “who sell doctrine for the faith of the people, indulgence for the penitence of confession.”¹⁰⁹ He goes on to repeat the turn of phrase that Aquinas also borrowed from Chrysostom, “another says that the merchants are the poor, because through them oil, that is the wages of mercy, is acquired.”¹¹⁰

105 “... civitatis, vel mundi,” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXIV, 75v, A.

106 “... in praesenti operantur ad laudem, in adventu sponsi quaerunt testimonium laudis a prudentibus, sic putantes intrare ad nuptias, & post clausam ianuam quaerunt dicentes: Domine Domine aperi nobis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 77v, B.

107 “... servientes Deo mente, & corpore.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 77v, B.

108 *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 78r, A.

109 “... Sacerdotes, qui vendunt doctrinam pro fide populorum, indulgentiam pro poenitentia confessionis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 78r, A.

110 “Alius dicit venditores, pauperes, quia per eos oleum, id est, misericordiae merces acquiritur.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 78r, A.

Hugh's interpretation of the Parable of the Talents maintains this theme, again corresponding closely to Thomas and his patristic sources. However, the numeric symbolism corresponds more to the hierarchy of the Church or to the morality of Christian life.

Five talents are given to the prelates, the office of instruction, coercion, institution, intercession and the sacraments. And also he gives five talents: nature for operation, grace for cooperation, Scripture for erudition, figures for education, the example of the saints for imitation. Similarly, the five talents are poverty, weakness, contumely, injury, and death.¹¹¹

The interpretation of the other sets of talents is shorter and more ecclesiological. “Two are given to the minor orders, the office of intercession and the sacraments.”¹¹² ‘Minor orders’ here appears to refer to the priesthood, as distinct from the episcopacy. Meanwhile, “one is given to all, care of his own.”¹¹³ By implication, this would be responsibility for one's own soul, as Thomas says.¹¹⁴

Hugh's discussion of the rewards is far more elaborate than Thomas', but it falls outside the purview of our discussion. Many of the things Thomas mentioned as rewards or worthy of reward are brought up by Hugh, but in a much more structured framework.

By contrast, discussion of kingship and kingdom in the section on the Last Judgment is very sparse in Hugh, consisting primarily of cross-references to Scripture (the Revelation to St. John and 1 Peter), the latter of which is used to affirm that “all good men will be kings,”¹¹⁵ a theme which we see Thomas pick up and develop.

111 “Quinque talenta data Praelatis, sunt officium instructionis, coertionis, institutionis, interpellationis, sacramentationis. Dedit etiam quinque talenta, naturam in operationem, gratiam in cooperationem, Scripturas in eruditionem, figuras in educationem, exempla Sanctorum in imitationem. Item quinque talenta sunt paupertas, infirmitas, contumelia, iniuria, mors.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 78r, B.

112 “Duo data sunt minoribus, officium interpellationis & sacramentationis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 78r, B.

113 “Unum datum omnibus, cura suiipsius.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 78r, B.

114 Cf. Aquinas, *Commentary on Matthew* C.18 L.3 ¶1532, 152.

115 “... omnes boni erunt reges”, *In evangelia*, Chapter XXV, 79r, B.

Chapter 26

Hugh's reading of Matthew 26:29 generally follows Jerome and Remigius, although Hugh does not cite his sources specifically. The vine is the Jewish people, and the “kingdom of my Father” is the Church Militant.¹¹⁶ Another interpretation that he offers is similar to Chrysostom's reading of the old wine as mortal human nature and “the garment of the new law is the seed of immortality.”¹¹⁷

Chapter 27

The most notable thing about the kingship in Hugh's commentary on Chapter 27 is its general absence. Hugh anticipates Thomas' awareness of the ironies and reversals associated with the Passion narrative, but the moral reading of the crown of thorns, for example, relates it to the priesthood and the sins of those holding it.¹¹⁸ The title “King of the Jews” placed on the Cross is read “as a sign in which the image of man should be reformed”¹¹⁹ and as meaning that Jesus should not have been crucified by the Jews. This suggests that Thomas was working from other sources or breaking new ground when he developed the kingship themes in relationship to the Passion of Christ.

Conclusions on Hugh of St. Cher

In conclusion, Hugh and Thomas share many similarities in discussing the Kingdom in Matthew's Gospel, due to their reliance on a common tradition and their shared Dominican

116 One problematic point is that Hugh says that “... illud vinum novum crudelitas est gentium” (*In evangelia*, Chapter XXVI, 81v, A), which translates as “that new wine is the cruelty of the nations.” While it's remotely possible that this could be a reference to the blood spilled in the Passion, Jerome's understanding (at least as cited in Thomas' own commentary) applies it rather to belief, so I expect that *crudelitas* is a typographical or manuscript error that should read *credulitas*.

117 “... legis vestitus novum genimen immortalitatis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXVI, 81v, A.

118 *In evangelia*, Chapter XXVII, 86r, A.

119 “... quasi sigillum, in quo debet reformati imago hominis.” *In evangelia*, Chapter XXVII, 86v, A.

emphasis on preaching, poverty and humility. There are differences of emphasis as well—Thomas tends to systematize and connect his ideas more, as we will discuss at the end of this chapter, and derives more meaning from the life and works of Christ, while Hugh will save his speculative constructions more for exegesis of the Lord's Parables. Still, Hugh is definitely a notable link in the chain that connects Thomas to the rest of the Great Tradition of the Church, though less important in the grand scheme than Albertus Magnus, to whom we now turn.

Albertus Magnus, *Super Matthaeum*

While Hugh's influence on Thomas appears to have been present but indirect, Albert's relation to Aquinas is so well known that James Weisheipl could complain that “to most moderns [Albert] is known simply as the teacher of Thomas Aquinas, if he is known at all.”¹²⁰ Here, we will focus simply on the relationship of the Matthew commentaries of the two friars.

Albert's commentary on Matthew predates Thomas' by only a few years, having probably been written between 1257 and 1264.¹²¹ This would likely place him in Germany, either in German Dominican *studia* or during his brief tenure as Bishop of Regensburg.¹²² However, Smalley follows Fries in dating the Gospel commentaries to the later part of this period, 1260 to 1264¹²³, and Fries holds that Albert spent 1261 to 1263 at the papal Curia, where he did meet with Thomas, so the two of them may have discussed the Gospel or issues related to it.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Preface to the collection *Albertus Magnus and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays*, 1980, edited by James A. Weisheipl, OP (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980), ix. See Torrell, I.18-40 for an overview of Thomas' studies under Albert. For a more dated but well-crafted account, see Joachim Sighart, *Albert the Great*, translated by T.A. Dixon, OP (London: R. Washbourne, 1876), 63-76. For more detail, see J. A. Weisheipl, *Thomas d'Aquino and Albert His Teacher* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980).

¹²¹ Canty, 159.

¹²² Smalley, *Gospels*, 242.

¹²³ Smalley, *Gospels*, 242.

¹²⁴ Albert Fries, “Die Entstehungszeit der Bibelkommentare Alberts des Großen” in *Albert Magnus - Doctor Universalis 1280/1980*, ed. by Gerbert Meyer and Albert Zimmermann (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1980),

Albert's use of Hugh—both as a source text and as an interlocutor with whom he disagrees—has been documented; as Smalley says, “Albert must have had Hugh of St. Cher's *Postilla* to hand, though he would not have named a contemporary, whom he knew personally.”¹²⁵ Scholars have also noted cross-pollination between Albert and Thomas in other Biblical commentaries, such as those on Job¹²⁶. But the influence of Albert's *Super Matthaeum* on Aquinas' work of the same title remains to be examined, and a full study of the parallels is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Still, a survey of the “Kingdom passages” in Albert can help us continue to place Thomas in his context.

Prologue

After a short prologue of his own that takes Isaiah 8:1 for its starting point, Albert moves on to Jerome's prologue. In reference to the subject of the kingdom or kingship, Albert takes Jerome's phrase *secundum cor* (“after the heart”) as signifying that “the kingdom is unmovable.”¹²⁷ Albert also says, when discussing the relation of Christ to Abraham and David, that “he cured nature by assuming it and suffering, and led into the kingdom by rising and ascending”¹²⁸

In contrast to Hugh, Albert takes the three divisions of the genealogy as signifying patriarchs, kings, and priests, connecting them further to Christ's threefold assumption of a human body, kingship, and priesthood for the redemption of captives.¹²⁹ He also finds deep

138-39.

125 Smalley, *Gospels*, 243.

126 Cf. Fries, 139.

127 “... regnum immobile significetur.” Albertus Magnus, *Opera Omnia, Editio Digitalis XXI, Super Matthaeum*, taken from the Editio Coloniensis, hosted at www.albertus-magnus-online.de, accessed on April 10, 2016, page 4, line 61.

128 “... curaret naturam assumendo et patiendo et introduceret in regnum resurgendo et ascendendo.” *Super Matthaeum*, 5.5-7.

129 See *Super Matthaeum*, 5.9-29.

symbolism in the fourteen generations, but while the ten in fourteen is explicitly connected to the Decalogue, the four has numerous meanings, from the four Gospels or the four cardinal virtues to four things that Christ redeems from (sins against natural law, Mosaic law, and the new law, and the death of Hell).

Like Hugh, Albert also comments on the understanding of the Gospel when discussing the third paragraph of Jerome's commentary. However, Albert's division of the senses of Scripture differs from that of his predecessor. Albert applies *first* to the historical meaning, *middle* to both the analogical and tropological, and *perfect* to the anagogical sense. He also notes, with reference to Proverbs 30:24, that “the four explanations of Scripture are small according to humility,”¹³⁰ a turn of phrase that parallels Thomas' emphasis on humility as necessary to the Kingdom (which includes Scripture) in the *Commentary on Matthew*.

Chapters 1-2

Like Aquinas, Albert connects Jesus to Moses' successor Joshua, even citing the same verse, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 46:1.¹³¹ He also naturally connects the term Christ to anointing, but for Albert, the anointing is twofold—priest and king are mentioned. This relative reduction of the prophetic role is also seen in commenting on the third part of Matthew 1:1—David is mentioned as king, Abraham as priest “because he offered the first sacrifice,”¹³² but the prophetic role is left unstated until Albert makes a reference to the Gloss at the end of his section on the passage.¹³³ The two agree that David is given priority over Abraham, but differ on the reason—Albert says that the priority of names is set out “because setting forth the deposit of law and assembling in a

130 “Quattuor enim expositiones scripturae minimae sunt propter humilitatem.” *Super Matthaeum* 9.31-33.

131 *Super Matthaeum*, 13.19-23.

132 “... quia Abraham obtulit primus sacrificium.” *Super Matthaeum*, 13.53-54.

133 *Super Matthaeum*, 13.86.

kingdom are prior to redeeming by sacrifice.”¹³⁴ This connects the role of king to the giving of the law; following Pseudo-Dionysius, Albert describes the role of a king as one who “gives laws, establishes precepts and distribute the ranks of officials,”¹³⁵ and further cites the Areopagite as stating that “a kingdom is laws and order and the distribution of goods.”¹³⁶ This set of duties will be a recurring phrase in the *Commentary on Matthew*.

This emphasis on law and politics is, according to Smalley, an innovation of Albert's commentary,¹³⁷ and, as we saw in Chapter II, it recurs in his student. Viviano thinks that this might save Albert from an overemphasis on interiority, but concludes that Albert is being overly Platonic here, although he does credit him with “catching an aspect of the biblical teaching.”¹³⁸

When discussing the genealogy, Albert makes no reference to the kingly role of Judah specifically; indeed, according to Albert, Judah is highlighted as a symbol of sin and repentance.¹³⁹ Albert does highlight David's kingship, agreeing with Thomas that the kingdom is given to his successors by the merits of David.¹⁴⁰

Albert makes more out of the royal line in connection to Christ's kingship, noting already that, while David's kingdom is a prefigurement of Christ's reign, Christ's kingdom is “not of this world” and the trials of that kingdom in the world are represented by the sufferings of the later Davidic kings.¹⁴¹ Even the wickedest of those kings also represents “the throne of Christ, not as

134 “... quia prius est depositis legem ponere et in regnum congregare quam redimere per oblationem,” *Super Matthaum*, 13.58-60.

135 “... leges dedit et praecepta disposuit et ordines officiorum distribuit,” *Super Matthaum*, 13.62-63.

136 “... regnum est legis et ordinis et boni distributio” *Super Matthaum* 13.64.

137 Smalley, *Gospels*, 251-52.

138 Viviano, “Kingdom in Albert and Aquinas”, 518.

139 *Super Matthaum*, 15.79-80.

140 “Et alii sequentes merito ipsius ad regnum sunt promoti, sicut dicitur in ps. (lxxxviii, 34): ‘Misericordiam meam non dispergam ab eo etc.’” *Super Matthaum* 17.6-8.

141 *Super Matthaum*, 17.28-32, 39-43.

concerns the Christian religion, but those who dare to sit on the throne, profaning it.”¹⁴² In a fascinating but somewhat obscure statement, Albert interprets the three 'missing kings' in the genealogy as being removed because “the kingdom of the devil would be over the throne of David and Christ unless they were taken away.”¹⁴³ Albert speaks extensively of how good fathers are often rewarded by good sons, and bad fathers punished by worse sons, as shown in the history of the kings.¹⁴⁴ Albert also says that Jechoniam and his brothers are named “in a common name, because that kingdom was a figure of the future reign of Christ,”¹⁴⁵ suggesting an eschatological reading where the Kingdom will involve communal rulership, but he does not go into detail. This does, however, echo the theme of universal Christian kingship in the eschaton.

Albert agrees with Thomas about Herod fulfilling the prophecy of Genesis 49:10 as a foreign king in Judea.¹⁴⁶ He gives far more attention to the culpable ignorance of the Jewish leadership and their rejection of Christ than Thomas does, though.¹⁴⁷ The two agree that Herod was troubled about the loss of his kingdom, and without reason; Albert cites Ambrose specifically on the point.¹⁴⁸ Similarly, the scribes and priests are blamed for not properly handling the situation “out of treason, out of ignorance, and out of malice.”¹⁴⁹

Albert also echoes the traditional association of the gift of gold with the Kingship of Christ, saying that it is “a sign of royal dignity, because the faithful will come to gather in the kingdom.”¹⁵⁰

142 “... throni Christi, non secundum religionem pertinentem ad Christum, sed potius profanando thronum ausi sunt sedere.” *Super Matthaeum*, 17.41-43.

143 “... eo quod regnum diaboli super thronum David et Christi nisi sunt adducere”, *Super Matthaeum*, 18.8-10.

144 *Super Matthaeum*, 18.13-43.

145 “... in communi nomine, quia regnum istud fuit figura regni Christi.” *Super Matthaeum*, 20.11-12.

146 *Super Matthaeum* 45.29-41.

147 *Super Matthaeum* 47.

148 *Super Matthaeum* 50.69-51.4.

149 “... de proditiōe, de ignorantia et de malitia.” *Super Matthaeum*, 52.53.

150 “... signum regalis dignitatis, quia fideles venerat congregare in regnum,” *Super Matthaeum*, 55.34-35.

Chapter 3

Like Thomas, Albert gives a multifaceted interpretation of the Kingdom here, but his is threefold. The first is the same as Thomas' first, referencing Luke 11: "The kingdom of heaven is within you," as well as Romans 14:17. Albert here says "that God reigns in us,"¹⁵¹ referring to our membership in the Kingdom through obedience to the New Law. citing Pseudo-Dionysius, who states that "the giving of laws, precepts, offices, ranks and rewards pertains to the civilization of the holy,"¹⁵² in parallel to the above statement. There are three parts to this: "illumination of those things which pertain to the kingdom, in the power of the kingdom and in the exercising of office to action."¹⁵³ Thus, we can say that this corresponds to the internal dimension of the Kingdom, which consists in our obedience to the grace of the New Law.

The second definition of the kingdom used is "the kingdom of heaven outside us, which is the place and honor and favor of ruling in heaven. And this is acquired by the first."¹⁵⁴ Thus, the interior, sanctifying dimension of the kingdom leads to the personal eschatological dimension.

I call this the 'personal eschatological' dimension because the third version, the reign of God over his people, appears to be more broadly eschatological. However, Albert says little beyond the fact that it is the "object and cause of the others."¹⁵⁵ His primary emphasis in this portion appears to be on the first dimension of the kingdom, for "the first kingdom"¹⁵⁶ is truly the

151 "... per hoc regnat deus in nobis." *Super Matthaeum* 68.24.

152 "... distributio legum et praeceptorum et officiorum et graduum et bonorum ad civilitatem sanctorum pertinentium." *Super Matthaeum* 68.25-27.

153 "... in illuminatione eorum quae ad regnum pertinent, et in potestatibus regni et in officiis exercitatis ad actum." *Super Matthaeum* 68.28-30.

154 "... Aliud est regnum caelorum extra nos, quod est locus et honor et iucunditas regnantium in caelo. Et hoc acquiritur per primum." *Super Matthaeum* 68.31-33.

155 "... obiectum et causa istorum," *Super Matthaeum* 68.34-35.

156 *Primum regnum*, a phrase Albert will use at several places in this commentary, referring in several ways to divine justice in the soul of the righteous. "Aliud regnum" and "tertium regnum" only appear in these passages.

soul of the king, whose illuminations and ordinances and laws and many acts among the nations make the kingdom, so that this kingdom is first in the mind of God and, promulgated among the saints, makes the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁵⁷ The second form of the kingdom “in heaven is outside us, and is like the first, but greater and similar to the kingdom of the mind of God, which is third and the exemplar, object and cause of the other two kingdoms.”¹⁵⁸ The ultimate kingdom as exemplar cause of the subordinate meanings is in keeping with Thomas' commentary on this passage, but locating that kingdom 'in the mind of God' is a point of distinction; indeed, Viviano describes Albert as meaning that “the kingdom of God is God himself. This is a relatively original concept in the history of interpretation of this biblical theme.”¹⁵⁹ Albert appears almost Neoplatonic in this sense, arguing for an Ideal Form of the Kingdom which the internal and eschatological point to, while for Thomas, the eschatological kingdom as realized at the end of history is the exemplar cause. Albert looks up and back into the original plan in the mind of God; Thomas looks forward to the full realization of that plan. This is in keeping with the general tendency of their work on the Kingdom, where Albert tends to rely more on Pseudo-Dionysius and the likeness of the various hierarchies to things in the mind of God, while Thomas makes more use of Aristotle and the unfolding of that plan in the world. These are, of course, purely differences of emphasis.

Albert also makes the note that Jesus is the same age that David was when the latter received the kingdom.¹⁶⁰

157 “... sicut primum regnum est anima veri regis, cuius illuminationes et ordines et leges et actus multiplicati in gentem constituent regnum, ita istud regnum primo est in mente dei et promulgatum in sanctos facit regnum caelorum.” *Super Matthaeum* 68.40-44.

158 “... in caelo est extra nos, simile est isti, sed magis est simile regno mentis divinae, quod tertium est et exemplar et obiectum et causa duorum regnorum aliorum.” *Super Matthaeum* 68.45-48.

159 Viviano, “Kingdom in Albert and Aquinas,” 515.

160 *Super Matthaeum*, 76.39.

Chapter 4

Albert agrees with Hugh and Thomas that the third temptation of the Devil is a lie, “because he has not the power of giving anything, for nothing is his, 'The Lord's is the earth and the fullness thereof.’”¹⁶¹ He also takes some of the same notes as Thomas regarding the angelic visitation and ministry afterward, but extends them in a different direction. Rather than being concerned with their relationship with Christ in itself, Albert's primary concern appears to be the impact of that relationship for us, stating that Christ “through victory over temptation merited *for us* the company of angels.”¹⁶² Similarly, regarding their ministry, Albert states that “not from need, but from reverence for the head, do they minister to us in our need.”¹⁶³ This phrasing provides an interesting complement to Thomas' reading of the angelic ministry; the two viewpoints could be combined to suggest a participation in Christ's triumph, complete with angelic heralds, for all who conquer sin and temptation.

Commenting on Matthew 4:17, Albert connects the two halves of Christ's proclamation intimately, describing the kingdom of Heaven as “the effect or fruit of penitence ... because penitence is a kind of movement from sin to justice.”¹⁶⁴ Thus, with penitence, “as the evil will is corrected, one continually is drawn away from the turpitude of sin and summoned to the justice of the kingdom, as the kingdom of heaven is righteousness, in embracing righteousness of law, counsel, office and a rank of divinity and citizenship and power.”¹⁶⁵ Albert returns to the concept

161 “... quia non habet potestatem dandi aliquid, cum nihil suum sit; ‘domini enim est terra et plenitudo eius’”, *Super Matthaeum* 91.53-55.

162 “... per victoriam temptationum meruit nobis coniunctionem angelorum.” *Super Matthaeum* 92.50-52, emphasis added.

163 “Non ex indigentia, sed ex reverentia in capite, nobis autem ex indigentia nostra ministrant.” *Super Matthaeum* 92.70-72.

164 “... effectus sive fructus paenitentiae. ... quia motus quidam est paenitentia a peccato ad iustitiam” *Super Matthaeum* 96.48-51.

165 “... prout est correctio malae voluntatis, continue abicitur turpitudine peccati et inducitur iustitia regni, prout regnum caelorum est rectitudo, in se ambiens rectitudinem legum et consiliorum et officiorum et graduum

of exemplary causality here, as “that righteousness which is in heaven is indefectible [*indeflexa*] through the conformity of all things in heaven to the will of God, which is the exemplar and cause of all righteousness.”¹⁶⁶ One could again combine Thomas and Albert here, with Thomas focused on the act of the preaching repentance as the coming of the kingdom, and Albert emphasizing its effect on the recipients and its fruits as the establishment of the kingdom.

Chapter 5

Speaking of the reward of the kingdom of Heaven promised to the poor in spirit in the first Beatitude, Albert says that “the reward is fitting to the reason [*rationem*] with regard to merit and to reward and to the nobility of the reward.”¹⁶⁷ The kingdom here is defined as that “in which is held sufficiency to govern.”¹⁶⁸ The first definition of the kingdom from earlier is repeated, while the second definition is that one “has the power of standing and not wavering, in which one is unshakable and able to withstand opposition.”¹⁶⁹ The third is “riches used subserviently for friends and subordinates, which means all exterior goods,”¹⁷⁰ and which Albert goes on to connect to the promise in Revelation 5:10 that the faithful will reign over the earth. Thomas makes a similar connection in his own commentary. The term 'heaven' here highlights the nobility of these goods, which do not change or decay. The eighth beatitude is interpreted similarly: those who suffer unjustly from those reigning in the kingdoms of the world will be

divinorum et civilitatum et potestatum.” *Super Matthaenum* 96.54-59.

166 “Qualis rectitudo est in caelo indeflexa per conformitatem omnium eorum quae in caelo sunt, ad voluntatem divinam, quae est exemplar et causa omnis rectitudinis.” *Super Matthaenum* 96.60-63.

167 “... rationem congruitatis praemii ad meritum et praemium et praemii nobilitatem.” *Super Matthaenum* 106.16-17.

168 “... in quo habetur sufficientia regiminis.” *Super Matthaenum* 106.33.

169 “... est potestas stans et non nutans, quae in se inconcussibilis sit et contrafacientes conterere possit.” *Super Matthaenum* 106.38-40.

170 “... divitiae organice subservientes et amici et subditi, quae omnia exteriora bona vocantur.” *Super Matthaenum* 106.40-42.

recompensed with the kingdom of heaven.¹⁷¹ The connection between the reward of the first and last beatitudes is because “what the poor do voluntarily, finding themselves to lack all changeable goods, these endure in execution.”¹⁷²

Albert follows Hugh in seeing two possible ways of reading Matthew 5:19, depending on whether one relates 'in the kingdom of heaven' to 'least' or to 'called'. In the former case, it applies “to those who loosen the least bits of the Law and do not lead except by example.”¹⁷³ Those who sin in such cases, “because of infirmity or negligence about the least precepts, sin venially and build out of wood, hay and straw”¹⁷⁴--a reference to 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. In the second reading of this phrase, “then [it means] sinning in the least, not in particulars, but in the substance of the laws,”¹⁷⁵ meaning that it is related to their merits in the kingdom, and that they are called 'least' “because they are not counted in the kingdom, unless it be by number and not by merit.”¹⁷⁶ Albert goes on to enumerate the ranks of those in the kingdom—those who follow the counsels and precepts and go beyond them are greatest, followed by those who observe both, then those who observe the precepts, and at the bottom, those “who are not counted unless formed by faith.”¹⁷⁷ Albert also raises the possibility, supported by the Gloss and Chrysostom, that being called 'least' means exclusion from the Kingdom. And like Aquinas, Albert cites Chrysostom on Matthew 5:20 regarding the distinction between 'being' in the Kingdom and

171 *Super Matthaeum* 115.68-76.

172 “... quia quod pauperes faciunt voluntate, in omnibus commutabilibus bonis se inveniunt deficere, hoc isti perferunt in effectu.” *Super Matthaeum* 116.5-7.

173 “... de his qui solvunt minimas particulas praeceptorum et non docent nisi per exemplum.” *Super Matthaeum* 129.25-27.

174 “... ex infirmitate vel negligentia circa minima praeceptorum, venialiter peccant et aedificant ligna, faenum, stipulam” *Super Matthaeum* 129.28-30.

175 “... tunc peccantes in minimis, non particulis, sed ipsis substantiis mandatorum” *Super Matthaeum* 129.34-36.

176 “... vocantur minimi, quia non connumerantur his qui sunt in regno, nisi numero et non merito.” *Super Matthaeum* 129.37-39.

177 “... quia non nisi fide informi connumerantur.” *Super Matthaeum* 129.44.

'entering' the Kingdom.

Chapter 6

In discussing the Lord's Prayer, Albert makes the comment, in the section dealing with *who art in heaven*, that “the true end of heaven [*usus vero caeli*] is to the splendor of contemplation in glory and the praise of the heavenly king in hymns.”¹⁷⁸ The contemplative dimension is obviously not unique to either Albert or Thomas, of course, since it is the traditional understanding of the Beatific Vision, but Aquinas may have taken a cue from Albert in incorporating the concept into his treatment of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Albert introduces the petition *thy kingdom come* with the statement that “just as the preceding petition pertains to being sons of god, so does this one, which is placed second, pertain to the perfect power of such.”¹⁷⁹ This is already a point of difference from Thomas, who identifies the first petition of the prayer with the divine glory, with benefits to the faithful not entering into it until this petition.

Albert divides the proper understanding of this petition into three parts: what the Kingdom is, how God the Father relates to this kingdom, and what it means for it to 'come'.¹⁸⁰ This section opens with a long passage on Albert's general theories of kingdoms and government, which, as Smalley points out, is an innovation of his.¹⁸¹ Citing Plato, Albert gives us a familiar definition of a kingdom: “a kingdom is nothing other than that in which power and dominion are

178 “*Usus vero caeli est ad splendorem contemplationis in gloria et laudem regis caelestis in hymnodia.*” *Super Matthaeum* 183.59-61.

179 “*Sicut ad esse filiorum dei pertinet praeinducta petitio, ita ad potestatem perfectam eorundem pertinet ista quae hic secundo loco inducitur.*” *Super Matthaeum* 191.75-78.

180 See *Super Matthaeum*, 191.78-83.

181 Smalley, *Gospel*, 251-55.

complete in one.”¹⁸² This is optimal because, based on both Aristotle and Christ's words in Matthew 12:25 and Luke 11:17, diffusion of power opens the door to the possibility of division and collapse.¹⁸³ While necessity may require a multitude of offices, “there would be inordinate confusion, unless these could be reduced to one.”¹⁸⁴ For that reason, God's power as head of the Kingdom “ought to be by the way of domination and not by the way of the exercise of power. Domination consists in a height of superiority [*altitudine superpositionis*], which is not fitting to be lowered to inferiors,”¹⁸⁵ based on God's sublime excellence.

“This power,” Albert continues, “ought to be inclined [*animata*] to justice, because the king must be inclined [*animata*] to justice. ... If the king should be of another mind [*alterius modi*], his kingdom is corrupted into tyranny.”¹⁸⁶ Based on these concepts of superiority and justice, “it is fitting for this power to be the establishment of laws.”¹⁸⁷ Albert draws on Aristotle here for the idea that instruction alone does not suffice for the governing of a people, due to ignorance, the inability to persuade, and the unwillingness of some to listen. This definition of kingly power seems more suited to an understanding of the Kingdom as the Church on Earth rather than the eschatological perfection of the Beatific Vision and the Church Triumphant. Albert seems to acknowledge this obliquely when he says “therefore it is permissible that law not be imposed on the just, for it is set forth by the mind of the just according to the form of justice, which is in the mind.”¹⁸⁸

182 “... regnum nihil aliud est nisi completa in uno potestas et dominatus.” *Super Matthaicum*, 191.85-87.

183 See *Super Matthaicum*, 192.5-10.

184 “... confusio inordinata esset, nisi reduceretur ad unum” *Super Matthaicum*, 192.16-17.

185 “... per modum dominatus et non per modum exercentis potestatem. Dominatus autem consistit in altitudine superpositionis, quae ad inferiora non dignetur inclinari,” *Super Matthaicum*, 192.20-24.

186 “Haec autem potestas animata debet esse iustitia, quia rex animata debet esse iustitia. ... Si autem alterius modi sit rex, regnum eius est corruptum in tyrannidem.” *Super Matthaicum* 192.59-60, 70-72.

187 “Oportent autem hanc postestatem legibus ordinatam esse.” *Super Matthaicum* 192.79-80.

188 “Licet ergo lex iusto non sit posita, tamen a iusta mente posita est secundum formam iustitiae, quae est in mente.” *Super Matthaicum* 193.17-19.

The relationship of the king to the law is also discussed

And although the king is above the law, it is not so much that he is against the law, but beyond it, as he is the living form of the law, one who forms and regulates the law rather than one formed and regulated by law. For law is nothing but the form of law from the form which is in the mind of the king, brought out and set down in writing for the regulation of the people.¹⁸⁹

After an extensive excursus on the classical understanding of the forms and roles of government (including the role of soldiers in a city, where he uses both Platonic and Biblical sources), Albert concludes that “a kingdom is the best way of governing a people,”¹⁹⁰ where “the mode of governing is according to the most just laws ... and to confirm the peace, joy, freedom and happiness of the people.”¹⁹¹ The best king governs with a focus on mercy and justice, not wealth and glory, although riches are a benefit of good rulership; Albert concludes by using the description of Solomon in 1 Kings 10:21-25¹⁹² as the prime example of this kingdom.

Albert then turns to a spiritual interpretation of this petition: “The divine processions accomplish the dominion of the kingdom in us, exalting and enriching and confirming us.”¹⁹³ These processions, which are “the rays of His grace, elevate the heart from all that drags it down unworthily, so that we do not descend to rest in such things, but exult in power over them.”¹⁹⁴ This is Albert's interpretation of Luke 11's statement that “the Kingdom of God is within you,” and it applies well to the statement that the poor in spirit—those who “do not descend to rest” in

189 “Et licet rex sit supra legem, tamen non est contrarius legi, sed est super legem, eo quod ipse est viva forma legis, potius formans et regulans legem quam formatus et regulatus a lege. Lex enim nihil aliud est quam iuris forma ex forma, quae in mente regis est, educta et ad regulandum populum scripto mandata.” *Super Matthaeum* 193.8-14.

190 “Hoc regnum est civitates optimas gubernans.” *Super Matthaeum* 194.31.

191 “... est modus gubernandi secundum aequissimas leges ... et per hoc pacem, gaudium et libertatem et felicitatem populo confirmare,” *Super Matthaeum* 194.32-35.

192 *Super Matthaeum* 194.62-73; for Albert, of course, this was 3 Kings.

193 “... dominatum regni faciunt processiones divinae in nos, exaltantes et ditantes et confirmantes nos.” *Super Matthaeum* 194.74-76.

194 “... radii suae gratiae; quae cor elevat ab omni eo quod serviliter deprimit ut iam non dignemur ad talia respicere, sed in potestate super talia exaltari” *Super Matthaeum* 194.77-80.

earthly things—will inherit the kingdom in having power over them.

Albert goes on to identify justice with eternal life, and derives from that and the passages about the law being inscribed on our hearts that “civilization [*urbanitates*], therefore, is perfected in us by the offices of virtue and positions of virtue's power,”¹⁹⁵ such as the seven virtues and the study of Scripture. The study of Scripture, in fact, is characterized as “the arms by which this kingdom is strengthened ... [and] the host of the devil repelled.”¹⁹⁶ He goes on to say that it “likewise governs that civilization, all the powers of the soul and society when held closely for both the interior city and the exterior civilization.”¹⁹⁷ Though the Latin is a little difficult, Albert appears to be referring to Scripture as the charter of the Kingdom both internally and externally, giving us one of the most explicit statements of the theme of “Scripture as charter and law of the Kingdom” that we saw suggested in Thomas.

The interior nature of the kingdom is reinforced as Albert brings in the theme of participation: “God the Father confirms his kingdom in us, first by giving us participation in his dominion by grace, which exalts us and assimilates us to the son of the king,”¹⁹⁸ thus making us Christlike.

The kingdom of God may be a monarchy, but Albert takes a moment to explain its resemblances to aristocracy and 'timocracy' as well—aristocracy in those who are great in grace and virtue, such as the continent, and timocracy in the common run of mankind who conquer

195 “Urbanitates autem perficiuntur in nobis virtutum officiis et gradibus potestatum virtutum” *Super Matthaenum* 195.14-15.

196 “Arma autem, quibus roboratur hoc regnum, sunt studia et sollertiae scripturae, quibus excluditur hostis diabolus.” *Super Matthaenum*, 195.22-24.

197 “Sic autem gubernat civilitatem suam, omnes animae vires et societatem cum proximo habens pro civibus suae interioris et exterioris civitatis.” *Super Matthaenum* 195.37-39.

198 “... deus pater regnum suum confirmat in nobis, ut primo det dominii sui participationem in gratia, qua nos exaltat et assimilat nos regi filio suo,” *Super Matthaenum* 195.49-52.

their wicked desires.¹⁹⁹ Similarly, “we acquire the arms of the many legions of this city by the participation of angels.”²⁰⁰ Albert concludes that “we should govern for the peace and happiness of our whole lives for ourselves and among other citizens.”²⁰¹ This passage may shed light on what he meant above by “interior and exterior” sides to the kingdom. Finally, the gold and silver of the external kingdom are understood in a spiritual sense as wisdom and the ‘eloquence’ of Scripture, with the precious stones being good works—a set of allegories that we saw often in Thomas.

Albert winds up discussion of the kingdom by citing Pseudo-Dionysius: “The kingdom is the end of all good things, the distribution of law and order.”²⁰² The law, Albert goes on to conclude, “is a sign or symbol in us of everything done in us according to the order of wisdom and charity.”²⁰³

The kingdom is called ‘thy kingdom’, addressing the Father, “because in it He reigns, because he gives it to his sons, leads his sons into it and is a king with his sons over all.”²⁰⁴ It is also called His as “having the signs of the eternal king,”²⁰⁵ decorated by the sublimity of divine wisdom, justice and power.

Albert uses the last part of the petition, “come”, to highlight the need for divine grace. “It does not say that we should come to the kingdom, because we do not have virtue of ourselves

199 See *Super Matthaenum*, 195.68-82.

200 “Acies autem militum multarum legionum nobis acquirimus per participationem angelorum,” *Super Matthaenum*, 195.83-84. Albert goes on to elucidate the gift associated with each level of the classical angelic hierarchy; unfortunately, a careful analysis of this and its implications for angelology and theology of the spiritual life is beyond the scope of this paper.

201 “Gubernemus enim ad pacem et felicitatem totam vitae nostrae apud nos et apud alios civilitatem,” *Super Matthaenum*, 196.12-14.

202 “Regnum est omnis finis boni, legis et ordinis distributio.” *Super Matthaenum*, 196.20-21.

203 “... lex signatur sive sigillatur in nobis, omnia facientes secundum ordinem sapientiae et caritatis in nobis,” *Super Matthaenum*, 196.27-29.

204 “... quia in ipso regnat, quia hoc filio dedit et quia in ipsum adoptionis filios ducit et a filio rege cum omnibus,” *Super Matthaenum*, 196.50-53.

205 “... habens aeterni regis insignia,” *Super Matthaenum* 196.77-78.

that we might come to it. But if he first comes to us, then by his virtue we also will come to him.”²⁰⁶ A second, parallel explanation is that, “while the kingdom of Heaven is always coming, in its cause and in itself, to many, it is no profit to us unless it should come to us.”²⁰⁷ The doubting scribes and Pharisees of Matthew 12 are cited here as an example—the Kingdom of God has come among the people in terms of its cause, the grace of the Gospel, but it has not come to them. Albert also notes that we pray for it to come repeatedly, “because no one is so just that the whole Kingdom of God has fully come to him.”²⁰⁸ He concludes with the statement “one will not enter into the honors of the kingdom unless the kingdom first comes to him, through observation of the law, virtue, justice, and power of this sort.”²⁰⁹

The kingdom returns in the commentary on Matthew 6:33. Albert allows for two interpretations, based on how one parses the statement “Seek first the kingdom of God”—does ‘first’ apply to the verb ‘seek’, in which case “the sense is: *Seek first*, that is above all or before everything, and then fighting for such you will be worthy of what your heavenly father provides.”²¹⁰ The other reading attaches *primum* to *regnum dei*, “that is, what is first and fitting for you to seek, who are sons.”²¹¹

As for the kingdom itself, Albert cites Chrysostom on it being the eternal reward, but qualifies it and ties it back to his earlier statements by saying “but the kingdom, which this

206 “Et non dicit, quod nos veniamus ad regnum, quoniam virtutem non habemus ex nobis, ut veniamus ad ipsum. Sed si ipsum primo venerit ad nos, tunc virtute ipsius veniemus tandem ad ipsum.” *Super Matthaeum* 197.23-27.

207 “... quoniam regnum dei per causam et per seipsum semper venit in multis, sed non prodest nobis, nisi ‘adveniat’ ad nos.” *Super Matthaeum*, 197.35-38.

208 “... quia nemo est adeo iustus, quod totum regnum dei sibi advenerit.” *Super Matthaeum* 197.52-53. The form of *advenire* here is the perfect subjunctive, carrying the sense of ‘completed action.’

209 “Non enim ad honorem regni perveniet, nisi cui primum regnum advenit per observationem legum et virtutum et iustitiae et potestatis secundum modum.” *Super Matthaeum* 197.69-72.

210 “... sensus est: Quaerite primum, hoc est imprimis vel prius, et tunc sic militantes digni eritis, quibus pater caelestis provideat.” *Super Matthaeum* 239.29-31.

211 “... hoc est, quod est primum et vobis congruum quaerere, qui estis filii,” *Super Matthaeum* 239.33-34.

enjoins us to seek, is that God will reign in men. And the sense is: *First* by laboring [*militando*], preaching, and doing good works vigorously, *seek the kingdom of God*, that is, that He should rule by the confirmation of his reign in man.”²¹² “And his righteousness” is the justice “by which this kingdom is built up and which leads to the perpetual kingdom.”²¹³

Chapter 7

When speaking of the “narrow gate” of Matthew 7:13-14, Albert says that “this gate is an entrance into life according to multiple ways: It is an entrance to the life of the Church's redemption, it is an entrance to the life of grace, and it is an entrance to the life of glory.”²¹⁴ The first is further subdivided into two forms: the redemption won by Christ, and the sacraments which apply that redemption to us. Thus, Christ and the waters of baptism are the two gates to the first way. The gate to the second way, by contrast, is virtue or justice, especially charity. “Meanwhile, the entrance to glory is through the gate of perseverance.”²¹⁵

The importance of charity and the practice of virtue recurs in the commentary on Matthew 7:21, where Albert explains that Christ “speaks about two things here, in which first he shows that an unformed confession of faith and confession of true preaching are not efficacious for salvation; secondly, he shows that the confession of perfect willingness and obedience is effective for salvation.”²¹⁶ Albert goes on to discuss the traditional understanding that faith must be formed by charity, and that “the kingdom of heaven is understood as it was above. And it

212 “... sed regnum, quod iniungitur hic quaerendum, est, quo regnat deus in hominibus. Et est sensus: Primum militando, praedicando, bene operando instanter quaerite regnum dei, hoc est, quod regnet confirmato regno in hominibus.” *Super Matthaeum* 239.42-46.

213 “... qua regnum istud confirmatur et quae ad regnum perpetuum,” *Super Matthaeum* 239.49-50.

214 “... multiplicatur porta secundum introitus ad vitam. Est autem introitus ad vitam redemptionis ecclesiae, et est introitus ad vitam gratiae, et est introitus ad vitam gloriae.” *Super Matthaeum* 257.43-46.

215 “Introitus autem ad gloriam est per portam perseverantiae.” *Super Matthaeum* 257.78-79.

216 “Dicit autem circa haec duo, in quorum primo ostendit, quod confessio fidei informis et confessio praedicatae veritatis non sunt efficaces ad salutem; in secundo autem dicit, quod confessio perfectae voluntatis et oboedientiae efficax est ad salutem.” *Super Matthaeum*, 266.7-12.

cannot be entered except through observation of the justice and law which pertains to that kingdom.”²¹⁷ Albert follows this with the interesting phrase *usurpatio doctrinae sine iustitia non est veritas regni*,²¹⁸ this translates easily enough as “the assertion of doctrine without justice is not the truth of the kingdom”, a condemnation of hypocrisy or faith without works, but the use of the word *usurpatio*, which often carries political connotations, is interesting in this context.

Chapter 9

The kingdom of Heaven is mentioned in the summary of Jesus preaching, for “this is leading to the eternal kingdom. *Wisdom* 6:21: ‘The desire of wisdom leads to the perpetual kingdom.’”²¹⁹ In an Aristotelian breakdown of the various elements or causes, the kingdom is identified as the final cause of Jesus’ preaching mission “The substance of the teaching was believing, the form was the gift of grace, and the end was the perpetual kingdom.”²²⁰ This is very similar to Thomas’ comments on the Kingdom in Matthew 8, regarding the importance of contemplation, but with a greater focus on the eschatological side of matters.

Chapter 11

After applying the first half of Matthew 11:11 as a praise of John’s “perfection of virtue and holiness”²²¹, Albert takes the second half as being where “the form and mode of the beginning of the Church is described.”²²² As Canty points out, Albert’s reading of Matthew 10 to

217 “Regnum caelorum accipitur sicut supra. Et in illud non intratur nisi per observationem iustitiae et legum ad ipsum regnum pertinentium.” *Super Matthaenum* 266.44-47.

218 *Super Matthaenum* 266.47-48.

219 “... hoc est ducens ad regnum aeternum. sap. vi (21): ‘Concupiscentia sapientiae conducit ad regnum perpetuum’.” *Super Matthaenum* 317.10-12. This is the same Scripture reference Thomas uses to open the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

220 “Sic ergo substantia dictorum fuerunt credenda, forma bona gratia et finis regnum perpetuum.” *Super Matthaenum* 317.12-14.

221 “... perfectione virtutis et sanctitatis.” *Super Matthaenum* 351.2-3.

222 “... principii ecclesiae describitur forma et modus.” *Super Matthaenum* 351.23-24.

25 is heavily focused on Church structure and ministry,²²³ which places him closer to Hugh than to Thomas in some ways. The “least” of the Scripture verse are the least of the ministers “in ecclesiastical power, which is the kingdom of heaven.”²²⁴ The comparison is between the ministers of the Law and of grace, where the latter is superior. “Thus the keys have been given to those who are in the kingdom of Christ, which is the kingdom of heaven, which were not given to John or the ministers of the law,”²²⁵ in anticipation of Matthew 16. Albert goes on to explicitly extend this superiority to “anyone, even an evil man, [who is] a minister of the kingdom of heaven.”²²⁶

This leads us into a definition of the kingdom and its power: “We have often shown that the power of the kingdom is complete and ordered to one end, and the Kingdom of Heaven is nothing other than ecclesiastical power ordered to the Christ the One King, distributed by laws, offices, counsels and heavenly civilization.”²²⁷ Taken at face value, this suggests a very strong identification of the Kingdom of Heaven with the Church, as well as reinforcing the Christocentric nature of that kingdom. This is reinforced not only by Albert's division of the greater text of Matthew, but by his summary of this passage: “Therefore it has been established that the way in which a minister is greater than John [the Baptist] is this, that one is led into the kingdom of Heaven by ecclesiastical power.”²²⁸

Verse 12 refers, in Albert's understanding to “how this kingdom was perceived by those

223 Canty, 159-60.

224 “... in potestate ecclesiastica, quae est regnum caelorum,” *Super Matthaenum* 351.30-31.

225 “Sic enim claves datae sunt his qui sunt in regno Christi, quod idem est caelorum regnum, quae non sunt datae Iohanni vel ministris legis.” *Super Matthaenum* 351.37-40.

226 “... quilibet, etiam malus homo, minister regni caelorum” *Super Matthaenum* 351.41-42.

227 “Nos enim saepius ostendimus, quod regnum potestas completa est, ordinata ad unum et regnum caelorum nihil aliud est nisi potestas ecclesiastica ordinata ad unum regem Christum, legibus et gradibus et consiliis et urbanitatibus caeli distributa.” *Super Matthaenum* 351.45-50.

228 “Sic igitur determinatum est, qualiter in ministro per hoc quod maior est Iohanne, regnum caelorum in potestate introducitur ecclesiastica.” *Super Matthaenum*, 351.70-72.

gathered around Him [Jesus].”²²⁹ Albert also reinforces the connection between law and kingdom that we saw at several points in Thomas when he here defines *regnum caelorum* as “the righteousness and laws of heaven, by which the kingdom is ordered, and also the distinction of duties and civil habits and the end of beatitude, which is acquired in this, that it *suffers violence*.”²³⁰

What does *suffers violence* mean, according to Albert? Like Hugh, he takes the interpretation that the 'violence' or 'force' referred to is the working of grace, as opposed to nature. This shares some similarities to Thomas' first interpretation, about the similarity of the motion towards the kingdom to that of robbery or force.

Chapter 12

When commenting on Matthew 12:25, Albert's definition of a kingdom is as a regional power (as distinct from a household or city) ordered to a single end, but he applies the concept of power set against power to all levels of organization that should be ordered to unity. Thomas uses the same definition and concepts here, which suggests either influence or a common source.

Albert also defines Satan as “'adversary' of human salvation, opposing the kingdom of God”²³¹--a theme that is stronger in Thomas, but not absent here. Indeed, it reappears when Albert comments on the second use of 'Satan' in this verse as “another adversary of this kingdom.”²³²

Albert also uses Matthew 12:28 to reiterate his favorite definition of the kingdom: “As we said above, this first kingdom is that which is animated by righteousness and the power of the

229 “... qualiter percipitur hoc regnum ab his qui colliguntur in ipso.” *Super Matthaeum* 351.73-74.

230 “... quoad iustitiam et leges caeli, quibus ordinatur regnum, et quoad distinctionem officiorum et urbanitatum et quoad finem beatitudinis, quae in ipso acquiritur, vim patitur.” *Super Matthaeum* 352.1-4.

231 “... ‘adversarius’ humanae salutis, regnum dei impugnans,” *Super Matthaeum*, 380.71-72.

232 “... alium adversarium eidem regno,” *Super Matthaeum*, 380.72.

laws and customs of the king in the soul.”²³³ This kingdom “has been distributed from the heart of Christ through all the ministers of the Church”²³⁴--combining Albert's focus on the ecclesiastical dimension of the kingdom with the themes of participation and Christocentricity that we see in Thomas.

Chapter 13

Albert's primary focus in the exposition of Matthew 13's parables is on the word preached by Jesus, so the Kingdom is not given much emphasis until Matthew 13:24, where he connects the two. “*The kingdom of Heaven*, so far as it refers to the word, by which the kingdom is governed”²³⁵--one of the clearest identifications of word, law and Kingdom that we have seen thus far. This is also one point where the use of the plural *caelorum* is addressed; according to Albert, it is because “by this is governed not one celestial act, but all acts of this kingdom. And it produces the rule of governance from Heaven and regulates things under heaven and that directed to heaven.”²³⁶

In the Parable of the Mustard Seed, Albert states that “the kingdom of heaven is not like the kingdoms of other powers. For the kingdoms and laws of other, lesser authorities impose virtue while the kingdom of heaven elicits virtue in us by affection.”²³⁷ The seed, in Albert's reading, symbolizes “the purity and fruitfulness of faith, and mustard denotes its virtue”²³⁸ on account of its subtlety and sharpness. This reinforces the interior dimension of the Kingdom, and

233 “Iam superius diximus, quod regnum primum est, quod est animata iustitiae et legum et urbanitatum potestas in anima regis.” *Super Matthaeum* 381.46-49.

234 “... distribuendum erat ex corde Christi in omnes ministros ecclesiae.” *Super Matthaeum* 381.50-51.

235 “... regnum caelorum quantum ad verbum, quo regitur regnum.” *Super Matthaeum*, 405.42-43.

236 “... eo quod non gubernat secundum unum actum caelestium, sed secundum omnem actum regni illius. Et prodit ratio gubernationis ex caelo et regulat secundum caelum et ad caelum dirigendo.” *Super Matthaeum* 405.45-49.

237 “Non enim regnum caelorum est sicut regna aliarum potestatum. Aliarum enim potestatum regna et leges coactiva obligant virtute, caelorum autem regna virtute quadam amativa nos alliciunt” *Super Matthaeum* 408.44-48.

238 “... puritas et fecunditas fidei et sinapi notetur virtus eiusdem” *Super Matthaeum* 408.57-58.

echoes the distinctions between the Old and New Law that Aquinas makes more of, as well as providing another example of the ways in which Christ's kingdom is not of this world or like worldly kingdoms.

Meanwhile, the parable of the treasure defines the kingdom as that “in which the power of virtue and grace is completed, reducing every appetite which is in man to the joy of heaven.”²³⁹ The treasure itself is “the study of virtue and wisdom, which is virtuous and most powerful.”²⁴⁰ The hiddenness, by contrast, is solitude and silence, and “the field is the human heart.”²⁴¹ This interpretation reinforces Albert's preference for an interior understanding of the kingdom, and also connects to Aquinas' emphasis on contemplation.

The last parable is one “in which the authority of the apostles and the church is compared to a net.” The kingdom is “the act which is the power and authority to lead men from the unstable waters of this world to the stable shore of faith, which through truth, which is its cause and subject, establishes the believers in eternity.”²⁴²

Chapter 16

Albert makes the same point as Thomas in connecting the title Christ to the anointing of kingship, and gives the reason that “he establishes the new law.”²⁴³

Albert also agrees with Thomas about the keys—they represent discernment and judgment, but as the power to execute and enforce such things, rather than knowledge strictly speaking. Likewise, they represent the ability to unbar the gates to heaven that mortal sin would

239 “... inquam, secundum quod est completa virtutis potestas et gratiae, ad caelestis gaudii reducens gustum omne, quod est in homine.” *Super Matthaeum* 414.12-14.

240 “Thesaurus autem est studium virtutis et sapientiae, quae potissima est virtutum.” *Super Matthaeum* 414.23-25.

241 “Ager est cor humanum” *Super Matthaeum* 414.49-50.

242 “... hunc actum qui est potestas et auctoritas educendi homines ex humoribus instabilis mundi ad stabile litus fidei, quae per veritatem, quae causa et subiectum eius est, iam stabilit credentes in aeternitate,” *Super Matthaeum* 417.66-70.

243 “... ut legem novam condant,” *Super Matthaeum*, 457.24.

shut.²⁴⁴ “They are called [the keys] *of the kingdom of heaven* in regard to the end, because they lead one into the kingdom.”²⁴⁵

The commentary on the last verse of this chapter is both like and unlike Thomas. The two Dominicans agree that one possible explanation is that it refers to the Transfiguration, or to the extension of the Church, but Albert adds that it could also speak of “the inheritance of the kingdom in the glory of the Resurrection.”²⁴⁶

Chapter 17

One brief note is that Albert assigns more significance to the Transfiguration in relation to the kingdom than Thomas does, stating that “it shows what the kingdom is like.”²⁴⁷ Thomas, by contrast, makes no mention of the Kingdom explicitly, but only a reference to future glory—although as Canty points out, we have some textual problems with Aquinas' commentary here.²⁴⁸

Chapter 18

The introductions to Chapter 18 provide an interesting point of contrast between Albert and Thomas. Thomas, as we discussed, saw this chapter as dealing with the common way of progress towards heavenly glory, while Albert applies it and the following two chapters to “the use and work of ministerial power,”²⁴⁹ in keeping with his more ecclesiastically oriented approach to the main body of Matthew's text.

This chapter deals with that subject “in the avoidance and cure of evil,”²⁵⁰ while Chapter 19 treats of it “in the direction of goodness according to all states of good in the Church”²⁵¹ and

244 See *Super Matthaeum*, 460-61.

245 “Dicuntur autem regni caelorum a fine, quia in regnum introducunt,” *Super Matthaeum*, 461.29-30.

246 “... regni hereditate in gloria resurrectionis,” *Super Matthaeum*, 465.81.

247 “... ostenditur hic, quale est regnum,” cited and translated by Canty, 160-61.

248 Canty, 215-216.

249 “Usus et opus potestatis ministrorum” *Super Matthaeum* 475.1-2.

250 “... in vitiatione et cura mali,” *Super Matthaeum* 475.9.

251 “... in regimine boni secundum statum omnem boni in ecclesia” *Super Matthaeum* 475.10-11.

Chapter 20 will discuss the “urgency related to the work.”²⁵² This first part of this chapter deals with the avoidance of evil, while the latter part (verses 12 onwards) discusses the cure.

Albert notes on the quarrel of the Twelve that while in the Kingdom “it is good to be great, nevertheless it is not good for oneself to be seen to be great, therefore, they earned not rebuke, but instruction.”²⁵³ The Kingdom is worth seeking greatness in, but that seeking must be accompanied by humility—hence the example of the child, and the implication that humility and child-like innocence are the key to avoiding evil.

“In the King,” Albert says on the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, “one may see the power, wisdom and mercy of heaven,”²⁵⁴ since the parable “compares the act of the justice of the kingdom of heaven to human action.”²⁵⁵ These are very much the same parallels that we find in Thomas. The kingship itself denotes power, the desire to settle accounts contains four attributes of wisdom (prudence, industry, stability and order), and the dealing with the servant demonstrates divine justice and mercy. The parable is elaborated in the moral sense, reflecting the need to renounce evil (in the commandment to sell everything) and the mercy shown to the servant, as well as an extensive discussion of how hatred of one's brother can lead to a lack of forgiveness of sins.²⁵⁶ The eschatological dimension, or anagogical sense, is also hinted at in the discussion of angels and the soul's judgment before God.²⁵⁷ This is one parable where Thomas emphasizes the ecclesiological dimension more than Albert, despite Albert's emphasis on ministerial power in his division of these three chapters. This may be a case of Thomas making

252 “... instantiam circa opus” *Super Matthaeum* 475.7.

253 “... bonum est esse magnum, licet non bonum sit videri sibi se esse magnum, ideo non merentur increpationem, sed instructionem.” *Super Matthaeum* 475.55-58.

254 “... regis videlicet caelestis potentiam, sapientiam et misericordiam” *Super Matthaeum* 485.38-39.

255 “... factum iustitiae regni caelorum humano facto comparatur” *Super Matthaeum* 485.42-43.

256 See *Super Matthaeum*, 488-89.

257 See *Super Matthaeum*, 487-88.

explicit what was implicit in Albert, whether he had access to Albert's text or simply made this point more clearly.

Chapter 20

This chapter, as mentioned, deals with “the urgency of the work of the Church's prelates,”²⁵⁸ and so the first parable “teaches the need of the work.”²⁵⁹ This parable highlights both “what it is similar to and in what it is similar.”²⁶⁰ He goes on to say that “It is compared to the kingdom of Heaven when the text says *The kingdom of Heaven is like*, that is the direction of the heavenly officials, who are in the Church; this is called the *kingdom of Heaven* because its origin, conversation and end are in heaven.”²⁶¹

Like Thomas, Albert incorporates two strands of the tradition in reading this parable, although he deals with them sequentially, rather than in an interwoven fashion as Thomas does, and does not cite the Fathers directly. First, Albert follows the pattern of identifying the various hours at which men are called in this parable to the various stages of salvation history and divine revelation, and agrees with Gregory in reading the vineyard as “the Church Militant; the faithful vines planted in the Church.”²⁶² The agreement to work is “the obligation of man to works of spiritual justice from the manifestation of the divine will.”²⁶³ The steward of the vineyard is Christ, and the denarius, as Thomas also taught, is the image of Christ impressed on us by grace.

258 “... instantiam operis praelatos ecclesiae.” *Super Matthaenum* 497.3.

259 “... instantiam docet operis” *Super Matthaenum* 497.9-10.

260 “... assimilatum et cui et in quo assimilatur.” *Super Matthaenum* 497.23-24.

261 “Assimilatum est regnum caelorum, cum dicit: Simile est regnum caelorum, hoc est gubernatio officiorum caelestium, quae sunt in ecclesia; hoc enim dicitur regnum caelorum, quia origo eius est in caelis et conversatio et finis.” *Super Matthaenum* 497.25-29.

262 “... ecclesia militans, vites fideles in ecclesia plantati.” *Super Matthaenum* 498.50-51.

263 “... obligatio hominis ad opus iustitiae spiritualis ex manifestatione divinae voluntatis.” *Super Matthaenum* 498.57-58.

And like Thomas, Albert identifies the grumbling early laborers as the Jews. Albert also cites the interpretation that “man ... is the vineyard, whose vines are the virtues,”²⁶⁴ with the hours of the day representing the stages of man's life.

Albert also parallels Thomas in discussing Matthew 20:25-26, where he says that Jesus “condemns not only the fashion of tyrants, but even of those who rule in civilization.”²⁶⁵ While tyrants are condemned by civilized men, Christ “condemns civil rulership among those invited to the perfection of justice.”²⁶⁶ This leads into a return to the topic of humility, another theme shared by these three Dominicans in their commentaries on this Gospel.

Chapter 21

In Aquinas' commentary, Chapter 21 opens the narrative of Christ's departure from the world. In Albert's, it “begins to deal with the description of the times of the most new state of the Church.”²⁶⁷ The first part of the chapter deals with the transfer of authority from the synagogue to the Gentiles, while the second part beginning at Matthew 21:17 describes the cause of that withdrawal—a cause that apparently takes three and a half chapters to explain, for Albert identifies the third part of this division of the text, which “describes the process of this most new rejection and calling”²⁶⁸ as beginning at Chapter 25.

The entry into Jerusalem fits into this scheme as a demonstration of the power and glory of the One who effects this transfer, and Albert says that “Christ is described here as coming in eight ways: by evidence of coming, by dignity of power, by connaturality with humanity, by the approach of love, by usefulness for the work of redemption, by the best habit of the heart, by the

264 “... homine ... vinea est, cuius vites sunt virtutes” *Super Matthaeum* 499.1-2.

265 “Ecce interdicat fastum non modo tyrannorum, sed etiam eorum qui in urbanitatibus praesunt.” *Super Matthaeum* 504.72-74.

266 “... ad perfectionem iustitiae invitans etiam fastum interdico urbanitatum.” *Super Matthaeum* 504.88-90.

267 “... incipit agere de temporibus novissimum statum ecclesiae describentibus.” *Super Matthaeum* 508.1-3.

268 “... describit iudicium novissimum abiectorum et vocatorum” *Super Matthaeum* 508.9-10.

quiet of His rulership, by the humility of His conversation and by the simplicity of His transportation.”²⁶⁹ Albert derives each of these from a word or passage in Matthew 21:5; while his exposition is more piecemeal, the general themes of kingship, connaturality, usefulness, compassion, and humility parallel Thomas' exposition of the same passage. In commenting on Matthew 21:9, however, Albert highlights not only the divine nature but also the fact that “by the law of succession the honor of kingship was owed to him”²⁷⁰—a point Thomas glosses over.

By contrast, Albert's interpretation of Matthew 21:31b is simple and straightforward; cross-referencing it to Romans 11:25-26, he states that the publicans and harlots will enter the Kingdom first “because when the fullness of the Gentiles has entered, then will come the conversion of the Jews.”²⁷¹

The parable of the vineyard and the wicked tenants shows “that immanent crime for which they were justly condemned.”²⁷² The planting of the vineyard is the work of the Lord, who guards it with righteous men and angels, purifies it by law, defends it in the worship of the Temple, and places it in fulfillment of his commands.²⁷³ Thus, in Albert's reading, the vineyard is the people of Israel and the 'Church' in its Old Testament state.

Albert does fold Scripture into this passage as well, but in a slightly different way than Thomas. The stone spoken of in Matthew 21:42 is Scripture, according to Albert, and he understands Christ's citation of the passage as “condemnation of their ignorance of Scripture, which leads to Christ.”²⁷⁴ Albert quickly uses the terms of rejection and becoming to return to the

269 “Describitur autem hic Christus veniens ab octo: ab evidentia venientis, a dignitate potestatis, a connaturalitate hominis, ab appropinquatione amoris, ab utilitate operis redemptionis, ab optimo habitu cordis, a quiete regiminis, ab humilitate conversationis et a simplicitate subvectionis.” *Super Matthaeum* 510.83-511.3.

270 “... cui iure successionis debetur regius honor.” *Super Matthaeum*, 512.68-69.

271 “... quia plenitudo gentium intravit et tandem fiet conversio Iudaeorum.” *Super Matthaeum*, 522.28-29.

272 “... ista immanitas sceleris, propter quam iuste reprobantur.” *Super Matthaeum*, 523.1-2.

273 See *Super Matthaeum* 523.24-69.

274 “... reprehensio ignorantiae scripturae, quae ducit ad Christum” *Super Matthaeum* 527.46-47.

main theme of rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles. He does however return to the Scriptural dimension when expressing the sentence, defining the kingdom as “the spiritual power and rule expressed in Scripture, which is designated by the vine.”²⁷⁵ This harmonizes well with what we found in Thomas about the Law of the Kingdom, contained in Scripture, as constituting the Kingdom, a theme we have seen elsewhere in Albert as well.

Chapter 22

For Albert, the Parable of the Wedding Banquet is “divided into two parts, the first of which shows the just expulsion of the Jews, and the second brings in the general calling of the Gentiles and the building of the Church.”²⁷⁶ The first paragraph of that first part “shows the benefits of grace in the preparations of God,”²⁷⁷ and gives us another extensive discussion of the Kingdom, especially in relation to justice. “It is *a kingdom* insofar as ruling is 'living justice', moving from justice and guided by justice and to justice in that it reduces all to an end, such as is moved by virtue and guided by wisdom and ending in the good of justice.”²⁷⁸ The kingdom is heavenly because “all these things are done with respect to the justice of heaven, which is divine and is the prime form of all justice.”²⁷⁹ The description of God as king likewise represents “glory, the righteousness of justice, the distribution of grades of honor, and the control and government of a multitude.”²⁸⁰ The wedding imagery of the parable takes on a slightly different

275 “... hoc est potestas et ordo spiritualis expressus in scripturis, quod per vineam designatur.” *Super Matthaeum* 528.28-30.

276 “Dividitur igitur parabola ista in duas partes; primo enim iustam ostendit eversionem Iudaeae et in secundo generalem inducit vocationem gentium et ecclesiae aedificationem,” *Super Matthaeum*, 529.13-16.

277 “... beneficia gratiae ostendit in deo praeparatae” *Super Matthaeum*, 529.18.

278 “Regnum in regnante est ‘animatum iustum’, movens ex iusto et dirigens iustum et ad iustum ut ad finem omnia reducens, ut sic sit movens virtute et dirigens sapientia et finiens bonitate iustitiae.” *Super Matthaeum* 529.53-57.

279 “... haec omnia fiunt respectu iustitiae caeli, quae divina est et est omnis iustitiae prima forma.” *Super Matthaeum* 529.58-60.

280 “... gloria et rectitudine iustitiae et distributione graduum honoris et continentia multitudinum et gubernatione earum.” *Super Matthaeum* 529.70-530.2.

tone in Albert, who expounds it in a way that is similar but not identical to Thomas' exegesis.

Three things are to be noted, namely the work, the making and for what it is made. In the first is the work of God, what God has done without us, but in us and for us. In the second is the greatness of the love, the unity of the conjunction and the charm of the delight which is expressed in what has been done. In the third is the height of the marriage and the honor conveyed, for our nature or spirit cannot marry any higher or more gloriously than to be conjoined to the Son of God.²⁸¹

Albert argues that on account of sin, “none of us were fitting for the kingdom of heaven or the divine union,”²⁸² thus the necessity of grace. This conjoining is called the kingdom of heaven on account of its nobility “in origin, in power, in order, in riches, and in glory.”²⁸³ Thus, “this kingdom of heaven is perfect in every way.”²⁸⁴

For what can be better for man than God, who is the origin of all his good, invincible and sufficient to all things in the perfection of power, that he can say 'I can do all things in Him who strengthens me', together in order in time and place with both God and men, sufficient and full in all the good things of the Holy Spirit and glorious in the splendor of virtue and truth?²⁸⁵

Albert also associates kingship with “the habit of the soul and the dignity of honor. A true king is a benign king, who disposes all things to goodness and usefulness, while a savage and inhumane king degenerates into a tyrant.”²⁸⁶

Though Albert may not be as clear as Thomas, he seems to share the same division of the 'wedding' into three types—the Incarnation, the spiritual union of the soul with God, and the

281 “Et notantur tria, scilicet factura, factum et cui fit. In primo est opus divinum, quod deus sine nobis, sed in nobis et pro nobis operatur. In secundo magnitudo amoris et unitas coniunctionis et iucunditas delectationis in hoc quod fecit, exprimitur. In tertio altitudo maritalis et honor importatur; nubere enim natura vel spiritus noster non potest altius et gloriosius, quam filio dei coniungatur.” *Super Matthaeum* 530.8-16.

282 “... nobis ad regnum caelorum et coniunctionem divinam nulla erat congruitas.” *Super Matthaeum* 530.27-29.

283 “... in origine, in potestate, in ordine, in divitiis, in gloria.” *Super Matthaeum* 530.40-41.

284 “Hoc est regnum caelorum undique perfectum.” *Super Matthaeum* 530.77.

285 “Quid enim melius fieri potest homini, quam divinus sit sui boni origine, invincibilis et ad omnia sufficiens virtutis perfectione, ut dicere possit: ‘Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat’, congruus tempori et loco et deo et hominibus in ordine, sufficiens et copiosus in omnibus spiritus sancti bonis et gloriosus in decore virtutis et honestatis?” *Super Matthaeum* 530.82-88.

286 “... habitu animi et 15dignitate honoris. Benignus enim rex vere rex est, qui omnia bene et utiliter disponit, ferus autem rex et inhumanus degenerat in tyrannum,” *Super Matthaeum* 531.14-17.

eschatological union. He speaks of the wedding “in nature, in spirit, in glory; in nature, when our nature was united to him, in spirit, when the soul of man is joined to him, in glory, when the whole man will be filled with the light of His divinity. The first was done in the womb of the virgin, the second in the bedroom of the soul, the third in the secret face of God.”²⁸⁷

Chapter 23

Albert is in harmony with Thomas on the reading of Matthew 23:13. “The kingdom of heaven is closed when the way which leads to the kingdom is hidden. And this was done by taking and hiding the mysteries of Scripture, which led to Christ.”²⁸⁸

Chapter 25

Albert opens his discussion of the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins by stating that it is addressed “to vigilance in cleanness, continence against sin and preparation in virtue, and therefore it is spoken about the contemplatives, whose life consists in zeal for virtue and purity and individual decorum.”²⁸⁹ The contemplative dimension seems to fit with what Albert says in discussing the use of the term 'kingdom of heaven' here: “The kingdom of heaven here is nothing other than the desire of excellence which follows the law set forth to lead men to heaven.”²⁹⁰ This is supported by Albert's statement that the “ten virgins ... [are] those who are mentally virgins, who have a pure concept of the faith with no defilement by illicit love.”²⁹¹ Like the

287 “... in natura, in spiritu, in gloria; in natura, quando sibi naturam nostram univit, in spiritu, quando spiritum hominis sibi coniungit, in gloria, quando hominem totum luce suae deitatis implebit. Primae factae 40 sunt in virginis utero, secundae in conscientiae thalamo, tertiae in faciei dei secreto.” *Super Matthaenum* 531.35-41.

288 “Regnum enim caelorum clauditur, quando via, quae ducit ad regnum, occultatur. Et hoc faciebant tollendo et occultando mysteria scripturarum, quae ducunt ad Christum.” *Super Matthaenum* 551.41-45.

289 “... ad vigilantiam munditiae et continentiae contra peccatum et praeparationem virtutis, et ideo attribuitur contemplativis, quorum est studium virtutis et puritatis et decoris proprium” *Super Matthaenum* 584.8-11.

290 “Nec regnum caelorum hic aliud intelligitur nisi studium pulchritudinis, quod secundum leges ad caelum ducentes homini proponitur.” *Super Matthaenum* 584.29-32.

291 “... hoc est virginalibus mentibus, quae conceptam fidei puritatem cum nullo illicito devirginant amatore.” *Super Matthaenum* 584.38-40.

various sources Thomas cites, Albert takes the 'ten' as representative of the Commandments or the senses. Albert's interpretation of the lamps is slightly different, though; he refers to them as “integrity of faith and body”²⁹², placing a greater emphasis on virginity than Thomas does. The definition of oil is similar to Thomas, though not identical: “*the oil* of fidelity in love, glory in the testimony of the conscience, illumination in intention, charity in the embrace of God, mercy in compassion to neighbors.”²⁹³ The sleep is understood in two ways: either as death or, as Chrysostom said, tedium of the soul in doing good. Likewise, the coming of the Bridegroom is, as is typical, associated with the Second Coming and the Last Judgment; this is supported by a citation from Jerome that “it is a tradition of the Hebrews that the day of judgment will be in the middle of the night.”²⁹⁴

Albert, like Thomas, favors the Origenist²⁹⁵ reading that the command for the foolish virgins to go and buy oil “is not advice, but they obliquely condemned the former life,”²⁹⁶ and takes this through the rest of the parable, treating it as a discussion of those who pursue worldly goods and thus find themselves in a state of sin at the end of life.

The last parable “is an admonition to activity for those who receive the talents of the Lord.”²⁹⁷ Albert adopts a more ecclesiological and soteriological model when discussing the talents; “there are five types of good [*bonorum*], which are exercised in the Church for merit.”²⁹⁸ The first is human nature, the second is grace; this will also be the understanding Albert uses

292 “... integritatis fidei et corporis.” *Super Mattheum* 587.81.

293 “... pietatis in affectu, gloriae in testimonio conscientiae, illustrationis in intentione, caritatis in amplexu dei, misericordiae in compassione proximi.” *Super Mattheum* 588.1-3.

294 “... quod traditio Hebraeorum est, quod media nocte futura sit iudicii dies,” *Super Mattheum* 589.21-22.

295 Cited by Thomas in *Commentary on Matthew* C.25 L.1 ¶2026, 327, and drawn from Origen’s *In Mattheum*, according to the *Catena Aurea*, C.25 L.1.

296 “Non est consilium, sed oblique reprehendunt vitam praeteritam,” *Super Mattheum* 590.75-76.

297 “... est ad admonitionem activorum, qui talenta domini receperunt.” *Super Mattheum* 591.83-84.

298 “Sunt autem quinque genera bonorum, quae exercentur in ecclesia ad meritum.” *Super Mattheum* 592.64-65.

when speaking of the man in the parable to whom two gifts are given, since “these two are necessary for anyone to merit. There are another two which are necessary for the commission of the rule of souls, namely wisdom for teaching ... the other is the gift of ordination or vicarage or commission of power.”²⁹⁹ The fifth 'talent' or gift is, at first glance, decidedly odd for a Dominican theologian; Albert describes it as “the good of opulence.”³⁰⁰ However, Albert says that “one has this gift instrumentally for merit and to be given in sustenance,”³⁰¹ suggesting that the wealth of the Church is to be used for charity and promotion of the Gospel. That the wealth of the Church is what he has in mind is clear when he says that “all five are given to prelates; while two, namely nature and grace, are given to all good men, and one, nature, is given to all,”³⁰² and his follow-up statement that the three gifts above nature and grace require one another to be properly used. Albert also cites “the saints” as providing the same exegesis that Thomas attributed to Gregory and Jerome, so we can see familiarity with the ideas if not the specific works.

In the discussion of the Last Judgment, Albert also highlights the communal nature of the rulership of the Kingdom: “And all the saints will reign as kings in this kingdom.”³⁰³

Chapter 26

Albert's reading of Matthew 26:29 is that it “sets forth the end of the Old Testament and a sacrament,”³⁰⁴ and the “kingdom of my Father” is “the perfection of Church power in sacred

299 “Et haec duo necessaria sunt cuilibet ad meritum. Sunt alia duo, quae necessaria sunt ad regimen animarum commissum, scilicet bonum scientiae ad docendum ... aliud est bonum ordinariae vel vicariae vel commissae potestatis.” *Super Matthaeum* 592.73-76, 80-81.

300 “... bonum opulentiae,” *Super Matthaeum* 592.86.

301 “... quod instrumentaliter se habet ad meritum et datum est in sustentationem,” *Super Matthaeum* 592.84-85.

302 “... omnia quinque dantur praelatis, duo autem, naturae scilicet et gratiae, omnibus bonis, unum autem, quod est naturae, datur omnibus.” *Super Matthaeum* 592.89-593.2.

303 “Et est hoc regnum quo omnes sancti ut reges regnabunt.” *Super Matthaeum* 602.14-15.

304 “Hic ponitur veteris testamenti et sacramenti terminatio,” *Super Matthaeum* 618.53-54.

rule, in civilized restraint [*urbanitate continente*], in the distribution of offices and in the laws of justice”³⁰⁵--the same set of terms he has used continually for the Kingdom in this commentary.

Chapter 27

Most of Albert's mentions of kingdom and kingship in the Passion narrative are straightforward cross-references to the other Gospels and the rest of Scripture, but his comment on Matthew 27:37 merits note. He reads the inscription on the Cross as saying “he who made himself king of the Jews. ... He is king, because the title on the Cross makes him king.”³⁰⁶ The phrase is brief, but suggestive of the same idea that we find more developed in Thomas—that the Passion merits the Kingship. The following phrase is likewise interesting, if only as a look at how medieval theologians understood Pilate's motives: “And it could be, that because he preached a new kingdom, the judge [Pilate] believed that it would be in this world and that he would make a kingdom in it.”³⁰⁷

Chapter 28

Albert's ecclesiastical focus can be seen one last time in the comments on Matthew 28:18, where he explains that the use of the term *potestas* “is the name for political power, and he uses *potentia* with regard to the ordination of laws. And therefore, when he will establish the Church, he makes mention of the fullness of *potestas*, when he will speak to Peter of pasturing the sheep ... and will commission the disciples for the dispensing of doctrine and sacraments”³⁰⁸--the

305 “... quod est ecclesiasticae potestatis perfectio in sacro principatu et urbanitate continente et officiorum distributione et legibus iustitiae,” *Super Matthaeum* 618.80-82.

306 “.. hoc est: qui se fecit regem Iudaeorum. ... Rex tamen est, quia titulus crucis eum regem facit.” *Super Matthaeum* 645.3, 5-6.

307 “Et potest esse, quod quia praedicavit novum regnum, iudex credidit, quod hoc esset mundanum et quod se regem vellet facere in illo.” *Super Matthaeum* 645.7-10.

308 “... quia potestas nomen est civile et dicit potentiam stantem ad iuris ordinem. Et ideo ordinaturus ecclesiam facit mentionem de plenitudine potestatis, dicturus Petro de pastura ovium, ... et commissurus discipulis dispensationem doctrinae et sacramentorum.” *Super Matthaeum* 662.46-52.

commission which concludes Matthew's Gospel.

Conclusions on Albertus Magnus

This is an appropriate way to conclude matters, for Albert's emphasis in the Commentary on Matthew has been twofold: one is the ecclesiastical kingdom, the other is the heavenly Kingdom as form and archetype of the earthly one. The similarities and differences to Thomas in both these regards seem to stem from a common root. Both of them see the Kingdom in much the same way, but where Albert emphasizes the origin or being—the institution of the Church as a structure, the idea of the Kingdom in the mind of God—Thomas focuses on the end or becoming, with a focus on the Church's mission over its structure, and on the realization of the Kingdom in the eschaton.

Overall Conclusions

Hugh of St. Cher, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas are, as Beryl Smalley once noted, “patches of terra firma”³⁰⁹ in the study of 13th-century scriptural commentaries. But even those patches can be unsteady in certain places; while we can draw a line from Hugh to Albert, and a less certain one from Hugh to Thomas, connecting Albert to Thomas when it comes to commentary on Matthew and on the subject of the Kingdom depends heavily on conjecture.

Albert's influence on Thomas' thought and career was profound, of course, but as Fries points out, the teacher was willing to cite the student at certain points as well.³¹⁰ Given the fact

309 Smalley, *Study*, 264.

310 Fries, 138-39.

that we have nothing more than a *reportatio* of Aquinas on Matthew to work with³¹¹, we are lacking the *ipsissima verba* of Thomas that would allow us to make solid determinations on whether he was citing Albert's commentary directly, or simply working with the same background and influences as his mentor.

Despite these problems, we can trace a thematic line through these three commentaries that roughly mirrors their chronological progression. Hugh's commentary was the first, and in many ways the bridge from a more patristic approach to the more philosophical, and especially Aristotelian, approach often associated with scholasticism. He has less patience than Albert and Thomas with speculation in some areas, though he is prone to more detailed elaboration of the parables, and is more focused on the moral sense than on or the literal application that Thomas (and to a degree Albert) favors. The repetition of the phrase *regnum caelorum, id est, Ecclesia militans* also points to the heavily ecclesiological focus of Hugh's understanding of the Kingdom. These two factors explain why some themes in Hugh are developed far more elaborately, such as the four kingdoms in Matthew 8, or the various ways of entering the Kingdom in Matthew 11:11, whereas Thomas retains a more sober, literal approach.³¹² By contrast, in other areas, Hugh makes references or drops hints that we see Thomas elaborate in a more complete and systematic way. The prime example is from Matthew 3, where Hugh's few references to the Commandments and to the Gospel as leading to the Kingdom are developed into the multidimensional structure that we have been exploring throughout this dissertation. Similarly, Hugh refers to Scripture as the Kingdom in Matthew 6, but fails to connect that to other passages such as Matthew 3 or Matthew 21, whereas Thomas brings all of them together.

311 See Chapter 2, 28-30, of this dissertation for more discussion of the history of the Matthew commentary.

312 Although in the discussion of the angel's ministry to Christ after the temptation in the desert in Matthew 4, it is Thomas who is willing to go farther, while Hugh explicitly declares the nature of that ministry unknowable.

Hugh also has a broader focus on poverty, which encompasses both literal poverty and the spiritual poverty of humility; Albert and Thomas give much more priority to the latter, in keeping with the already noted emphasis on the internal dimension of the Kingdom.³¹³ Hugh enters the Order as an adult and earlier than Thomas, and at points in his commentary³¹⁴ we see some of the zeal of that first generation for apostolic poverty show through. One cannot easily imagine Hugh using Albert's idea of “the good of opulence” as one of the talents given by Christ to his clergy.

The ecclesiological focus is also why one could place Albert between Hugh and Thomas thematically as well as chronologically. In most regards, Albert and Aquinas are very similar in their understanding of the Kingdom. The multifaceted nature of the Kingdom, the heavy emphasis on the internal nature, law, and the contemplative dimension, and other factors show up in both thinkers, suggesting that even if Thomas did not have Albert's commentary to hand, there was a commonality of thought and sources. While precise influences and references cannot be reliably traced, we can say that there was a definite harmony of ideas between these two Doctors of the Church.

However, there are some points of difference. As noted, Albert's approach to the Kingdom places more emphasis on both the established Church and on the ideal of the Kingdom in the mind of God than Thomas does. In addition, Albert's repeated definition of kingdom and kingship as related to “the giving of laws, precepts, offices, ranks and rewards”, which is taken in turn from Pseudo-Dionysius, suggests a more hierarchical cast to his thought on the Kingdom

313 For a comparison of Aquinas' thought on the relation of poverty to perfection with another thinker in favor of a stricter construction—namely, Peter Olivi—see Madigan, 106-9.

314 See the commentary on Matthew 9 and 22.

as a whole.³¹⁵ The hierarchical dimension is not foreign to Thomas—indeed, it is a fundamental element of his idea of “contemplating and handing on the fruits of contemplation”—but the Angelic Doctor seems to make more of individual participation in the Kingdom, though again, he does not neglect the role of ‘masters’ (teachers, lawgivers and sanctifiers) and subjects. It might be said that Albert focuses more on the givers of grace, law and other fruits of wisdom and contemplation, while Thomas focused more on what is given. This may be why, in another context, Bernhard Blankenhorn points out that “instead of Albert’s hierarchy of learning, grace now constitutes the stages of ascent to Mt. Sinai. The unitive state or event no longer pertains primarily to bishops and monks.”³¹⁶ This also ties in with the emphasis, noted above, on the mission of the Church in Thomas as opposed to the institution or hierarchy in the other two theologians.

In conclusion, all three of these thinkers say many of the same things about the Kingdom, but with different emphases and points of focus. One could see Hugh as the precursor, gathering patristic ideas and laying the foundation for themes that the other two will develop more deeply, with Albert as the ‘Platonic’, idealistically and hierarchically focused continuer of that tradition, and Thomas as the more ‘Aristotelian’ thinker, focused on the instantiation and *telos* of the Kingdom and its ultimate realization in the eschaton.

With this, we come to the conclusion of our survey of Thomas Aquinas’ work on the Kingdom as approached through his Gospel commentaries. After laying the foundations, we have looked at those commentaries in themselves, supplemented them with other Scriptural

315 Albert, of course, did more work with Pseudo-Dionysius than Thomas did, and was arguably Thomas’ mentor in dealing with the Areopagite’s works. More relevant to this point, Albert commented on the *Celestial Hierarchy* and *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, while Thomas did not.

316 Blankenhorn, 439.

commentaries and Thomas' works in general, and compared them to commentaries from Thomas' contemporaries. Having done all this, it is time to return to where we began and consider what has been learned, how we can address earlier readings and critiques of Thomas' Kingdom theology, and the implications of this work.

Concluding Remarks

Thomas' Vision of the Kingdom

Now that we have examined what Aquinas says about the Kingdom throughout his corpus and compared him to other medieval Dominican commentaries on Scripture, we can reach some conclusions about his doctrine.

Chapter 1 explored the current scholarship on Thomas' understanding of the Kingdom of God, and laid the foundations for our study of the topic with Thomas' general understanding of Scriptural exegesis and the concepts of kingdom, contemplation and participation. Chapter 2 studied how this concept of the Kingdom was laid out in the *Commentary on Matthew*, with the fundamental fourfold definition of the Kingdom as consisting in Christ's rule in the soul, Scripture and the Gospel message, the Church Militant on Earth, and the Church Triumphant in Heaven, as well as and supplemented by the *Commentary on John*. Chapter 3, with the consideration of other Scripture commentaries, showed us the unity of Aquinas' thought and approach to Scripture, and provided supplemental material on the Christological and eschatological dimensions of this kingdom. Chapter 4 explained how other sources contribute to our understanding of the Kingdom of God in Thomas' thought, and how the scholarship done on the subject in those sources complements our conclusions but does not make the study of the Gospel commentaries redundant. Chapter 5 helped to place Thomas in his historical context, examining the theme of the Kingdom in the Matthew commentaries of Hugh of St. Cher and St. Albertus Magnus.

At first glance, it may seem that some of this material is irrelevant, such as the discussion of Thomas' political theory and conception of earthly kingdoms. However, exploring these

elements of Thomas' thought is fruitful, since, based on both the internal evidence and the Scholastic maxim that "grace perfects nature," Thomas' understanding of earthly kingdoms, both by analogy and by contrast, helps us better understand the Kingdom of Heaven.

A kingdom, according to Aquinas, is a unity designed to provide for the mutual defense and encourage the flourishing of its citizens.¹ Ideally, that kingdom would be unified under a singular ruler and with a singular direction, setting out laws for the growth of its citizens in virtue and educating them in how to attain to earthly happiness, associated with justice to one another, peace in their relations with their fellow human beings, and the joys of virtue and philosophical contemplation. Since human beings are fallen and live in a fallen world, though, this goal is not always achieved, and the unitary model of kingship is prone to corruption and disorders. In addition, due to the weakness and hostility of mankind, the kingdom must often resort to force both to punish wrongdoers and to protect itself.

The Kingdom of Heaven is thus analogical² to an earthly kingdom, but also different and 'not of this world'. The singular ruler of that kingdom, of course, is Christ Himself, who reigns at present not through force or visible majesty but in the hearts of those who would enter into this Kingdom. This is Thomas' first dimension of the Kingdom—the internal or moral dimension, whereby Christ rules in the soul through grace. This grace leads one not only to justice, which gives what is due to both God and man, but to charity, which leads one to love God above all things and to love all men as themselves for the sake of God. The peace offered by this grace

¹ See Chapter 1, 13-21

² The issue of analogy in Aquinas' thought is, of course, a much-debated one. See Bernard Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being according to Thomas Aquinas*, translated by E. M. Macierowski, reviewed by Pol Vandavelde, edited by Andrew Tallon (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2004), Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, and Ralph McInerney, *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988) for starting points.

likewise goes beyond external relations to the peace of loving relationships with God and with one's fellow members of the Kingdom, for the centrality of charity and the fundamental union of all believers in the Body of Christ surpasses any peace and unity that can be established by earthly powers. And as for the joys of virtue and contemplation, these are not so much superseded as elevated to a supernatural level where one sees God as God sees Himself and loves as God loves, with an unending joy.³

This Kingdom, like all kingdoms, has its laws and statutes, but unlike positive law, which participates in natural law, these laws come directly from the eternal law and the Eternal Lawgiver. Thomas' emphases on law and contemplation combine to highlight the second dimension of the Kingdom—Scripture, and the evangelical message, as the Kingdom. For Thomas, while the ruler is the unifying and directing force of a kingdom, it is by the establishment, propagation and use of laws that he gives a kingdom that unity and direction. Hence, it can be truly said that the king and the laws are *both* constitutive of the Kingdom in their own way. How much more so, then, is that true of the Kingdom of Heaven, whose king and laws are both described as the very Word of God? These laws are not only wise and valuable for human flourishing, but they reveal the mind of the Lawgiver who is the source of all goodness and joy, and thus provide unending material for contemplation and study. Thus could Thomas say with the Psalmist, “Blessed is the man ... [whose] will is in the law of the lord and who meditates on it day and night.” (Psalm 1:1-2)

A kingdom is more than king, subjects and laws, however. In all but the smallest communities, there must be those who carry out the will of the King and help promulgate and

³ See White, *Incarnate Lord*, 12-14 for some inspiring reflections on the relationship between wisdom, charity, and the joy of the Father.

apply his laws. In the Kingdom of God as presently constituted, this role is taken by the third dimension of the Kingdom, the Church Militant. The term ‘militant’ is not only a term by which Thomas distinguishes the wayfarers from those who possess the Kingdom in its fullness, though. For Thomas, the Church’s role on Earth is to conquer the world for Christ and vanquish his enemies—but not in the way of earthly kingdoms, through military might or political negotiation and trickery. Indeed, the Church’s enemies are such that they *cannot* be conquered in this way, for the opposition to the Kingdom lies not in earthly powers or even ‘structures of sin’—although it can manifest in those—but in the sins of individuals and the fallen angels who seek to drag mankind down into sin and away from the Kingdom. The Church conquers these powers by breaking their power over individuals, through preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and applying the merits of Christ’s Passion through the sacraments that undo the power of evil and unlock the Kingdom of Heaven.

As the reader may have noted, these first three dimensions of the Kingdom are very tightly interwoven. The individual participates in the Kingdom more and more fully through contemplation of Scripture and participation in the life of the Church. Scripture lays down the pattern of life for the individual and serves as the charter of the Church Militant. The Church on Earth fosters the growth of individuals into citizens and co-heirs of the Kingdom, and reflects on and proclaims the Word of God as found in Scripture and the tradition passed on through the preaching of her King and his first and greatest ministers, the Apostles.

All three of these dimensions are also anticipatory, looking forward to the fourth and fullest dimension of the Kingdom, which is the eschatological Kingdom or the reign of Christ in the “new heaven and new earth” that will endure for all eternity. In the current situation, humanity remains subject to sin, ignorance, turmoil and death, and even the greatest saints are

not wholly free of those burdens and at perfect peace and unity with God. That state will eventually manifest in its fullness, when the last enemies are utterly vanquished and Christ hands over the Kingdom to the Father, at which point “God will be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28)—and all will be in God, seeing Him face to face, knowing and loving Him even as He knows and loves Himself.

This is what the Kingdom of Heaven in the soul, in Scripture and the believer looks forward to, just as the Old Law, the rites of the Old Covenant, and the Kingdom of Israel looked forward to the New Law, the Church, and the Kingdom as manifest here on Earth. Thomas does draw a distinction between the two levels of ‘anticipation’, though, with the implication that the Old Testament was still constrained by the limits of the world. One finds that point in various forms in Thomas’ understanding of the Old Covenant, such as the emphasis in the Old Testament⁴ on earthly rewards, the focus on external deeds and punishments and the idea that the Old Law governed by fear instead of love, and the manifestation of the Kingdom of Israel as an earthly kingdom where the priesthood was subject to the monarchy, as opposed to the independence and (arguably) superiority Thomas claims for the Church in the new era. All of these are closer to the realities of earthly kingdoms than the ideal form of even the Kingdom on earth that Aquinas sets forth, suggesting a gradual process of elevation which has its deciding point in Christ.

Indeed, for Thomas, Christ is arguably the fifth—and, from another perspective, the first—dimension of the Kingdom. The individual Christian is conformed to Him, the whole of

4 In Thomas’ understanding, shaped by the Fathers of the Church, especially Augustine. Whether this is wholly fair to Old Testament Judaism is open to debate, but it should be noted that by definition, anything anticipatory both contains elements of what it anticipates and yet falls short of that reality. In addition, the Old Testament, while still a unity, is not given the same degree of unity and completion that the New Testament attains in Christ.

Scripture points to and reveals Him, the Church works in His name and applies His power, especially the wisdom of His word and the merits of His Passion.

That last element ties together multiple strands of the Kingdom for Thomas, and I believe it is why we see so many references to the martial dimension of kingship in the *Commentary on Matthew*, as well as continuing discussion of ‘two kingdoms’—Christ is very much a conquering King *and* a hereditary monarch, one who possesses the Kingdom by both divine and human right but who also merits to attain it through His triumphant victory over an Enemy who seeks to steal the kingdom from the rightful king and make himself a supreme and everlasting tyrant over the human race.

But as the centrality of the Passion and the emphasis on the Church as militant *in* preaching demonstrate, this victory is not a matter of force, but of justice, wisdom and love. Christ illuminates the way of the True Kingdom in both word and deed, and ultimately offers Himself for the sake of those who would enter that Kingdom. For this, He establishes that Kingdom and wins it from the Father as a reward, justly depriving the Usurper who has laid unjust claim to it and preserved his dominion over mankind through deception, force and fear. The rest of history, the work of the Church Militant, and the responsibility of every human person is, for Thomas, the continual unfolding of this victory in individuals and in the world, and the final choosing of sides for humanity, until those who have chosen for Christ reign with Him in eternal joy and majesty, and those who choose against Him are subjected to Him.

Revisiting the State of the Question

As stated earlier, Thomas draws on a variety of sources to produce

a fascinating, multifaceted interpretation of the Kingdom which builds on Scripture and, in conjunction with ideas from Aristotle, Pseudo-Dionysius, Johannine mysticism and the mendicant movement, constructs a vision of a Kingdom that is both contemplative and evangelical, internal and ecclesiastical, focused on God and others, and manifest in multiple dimensions and yet fundamentally oriented towards an eschatological vision at which the full promise of humanity is revealed and God becomes all in all.⁵

To conclude our work, we will return to that definition and explore how it has been supported, by the study done here, in dialogue with the other works that were considered when discussing the state of the question back in Chapter 1. We will first examine the foundational question of how Aquinas connects Scripture to the Kingdom and explore why starting from the Scripture commentaries provides new and valuable insight into the topic. We will then consider the other sources and dimensions of the kingdom in relation to some of the criticisms and themes mentioned in that first chapter—Aristotle and earthly politics as the natural mirror of the supernatural kingdom, Johannine emphasis on contemplation and the personal dimension of the Kingdom, the mendicant movement’s vision of the Church’s mission as the ecclesiological dimension, and the combination of contemplation and participation reaching their fulfillment in the eschatological vision of humanity as sharing in the Divine Power and Wisdom in the eschatological Kingdom. Finally, we will include some notes on possible avenues for future research, and the relevance of this topic to the contemporary situation of the Church.

The Kingdom and Scripture

The relation of Scripture to the Kingdom is brought up primarily in Matthew 3, where Thomas identifies it as a facet of the Kingdom, and Matthew 21, where we discussed it as subordinate to the other three senses—the individual soul, the Church, and the eternal Kingdom--

⁵ Chapter 1, 3-4.

as a vessel. Thomas also speaks of it as a gateway to the Kingdom in Matthew 22, and it is implicitly connected with the evangelical nature of the Kingdom as expressed in Matthew 13 and elsewhere. Given the emphasis on wisdom and contemplation in the personal dimension of the Kingdom, and the emphasis on the contemplative role and the preaching mission of the Church, it applies to other sides of the Kingdom of God as well. Furthermore, as demonstrated throughout this dissertation, Thomas makes extensive use of Scripture when developing his doctrine of the Kingdom. Thomas' view of Scripture in the life of the Kingdom—as material for bringing the individual to deeper knowledge and closer identification with Christ the King, as the charter of the Church, the core of the evangelical message she proclaims, and the guide to how she also participates in the full Kingdom, and as a source of revelation about the Kingdom as a whole—seems to be very high indeed.

Despite all this, did Thomas Aquinas and other medieval thinkers fundamentally misunderstand what Scripture had to say about the Kingdom? Benedict Viviano certainly implies such in his work *The Kingdom of God in History*, stating that “the Middle Ages on the whole did not understand well the this-worldly dimension of the kingdom of God,”⁶ a fault he blames on numerous factors, including overuse of Platonic idealism, Augustinian identification of the Kingdom with the Church, ignorance of the Jewish apocalyptic literature that Viviano sees as giving context to Christ's preaching, and a misunderstanding of Scriptures such as Luke 17:21 and John 18:36.⁷ A full response to Viviano would be another work, but some notes on his critiques of Thomas and the medievals seem appropriate here.

It is true that Thomas rejects every hint of millenarianism and does not emphasize the

⁶ Viviano, *Kingdom*, 57.

⁷ See Viviano, *Kingdom*, 19.

'social justice' dimension of the kingdom which is of such concern to Viviano.⁸ However, as seen in Chapter 2, Thomas may actually lay new foundation for that element with his introduction of *aliorum salutem* into the vineyard parable of Matthew 20, as discussed in Chapter 2⁹. That is a development from Thomas' patristic sources of Gregory and Pseudo-Chrysostom, and while Thomas does not do more than gesture in that direction, he moves the role of charity a step forward, from simply "good action" and "the glory of God" to explicitly speaking of "the salvation (or well-being) of others."

More to the point, to accuse Thomas of misunderstanding Scripture, by not being aware of precise nuances of the Greek¹⁰ or of the historical background of Jewish apocalyptic preaching, is based on premises of interpretation that are somewhat alien to the Angelic Doctor's thought. Thomas likely would have admitted the value of such tools as study of the best texts and the historical-critical method, by all means. But his principles of Scriptural interpretation, as discussed in Chapter 1, would not lend themselves to calling an interpretation *wrong* simply because it does not fit with the assumptions and conclusions reached by those tools. Rather, the first guide for Scriptural interpretation would be the integrity of the text, both in the sense of avoiding violence to the literal meaning and as reading Scripture—both the individual books and the compiled canon—as a whole, not merely a collection of texts from across history. The second guide would be the tradition of the Church, which contained much material suggesting that Thomas' reading of the Kingdom texts, while not necessarily the last word, was certainly a legitimate strand of that tradition. Indeed, we have demonstrated that much of Thomas' material

⁸ Viviano, *Kingdom*, 22.

⁹ Chapter 2, 100-101.

¹⁰ See Viviano, *Kingdom*, 19, for general discussion of this as related to John 18:36, and 69-70, for Luke 17:21 in the context of Albert and the Vulgate in general.

is a compilation and synthesis of tradition; even the fourfold definition of the Kingdom that forms the central theme of this dissertation is not original to Thomas, but is taken from Remigius and developed more thoroughly. However, as we have established, Thomas was not just a compiler of patristic thought. He certainly grounded himself in the patristic tradition, but at several points, he developed and went beyond it to create his own distinctive vision of the Kingdom, in harmony with his predecessors and companions but possessing its own ‘flavor’ and elements.

As a *Magister in Sacra Pagina*, Thomas was steeped in Scripture, and while his Scripture commentaries are only now receiving the same kind of attention paid to his theological *Summae* or commentaries on Aristotle, they contain much of the same material and quality that we are accustomed to finding in the Angelic Doctor. Analyzing a Scriptural theme such as the Kingdom of God through the lens of these commentaries has given us a breadth and depth of perspective that prior attempts have lacked. While Joanne Edwards provides much of value and agrees with many of the general conclusions we have reached, there is a difference between the ‘top-down’ philosophical perspective of her work, guided by the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and the *Summa Theologiae*, and this work, which engages the Kingdom in the context of Christ’s life and preaching and so, in an interesting contrast to Viviano’s concerns and critique, places the Kingdom of God more clearly ‘in the world, but not of it.’

This is perhaps most clearly expressed when considering how Aquinas takes an Aristotelian understanding of politics and uses it to develop his understanding of both earthly kingdoms and the Kingdom of Heaven, and how the two are both like and unlike each other.

“Baptizing Aristotle:” Earthly Politics and the Kingdom of Heaven

If Benedict Viviano complains that Thomas neglects the this-worldly dimension of the

Kingdom, William Vinson's dissertation on the Kingdom in Aquinas as a guide to church-state relations goes to the other extreme, arguing that “Thomas's system is a monism in which church and state are on the same continuum to God. For Thomas the church has the higher authority, and the state is the church's servant. In the monistic hierarchy, there are only two options: church over state or state over church.”¹¹

Is this in fact the case? Thomas makes extensive use of Aristotle's understanding of politics and the kingdom in interpreting the Kingdom in the Gospel commentaries and other theological works, and there are passages in *De Regno* and the *Commentary on the Sentences* that seem to suggest a subjugation of kings to priests. However, other parts of those works, as well as the *Commentary on Romans* 13, commend obedience to secular authorities except in extreme circumstances.¹²

What Thomas borrows from Aristotle when dealing with the question of the Kingdom goes deeper, however, than his politics. Aquinas adopts an Aristotelian methodology when addressing the Kingdom in that he devotes himself to understanding its nature and its purpose. Aquinas' treatment of the Kingdom is fundamentally focused on the end of man—the Beatific Vision—just as his treatment of earthly kingdoms, like Aristotle's, is focused on the end of the common good as expressed in support for the contemplative life.¹³ The eschatological kingdom is the fulfillment of this end, while the other dimensions lead towards it—the personal as the growth of the individual soul towards divinization, the Church as bringing the people of God together in that process, and Scripture and the Gospel message as the source of wisdom and object of contemplation to achieve that end.

¹¹ Vinson, 218.

¹² See Chapter 3, 164-7.

¹³ See Chapter 1, 16-18 and 22-25.

We can understand the relationship of the Kingdom of God with earthly kingdoms by combining this factor with the scholastic maxim that “grace perfects nature.” The natural end of earthly kingdoms is the common good and the contemplative life, as discussed in Chapter I, and the supernatural end of the Kingdom of God is the union of all God's people in the Beatific Vision. It could be said that just as philosophy is the handmaid of theology in the academic sphere, earthly kingdoms are the handmaids of the Kingdom of God on Earth—the Church—in the political sphere.

There are some differences that Vinson seems to overlook, though. Chief among them is the differing means of government. Thomas asserts in numerous places that government is founded on the idea of force for restraining evil and encouraging goodness, while the New Law of Christ is often described as internal and oriented to love, as opposed to the fear instilled by earthly rulers or even the Old Law. This anticipates St. John Paul II's statement that “the Church proposes; she imposes nothing,”¹⁴ although that is an ideal that her ministers have not always fully understood or lived up to.

Does this still imply theocracy, as Vinson suggests? Thomas was certainly comfortable with ideas such as tax exemptions and special benefits for clergy, but he also highlights the rightful independence of political rulers, so long as they are not in opposition to the Kingdom of God.¹⁵ I believe that while Thomas never made the mental leap to endorsing full freedom of religion and 'separation of Church and State', he would find nothing offensive in the idea so long as the freedom of the Church was respected and the state did not demand or forbid anything outright offensive to divine law. Just as a philosopher can argue well and rightly without

14 St. John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* 39, December 7, 1990, hosted at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html, accessed on April 10, 2016.

15 See Chapter 1, 13014 and n45, and Chapter 3, 164-7.

revelation, a king or senate can govern justly. Although the intellectual and spiritual aids offered by the Church make the task much easier, they do not themselves replace the philosopher's arguments or the ruler's power.

Also, as mentioned above and highlighted in the *Commentary on John* and in Viviano's discussion of how Thomas differs from Joachim of Fiore and his followers, Thomas had very little regard for the idea of an earthly kingdom, or a kingdom won by earthly means. Just as "Thomas boldly gives in no uncertain terms his preference for a "little old lady" (*uetula*) burning with love of God over the scholar full of his own superiority,"¹⁶ the idea that the Kingdom of God could be built up by conquest or demagoguery would be equally foreign to his thought. The Kingdom is first and foremost a work of the mind, heart and soul, and as such can be built up only through the means proper to forming the intellect, affections and will of man in righteousness—preaching, teaching, the sacraments. Legal force is an imperfect instrument for guiding imperfect men, and while it may have its role to play, it would be a decidedly subordinate one. This naturally leads us to the internal dimension of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom and the Soul

The teleological nature of Aquinas' approach to the Kingdom was also discerned by Joanne Edwards, who pointed out that "St. Thomas's teaching on the Kingdom of God is no more than a concrete application of his teaching on the order of the universe; or, perhaps more correctly, it is the same teaching in other words."¹⁷ A study of Aquinas' doctrine on the Kingdom in his Scripture commentaries fits in with Edwards' approach and complements it well, for Edwards worked largely from the *Sentences* commentary and the *Summae*, which predominantly

¹⁶ Torrell, II.98.

¹⁷ Edwards, 13.

approach this question from the point of view of divine providence and the ultimate end. The Scriptural works, by contrast, highlight this from a more human and historical point of view, being more concerned with the means and processes by which man attains to the Kingdom.

One example of the differing emphases might be the role wisdom plays in this dissertation as contrasted with Edwards. For Edwards, the primary meaning of wisdom is the Divine Wisdom which directs all things to their ends.¹⁸ Here, by contrast, the chief meaning of wisdom under discussion has been that wisdom which makes human creatures possessors of the Kingdom. The two meanings meet in one of Thomas' favorite verses of Scripture, Jeremiah 23:5: *The king shall reign, and be wise*. This emphasis on wisdom is, in fact, one of the distinctive notes of Thomas' understanding of the Kingdom in its personal dimension.

Wisdom, as Thomas states at numerous points, is the treasure of God and of His Kingdom.¹⁹ It can be possessed imperfectly here by contemplation, and perfectly in the eschatological kingdom—indeed, its perfect possession *is* the eschatological kingdom. This does not oppose the centrality of charity, but rather perfects it, for while a man can love the good without perfectly knowing it,²⁰ it is also true that the more he knows it, the better he loves it and wishes to know it better, in an infinite cycle.²¹ Thus, the kingdom is fundamentally contemplative, based on knowing and loving God, as expressed in the Prologue to the *Commentary on John* and the material on John 3.²²

All other virtues that lead to the Kingdom flow from this central pairing. Poverty is important not in and of itself, but in that it detaches the spirit from lesser things and allows a

18 Cf. Edwards, 24-38.

19 See Chapter 2, 69n191, 73n209, 88n277, 89n78, Chapter 3, 157n98 and 159n108, and Chapter 4, 195n30.

20 As Thomas states in *ST* I-II.27.2.

21 Cf. *ST* II-II.2.10 as cited in Torrell, II.6.

22 See Chapter 2, 121-27.

clearer understanding and more perfect love of God. Humility, which Thomas especially emphasizes in the *Commentary on Matthew*, makes the mind docile and receptive to teaching, and allows the heart to open itself up to things above and beyond itself, rather than being, in Augustine's famous phrase, *incurvatus in se*. The same point, in fact, is made explicitly in *Rigans Montes*, Chapter 3, where Thomas emphasizes the need for humility in receiving divine teaching and, following Proverbs 11:2 and Sirach 6:34, makes it a precondition for wisdom.²³

While Thomas emphasizes the soul's relationship with God, his understanding of the Kingdom does not collapse down to a singular relationship excluding all others, especially since the Kingdom is centered upon receiving and passing down the knowledge of Divine Wisdom. This leads us to the ecclesiastical and eschatological dimensions of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom and the Church

Walter Mitchell has done fine work on the relationship between the Kingdom and the Church in Aquinas, and pointed out that “the church's relationship to the kingdom is this: that *through* the church the spiritual, eschatological, kingdom-gifts are effected in men by God.”²⁴ While Mitchell emphasizes the sacramental dimension of this,²⁵ a study of the Gospel commentaries highlights that for Thomas, the Church is not only a sacramental mediator²⁶ but also a teacher of the Gospel. Indeed, through Matthew's Gospel, and especially in Matthew 13, Thomas highlights that the Gospel message is the Kingdom itself, which also highlights the way in which we can say that Scripture (as bearer of the message) and Christ (as both preacher and subject) are the Kingdom. The *Commentary on John* complements this through its emphasis on

²³ See *Rigans Montes*, Caput 3.

²⁴ Mitchell, 43.

²⁵ Perhaps following Congar, whom he does cite and who came to the same conclusion.

²⁶ Although those elements are certainly present; see the use of the keys to represent Confession, even more so than governing authority, in Matthew 16, as discussed in Chapter 2, 69-70.

contemplation. Together, the two Gospels as read by Thomas highlight the special charism of the Dominicans as expressed by Thomas—to contemplate in John, and to hand on the fruits of contemplation in Matthew. And as mentioned above, poverty of spirit and humility, virtues specifically emphasized by the mendicant movement, are key to participating in this contemplative dimension.

Thus, while Thomas takes the monarchial and hierarchical structure of the Church as Kingdom for granted, he also makes room for the new mendicant orders he did much to defend. As discussed in Chapter 2,²⁷ Thomas also sees the Church as militant and crusading—but in a different way than we usually understand those terms, either in a medieval context or today. For Thomas, the Church is at war, but not with any earthly enemy. Rather, the opposition is the kingdom of the Devil, which rules through sin and error. The weapons of this war are likewise not earthly, but spiritual—contemplation and preaching to dispel those works of the Adversary and help wayfaring mankind approach the final Kingdom where God will be all in all.

The Kingdom to Come

The eschatological kingdom, as Edwards and Mitchell both point out and as is demonstrated in our own study, is the ultimate end, exemplar and goal of all the other senses of the Kingdom. Further, if one could say that the Scriptural dimension and the preaching side of the Kingdom reflect and derive from Christ's role as prophet, while the ecclesiastical dimension and sacramental side correspond to His priesthood, the eschatological Kingdom most fully manifests Christ's role as king, since Aquinas strongly associates the eschatological kingdom with Christ as conqueror and as judge. Indeed, judge and lawgiver—two sides of the same

²⁷ 111-14, 117-18.

coin—are the major roles that Aquinas associates with Christ's kingship in the Gospel commentaries.²⁸ The dichotomy is expressed strongly in John 12:31, where Thomas speaks of judgment for the world as opposed to judgment on the world. The giving of the New Law as part of this judgment of liberation is not mentioned explicitly, but it would not be alien to Thomas' thought to connect it with the defeat of the devil, especially in light of the Passion as the prime example of teaching about God's love and victory over sin.²⁹ The judgment of condemnation, by contrast, relates to Christ's second coming and the eschatological kingdom, when Christ as Judge will evaluate the world in light of the New Law that He gave in His first advent.

This judgment, though, is the gateway to the eschatological kingdom, not its culmination. The fullness of the Kingdom is found, as Aquinas says commenting on the famous eschatological passage of 1 Corinthians 15, when “the soul of man rest[s] fully in God, and God alone will be his beatitude.”³⁰

Germain Grisez has criticized this account of beatitude, arguing that it focuses too narrowly on the enjoyment of God alone and excludes the communion of saints and the enjoyment of other created goods in God.³¹ Setting the Kingdom in opposition to the Beatific Vision sounds odd after spending so much time with Thomas, for whom the Kingdom fundamentally *is* the Beatific Vision. Ezra Sullivan demonstrates that later theological development, especially in the First Vatican Council, has sided more with Thomas on this

28 In this scheme, the spiritual and interior dimension of the Kingdom would actually reflect all three of Christ's role—King as lawgiver, Prophet as teacher, Priest as sanctifier. There are certainly other ways in which Christ's tripartite role and the four dimensions of the Kingdom could be associated, and many of them would cohere nicely with Aquinas' teaching. This one happens to stand out in light of the Matthew commentary.

29 Cf. Matthew Levering, “Does the Paschal Mystery Reveal the Trinity?” in *Reading John with Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 84, 89-90.

30 *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* C.15 L.3 ¶950, 358.

31 See Grisez, 38-61, especially 39-40, 50-53, and 61.

point.³² Sullivan also highlights how the two can be reconciled in understanding the Kingdom as Jesus Christ, in the individual soul, the Church, and the eschatological fulfillment³³--a conclusion that returns us to Thomas' initial comments on the Kingdom in Matthew 3, where after discussing the four dimensions of the Kingdom, he points out, almost as an aside, that the Kingdom is also Christ the King. This also fits in with the emphasis on participation and the Pseudo-Dionysian ascent through the hierarchy to Christ himself, as the soul joins itself to Christ in knowledge and love and so participates in his power and wisdom. The *Imago Dei* in man becoming conformed to the *Imago Dei* that is the Word, and so the Kingdom becomes the King and the King is present throughout all the members of His Kingdom.

Possibilities for Further Research

Though I have done my best to survey Thomas' teaching about the Kingdom in this dissertation, I can only scratch the surface. There are numerous areas that merit further attention, in various fields of theology.

From a historical perspective, as noted, the figure of Hugh of St. Cher appears to have been neglected to a degree that is disproportionate to the influence he had on subsequent medieval theologians. Also, from that point of view and the question of Scripture studies, Thomas' commentary on Matthew could be fruitfully brought into dialogue with numerous other exegetes from throughout history. I hope at some future point to pursue a more extensive comparison of Thomas and his master Albert on this Gospel, for example. A study of the Kingdom in relation to Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* would also prove fruitful

³² Sullivan, 959-995, especially 964-69.

³³ Sullivan, 983-95.

Moral theologians may find it worthwhile to go much further than I have in exploring Thomas' understanding of how virtues such as humility, poverty of spirit, and charity relate to the attainment of the Kingdom, especially in light of Blankenhorn's recent study on Dionysian mysticism and union with God in Albert and Thomas, and the work done by Spezzano and others on deification in Aquinas.

Finally, for those of a speculative bent, the question of how Thomas' understanding of the parallels and distinction between earthly kingdoms and the Kingdom of Heaven could relate to the much-discussed question of man's natural and supernatural ends, and the natural desire for God, seems to provide much opportunity for further examination.

The Use of the Thomistic Model of the Kingdom in the Contemporary Situation

After over 300 pages of exegesis, commentary on commentary, and speculation, one may reasonably ask if this has any real relevance beyond historical and intellectual curiosity. Hasn't Thomas been criticized, as mentioned in the Introduction, for neglecting the practical, real-world relevance of the Kingdom?

There are two possible answers to this question, both of which I believe have value. The first is that, as Viviano himself says, Thomas emphasizes “sober theological restraint and timeless necessary truths, rather than the caprice of historical change.”³⁴ Thomas' distance from his own times and the unfolding of history, in this answer, makes his emphasis on the eternal truths of the Kingdom valuable for every age, not just his own.

³⁴ Viviano, *Kingdom*, 64.

A second answer is to highlight the specifically contemporary aspects of Thomas' model of the Kingdom. Though writing at the high point of “the glory of Christendom,”³⁵ Thomas argues for neither complacency that things will go on as they have nor expectation of a new and glorious eschaton approaching. Rather, in keeping with the charism of the Order of Preachers and the spirit of the mendicant revival, Thomas' understanding of the Kingdom carries an implicit call to renewal. The emphasis on Scripture and contemplation, the evangelical mission, and even the repeated use of martial imagery suggest a Church that needs to be on the move, deepening its understanding of Christ's message, living it out, and bringing it out into a world still much under the power of the Evil One.

This vision of the Church is well-suited, it strikes me, to the “New Evangelization” that St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and the rest of the Church hierarchy have called for. The Church arguably finds herself much dispirited in the Western world of today, and beset by numerous problems both without and within. A renewed focus on Scripture and contemplation, an openness to a spirit of poverty, humility, and charity, and a commitment to spreading the Good News are called for—and these elements are fundamental to Thomas' understanding of the Kingdom for us wayfarers, both individually and in the body of the Church, as we approach that fulfillment of the Kingdom of God, when “Christ hands over the kingdom to His God and Father ... so that God may be all in all.” (1 Corinthians 15:24, 28)

35 As Warren Carroll calls this epoch in his six-volume *History of Christendom*; indeed, the chapter in which Carroll discusses Thomas' life is called, for that and other reasons, “The Climax of Christendom.”

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