

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The *Summa Theologiæ* ranks among the greatest documents of the Christian Church, and is a landmark of medieval western thought. It provides the framework for Catholic studies in systematic theology and for a classical Christian philosophy, and is regularly consulted by scholars of all faiths and none, across a range of academic disciplines. This paperback reissue of the classic Latin/English edition first published by the English Dominicans in the 1960s and 1970s, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, has been undertaken in response to regular requests from readers and librarians around the world for the entire series of 61 volumes to be made available again. The original text is unchanged, except for the correction of a small number of typographical errors.

The original aim of this edition was not narrowly ecclesiastical. It sought to make this treasure of the Christian intellectual heritage available to theologians and philosophers of all backgrounds, including those who, without claiming to be believers themselves, appreciate a religious integrity which embodies hardbitten rationalism and who recognise in Thomas Aquinas a master of that perennial philosophy which forms the bedrock of European civilisation. Because of this the editors worked under specific instructions to bear in mind not only the professional theologian, but also the general reader with an interest in the 'reason' in Christianity. The parallel English and Latin texts can be used successfully by anybody with a basic knowledge of Latin, while the presence of the Latin text has allowed the translators a degree of freedom in adapting their English version for modern readers. Each volume contains a glossary of technical terms and is designed to be complete in itself to serve for private study or as a course text.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NIHIL OBSTAT

THOMAS GILBY O.P.

PASCAL LEFÈBURE O.P.

IMPRIMI POTEST

JOHANNES HISLOP O.P.

*Prior Provincialis Angliæ*

die 1 Novembris 1967

NIHIL OBSTAT

ANDREW J. MOORE J.C.L.

*Censor*

IMPRIMATUR

✠ PATRICK CASEY

*Vic. Gen.*

Westminster, 22 November 1967

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

ST THOMAS AQUINAS  
SUMMA THEOLOGICÆ

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ST THOMAS AQUINAS  
SUMMA  
THEOLOGIAE

Latin text and English translation,  
Introductions, Notes, Appendices  
and Glossaries



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

PIÆ MEMORIÆ

JOANNIS

PP. XXIII

DICATUM

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

ALLOCUTIO

PAULI

PP. VI

MCMLXIII

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - *Summa Theologiae*: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI

WAS PLEASED to grant an audience, on 13 December 1963, to a group, representing the Dominican Editors and the combined Publishers of the new translation of the *Summa Theologiae* of St Thomas, led by His Eminence Michael Cardinal Browne, of the Order of Preachers, and the Most Reverend Father Aniceto Fernandez, Master General of the same Order.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## AT THIS AUDIENCE

THE HOLY FATHER made a cordial allocution in which he first welcomed the representatives of a project in which he found particular interest. He went on to laud the perennial value of St Thomas's doctrine as embodying universal truths in so cogent a fashion. This doctrine, he said, is a treasure belonging not only to the Dominican Order but to the whole Church, and indeed to the whole world; it is not merely medieval but valid for all times, not least of all for our own.

His Holiness therefore commended the enterprise of Dominicans from English-speaking Provinces of the Order and of their friends; they were undertaking a difficult task, less because the thought of St Thomas is complicated or his language subtle, than because the clarity of his thought and exactness of language is so difficult to translate. Yet the successful outcome of their efforts would undoubtedly contribute to the religious and cultural well-being of the English-speaking world.

What gave him great satisfaction was the notable evidence of interest in the spread of divine truth on the part of the eminent laymen concerned, members of different communions yet united in a common venture.

For these reasons the Holy Father wished it all success, and warmly encouraged and blessed all those engaged. He was happy to receive the first volume presented to him as a gesture of homage, and promised that he would follow with interest the progress of the work and look forward to the regular appearance of all the subsequent volumes.



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# VOLUMES

## PRIMA PARS

- 1 Christian Theology (1a. 1)
- 2 Existence and Nature of God (1a. 2–11)
- 3 Knowing and Naming God (1a. 12–13)
- 4 Knowledge in God (1a. 14–18)
- 5 God's Will and Providence (1a. 19–26)
- 6 The Trinity (1a. 27–32)
- 7 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (1a. 33–43)
- 8 Creation, Variety, and Evil (1a. 44–9)
- 9 Angels (1a. 50–64)
- 10 Cosmogony (1a. 65–74)
- 11 Man (1a. 75–83)
- 12 Human Intelligence (1a. 84–9)
- 13 Man Made to God's Image (1a. 90–102)
- 14 Divine Government (1a. 103–9)
- 15 The World Order (1a. 110–19)

## PRIMA SECUNDÆ

- 16 Man's End and Happiness (1a2æ. 1–5)
- 17 Human Acts (1a2æ. 6–17)
- 18 Principles of Morality (1a2æ. 18–21)
- 19 The Emotions (1a2æ. 22–30)
- 20 Pleasure (1a2æ. 31–9)
- 21 Fear and Anger (1a2æ. 40–8)
- 22 Dispositions for Human Acts (1a2æ. 49–54)
- 23 Virtues (1a2æ. 55–67)
- 24 Gifts and Beatitudes (1a2æ. 68–70)
- 25 Sin (1a2æ. 71–80)
- 26 Original Sin (1a2æ. 81–5)
- 27 Effects of Sin (1a2æ. 86–9)
- 28 Law and Political Theory (1a2æ. 90–7)
- 29 The Old Law (1a2æ. 98–105)
- 30 The Gospel of Grace (1a2æ. 106–14)

## SECUNDA SECUNDÆ

- 31 Faith (2a2æ. 1–7)
- 32 Consequences of Faith (2a2æ. 8–16)
- 33 Hope (2a2æ. 17–22)
- 34 Charity (2a2æ. 23–33)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- 35 Consequences of Charity (2a2æ. 34-46)
- 36 Prudence (2a2æ. 47-56)
- 37 Justice (2a2æ. 57-62)
- 38 Injustice (2a2æ. 63-79)
- 39 Religion and Worship (2a2æ. 80-91)
- 40 Superstition and Irreverence (2a2æ. 92-100)
- 41 The Social Virtues (2a2æ. 101-22)
- 42 Courage (2a2æ. 123-40)
- 43 Temperance (2a2æ. 141-54)
- 44 Parts of Temperance (2a2æ. 155-70)
- 45 Mysticism and Miracle (2a2æ. 171-8)
- 46 Action and Contemplation (2a2æ. 179-82)
- 47 The Pastoral and Religious Lives (2a2æ. 183-9)

## TERTIA PARS

- 48 The Incarnate Word (3a. 1-6)
- 49 The Grace of Christ (3a. 7-15)
- 50 The One Mediator (3a. 16-26)
- 51 Our Lady (3a. 27-30)
- 52 The Childhood of Christ (3a. 31-7)
- 53 The Life of Christ (3a. 38-45)
- 54 The Passion of Christ (3a. 46-52)
- 55 The Resurrection of the Lord (3a. 53-9)
- 56 The Sacraments (3a. 60-5)
- 57 Baptism and Confirmation (3a. 66-72)
- 58 The Eucharistic Presence (3a. 73-8)
- 59 Holy Communion (3a. 79-83)
- 60 The Sacrament of Penance (3a. 84-90)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## GENERAL PREFACE

BY OFFICIAL APPOINTMENT THE SUMMA PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK for Catholic studies in systematic theology and for a classical Christian philosophy. Yet the work, which is more than a text-book for professional training, is also the witness of developing tradition and the source of living science about divine things. For faith seeks understanding in the contemplation of God's Logos, his wisdom and saving providence, running through the whole universe.

The purpose, then, of this edition is not narrowly clerical, but to share with all Christians a treasury which is part of their common heritage. Moreover, it consults the interests of many who would not claim to be believers, and yet appreciate the integrity which takes religion into hard thinking.

Accordingly the editors have kept in mind the needs of the general reader who can respond to the reasons in Christianity, as well as of technical theologians and philosophers.

Putting the Latin text alongside the English is part of the purpose. The reader with a smattering of Latin can be reassured when the translator, in order to be clear and readable, renders the thought of St Thomas into the freedom of another idiom without circumlocution or paraphrase.

There are two more reasons for the inclusion of the Latin text. First, to help the editors themselves, for the author's thought is too lissom to be uniformly and flatly transliterated; it rings with analogies, and its precision cannot be reduced to a table of terms. A rigid consistency has not been imposed on the editors of the different volumes among themselves; the original is given, and the student can judge for himself.

Next, to help those whose native tongue is not English or whose duty it is to study theology in Latin, of whom many are called to teach and preach through the medium of the most widespread language of the world, now becoming the second language of the Church.

The Latin is a sound working text, selected, paragraphed, and punctuated by the responsible editor. Important variations, in manuscripts and such major printed editions as the Piana and Leonine, are indicated. The English corresponds paragraph by paragraph and almost always sentence by sentence. Each of the sixty volumes, so far as is possible, will be complete in itself, to serve as a text for a special course or for private study.

THOMAS GILBY O.P.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ST THOMAS AQUINAS  
SUMMA THEOLOGIAE  
VOLUME 9

ANGELS

(1a. 50–64)

Latin text. English translation, Introduction,  
Notes, Appendices & Glossary

KENELM FOSTER O.P.



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521393560](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521393560)

© The Dominican Council as Trustee for the English Province of the Order of Preachers 1968  
[Excepting Latin text of 'DE CREATURA PURE SPIRITUALI, QUÆ IN SCRIPTURA  
SACRA ANGELUS NOMINATUR']

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
no reproduction of any part may take place without  
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

This digitally printed first paperback version 2006

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN-13 978-0-521-39356-0 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-39356-6 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-02917-9 paperback

ISBN-10 0-521-02917-1 paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# CONTENTS

xi General Preface

xix Editorial Notes

xxi Introduction

## QUESTION 50. THE ANGELIC NATURE

- 5 Article 1. is an angel an entirely incorporeal being?  
 9 Article 2. is an angel composed of matter and form?  
 17 Article 3. are there a great number of angels?  
 21 Article 4. do the angels differ from one another specifically?  
 25 Article 5. are the angels immortal?

## QUESTION 51. HOW THE ANGELS ARE RELATED TO BODIES

- 31 Article 1. have angels bodies as part of their nature?  
 35 Article 2. do the angels ever assume bodies?  
 39 Article 3. do the bodies assumed by angels function as living organisms?

## QUESTION 52. ANGELS AND POSITION IN SPACE

- 45 Article 1. does an angel exist in place?  
 47 Article 2. can an angel be in several places at once?  
 51 Article 3. can several angels be in the same place at once?

## QUESTION 53. THE MOVEMENT OF ANGELS IN SPACE

- 55 Article 1. can an angel move from place to place?  
 61 Article 2. does an angel, moving locally, pass through an intermediate place?  
 65 Article 3. is an angel's movement instantaneous?

## QUESTION 54. ANGELIC KNOWLEDGE

- 73 Article 1. is an angel's actual understanding identical with his substance?  
 79 Article 2. is an angel's actual understanding identical with his existence?  
 81 Article 3. is an angel's power to understand one thing with his essence?  
 85 Article 4. is the difference between agent and potential intellects found in angels?  
 87 Article 5. have the angels only intellectual knowledge?

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)**QUESTION 55. THE MEDIUM OF ANGELIC KNOWLEDGE**

- 93 Article 1. is the medium of all an angel's knowledge simply himself?
- 97 Article 2. do angels understand by means of ideas drawn from external things?
- 103 Article 3. do the greater angels know by means of more general ideas than lesser angels?

**QUESTION 56. THE ANGELIC KNOWLEDGE OF SPIRITUAL BEINGS**

- 109 Article 1. does an angel know himself?
- 113 Article 2. does one angel know another?
- 117 Article 3. can angels have a natural knowledge of God?

**QUESTION 57. THE ANGELS' KNOWLEDGE OF MATERIAL THINGS**

- 123 Article 1. do the angels know material things?
- 127 Article 2. do the angels know particular things?
- 131 Article 3. do angels know the future?
- 135 Article 4. do the angels know a man's thoughts?
- 139 Article 5. do angels know the mysteries of grace?

**QUESTION 58. HOW AN ANGEL'S MIND FUNCTIONS**

- 145 Article 1. is an angel's mind sometimes in act of knowing and sometimes not?
- 149 Article 2. can an angel understand several things at once?
- 151 Article 3. does an angel know by discursive thinking?
- 153 Article 4. does an angel know by distinguishing and combining concepts?
- 157 Article 5. can an angel fall into error?
- 161 Article 6. can we distinguish a 'morning' and 'evening' knowledge in the angels?
- 165 Article 7. are the morning and evening knowledge the same or different?

**QUESTION 59. THE WILL OF THE ANGELS**

- 169 Article 1. is there will in the angels?
- 173 Article 2. is the angels' will the same as their intellect or their nature?

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- 177 Article 3. have the angels free will?  
 179 Article 4. are the irascible and concupiscible tendencies found in angels?

## QUESTION 60. ANGELIC LOVE

- 185 Article 1. are the angels loving by nature?  
 187 Article 2. are the angels loving as choosing to love?  
 191 Article 3. does an angel love himself both naturally and by choice?  
 195 Article 4. does one angel by nature love another as himself?  
 197 Article 5. does an angel naturally love God more than self?

## QUESTION 61. THE CREATION OF THE ANGELS

- 205 Article 1. is the angels' existence caused?  
 207 Article 2. have angels been created from eternity?  
 209 Article 3. were the angels created before the physical universe?  
 213 Article 4. were the angels created in the empyrean heaven?

## QUESTION 62. THE RAISING OF THE ANGELS TO THE STATE OF GRACE AND GLORY

- 217 Article 1. were the angels created enjoying bliss?  
 221 Article 2. does an angel need grace in order to turn to God?  
 225 Article 3. were the angels created in grace?  
 227 Article 4. is the bliss of a blessed angel an effect of merit on his part?  
 231 Article 5. did each angel obtain bliss immediately after one meritorious act?  
 233 Article 6. did the angels receive grace and glory to the measure of their natural gifts?  
 237 Article 7. do the angels who are in glory retain any natural knowledge and love?  
 239 Article 8. can an angel, once in glory, sin?  
 241 Article 9. can an angel, once in bliss, continue to grow in that state?

## QUESTION 63. SIN IN THE ANGELS

- 247 Article 1. can there be moral evil in angels?  
 251 Article 2. is it only by pride and envy that angels can sin?  
 255 Article 3. did the devil desire to be as God?



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- 259 Article 4. are any devils bad by nature?  
 261 Article 5. did the devil turn evil, voluntarily, immediately on being created?  
 267 Article 6. was there a time-interval between the creation and the fall of the first angel that sinned?  
 269 Article 7. was the highest angel that fell also the highest absolutely?  
 273 Article 8. was the sin of the first angel that sinned a cause of the others sinning?  
 277 Article 9. did the number of angels who sinned equal the number that did not?

## QUESTION 64. THE DEVILS' PUNISHMENT

- 281 Article 1. is a devil's intellect darkened by the loss of all knowledge of truth?  
 287 Article 2. is the will of the devils fixed in evil?  
 293 Article 3. do the devils suffer pain?  
 295 Article 4. is this atmosphere of ours the place where the devils are punished?

## Appendices

- 301 1. Angelology in the Church and in St Thomas  
 306 2. Satan  
 322 Glossary  
 329 Bibliography  
 331 Index of Matters  
 337 Index of Names

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - *Summa Theologiae*: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# EDITORIAL NOTES

## THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE LATIN text relies on the 'Leonine' edition, commissioned by Leo XIII towards the end of the last century. In only two or three instances has an alternative reading been chosen from earlier editions or manuscripts. This choice has been dictated by St Thomas's general usage and the particular text context. The attempt has not been to establish a critical text, but to offer a sound working version. The punctuation is that of the editor.

The English has been prepared with a view to being read independently of the Latin, though reference to this has been made easy. Where technical terms have been retained, they are explained in footnotes. Still, a serious effort has been made to give an accurate English equivalent for even the most 'scholastic' expressions, while at the same time avoiding translation by circumlocution or an explanatory rendering. The Glossary can generally be relied upon to give further assistance where a term offers difficulty to the reader.

## FOOTNOTES

Those signified by a superior number are the references given by St Thomas, with the exception of no. 1, to each article which refers to parallel texts in his writings. Those signified alphabetically are editorial references and explanatory remarks.

In this volume the Notes are fuller than in many of the others, so the reader is recommended to make good use of the Index of Matters.

## REFERENCES

Biblical references are to the Vulgate; English translations from the Revised Standard Version. Patristic references are to Migne (PG, Greek Fathers; PL, Latin Fathers). Abbreviations to St. Thomas's works are as follows:

*Summa Theologiae*, without title. Part, question, article, reply; e.g. 1a. 3, 2 ad 3. 1a2æ. 17, 6. 2a2æ. 180, 10. 3a, 35, 8.

*Summa Contra Gentiles*, CG. Book, chapter; e.g. CG 1, 28.

*Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum*, Sent. Book, distinction, question, article, solution or *quaestiuncula*, reply; e.g. III Sent. 25, 2, 3, ii ad 3.

*Compendium Theologiae*, *Compend. Theol.*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Commentaries of Scripture (*lecturæ, expositiones*): Job, *In Job*; Psalms, *In Psal.*; Isaiah, *In Isa.*; Jeremiah, *In Jerem.*; Lamentations, *In Thren.*; St. Matthew, *In Matt.*; St John, *In Joan.*; Epistles of St Paul, e.g. *In Rom.* Chapter, verse, *lectio* as required.

Philosophical commentaries: On the *Liber de Causis*, *In De causis*. Aristotle: *Peri Hermeneias*, *In Periherm.*; Posterior Analytics, *In Poster.*; Physics, *In Physic.*; *De Cælo et Mundo*, *In De Cæl.*; *De Generatione et Corruptione*, *In De gen.*; *Meteorologica*, *In Meteor.*; *De Anima*, *In De anima*; *De Sensu et Sensato*, *In De sensu*; *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, *In De memor.*; Metaphysics, *In Meta.*; Nicomachean Ethics, *In Ethic.*; Politics, *In Pol.* Book, chapter, *lectio* as required, also for Expositions on Boëthius, *Liber de Hebdomadibus* and *Liber de Trinitate*, *In De hebd.* and *In De Trin.*, and on Dionysius, *De Divinis Nominibus*, *In De div. nom.* References to Aristotle give the Bekker annotation.

*Quæstiones quodlibetales (de quolibet), Quodl.*

Main titles are given in full for other works, including the 10 series so *Quæstiones Disputatæ*.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - *Summa Theologiae*: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## INTRODUCTION

THE CENTRAL point of Christian belief is that the maker of the universe is now a man: hence the triple theme of Catholic theology: the divine and human natures and their mysterious union; and hence the triadic pattern of the *Summa theologiae* of St Thomas, successively focusing as it does upon God, considered in himself and in his creation (*Prima Pars*), upon human life (*Secunda Pars*) and upon Christ 'who as man is our way to God' (*Pars Tertia*; cf 1a. 2, Prologue). Where and why then do angels come in—things *ex hypothesi*, for St Thomas and for all Christian tradition, neither human nor divine? They come in, first, through the Scriptures, which speak from time to time of non-human intermediaries between God and mankind; and secondly, by a kind of rational necessity, given St Thomas's approach to his subject.

For if as a believer Thomas found his centre in Christ, so that whatever he did, *in word or deed*, was done *in the name of the lord Jesus*,<sup>1</sup> as a theologian he conceived it his task to mediate a Christian 'word' to the world through the mode and movement of rational discourse.<sup>2</sup> Faith starts with assent to the mystery of Christ, and so does theology, as presupposing faith; but theology proceeds by way of analysis, taking concepts apart for separate consideration: hence in the *Summa* the treatise *de Christo*, the Godman, is preceded by those on God and on man. But while the third treatise is in a sense the synthesis of the other two, nevertheless in the perspective of the whole work both it and the second one are governed by the first, *de Deo*; because man all through the work is seen as an 'image' of God that comes from God and returns to him,<sup>3</sup> and Christ as the God-given means for that return. God is man's origin and his end, and theology is all a study of this two-way relationship; it considers everything *sub ratione Dei*, 'in terms of God'.<sup>4</sup> But it is in his looking back, so to say, to God as the origin of things that St Thomas—with the other medieval theologians—saw angels entering the picture. Angels came in, that is to say, not only because the Bible seemed to speak of superhuman created beings but also because God was envisaged in terms which made the existence of such beings at least a reasonable hypothesis—one which in any case had to be considered. From this point of view St Thomas's treatise on the angels

---

<sup>1</sup>*Colossians* 3, 17

<sup>2</sup>See Vol. 1 of this series, *Christian Theology*, Appendices 5–8; and below, Q. 53, 1, note a; also Appendix 1

<sup>3</sup>Cf 1a2æ. Prologue

<sup>4</sup>1a. 1, 7

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

is a corollary of his idea of God, of his conceiving of God as almighty creative Power absolutely independent of and infinitely transcending the world he has made or any other that he might conceivably make. Whatever perfections or possibilities we may find in the human world are only traces of the sovereign perfection of God; who is also, and by the same token, an unlimited Power to bring into being any such traces as he may choose. Might he not then have created intelligent beings superior in nature to man? Wasn't it more likely than not that he had done so, given the limitations of human intelligence as compared with what a created intelligence might conceivably be in less restricting conditions? To put the matter thus is to indicate the field St Thomas set out to explore in this treatise. But one must add, of course, that his exploration was not merely speculative, since he took it from the Bible and Christian tradition that 'angels' did in fact exist<sup>5</sup> and that certain events involving angels had in fact occurred, in particular the entry of evil into a world of creatures originally *valde bona*.<sup>6</sup> The wide field open to him had, then, certain boundaries fixed by faith; within which he was free to follow reason wherever it led; and it led him far.

Too far, the modern reader may be inclined to reflect as he turns the pages of this book and meets, perhaps for the first time, with a mind that professes to demonstrate that no two angels are the same in 'species' (50, 4), that an angel is in space by 'power-contact' (52 and 53), that his intellect is other than his essence (54, 3), that he can know bodies without sensing them (55, 5; 57, 1-2), and other strange-sounding theses; and certainly the assurance with which St Thomas reasons about the nature and behaviour of pure spirits belongs to a mental climate very different from that of our century. It reflects a culture which in one sense had more confidence in the intellect than ours; in the sense that it was then commonly accepted among educated men that beyond the natural sciences and beyond mathematics the mind could, in principle, proceed, with scientific certainty, into the field called metaphysics. The conclusions of natural science (St Thomas's *naturalis philosophia*) concerned the physical world alone, which our senses apprehend, and the same was true, at a more abstract level, of mathematical conclusions; whereas the metaphysician as such was not interested in any special *kind* of world, but in something presupposed in every conceivable and possible world, in being *qua* being. Hence, to the metaphysician as such empirical verification was irrelevant. St Thomas was perfectly aware that his conclusions about angels could not be empirically verified, and that the same was true *a fortiori* of his

<sup>5</sup>See Appendix 1<sup>6</sup>See Appendix 2

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

conclusions about God. None the less he elaborated a metaphysical doctrine about God and about angels which he thought demonstrable and demonstrated. This is not the place for a full discussion of Thomist epistemology; but it may help the reader to get his bearings if we indicate, broadly, first the basic postulate of St Thomas's metaphysical thinking, and secondly the chief distinctions, based on that postulate, which he employs in the treatise we are concerned with.

The postulate in question is that the human subject is radically capable of a certain understanding of all that has being, that is not nothing.<sup>7</sup> This position can be set out as follows:

(a) The first act of reason—or mind or intelligence—is an implicit apprehension of reality in general;

(b) this apprehension pre-contains, in one way or another, every concept the mind may then proceed to form;<sup>8</sup>

(c) by abstracting the formal content of that apprehension and reflecting on it, it is possible to acquire certain insights into the structure of reality which are evidently true, and universally and necessarily so; and which, when critically and systematically drawn out, compose a science. This science, which is metaphysics, represents, then, the analytical unfolding of the content of 'being' considered formally, i.e. in respect precisely of what it conveys *as an idea and as this idea*. And this idea itself has emerged from an initial intuitive contact, so to call it, of the mind with real existence. Hence, as regards sensory experience, metaphysics must depend on it so far as that intuition has involved and continues to involve it; but no further, strictly speaking. In this sense and to this extent metaphysics is not an empirical science: it is the *formal* science of the structures of being. So understood, it is the main philosophical instrument used in the *Summa*, and notably in the treatise on angels.

As a theologian using metaphysics St Thomas's aim then in this treatise is (a) to conceive of a realizable type of being answering to what the Bible

<sup>7</sup>Cf Aristotle, *De Anima* III, 8, 431b20; St Thomas's *Commentary* III, *lect.* 13

<sup>8</sup>Cf *De veritate* I, 1: 'That which the mind first conceives of, and by this token declares most evident, is being (*ens*); which is also that into which it resolves all other concepts . . . Hence all other concepts are formed in the mind as additions to being; but not as additions coming as it were from outside being—that would not be possible. It is not as when a difference is added to a genus or an accident to the subject it inheres in; because everything *intrinsically* shares in being (*quia quaelibet natura essentialiter est ens*); hence Aristotle's proof that being cannot be a genus. But other concepts 'add to' being in this sense, that they express modes of it which are not expressed in the term 'being'. The reference is to Aristotle, *Metaphysics* III, 3, 998b21 ff; cf St Thomas's *Commentary* III, *lect.* 3

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

says about angels; and (b) to clarify this conception by as thorough an analysis as the plan of his book as a whole allowed. The general result of this analysis is to offer to thought the idea of a type or class of being that is created but wholly spiritual; like mankind in the first respect, unlike in the second. And 'wholly spiritual' in this context means, briefly, that beings of the type envisaged are like men in having intellect and will but unlike men in not having bodies and indeed (here St Thomas differed from other theologians of his age) in having no intrinsic material component at all. They are, then, 'higher' entities than man but infinitely 'lower' than their and man's Creator.

Three themes dominate the discussion taken as a whole:

(a) the difference of the angelic nature from human nature—worked out chiefly in terms of a *non-limitation* of angels in respect of individuality (50, 2 and 4), of relations to space and time (52 and 53), of knowledge (54, 4 and 5; 55, 2; 57, 2; 58, 1 to 5) and of love (59, 3 and 4; 62, 5; 63, 2 and 6; 64, 2);

(b) the difference of the angelic nature from God—worked out chiefly in terms of its *contingency in being* and relative *limitation in activity* (for angelic contingency, see especially 50, 2 and 5; 54, 1 to 3; 60, 5; 61: for limitation in activity, especially 52, 2 and 3; 55, 1; 57, 2 to 5; 59, 2; 62, 1 and 2; 63, 1 and 3);

(c) the angels and evil (63 and 64).<sup>9</sup>

In the last resort the entire discussion is controlled by religious and theological considerations, but this control is much more evident in some places than in others: almost imperceptible, for example, in Questions 52–3 (on the pure spirit's relations to space and time) and in much of 58 (on the difference between angelic and human mental processes), theology proper comes clearly into the foreground in Question 51 (on angelic 'appearances' in Scripture) and in 61 (on the creation of the angels), and it predominates in Questions 62–4. The two final Questions, 63 and 64, on the 'fall' of the devils are of course very closely conditioned by the data of Scripture and Christian tradition. Their matter is obviously very relevant indeed to the Christian religion, and it is this consideration, together with the special interest and importance of the problem of evil, that seems to justify our marking it off as a separate 'theme' in the preceding paragraph. Note however that this theme (c) can be regarded, alternatively, as an aspect or development of theme (b); for not only is angelic evil, in Questions 63–4, discussed chiefly—and inevitably so—in

<sup>9</sup>See Appendix 2 below

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

relation to God, but the most crucial article in this section (which is 63, 1) hinges entirely on the idea of a basic *difference* between God and all creatures in respect of purposeful activity—the essential difference which, for St Thomas, makes moral evil a metaphysically conceivable possibility.

These remarks will have made it clear to the reader that in our account of the treatise a major stress is being laid on the way its argument proceeds by a kind of *via remotionis*, by a *Neither/Nor* dialectic which progressively brings out the nature of angelic being by preventing its confusion with human or divine being: a zone of non-material and yet fundamentally contingent, because created, existence is divided off from the human condition on the one hand and the properly divine on the other.<sup>10</sup> Such procedure by discrimination is a marked feature of the treatise as a whole, and the reader can safely be recommended to take it as a sort of guiding-line through the labyrinth. He is also recommended to give particular attention to the two main distinctions which that procedure entails and employs: between actuality and potentiality and between form and matter. The former distinction is chiefly used here to bring out the difference between angels and God, the latter to bring out their difference from mankind. The former, as St Thomas employs it, has wider and deeper implications than the latter. The distinction between form and matter represents in fact an application of that between actuality and potentiality to a more limited field.<sup>11</sup> Hence in a sense the two overlap. Yet they arise from distinct ways of considering being or *ens*; which (at the risk of over-simplifying) may be called, respectively, the way that bears on ‘event’ or existence and the way that bears on mode or essence. Speaking of a thing as actual or potential St Thomas has chiefly in mind, as a rule, its realization in the line of existence; speaking of it in terms of form and matter he has chiefly in mind its realization in the line of a determined ‘kind’ or nature.<sup>12</sup>

Metaphysically, the chief turning points in the treatise are (a) the subtraction of matter from angels, effected almost at the beginning, in 50, 2, and (b) the *non*-subtraction of potentiality from angels, already adumbrated in 50, 2 (answer to the third objection) and worked out thoroughly in 54, 1 to 3. In these key articles St Thomas establishes his basic position; which he then elaborates, of course, through further distinctions, of which

<sup>10</sup>See below, 54, 1, notes *b, f, g*; 4, notes *a & b*; 55, 2, note *d*; 58, 1, note *a*

<sup>11</sup>Cf *In librum Bæthii de Trinitate* v, 4 ad 4: ‘actus et potentia sunt communiora quam materia et forma’

<sup>12</sup>For further comment on these distinctions see below: on actuality and potentiality, 50, 2, notes *h & i*; 4, note *c*; 54, 3, note *b*; 61, 1, note *b*: on form and matter, 50, 1, note *d*; 2, notes *a, g & i*; 4, note *c*; 5, note *a*; 51, 1, note *d*; 56, 1, note *b*; 61, 1, note *c*



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

perhaps the most important (in this context) are the following: of movement into *actus imperfecti* and *actus perfecti* (53, 1 ad 2);<sup>13</sup> of activity into immanent and transitive (54, 2);<sup>14</sup> of knowledge into *per essentiam* and *per speciem* (55–7);<sup>15</sup> of the contrasted basic orientations of intellect and will (59, 2);<sup>16</sup> of activity into that proceeding immediately from absolute goodness and that which does not so proceed (63, 1).<sup>17</sup>

The general structure of the treatise is displayed in the following conspectus. References are given, in brackets, to a selection of the footnotes to our translation of St Thomas's text.

## CONSPECTUS OF QQ. 50–64

### I. INTRODUCTORY (Q. 50)

- Q. 50 Angels are non-material subsistent forms (notes *a* & *g*, art. 2) but in potentiality with respect to existence, *esse*, (notes *h* & *i*, art. 2; *a* & *c*, art. 5). As a subsistent form each angel is specifically unique (notes *c* & *d*, art. 4) and immortal (note *a*, art. 5).

### II. ANGELS AND BODIES (QQ. 51–53)

- Q. 51 Bodily appearances of angels in the Bible (see notes *a* & *c*, art. 1).  
 QQ. 52–3 Angels in relation to space, movement and time:  
 Q. 52 Angels and locality (notes *a*, art. 1; *c*, art. 2; *a*, art. 3).  
 Q. 53 Angels and movement (notes *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, art. 1; *c*, *d*, *e*, art. 3).  
 Angels and time (notes *a*, *c*, *d*, *e*, art. 3).

### III. THE ANGELIC MIND (QQ. 54–8)

- Q. 54 Ontological analysis of the angelic intellect in terms of actuality and potentiality, showing how the angel differs,  
 (a) from God (notes *f*, *g*, *h*, *i*, art. 1; *b*, art. 2; *b* & *c*, art. 3);  
 (b) from Man (notes *a* & *b*, art. 4; *c*, art. 5).  
 QQ. 55–8 Angelic Knowledge.  
 Q. 55 How an angel is able to know. Knowledge *per essentiam* and *per speciem* (notes *a*, *c*, *d*, *f*, art. 1; *a* & *d*, art. 2; *a*, *c*, *d* & *e*, art. 3).

<sup>13</sup>Cf 50, 1, note *h*; 53, 1, notes *b* & *d*

<sup>14</sup>Cf 54, 1, note *i*; 56, 1, note *b*

<sup>15</sup>Cf 54, 2, note *b*; 55, 1, notes *a* & *c*; 2, note *a*; 56, 2, note *d*; 3, note *b*

<sup>16</sup>Cf 59, 2, note *c*

<sup>17</sup>Cf 63, 1, notes *a* & *d*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

QQ. 56–7 What an angel knows:

- Q. 56 Non-material objects (notes *b*, art. 1; *d*, art. 2; *a* & *b*, art. 3).  
 Q. 57 Material objects (notes *a*, art. 1; *a*, art. 2; *b* & *d*, art. 3; *b*, art. 4; *b*, art. 5).  
 Q. 58 How an angel actually knows. His intellectual difference from man (notes *a* & *c*, art. 1; *a*, art. 3; *a*, art. 4; *a*, *b*, *c*, art. 5; *a*, art. 6).

#### IV. ANGELIC APPETITION (QQ. 59–60)

- Q. 59 The angels' will, in relation to their nature and intellect (notes *b* & *c*, art. 1; *c* & *d*, art. 2);  
 in relation to freedom (notes *c* & *d*, art. 3);  
 in relation to passion (notes *a* & *d*, art. 4).  
 Q. 60 The angels as lovers,  
 (a) by nature or by choice (notes *a*, *d*, *g*, *h*, art. 1; *d* & *f*, art. 2);  
 (b) of themselves (notes *a*, art. 3; *a*, art. 4);  
 (c) of God (notes *b*, *g*, *h*, *j* & *k*, art. 5).

#### V. ANGELS IN RELATION TO CREATION, GRACE AND GLORY (QQ. 61–2)

- Q. 61 The angels' creation (notes *b* & *c*, art. 1; *a*, art. 2; *b*, art. 3).  
 Q. 62 Their elevation to grace and to glory or bliss (*beatitudo*):  
 (a) perfect bliss, as transcending every created nature, is attainable only through grace (notes *a* & *d*, art. 1; *a*, art. 3);  
 (b) angels were probably created in a state of grace (notes *a* & *b*, art. 2);  
 (c) and then merited glory or bliss (note *b*, art. 5; cf 1a2æ. 114);  
 (d) the relation of their nature to their bliss (notes *a*, art. 6; *a*, art. 7);  
 (e) their condition as in bliss (notes *a* & *b*, art. 8; *a* & *c*, art. 9).

#### VI. THE ANGELS AND EVIL (QQ. 63–4)

- Q. 63 Angelic sin:  
 (a) its possibility (notes *a* & *d*, art. 1);  
 (b) its nature (notes *h*, art. 1; *a*, art. 4);  
 (c) when it occurred (note *a*, art. 6);  
 (d) relation of the first angelic sin—Satan's—to that of the other fallen angels;  
 (e) the number of those fallen.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02917-9 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 9 - Angels, (1a. 50-64)

Kenelm Foster O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- Q. 64 The fallen angels' punishment:
- (a) as affecting their intellect and will;
  - (b) as cause of suffering;
  - (c) its locality.

St Thomas may have begun to write this section of the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa* in 1266, but it was probably completed in the following year. He was in his early forties. In 1264 he had finished the *Contra Gentiles* and around that time had begun to give himself to that intense study of Aristotle which was to bear fruit in the great Commentaries written during the next eight or nine years. Appointed rector of the Dominican *studium* at Rome in 1265, he remained in Italy until the end of 1268, when he was recalled to Paris. It was in the University of Paris that he had made his brilliant debut as a young theologian in the 1250's; and there, in his maturity, he now had to face a rising tide of rationalism in the Faculty of Arts and the formidable prestige and influence, in effect anti-Christian, of Averroes. St Thomas was, however, philosophically prepared for the contest, as the present treatise on the angels, along with the rest of the *Prima Pars*, suffices to show.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup>This Introduction has not taken account of modern *theological* objections to St Thomas's angelology, and in general to older types of Christian angelology. A brief consideration of this topic will be found in Appendix 1 below