

# **Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas, Ed., with an Introd. by Anton C. Pegis Study Guide**

**Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas, Ed., with an  
Introd. by Anton C. Pegis by Thomas Aquinas**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

[Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas, Ed., with an Introd. by Anton C. Pegis Study Guide.....1](#)

[Contents.....2](#)

[Plot Summary.....4](#)

[Book 1, Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 1, On God from the Summa Theologica..5](#)

[Book 1, Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 2, Questions VII - XII.....6](#)

[Chapter 3, Question XIII , XIV, XV.....7](#)

[Book 1, Saint Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 4, Questions XVI & XVII, XVIII & XIX.....8](#)

[Chapter 7, Conclusion of Question XIX & Question XXII.....9](#)

[Chapter 8, Question XXV & XLIV, Chapter 9, Questions XLV, XLVI, XLVII, XLVIII, XLIX.....10](#)

[Chapter 10, Rest of Question LXXV & LXXVI.....11](#)

[Chapter 11, Questions LXXVI, LXXVII & LXXVIII.....13](#)

[Chapter 13, Question LXXIX / 79 & Analysis Chapter 14, Questions LXXX, LXXXI, & LXXXII & LXXXIII.....14](#)

[Chapter 15, Questions LXXXIV, LXXXV &.....16](#)

[Chapter 16, Question LXXXVII & The End of Man Chapters II, III, XVI, XVII.....17](#)

[Chapter 17, The End of Man Chapters XVIII, XIX, XX, XXV Chapter 18, XLVII, LI, LII, LIII.....18](#)

[Chapter 19, Human Acts: Questions 6, 8 & 9 Chapter 20, Questions 12, 13 & 18Chapter 21, Questions XX, XLIX, LI, LIV, LV, LVI, LVII.....19](#)

[Chapter 22, Morality - Questions LVIII, LX, LXI, LXII, LXIII, LXIV, & Law Questions - XC, XCI, XCIII, XCIV.....21](#)

[Chapter 23, Questions CIX, CXII, Grace.....22](#)

[Characters.....23](#)

[Objects/Places.....26](#)

[Themes.....29](#)

[Style.....31](#)

[Quotes.....33](#)



Topics for Discussion..... 34



## Plot Summary

Aquinas is one of the great theological philosophers. Here, through the power of translation, are the basic tenets of his philosophical thought. Unlike his philosophical comrade Augustine, whose Grecian predecessor was the pagan philosopher Plato, Aquinas is the spiritual descendant of the pagan philosopher Aristotle. Plato and Aristotle's lives overlapped in time; they did not entirely agree but their combination is rather akin to seeing the sun and the moon in the sky at the same time - the combined power of them both is astronomical and they are both treasured by Christian and non-Christian alike for the might of their thought and the ability to communicate and teach it. Thomas Aquinas is one of millions to benefit from generations of humans who have managed to preserve their thought, and to test it, such that the proverbial wheat is separated from the chaff and truth is divided from the fiction of error.

The Introduction explains that the thirteenth century exposed the brilliance of Arabian philosophers in addition to the Grecian and Catholic ones. Augustine was delivered as an opponent to Aquinas, and the former overcame the latter just as Plato and Aristotle have repeatedly wrangled for position as "top Grecian philosopher aside from Socrates". Readers are taken through various points of the *Summa Theologica*, which is in fact a profound tome, written in Latin after the manner of the scholars of his era. Finally, there are two other points. First, Thomas Aquinas was canonized within fifty years of his death. Second, in 1880, the Catholic Church made him the Patron Saint of schools which is why, if you live in a town where there are Catholics, it is likely that there is at least one St. Thomas Aquinas School. The intended audience is undergraduates at university.

Does Nature reveal God? Many answer obviously yes, while for others the truth is no; the coexistence of these opposing conclusions show that this absolutely fundamental metaphysical question seems difficult to penetrate despite the prolific evidence of a correct answer. Just as being a thirteen-year-old is new to everyone who is living it as a new condition, philosophy is always new for those participating in it whether the ideas presented are themselves new or not. Like culture and technology, philosophy has changed and developed over the millennium. Whether or not this accurately indicates progress is another challenge. Again, for many the answer is obviously yes, which is an attitude made famous by the German philosopher Hegel. This introduction to Aquinas will be all there is to it for some, and the inspiration to learn a great more of the philosopher's thought for others.



# **Book 1, Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 1, On God from the Summa Theologica**

## **Book 1, Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 1, On God from the Summa Theologica Summary and Analysis**

The Introduction has been written by a scholar. The translation provided does not have a specific name attached to it, and is assumed to have been done by members of the Roman Catholic Church with the veil of anonymity. The Summa Theologica is a tome of Thomas Aquinas' philosophical theology. It was originally written in Latin during the late 1200 AD/CE. His work was severely challenged by the powerful Arabian philosophy of the time; this developed greatly after the arrival of the prophet Mohammed, who had a Christian best friend for many years. Aquinas was a learned man of the Church, and thanks to his education he had been made aware of some of the ancient thinkers outside of Scriptures as well as inside them. These include two of the greatest minds of Athens. There is actually a trilogy of men of Athens: Socrates, Plato and then Aristotle, in that order. Aristotle is an exception because he was a Macedonian working in Athens, whereas Socrates and Plato were dedicated Athenians. Aristotle is the youngest. Centuries earlier Augustine, over in North Africa, had philosophized extensively based upon Plato's thought. Here, Thomas Aquinas highlights the brilliance of the Macedonian genius and teacher, Aristotle. The entire discourse stems from Aquinas' Summa Theologica.

The introductory pieces have been set out into eight major chapters. After the Introduction in which all of the above is explained, the first chapter is titled GOD and contains excerpts from the Summa Theologica. The work is laid out to be able to be used for intellectual exercise. This is the philosopher's and theologian's version of 'scientific precision' in the best sense of the term. The nature of the soul is of primary importance to the metaphysical discussions that take place here. Thomas Aquinas has determined, to the best of his knowledge, that the spiritual nature of mankind is such that the mind of man is the nearest descriptor for the soul, and that the living human body is an integral and essential attribute of that aforementioned mind. This means that the very life of any given individual is the means for spiritual activity to take place upon the planet Earth. The implications of Aristotle's and Aquinas's formulation of the spiritual nature of mankind have similar but also very different implications. Every entity that has a spiritual work to perform must do this during the lifetime of the individual. This idea will find a natural home among many who view themselves as 'unreligious materialists' even while it is meant to apply to the truest and best of believers and followers of God. This view of the individual as having spiritual work to conduct by living his or her life proves to be one of the most important points of the entire Summa.



# **Book 1, Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 2, Questions VII - XII**

## **Book 1, Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 2, Questions VII - XII Summary and Analysis**

There is such a person as a Thomist. This is someone who is especially well-versed in the work of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The Summa Theologica is a massive work. The author was only able to do write this work as a successful consequence of tremendous education and preparatory work. For anyone not specially educated in the areas of philosophy and theology, reading the Summa is much like trying to read a well thought out physics book written for other physicists, not lay folk. The format is designed to suit debate and logical argumentation, which is a psychological purification process as per other sciences. Objections and refutations to those objections are presented so that readers can follow the line of thinking.

The questions covered above regarding God are: The Nature and Domain of Sacred Doctrine, with 10 Articles. Here, article means brief essay and clarification. In Question II, The Existence of God, with three articles Aquinas covers the self-evidence of God and addresses difficulties posed by undemonstrable conditions and demonstrable proof of God's existence. Aquinas supports God as self-evident, but again shows his existence through demonstration. Aquinas explains that GOD is defined as the "first cause", or "prime mover", and such definitions make Him self-evident and necessary. This is concluded from the use of logic. Every logical argument relies upon presuppositions. When God is positioned as the First Cause, and when the spiritual essence of material existence is also a presupposition, then it is not possible to derive the nonexistence of God. This results in 'Therefore, God exists'. This is what Aquinas is getting at here. Aquinas also claims that Scriptures may be used as sources of evidence of God's existence. This means that to Aquinas Biblical evidence is as good as a soil sample is to a farmer who needs to know the condition of his field. A number of further questions are passed over until readers come to Question VII, The Infinity of God, with four consecutive articles. Questions 8, 9 and 10 have been skipped over.

Question XI, The Unity of God, with four consecutive articles, contains the most important point here being that GOD's infinite perfection mandates that He is not rooted in matter, for the very nature of matter is finite. While GOD's perfection and infinity emerge from the true nature of a First Principle of reality and truth, also logic and reason, this formulation is a correction of arcane error. This is the point Aquinas's thought reached, with the influence of Damascene.



## Chapter 3, Question XIII , XIV, XV

### Chapter 3, Question XIII , XIV, XV Summary and Analysis

There are two major thinkers other than Aquinas who the author most frequently names. Damascene is named for Damascus, Syria which was his homeland. He was a public official, then quit and became a Christian monk in a Muslim world. He spent years living in Palestine and died in or near Jerusalem. This Syrian was later canonized as both a healer and a thinker. Dionysius was known as Dionysius the Areopagite. He attempted to reconcile philosophy with theology. The First Article is: Whether a Name Can be Given to God? This is more complex than it first appears. Aquinas includes the role of language as part of the puzzle of God's name. He addresses the use of words and speech in relation to things first. He states that words do relate to actual things. It is also important to note that the mind has an important role in language. That is why Aquinas introduces the idea of naming things by intention and with understanding. Aquinas writes about how in some cases there is greater difficulty. Abstract concepts are harder to name, especially since they are not things in the usual sense. What follows is the way this observation is presented by Aquinas in the text itself. After one paragraph there is another italic notice that Aquinas is giving Reply to Objection 1, which he introduced earlier. "The reason why God has no name, or is said to be above being named, is because his essence is above all that we understand about God and signify in words," (p. 98). God is an example of this. The Second Article is called Whether Any Name can be Applied to God Substantially? There are three objections, in the first Dionysius is mentioned again. Aquinas follows these with "I answer that" (p. 99) in italics and four paragraphs precede his next step: the direct replies to each objection. This question is relatively obscure in relation to contemporary debate. However, for agnostics and scientists who wonder 'is God the Big Bang' - the origin of the Universe, the answer is 'Yes, the name of God is meant to cover this and things like it.'

Question XIV: On God's Knowledge begins on page 127. Aquinas writes that God exists in perfect knowledge. The following questions and answers reveal that Aquinas is devoted to a thorough investigation. The format of the book goes far beyond simple exposition and is really designed for specialists. The questions contained and pursued in the remaining seven Articles each deal with subdivisions of the same general topic. Intellectually, it is rather like using a philosophical microscope wherein suddenly one idea become greatly magnified and tremendous details become accessible to the mind.



# **Book 1, Saint Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 4, Questions XVI & XVII, XVIII & XIX**

## **Book 1, Saint Thomas Aquinas : Chapter 4, Questions XVI & XVII, XVIII & XIX Summary and Analysis**

Question XVI has its own heading at the beginning of a page. This is still under the same book chapter 1. GOD: Summa Theologica...including all excerpts discussed so far and more. Here there are eight Articles On Truth. The titles of the eight articles are: Whether truth resides only in the intellect ? This is actually one of the most important philosophical questions known to humanity. This matter is categorized in philosophy as epistemology - matters of knowledge. The present scientific view on this is that the claim is false. Truth does not only exist in the intellect. Truth does exist in the intellect. The two statements are true together. This is like saying that you can get water from the tap and you can get water from rain. Aquinas goes into this further but for the purposes of the summary, the matter ends here. Whether God is Truth? The short answer is 'Yes'. Whether there is only one Truth according to which All Things are True? Again, the short answer is 'Yes'. Whether Created Truth is Eternal? The short answer is 'Not all of the Truth is Eternal, but all that is Eternal is the Truth. Whether Truth is Immutable? There is Truth that is Immutable - that does not and cannot be changed, but not all truth is of this kind.

Question XVII is Concerning Falsity. There are four articles. Truth and falsehood are both described in relation to the intellect. Response two reads, Article Two: Whether there is Falsity in the Senses? Third Article Whether Falsity is in the Intellect ? Here Aquinas observes that while "the Philosopher" claimed that the human intellect can have perfect knowledge, he uses Aristotle to refute this citing an observation made in De Anima that in the mind's understanding of things there is truth and falsehood.

Number XIX is The Will of God. There are twelve Articles written on this matter, ten of which are presented in this book. First Article: Is there Will in God? This is set out as a type of logical argument. God's good is His own will - for this reason even Plato saw that God is His own prime mover - the first cause. Aquinas brings up the divergent views regarding corruptible and incorruptible - saying that there are two lines of teaching. One is in regard to what makes any individual specimen corruptible or incorruptible and what makes a given species of thing, such as humanity, incorruptible. Aquinas then brooches the matter of corruptible and incorruptible substances. The science of chemistry provides some of the best analogies for this. Also, light might be viewed as an incorruptible. What Christ and Aquinas meant was that when a living entity's values and life force are both operative and incorruptible, then the spiritual nature and the essence and therefore the being of the person will be incorruptible.





# Chapter 7, Conclusion of Question XIX & Question XXII

## Chapter 7, Conclusion of Question XIX & Question XXII Summary and Analysis

The layout of the Summa Theologica is designed for use in intellectual debate amongst theologians and philosophers. For ordinary readers, the format may seem a bit odd. Aquinas opens with a question. He gives a very brief essay on the topic - the length of half a printed page for example. Then he turns to the debate format. When he does this, he is assuming that the reader is aware of the main intellectual controversies of his era. For contemporary readers and for lay folk this isn't true. Because of this, some of the ideas that Aquinas writes up as counter-arguments may seem to readers as though they have come 'out of the blue'. That being said, the basic purpose is still fulfilled. Aquinas shows that his ideas can be formed and that they stand the test of conflict and disagreement. They hold up against counter arguments. The Objections are legitimate opposition to the idea. In contemporary argument and persuasion, sales people also use the same format: present an idea, acknowledge objections, overcome the objections with Refutations, make the sale. Below, only a small portion of the complete arguments and refutations made in Question XIX are included.

Question XIX: Sixth Article: Aquinas begins his answer to three brief objections that the will of God must always be fulfilled (p. 203). During the third reply, Aquinas posits words of the Apostle; they are presented in italic font for emphasis in the text: "God will have all men to be saved," (p. 204). He then goes on to explain this; he also goes into the process needed to calculate right and wrong, good and evil when there are multiple values involved in one decision.

In the Seventh Article: Whether the will of God is changeable? there are four objections and their replies. Tenth Article: this last article has only two objections and two responses. While God does not ever will sin or evil of any kind, God can will for the existence of opposites and their possibilities - to do or to not do something. Question XXII is The Providence of God. Aquinas defines providence, "Hence, the exemplar of the order of things towards their end must necessarily pre-exist in the divine mind: and the exemplar of things ordered towards an end is, properly speaking, providence, [Q. 19, a. 4]" (p. 215). During the refutations he claims, "Hence likewise, prudence presupposes the moral virtues, by means of which the appetitive power is directed towards good, as the Philosopher says,[note 11, Aristotle's Ethics, VI, 13 {1144b 32}" ( p. 216).



## **Chapter 8, Question XXV & XLIV, Chapter 9, Questions XLV, XLVI, XLVII, XLVIII, XLIX**

### **Chapter 8, Question XXV & XLIV, Chapter 9, Questions XLV, XLVI, XLVII, XLVIII, XLIX Summary and Analysis**

Question XXV regards The Power of God and covers the topic in six articles. First Article: Whether There is Power in God? There are four objections and their responses. Aquinas answers that "Power is twofold - namely, passive, which exists not at all in God; and active, which we must assign to Him in the highest degree," (p. 226). He further asserts that God's action and essence are in constant unity. In so being, God's power dwells throughout every one of God's actions. Readers can understand this: whenever you act in accordance with your own truth and values then your behavior is in unity with your essence. When you behave in a way that does not express the truth - this means you are 'acting' and that your behavior and essence are not united at that moment. Third Article: Whether God is Omnipotent? By definition, god is Omnipotent, but this is to equate Him with Aristotle's Prime Mover. Upon careful examination, actually answering this question is somehow 'threatening'. This is because the anthropomorphic image of God does not hold up well and people are led closer to this wild 'God here means the Big Bang or something like that.' Those who have seen the t-shirt with the: "God said," followed by a complex mathematical equation at the end of which it reads, "and there was," are in tune with this aspect of God's nature in relation to this question of Omnipotence. This is disconcerting compared to the more ordinary idea of "God as the Ultimate Know-It-All". Question XXV is covered rather briefly in only eight printed pages of an English translation.

Question LXV/45 is The Mode of Emanation of Things from the First Principle. There are eight Articles to this. The presentation starts with the fifth of those eight Articles. Angels appear amid the discussion for the second time in the book. Angels are rather complex. They appear as individuals in many cases. However, they are often also images that represent abstract concepts. For example, a congregation inclusive of all its members may have some definitive qualities. When the totality of the group is taken as a whole and personified, this can be perceived or envisioned as 'an angel of the congregation'. In Question LXVI On the Beginning of the Duration of Creatures, Aquinas cites the creation of the world by God is an Article of Faith. Articles of Faith are an important and integral component of Catholic theology and philosophy.



# Chapter 10, Rest of Question LXXV & LXXVI

## Chapter 10, Rest of Question LXXV & LXXVI Summary and Analysis

Many of the questions in the Summa Theologica are long and complex. In this case, the chapter begins with a question that was begun in the preceding summary chapter. Question LXXV On Man who is Composed of a Spiritual and a Corporeal Substance: And First, Concerning What Belongs to the Essence of the Soul. There are seventeen Articles to address this question. Aspects of this include: how the soul exists in relation with the human body, differences between the nature of both the soul and bodily attributes of nonhuman animals. Again, during this part of the book, the truth or perception is that the living soul is the mind intimately associated with the body. Aquinas did not have the advantage of contemporary neuroscience, but fortunately readers of the 2000 AD Millennium do. The sixth article takes up the matter of the puzzle of whether the human soul is corruptible or incorruptible. As Aquinas follows more along the lines of what Aristotle determined, the soul is only separable from the body inasmuch as thoughts and practices are. The life force is equally much an element of soul, and in this manner the life-giving breath of God is included. The idea of spontaneous generation has been extended to God; this idea has been disproved with regard to lesser matters. Aquinas writes of the Creator's powers in relation to potentiality and actuality; potentiality has both a passive and an active functionality. Aquinas concludes by expressing what is presently understood to be entropy - that the Creator can reduce a being to nothing, to non-being by ceasing to sustain the life force, or order of a being.

In Question LXXVI: The Union of Body and Soul, there are eight Articles on this topic, of which only the first four are presented in the book. First is Whether the Intellectual Principle is United to the Body as its Form? The objections include some associations found in DesCartes type of dualism, stemming from Plato, that the mind is a phenomenon of the human being that can be entirely separated and retain function. From this is drawn the idea that the soul is indeed entirely separable from the body. This formula is a simplified empirical science version of what Saint Thomas Aquinas is getting at in these articles. The Saint does not limit this to brain physiology, but readers do better to assume that he would have included such information had it been available to him at the time that he wrote the Summa Theologica. Nevertheless, the activity of the mind is usually expressed through the living body but will continue in its form even with the cessation of the material nature. In this regard there is a similarity to the nature of light which, according to contemporary physics, does bridge the gap of the immaterial and material nature. For some this is a particularly difficult point. It tends to sow some confusion for people about all of our ideas of an afterlife. Comments Jesus Christ made

about 'the other world', and remarks of this type from other traditions add to the general confusion.



# Chapter 11, Questions LXXVI, LXXVII & LXXVIII

## Chapter 11, Questions LXXVI, LXXVII & LXXVIII Summary and Analysis

This is the continuation of Question 76. Second Article: Whether the Intellectual Principle is Multiplied According to the Number of Bodies? This has to do with perceptions of separation and connection. Aquinas discusses agents and actions. When there is an organizer, or leader of a group; Aquinas explains that only the leader is considered to be the agent. This is the relationship between God and angels. This same structure also appears when a corporation is experienced from the outside. However, when a lone smith performs his work, then there is one agent and one actor. Aquinas introduces the idea of one mind. Is every event of the mind the same mind in action? Aquinas derives, 'No, the thoughts of humans are not all of one mind. More than one mind exists and thinks.' Aquinas also believes that humans do perceive the same principles when they use abstract and conceptual thought. Aquinas sees individuating qualities as signs of fundamental separateness rather than as the type of separation associated with biological and social organizations, where even the separating qualities are definitive in relation to the greater whole of which they are a part. Likewise, that whatever any individual does to another, this has been done to Jesus. Forgiveness of ourselves and others is the healing force. Also included are the Third Article: Whether besides the Intellectual Soul there are in Man Other Souls Essentially Different from one Another and the Fourth Article: Whether in Man There is Another Form Besides the Intellectual Soul?

The following two questions are exceptionally challenging. Those interested are advised to read the original text. Question 77, What Belongs to the Powers of the Soul in General? contains eight Articles. Articles 1,2, 3 & 5 are included. Whether the Essence of the Soul is its Power? Aquinas lists seven objections in the opening of this Article. The matter involves whether the sensitive and the rational soul are separate and distinct or not. Aquinas writes in his first response directed towards this. Ultimately, he shows how knowledge and love are combined here. Article Two: Whether there are Several Powers of the Soul? The reply to this is: "A unified power is superior if it extends to equal things. But a multiform power is superior to it, if it is over many things," (p. 316). Whether the Powers are Distinguished by their Acts and Objects? The next Question LXXVIII/78 The Powers of the Soul in Particular? In four Articles the answers to this question are pursued.



# Chapter 13, Question LXXIX / 79 & Analysis Chapter 14, Questions LXXX, LXXXI, & LXXXII & LXXXIII

## Chapter 13, Question LXXIX / 79 & Analysis Chapter 14, Questions LXXX, LXXXI, & LXXXII & LXXXIII Summary and Analysis

During the summary the Arabic and Roman Numerals are interspersed. This is to serve as a reminders and clarification to those readers who may not have been taught the Roman Numerals or who have not used them in so long that they have forgotten how to read them. Only the Roman Numerals have been used in the original text. Question 79 is: The Intellectual Powers (In Thirteen Articles). Aquinas seems to be asking a question he has already answered: the question is whether the intellect and the soul are one and the same. In the First Article he differentiates between angels and people in that angels consist of mind and will only, whereas the humans also have other bodily related appetites, motives and abilities. The intellect gives virtue and power to the soul, but is not the soul in and of itself, Aquinas writes in the last reply to the objections. The Second Article is regarding whether the intellect is a purely passive power or not. The short answer is 'No, intellect is not purely passive.' The Third Article is Whether there is an Agent Intellect? In this section he mentions Augustine, Aristotle and Plato. The Fourth Article emphasizes the immaterial nature of mind - intellect and also of soul. Question 80 is The Appetitive Powers in General. "Each power of the soul is a form, and has a natural inclination to do something," (p. 351). The Second Article is focused upon differentiating the sensitive and the intellectual appetites: are they different powers? Appetites are movable; often the appetites have moved us before and will again. Aquinas refers to Aristotle's description of this written and preserved through a Greek book translated into Latin as *De Anima*. Aquinas then writes that the intellect and the senses of the body are of one motive. The desire for intellectual stimulation and a physical drive such as hunger represent the division between these two types of appetites. Question LXXXI: The Power of Sensuality, with three articles. The Second Article is more intimately connected with Church doctrine: separating irascible from concupiscence. In [ReplyObj1] Aquinas claims that the concupiscible power observes, categorizes, and determines what would be harmful and what would be helpful to an entity, person, or organism. The irascible defends the person from harm. There is no other purpose to the irascible.

Third Article: Whether the Irascible and Concupiscible Appetites Obey Reason?  
Question LXXXII is The Will. There are five Articles on this aspect of mankind. The first four of these are included. The First is Whether the Will Desires Something of Necessity? Here again, there are three objections. The Second Article is Whether The Will Desires of Necessity Whatever it Desires? There are three objections. Among the

objections is that to will requires understanding. The other is as a set of movements, and here the will is apt to move the intellect: what do I need to do to satisfy my employer?



# Chapter 15, Questions LXXXIV, LXXXV &

## Chapter 15, Questions LXXXIV, LXXXV & Summary and Analysis

Question 84: How the Soul While United to the Body Understands Corporeal Things Beneath It in Eight Articles. All of the eight are presented here. Aquinas gets into a more complex yet brief historiography of the quest for knowledge and certainty regarding the truth. He goes back to pre-Socratic times, and the observation that the system is rooted in motion, which undermines certainty. There are only two objections in the eighth Article.

Question 85: The Mode and Order of Understanding. The thing is understood and then there is the fact that it is understood. The Fourth Article is Whether We Can Understand Many Things at the Same Time? [Obj 4] writes that the ability to distinguish two things involves knowing their difference. Here, the distinction is a subdivision of knowledge of a whole. In [Rep4] An intellect knows multiple things by their difference and can compare them from direct experience. This way, the intellect can know both. The Fifth Article is Whether Our Intellect Understands by Composition and Division? [Rep1] Makes it clear that "Composition and division of the intellect are made by differentiating and comparing. Hence the intellect knows many things by composition and division, by the knowing the difference and comparing things," (p. 415). Sixth Article: Whether the Intellect Can Be False? Seventh Article: Whether One person Can Understand One and the Same Thing Better Than Another Can? [Obj1] Only perfect understanding or complete lack of understanding exists. [Reply1] Aquinas writes that it is virtually self-evident that there is more than one way for there to be greater or lesser understanding between individuals. The Eighth Article: Whether the Intellect Understands the Indivisible Before the Divisible?

At its best, An Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas clarifies the mind, provides instruction and insight and displays the vigorous efforts made by the Catholic religion to come to terms with two of the top Grecian philosophers. The Summa Theologica is part of a long tradition. Like the space program, progress is made by millions. The goal is ambitious. Here, the goal is knowledge and understanding of the Truth. These writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas moves humanity forward in the quest to understand and to make sense of natural, mental, and spiritual truth. Centuries later, the German philosopher Hegel adds to the tradition. He is adept at showing the connection between Christian religion's revealed knowledge and changes in society through history. Those changes include the way that Aristotle, Jesus the Christ, and Thomas Aquinas are connected in the movement of philosophy through the generations.





# Chapter 16, Question LXXXVII & The End of Man Chapters II, III, XVI, XVII

## Chapter 16, Question LXXXVII & The End of Man Chapters II, III, XVI, XVII Summary and Analysis

Question 87: The Intellectual Soul Knows Itself and all That is Within Itself. There are Four Articles: Whether the Intellectual Soul Knows Itself by its Essence? There are three objections with their rebuttals. The answer to this first one includes a description of the angelic hierarchy as immaterial and intelligible. He refers to Plato's theory of forms. He explains that the human mind can discover a new 'realm'. People should assume that there is more to the region than what has been discovered. In the same manner, Columbus is said to have caused the Europeans to discover the Americas. He did not know everything about the entire set of Continents at once. Action is used as a defining factor. Referring to St. Augustine, Aquinas asserts that the human soul benefits from human knowledge. Action and essence are compared. There are two types of self-evidence. The essence of an angel is the knowledge and the knower of knowledge. The concepts in this section are particularly complex and difficult to 'get'.

There is a major change in the book at this point. The End of Man: The Summa Contra Gentiles: Third Book: Chapter I That Every Agent Acts For an End. Aquinas is referring to purposive behavior. He claims that purposive behavior is the majority of human action. He writes that men [and women] judge others on the basis of their intended objectives. While a doctor would be criticized for failing to heal others, a builder would not be judged negatively for not healing numerous patients for the simple reason that healing is not the builder's end.

Chapter II: That Every Agent Acts for Good. Aquinas writes that it is the same motive to shun evil as it is to nurture and seek good. Chapter XVI: That the End of Everything is a Good. Here, the end is viewed as the motive and that end is 'the good', and therefore the ends are 'good'. Chapter XVII: That All Things are Directed to One End, Which is God. Aquinas gets into sources here. He teaches by analogy: God is to good what fire is to that which it heats. God is very different from the rest in that God is also the end towards which all activity is directed. The common good is then construed as being greater than the good of any one individual. The common good is also closer to God. This is based upon the idea of God's mercy, rather than His punishment of humanity. For, in the case of punishment, the common good would likely not appear as such to those in the society, but would rather seem to run counter to it, although in either case the end in view is the same: the common good and intimacy with God.



# **Chapter 17, The End of Man Chapters XVIII, XIX, XX, XXV Chapter 18, XLVII, LI, LII, LIII**

## **Chapter 17, The End of Man Chapters XVIII, XIX, XX, XXV Chapter 18, XLVII, LI, LII, LIII Summary and Analysis**

Chapter XVIII: How God is the End of Things: "Accordingly, God is the end of things as something to be obtained by each thing in its own way" (p. 437). Aquinas uses two very different examples: one is the physician re-establishing health in the patient, another is fire moving upwards, another is a king taking a city through warfare. "God, therefore, cannot be the end of things as though He were something effected, but only as something already existing and to be acquired" (p. 438).

Chapter XIX: That All Things Tend to Be Like Unto God. Here, God has imbued all creatures, most especially humanity, to partake of the nature of God and to shed off that which holds them back from being more divine and perfect in their being. Chapter XX: How Things Imitate the Divine Goodness: God manifests as goodness within humanity. Chapter XXV: That to Know God is the End of Every Intellectual Substance. Chapter XXVI: Does Happiness Consist in an Act of the Will? Chapter XXXVII: That Man's Ultimate Happiness Consists in Contemplating God. Chapter XXXVIII: That Human Happiness Does Not Consist in the Knowledge of God Which is Possessed Generally by the Majority. Chapter XXXIX: Mans Happiness Does Not Consist in the Knowledge of God Acquired by Demonstration.

Summa Contra Gentiles. Chapter XLVII That in this Life We Are Unable to See God in His Essence: He claims that focus upon the spiritual means that the interest has been removed from the sensory. This is contrary to his other point that action is what manifests essence. Chapter XLVIII: That Man's Ultimate Happiness is Not in This Life. Because of this, Aquinas claims that happiness may not be attainable during life. Chapter LI: Truth is the perfection of the intellect, claims Aquinas on page 469. The divine essence is exposed through an immediate vision of God. LII: That No Created Substance Can By Its Natural Power Arrive at Seeing God in His Essence. The Higher Nature leads to Higher Knowledge. Chapter LIII: That the Created Intellect Needs the Assistance of the Divine Light in Order to See God in His Essence. Chapter LIV: Arguments that Would Seem to Prove that God Cannot be Seen in His Essence, and Their Solution. Here, the divine essence is compared with light. An increase in the source does not change the 'medium' so that it can perceive beyond what it was capable of before. The divine substance goes beyond the height of brilliance, and extends beyond all knowledge. LXI: That By Seeing God a Man is Made a Partaker of Eternal Life.



## **Chapter 19, Human Acts: Questions 6, 8 & 9 Chapter 20, Questions 12, 13 & 18 Chapter 21, Questions XX, XLIX, LI, LIV, LV, LVI, LVII**

### **Chapter 19, Human Acts: Questions 6, 8 & 9 Chapter 20, Questions 12, 13 & 18 Chapter 21, Questions XX, XLIX, LI, LIV, LV, LVI, LVII Summary and Analysis**

While still part of The Summa Theologica, this is an entirely different part. Here, the format resumes the structure of the questions with objections, answers, and rebuttals. This falls under the category of articles. These excerpts come from the first half of the Second Part. Question VI: On the Voluntary and the Involuntary. First Article: Whether there is Anything Voluntary in Human Acts? Second Article: Whether there is Anything Voluntary in Irrational Animals? Third Article: Whether there can be Voluntariness Without Any Act? Fourth Article: Whether Violence Can Be Done To the Will? Aquinas answers that, there is a twofold will; one is immediate and the rest may be the same or the guidance of some 'higher will' which governs the events. Fifth Article: Whether Violence Causes Involuntariness? Sixth Article: Whether Fear Causes What is Voluntary Absolutely? The Seventh Article: Whether Concupiscence Causes Involuntariness? Question VIII: On the Will, In Regard to What it Wills. Question IX: On That Which Moves the Will in Six Articles.

Question XII: On Intention. Whether intention is an Act of the Intellect or of the Will? There are four objections to the first article. The Second Article: Whether Intention is Only of the Last End? Question XIII: On Choice, Which is an Act of the Will in Relation to the Means to an End. There are six articles in this case. Choice is the theme, and here 'choice' is described as a combination of thought and natural appetite or body. The second article is not included in the text of this Introduction. Third Article: Whether Choice is Only of the Means to the End or Sometimes also of the End? There are two objections and their replies. "The proper ends of the virtues are ordained to happiness as to their last end....[RO2] As was stated above, there is but one last end," (p. 516). Fourth Article: Whether Choice is of Those Things Only That are Done By Us? Three objections and their replies. Contemplation and action both contain choice. Fifth Article: Whether Choice is only of Possible Things? Question XVIII: On the Goodness and Malice of Human Acts in General. There are eleven Articles that go along with this. Question XX: On the Goodness and Malice of the External Act Adds Any Goodness or Malice to that of the Interior Act? Fourth Article: Whether the External Act Adds any Goodness of Malice to That of the Interior Act? The next section is Habits and Virtues. Question LI: On The Cause of Habits, as to Their Formation. All four of the articles are included in this. Question LVI: On the Subject of Virtue. The first of the original six

articles has been included. Question LVII On the Distinction of the Intellectual Virtues.  
Articles 2,3,4 & 5 are included.



## **Chapter 22, Morality - Questions LVIII, LX, LXI, LXII, LXIII, LXIV, & Law Questions - XC, XCI, XCIII, XCIV**

### **Chapter 22, Morality - Questions LVIII, LX, LXI, LXII, LXIII, LXIV, & Law Questions - XC, XCI, XCIII, XCIV Summary and Analysis**

Question 58, On the Difference Between Moral and Intellectual Virtues. First Article: Whether Every Virtue is a Moral Virtue? Second Article: Whether Moral Virtue Differs From Intellectual Virtue? There are four objections and their refutations in this case. Question LX: How the Moral Virtues are Distinguished From One Another in five articles. Question LXI: The Cardinal Virtues in five articles. First Article: Whether the Moral Virtues Should be Called Cardinal or Principal Virtues? Second Article: Whether there are Four Cardinal Virtues? Question LXII: The Theological Virtues in four articles. First Article: Whether there are Theological Virtues? Second Article: Whether the Theological Virtues are Distinguished from the Intellectual and Moral Virtues? Third Article: Whether Faith, Hope and Charity are Fittingly Reckoned as Theological Virtues? Fourth Article: Whether Faith Precedes Hope, and Hope Charity? Question LXIII: The Cause of the Virtues? First Article: Whether Virtue is in us by Nature? Second Article: Whether any Virtue is Caused in us by Habituation from our Acts? Fourth Article: Whether Virtue Acquired by Habituation from our acts Belongs to the Same Species as Infused Virtue? Question LXIV: On the Mean of Virtue in four articles. First Article: Whether the Moral Virtues Consist in a Mean? Second Article: Whether the Mean of Moral Virtue is a Real Mean or a Mean of Reason? This completes this type of discussion on morality.

The next set of questions are focused on the issue of law. The first in this set is Question XC: On the Essence of Law in four articles. First Article: Whether Law is Something Pertaining to Reason? Second Article: Whether Law is Always Directed to the Common Good? Third Article: Whether the Reason of Any Man is Competent to Make Laws? Fourth Article: Whether Promulgation is Essential to Law? Question XCI: On The Various Kinds of Law in six articles. First Article: Whether there is an Eternal Law? Second Article: Whether There is in us a Natural Law? Third Article: Whether there is a Human Law? Fourth Article: Whether there was any Need for a Divine Law? Fifth Article: Whether there is but One Divine Law? Sixth Article: Whether there is a Law in the Form of Sin? Question XCIII: The Eternal Law in six articles. First Article: Whether the Eternal Law is a Supreme Exemplar Existing in God? Second Article: Whether the Eternal Law is Known to All? Third Article: Whether Every Law is Derived from the Eternal Law? Question XCIV: The Natural Law in six articles.



# Chapter 23, Questions CIX, CXII, Grace

## Chapter 23, Questions CIX, CXII, Grace Summary and Analysis

Grace is the final subject of this introduction to Saint Thomas through translated excerpts of the Summa Theologica. Question CIX/109: On the Exterior Principle of Human Acts, Namely, the Grace of God in ten articles. "God, in so far as, through grace, we are helped by Him to do the right" (p. 651). First Article: Whether without Grace Man Can Know Any Truth? During the answer, God is called the First Mover - a definition expressed by Aristotle, but the ancient Greek did not explicitly state that the Prime Mover is a god. Grace, which is the handiwork of the Holy Ghost in this trinitarian theology. Third Article: Whether by His own Natural Powers and without Grace Can Man Love God Above All Things? In the third reply to the last objection of this article it is written, "Love is said to be highest not only with regard to the degree of love, but also with regard to the motive of loving, and the mode of love" (p. 658). Fourth Article: Whether Man, Without Grace and by his own Natural Powers, can Fulfill the Commandments of the Law? Fifth Article: Whether Man can Merit Eternal Life without Grace? Sixth Article: Whether a Man, by Himself and Without the External aid of Grace, can Prepare Himself for Grace? In this case there are four objections and with their rebuttals. Seventh Article: Whether Man can Rise from Sin without the Help of Grace?

Eighth Article: Whether Man without Grace can avoid Sin? Augustine claims, in the first objection, that no one can sin when he or she has no choice but to do it. In the answer, Aquinas writes about two natures of humankind: integral nature and corrupted nature. The integral nature does not lend itself to sin. Aquinas writes of grace and God's assistance in escaping temptations and overcoming obstacles. This is done by the deliberate cultivation of good habits. Divine grace helps to heal the corrupted nature; when healed, the individual will cease to commit the sins - this 'restored innocence' is a natural state. Ninth Article: Whether one who has Already Obtained Grace Can, of Himself and Without Further Help of Grace do Good and Avoid Sin? Tenth Article: Whether Man Possessed of Grace Needs the Help of Grace in Order to Persevere? Question CXII: On the Cause of Grace in five articles. First Article: Whether God Alone is the Cause of Grace? Second Article: Whether Any Preparation and Disposition for Grace is Required by Man's Part? Third Article: Whether Grace is Necessarily Given to Whoever Prepares Himself for it, or to Whoever Does He Can? Fourth Article: Whether Grace is Greater in one than in Another? Fifth Article: Whether Man Can Know that he has Grace? This completes the samples from the Summa Theologica provided through translation. There is a bibliography which follows the text.



# Characters

## Thomas Aquinas

This is one of the greatest of Catholic thinkers who left a legacy not only of his direct work, but also through lengthy writings. He is not the subject of the book. Rather, God and the effort to come to terms with the ancient Grecian pagan philosophers Plato and Aristotle was a major task of his writings. He is endeavoring to clearly understand the nature of God, without avoiding some of the more challenging philosophical questions. He shows that he was well educated within the strictures of the Church tradition of his time and place. This shows through his writing's engagement with some other prominent figures such as Dionysius and the Sainted North African Augustine. He lived from 1225 until at least 1279. He was born in Italy and was educated at a 'boarding school' in the sense that it was a monastery with a school included. Thomas Aquinas was canonized after his death, and 6 centuries later was chosen to serve as a patron Saint of parochial Catholic primary and secondary education.

Thomas was the first and one of the best students of Albert the Great from his inception of a place of study in Cologne.

## Anton Pegis

Editor, author of the Introduction. This scholar has had the profound privilege of being heavily involved in the publication of this book. Anton Pegis has supplied readers with a very helpful brief biography for those not already familiar with Aquinas. His work only appears in the beginning of the book, prior to the excerpts in the usual sense. The remainder of his efforts are not directly discernible in the text itself: nevertheless the fruits of his labor are there.

This scholar does not have a giant reputation in his own right, but was quite successful within the more humble standards of 'normalcy'. In this respect, that means that he held a perfectly good day job as a scholar and was able to contribute to far more than this one book on Thomas Aquinas. In this matter, Anton Pegis is but one of an army of quiet supporters and guardians of history and of knowledge.

## James C. Cardinal McGuigan

Archbishop of Toronto, in 1948. This man has no bearing upon the text in a way that makes much sense from a secular perspective. However, as the Archbishop, he served to both guard and send this particular work through the publication process and its release into the world in the English translation. As such, from the religious perspective, this action was an important case of the exercise of his duties.



## Dionysius the Argeopagite

This man is mentioned repeatedly by Aquinas during the text. Dionysius was another powerful philosopher and theologian. There are times during the book when Aquinas agrees with him and other instances when Dionysius is the one whose idea he is set against. Aquinas writes of him with the same impression of 'assumption' that readers will be familiar with this Dionysius and his ideas. This figure is referred to as being of great importance at least in terms of the intellectual tradition within theology.

## St. John Damascene

This man really was born in Damascus, Syria. He is referred to numerous times in the book. He spent much of his life as a Christian monk in a Muslim context. During his time as a monk, he contributed to writings and dialogues which became integrated into the Catholic theological literary and intellectual tradition. He is normally referred to as Damascene at various locations during An Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas.

## Plato

This is one of the best known and most beloved of the ancient Grecian philosophers. He lived and practiced philosophy circa 350 BC. He lived during a time when writing was a skill that was growing in power and extending beyond its use in law courts and governments, and as inventory markers for merchants. He is known through the preservation of his writings. He is honored for three major things. One is that he preserved knowledge and memory of a man older than himself Socrates who gave the elenctic method and who was not a writer himself. Second he is more revered for having formulated a theory of ideas and of espousing this theory in an orderly manner. Third, he is revered as having been a major mentor of Aristotle. Finally, he also founded and taught one of the earliest and best universities in Athens. He is mentioned several times during the book, normally for his theory of forms- ideas.

## Aristotle

This Macedonian spent a large portion of his adult life in Athens. He is best known for his philosophical efforts. These included: taxonomy, increasing the categorical organization of ideas, differentiating between consciousness and 'dimension of reality' especially in relation to Plato's theory of ideas, analysis of the origins of the natural world, the question of soul or spirit in mankind with some discussion of its relation to the gods.

Aristotle, is mentioned numerous times during the book. The reason for this is that his philosophical points regarding the origins, the soul, and his criticisms of Plato's theory of ideas are all pertinent to Aquinas's understanding of and evaluation of God, the soul, and to some degree also natural philosophy and ethics. His thought is both embraced





but also criticized with the benevolent intention of improving the human understanding and apprehension of the truth.

## Jesus the Christ

Jesus is mentioned numerous times throughout the book. However, he is typically referred to as Scriptural passages are brought up. Aquinas has used these to highlight areas where philosophy and theology do not mix well and to differentiate when and why to use revelatory techniques and worship and often faith as well as those areas of religion within which philosophy is also highly valuable and quite useful. Christ's contribution is understood to be predominantly suffused with all of the discourse about God and as providing many of the underpinnings of Aquinas' discussion. He is clearly viewed as an actual historic Messiah who had God for his father and a perfect, sinless woman Mary for his mother. It continues to be claimed that from the purely materialistic contemporary perspective he was a case of parthenogenesis - meaning, his mother did not have sexual intercourse with a mortal man in order to conceive Jesus the Christ.

## God

This is understood to be an actual entity; as well as the source of all Creation, and the Prime Mover and the Unmoved Movent this being is also known to be Jesus the Christ's actual father. God pervades the work of Saint Thomas Aquinas in terms of being very much the main topic and subject of the book. Much of the writings are about this God. To the extent that Scriptures and philosophers and His son Jesus the Christ and the writings of this and another Saint count as the handiwork of God Himself, then it may be construed that God is quoted in some cases of the book, but not in the ordinary manner. This name form and religious context most closely associates God as revealed to the world through the Jews as their sovereign deity, from which all Christian relationships to Him have stemmed - thanks to His son, Jesus the Christ.

## Moses

This is another important Jew. Moses pre-dated Jesus the Christ by centuries. He is most famed for having been intimate with God, and for being the Jew who was able to provide a concise moral codex, still known today as the Ten Commandments. These are behavioral guidelines intended to protect, and nurture individuals and the Jewish community, and if they/we abide by them, all of mankind would be well served and God - so they say, will also be most pleased when humans abide by these basic rules of conduct. He is referred to in Aquinas's work, Question 47 of The Summa Theologica, during The Distinction of Things in General.



# Objects/Places

## Italy

Italy figures in the book as extremely important but is almost never mentioned. It is the home nation of Saint Thomas Aquinas. It is mentioned almost exclusively in the Introduction of the book. Most of the other times it comes up, it does so as part of the Roman Empire, but by the time of this Saint's ordinary life, it was after the fall of the Roman Empire but during the strength of the Roman Catholic Church, which in some ways is a surviving aspect of the Roman Empire, which switched from opposing the Church to protecting it a millennium earlier.

## Greece

Like Italy, this is background: environmentally relevant to events, but otherwise it goes without saying. Like Italy, it is indicative of Southern Continental Europe and is simultaneously the Northern Coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It was the home of Plato, and often the home of the non-Native Aristotle. Its role as the geographical location that supported Plato and Aristotle is what makes it most relevant to Saint Thomas Aquinas during his writings of the Summa Theologica.

## Arabia

This is the name of a region that consists of a land mass between North East Africa and the Asiatic portion of the EurAsian Continental Mass. There are small gulfs and seas creating the 'between factor'. This region has its own language Arabic, which continues to be major, though not dominant on a global scale. The culture has continued to be tribal in a way that many other peoples have traded in for 'nationalism' as their new, republican form of tribalism. This region is most relevant to Saint Thomas Aquinas's writings from the thirteenth century because by the time he was born two events of profound importance had occurred. First, Mohammed had lived and brought Islam to the Arabians as a gift, intentionally following on Jesus the Christ's arrival. This was done as a spiritual act out of consideration to a shared ancestor and heritage. Contemporary with Saint Thomas Aquinas, these people produced a great deal of high quality philosophy for which Aquinas's work might be viewed as a defense from or as a participation in a period of heightened growth.

## The Summa Theologica

This is the name of the book or set of books written by Thomas Aquinas in Latin. The tome provided those excerpts used by the editorial staff for An Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas. It is an extensive work of philosophy and theology that runs well over one thousand pages in length, with well over one hundred questions set out with lines of



reasoning explained clearly in articles. This is one place where it may show that he was one of Albert the Great's students at Cologne.

## **golden mountain**

This is referred to as part of the discussion of Question 12: How God is Known By Us, (p. 88).

## **Holy Scripture**

This thing, or these things, are referred to in several places throughout the book. For the greater part, Aquinas means the Old and New Testaments. He refers to them with the same ease and rigor that he refers to others such as Aristotle and Plato. Scriptures are cited as one of the most important sources of religious education through literature in existence.

## **monastery**

Thomas Aquinas was sent to school at a local monastery at the age of six. This type of boarding school system will seem normal to some, but odd to others and downright shocking and offensive to still others. Monasteries - convents for boys, were used for this purpose at that time in history.

## **Human soul**

This is a subject of great discussion during the book, in many places. According to Aquinas it is the human intellect in combination with God above, the life force, and the so-called 'lower nature' of the human life form. His view is largely Aristotelean and embedded within his commentary is the belief that Jesus the Christ lived and worked - at least prior to the crucifixion from rather than Aristotelean than Platonic viewpoint, although he wouldn't have called it that unless he also knew their works.

## **Spiritual Life Work**

At various parts of the Summa, especially during the first two hundred pages, this is described by Aquinas. He writes that Scriptures, along with his knowledge of philosophy, report that the spiritual labors required of any human must be done during his or her lifetime. It is the mind and the living soul that conducts the spiritual practice and lifestyle.

## **creatures**

During Aquinas's life, the term 'creature' was commonly used within theology, science, and philosophy. It is generally just another word for animal, but was used within an intellectual framework designed for the debates of the 1200s.



# Themes

## Roman Catholicism Meets Ancient Greek Philosophy

When the Catholic Church's representatives met with the ancient knowledge of an Athenian and a Macedonian who loved Athens, they were taken aback. The philosophical power of the Athenians, particularly Plato and Aristotle, even more so for those who include Socratic philosophy as part of Plato's works was enough to send lesser minds reeling. Many Catholics had learned of them and had written on them. Over the centuries, these were confronted and addressed. Earlier, Saint Augustine included some of the ancient Greeks in his own efforts in theology. In Augustine's case, Plato's work dominated his psychology. Centuries later, Aquinas was able to access the same old time philosophy, but with further updates than his predecessor Augustine had been able to access. Aquinas felt the power of Aristotle as well, but tended to prefer this. Over the millennium, Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies often jockey for position, and seem to take turns in prominence almost as if they were the philosophical equivalent of peddles on the wheels of functional bicycles.

Aquinas is able to show how at least some of Aristotle's insights can be used readily within the theological framework. Some of these are rather dry, such as the inclusion of Aristotle's Prime Mover as part of God the Father. In other areas, Aquinas's work is based much more on Scriptures in ways that do not so directly incorporate the philosophers. Aquinas also endeavors to provide some discussion of distinguishing areas where revelations and faith are more effective than the more pure intellect. In other cases, Aquinas supports the intellectual exercise as the best ways to find and promulgate the truth. For the peoples living in realms of the Earth where the tendency is to come across the influence of both, it is extremely helpful that the Catholic thinkers have made efforts to come to terms with what the Greeks have exposed.

## Evasion of One by Confrontation with Another : Arabian Philo

Aquinas does not directly confront any of the Arabian philosophers anywhere during the excerpts included in *An Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas*. However, in the very beginning, the editor pointed out that this was extremely important. The Arabians were performing some of their very best work during this time in history, the 1200s. It is not known from the work presented which of the issues included can be tied to Muslim or other Arabian philosophers. Aquinas endeavored to work within and to support his own tradition and to preserve the connection with the Pre-Christian Greek thinkers. As the comparison is not overtly provided, it is not possible to detect from 2008, which of the topics covered by the questions may have been matters clearly being pursued by the Arabians at the same time in history.



There is an extent to which Aquinas is evading confrontation with the problems of the Arabian philosophers as posed by the men of his day through the very act of paying attention to others along a different line. In addition to Plato and Aristotle who occurred in a miraculous conjunction - having overlapped one to teach the other, Aquinas mainly includes Dionysius, Christ through Scriptures, Augustine and ideas known somehow as 'the Apostle' and 'the Philosophers'.

For readers, this will easily go unnoticed in areas of the world less touched by Arabian theology and philosophy. The market for the book seems to consist largely of working around a particular kind of problem. As such, the editor has made it apparent, but it is otherwise invisible.

## God

Knowledge and understanding of God are core concerns of Saint Thomas's writings. The many questions are either about the nature of God or of the relationship between God and humanity. Often these are also intertwined with awareness of what the human soul is, and what the spiritual life is. There are also expositions on many subtle aspects of morality in relation to the individual. These are designed to empower the reflective, but can also serve as a foundation so that others may dispense with teachings within the Church's structure with the advantage of some definitions and understandings of how best to help their fellows. This can also be valuable for priests and other clerics who are in the process of repenting as a consequence of some trouble or in the case that he or she is exploring what can be done as a result of the individual's concupiscence.

Some of these matters are how humans can best relate to God. There is a mixture of advice to submit and hold faith in connection with the unknown while also encouraging intellectual inquiry and pursuit in a theological and philosophical matter - to pursue the truth and the wisdom that derives from the quest and from knowledge of the truth itself. These are focused more so on God as such. Other questions discuss the relation of the human nature and the soul - what it is and how it works. These then delve into the world, as the locus of the expression of the relation of God to mankind *visa viz* both the individual and the 'collective'. This includes then, also, what God does do and can do for people - again, this is relevant not only on an individual basis but also on a larger scale of social organization.

Much that is described during ethical selections from the text are actually displays of some of the means that individuals can use to transform themselves intentionally. These can also be used to show clerics how the processes work. This way, they can apply the techniques to themselves, and are hopefully then also better able to help those under their pastoral care. As such, these passages essentially describe how humans and God can attune to one another. As such it falls under 'what God does for the individual' but also, 'how individuals can help God to help them'.

# Style

## Perspective

Thomas Aquinas was fortunate enough to receive quite an extensive education. He was delivered to a monastery for his education beginning as a six year old child. This is a practice which is still done, more in some parts of the world and for some subgroups in society than others. Later in his life, he was able to accompany Albert the Great to Cologne where he was able to be a most prominent student. He was also able to be a priest. An Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas is not really about Thomas himself, but does include him very much in certain ways.

The author of the originals was working in the 1200s, mainly in Italy, including Cologne. His Roman Catholicism was prevailing within his time and culture. His efforts were also strongly performed with the intention of providing sound defenses for Catholic thought when confronted by brilliant Arabs, whose philosophical influence was exceptionally powerful during Thomas Aquinas' customary earthly lifetime.

## Tone

The tone of the work is thorough and educational. The author presupposes some familiarity with the history of philosophy and theology. The work could well also have a quality of being 'official'. This goes hand-in-hand with the rigor as the work could be used to nurture students, and as a reference guide to support clerics whose main strength might not be academic rigor. There are numerous terms that are used as technical terms. The author, given the authenticity of the translations, provides clear explanations and definitions of each term.

The format is designed to enhance the tone. Honest inquiry into the truth and the understanding of what is true is evidently the very root of this entire work, and the basis of the original Summa Theologica and related writings. This is expressed by the diversity of problems pursued through the questions. Many topics are covered. The benefits of the effort are clear. One of the reasons the effort is so significant is that it has practical applications and there are, of course, attendant implications on how and what must be implemented to achieve the ends discerned by the philosophical and theological examination.

The tone is not condescending, which is inherently pleasurable and it appeals to the 'high brow'. There are points it is possible to criticize, of course. That does not degenerate the value of the writings in and of themselves. Many of the questions raised and answered may have been tailored to the intellectual climate of the time from which they emerged. Even so, while more of them may seem readily applicable for clergy, within a religious context, they are handy for philosophers and also lay folk.

## Structure

The book is divided into a number of parts. Within these there are topic headings. Falling under each heading there are a number of questions. Each question often has even smaller questions attached to it. These are followed by a 'preamble,' which clearly indicates what is to follow with more precision. After this, Aquinas sets forth objections. Each of these contains the written form of a thought which directly counters a proposed idea. These were likely to have been a part of the academic and intellectual climate of the time that Thomas Aquinas did the original writing of the work. After writing these out, he then responds to them, overcoming them after the manner of real or imagined opponents. If he created the objections then he was 'shadow boxing,' which is still a healthy form of training. Those extremely well versed in this part of the tradition of the Church will be aware of whether or not the objections came from clearly defined 'schools of thought' or not.

There is typically a section that begins, "I answer that" followed by a short piece that comes after the objections and before the first of his listed responses. The rebuttals are clearly numbered, which helps to minimize any confusion that might otherwise arise. These help Aquinas to have presented his work very neatly. He may have intended his work to be used by others; admittedly, one does hope so since he went to such lengths.

The questions go well into the hundreds. However, in the Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas, a large number of these have been left out. These may have been most pertinent to the various schools of Catholic thought during the priest's lifetime. Be that as it may, the formulations are helpful in displaying for students as well as for others already in the know the correct process for handling objections and refutations when engaged in genuine philosophical debate, or in pursuing 'simple' inquiry in an effort to divine the truth.





## Quotes

"The reason why God has no name, or is said to be above being named, is because his essence is above all that we understand about God and signify in words." p. 98

"Thus, according to nouns, particles, and demonstrative pronouns are applicable to God, so far can He be signified by relative pronouns." p. 99

"For an act of virtue is nothing less than the good use of free choice." p. 561

"habit implies a disposition in relation to a thing's nature." p. 545

"To sin is nothing else than to fail in the good which belongs to any being according to its nature." p. 656

"Love is said to be highest not only with regard to the degree of love, but also with regard to the motive of loving, and the mode of love." p. 658

"The intention of the heart is called a cry to God, not because God is always the object of intentions but because He sees our intention." p. 512

"Likewise, whenever we speak of one thing being chosen in preference to another, it is in conjunction with the some action of the chooser." p. 517

"The proper ends of the virtues are ordained to happiness as to their last end....[RO2] As was stated above, there is but one last end." p. 516

"God, in so far as, through grace, we are helped by Him to do the right." p. 651

"To sin is nothing else than to fail in the good which belongs to any being according to its nature." p. 656

"Love is said to be highest not only with regard to the degree of love, but also with regard to the motive of loving, and the mode of love." p. 658



## Topics for Discussion

What is your favorite part of those portions of the Summa Theologica presented here?

List one problem with Plato according to Aquinas's work as presented here.

Do you think Aquinas' description of God as the Prime Mover - which is clearly an Aristotelean idea, is legitimate Catholic theology, or more a trick of the mind endeavoring to reconcile super powerful truths? Defend your answer.

List your most favorite questions of all those presented as part of this text.

Did you feel the writings about concupiscence were helpful? Explain why if possible.

Describe the difference between irascible and concupiscent aspects of a person.

Define the human soul according to Aquinas and write briefly about how it works.

Name three of the other philosophical and theological thinkers who affected the work of Aquinas.