

AQUINAS: EXPOSITION OF BOETHIUS'S "HEBDOMADS"*

Introduction

Get thee home without delay; foregather there
and play there, and muse upon thy concep-
tions. (*Sirach* 32:15–16)

[1] The zeal for wisdom has the prerogative that by pursuing its task it is the more sufficient unto itself. For in the case of external tasks a man requires the help of a great many, whereas in the contemplation of wisdom, the more someone persists on his own the more effectively he performs. Hence the Sage calls man back to himself in the words cited above, saying GET THEE HOME WITHOUT DELAY—that is: let you who are troubled come back from external affairs to your own mind, before one is taken up with something else and is distracted in looking after it. Accordingly, *Wisdom* 8:16 says:

After entering my house, I will repose with her
(*i. e.* with wisdom).

[2] Now just as for the contemplation of wisdom a person must take hold of his mind so as to fill his entire house with the contemplation of wisdom, all the more so must he be completely present inside through his concentration, namely so that it isn't drawn off into diversions. Hence the Sage adds FOREGATHER THERE, *i. e.* collect your entire concentration in that place. So then, once the inner house is completely cleared out and one is completely dwelling in it through concentration, the Sage sets forth what is to be done, adding AND PLAY THERE.

[3] We should here note that the contemplation of wisdom is suitably compared to play on account of two features found in play. First of all, play is delightful, and the contemplation of wisdom holds the greatest delight. Accordingly, in *Sirach* 24:27 the mouth of wisdom says:

My spirit is sweeter than honey.

[4] The second is that the activities of play are not directed towards something else, but are sought on their own account; this is also true of the delights of wisdom. For sometimes it happens that a person takes delight within himself in considering those things which he desires or which he proposes to do. Now this delight is directed to something external he is striving

* Translated from the Latin text in the Marietti edition.

to achieve. Yet if this were lacking or delayed, no small affliction is added to such delight, in line with *Proverbs* 14:13:

Laughter shall be mingled with sorrow

But the delight pertaining to the contemplation of wisdom holds the cause of delight in itself. Thus it allows no worry, as though awaiting something it lacks. For this reason *Wisdom* 8:16 says:

Her conversation hath no bitterness; and it hath no sorrow to live with her

(*i. e.* wisdom). Hence Divine Wisdom compares its delightfulness to play (*Proverbs* 8:30):

I was delighted for days on end, playing face to face with it.

Understand the consideration of different truths on the different days. Accordingly, he adds: AND MUSE UPON THY CONCEPTIONS, namely those through which a man acquires the knowledge of truth.

[PROLOGUE]

[5] Thus Boethius, following this exhortation, produced for us a book about his conceptions, called "On the Hebdomads", *i. e.* on investigations, since ἔβδομαδα is the same as "to investigate."

[6] In this book, Boethius (*a*) begins with a preface, and (*b*) proceeds in §22 to the treatment of his task. In (*a*) he does three things: he shows what his endeavor is about (§7); how it is to be treated (§8); he provides the order in which he is to proceed (§12).

YOU ASK ME TO SET OUT AND TO EXPLAIN A BIT MORE CLEARLY THE OBSCURITY OF THE QUESTION FROM OUR HEBDOMADS THAT INVOLVES THE WAY IN WHICH SUBSTANCES, IN THAT THEY ARE, ARE GOOD, ALTHOUGH THEY AREN'T SUBSTANTIAL GOODS.

[7] Now Boethius is writing this book for John, a Deacon of the Roman Church who had requested him to discuss and explain a certain difficult problem from his hebdomads (*i. e.* his own investigations), through which an apparent conflict is solved. For it is said that created substances, insofar as they are, are good. Yet it is also said that created substances are not substantial goods; this is rather said to be distinctive of God alone. But what is suitable to something insofar as it is, seems to be suitable to it substantially. Hence if created substances are good insofar as they are, it seems to follow that they are substantial goods.

YOU SAY THAT THIS OUGHT TO BE DONE BECAUSE THE METHOD USED IN WRITINGS OF THIS SORT ISN'T FAMILIAR TO EVERYONE. WELL, I MYSELF AM YOUR WITNESS HOW VIGOROUSLY YOU TREAT-

ED THESE MATTERS BEFORE.

[8] Boethius next shows us how he wants to approach his task, *i. e.* not clearly but obscurely—and on this score Boethius shows us that he intends to speak obscurely (§9), that this approach is customary for him (§10), and that he should adopt this approach (§11).

[9] Thus Boethius says first that John, to whom he is writing these things, had requested them to be written because the way of the matters to be written about here is unfamiliar to anyone not stirred by the same desire for them as is he himself. Boethius attests that John had VIGOROUSLY TREATED them BEFORE, *i. e.* either understanding perspicaciously or desiring feverishly.

BUT I THINK ABOUT THE HEBDOMADS FOR MYSELF, AND I KEEP THESE SPECULATIONS IN MY MEMORY, RATHER THAN SHARING THEM WITH ANY OF THOSE PEOPLE WHOSE IMPERTINENCE AND INSOLENT PERMITS NOTHING TO BE ANALYZED WITHOUT JOKING AND LAUGHTER.

[10] Boethius then shows this approach also to be customary for him. He says that he was used to meditating upon these matters for himself, that is to compose or think up certain HEBDOMADS (*i. e.* investigations or conceptions) which he was keeping IN his MEMORY, contemplating them, rather than let share in them one of those people who permit NOTHING TO BE ANALYZED (*i. e.* ordered or put together) WITHOUT JOKING AND LAUGHTER due to their IMPERTINENCE AND INSOLENT (*i. e.* extravagance and shallowness). For they are scornful when someone has put together or set in order some discourse not for the sake of play but for serious business.

ACCORDINGLY, DON'T BE OPPOSED TO OBSCURITIES STEMMING FROM BREVITY; SINCE THEY ARE THE FAITHFUL GUARDIAN OF THE SECRET THEY HAVE THIS ADVANTAGE: THEY SPEAK ONLY TO THOSE WHO ARE WORTHY.

[11] Boethius concludes from the previous statements that he ought to undertake an obscure discourse the more gladly since John had himself requested such a discourse. He says ACCORDINGLY because you did this so that the method of our writings not be accessible to all. DON'T BE OPPOSED (*i. e.* hostile) TO OBSCURITIES STEMMING FROM BREVITY, *i. e.* to the obscurity of the present book, which is joined with its brevity. For things are more likely to be obscure in virtue of the fact that they are said briefly. Moreover, when obscurity faithfully guards a secret, it brings along the benefit that it speaks only to those WHO ARE WORTHY, *i. e.* to the intelligent and diligent, who are worthy to be admitted to the secrets of wisdom.

THEREFORE, AS IS THE CUSTOMARY PRACTICE IN MATHEMATICS AND ALSO IN OTHER DISCIPLINES, I HAVE FIRST PUT FORWARD TERMS AND RULES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHICH I SHALL WORK OUT ALL THAT FOLLOWS.

[12] Boethius shows us the order in which he is to proceed—obviously, through those things that are known *per se*: he sets out the order in which he is to proceed (§13), and he acquaints us with the things from which he intends to proceed (§14).

[13] Thus Boethius says first that he intends to put forward at the beginning certain principles known *per se*, which he calls TERMS AND RULES: TERMS because it is in such principles that the resolution of all demonstrations comes to their stopping-point; RULES because it is through these that a person is directed towards knowledge of the conclusions that follow. From such principles Boethius intends to derive conclusions and make known all matters which are thereafter to be discussed, as happens in geometry and other demonstrative sciences. These are called disciplines since through them disciples come to have knowledge from the demonstration their teacher sets forth.

[COMMENTARY ON THE TERMS]

[14] Boethius acquaints us with the principles known *per se*, namely by definition (§15) and by division (§16).

[15] As for the first, we should consider that principles of this sort, which are 'terms' since they are rules of demonstration, are called common conceptions of the mind. Boethius thus defines a common conception of the mind as follows:

A COMMON CONCEPTION OF THE MIND IS A STATEMENT THAT EACH PERSON APPROVES UPON HEARING IT.

i. e. one that anyone at all accepts as soon as he hears it. Other propositions which are demonstrated by means of these are not accepted immediately on the hearing itself. Instead, some propositions must come to be known through others. Now this cannot proceed to infinity. Accordingly, we must arrive at some propositions that are immediately known *per se*. Accordingly, they are called common conceptions of the mind; they commonly enter into the conception of any given understanding, because the predicate belongs to the account of the subject, and so as soon as the subject has been named and what it is has been understood, it is immediately obvious that the predicate is present in it.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF THESE. ONE KIND IS COMMON IN

SUCH A WAY THAT IT BELONGS TO ALL MEN—FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU WERE TO PROPOSE: “IF YOU TAKE EQUALS AWAY FROM TWO EQUALS, THE REMAINDERS ARE EQUAL” NOBODY UNDERSTANDING IT WOULD DENY IT. THE OTHER KIND BELONGS ONLY TO THE LEARNED EVEN THOUGH IT COMES FROM SUCH COMMON CONCEPTIONS OF THE MIND, AS FOR EXAMPLE: “INCORPOREAL OBJECTS ARE NOT IN A PLACE” AND THE LIKE, TO WHICH THE LEARNED GIVE THEIR APPROVAL BUT NOT THE COMMON MULTITUDE.

[16] Boethius now divides the aforementioned principles, saying that THERE ARE TWO KINDS of the aforementioned common conceptions of the mind.

[17] Some conceptions of the mind are common to all men, such as this: IF YOU TAKE EQUALS AWAY FROM EQUALS, THE REMAINDERS ARE EQUAL.

[18] But THE OTHER KIND of conception of the mind is common only to the learned, and it is derived from the first conceptions of the mind, which are common to all men. For instance: THINGS THAT ARE INCORPOREAL ARE NOT IN A PLACE. This statement is accepted not by the layman but only by the wise. The reason for this distinction is because a common conception of the mind or a principle known *per se* is some proposition in which the predicate belongs to the account of the subject; if what is signified by the subject and the predicate is the same, it enters into the knowledge of all people, and consequently such a proposition is known *per se* to all. For example, everyone knows what it is to be equal, and similarly what it is to be subtracted; hence the aforementioned proposition is known *per se* to all. Similarly for “Every whole is greater than its part” and the like. But only the understanding of the wise reaches to the apprehension of an incorporeal thing. For the understanding of laymen does not go beyond imagination, which is limited to corporeal things. Hence things that are distinctive of bodies—*e. g.* being circumscribed in a place—the understanding of the wise immediately removes from incorporeal things. The layman is not able to do this.

[COMMENTARY ON THE RULES]

[19] Boethius had said in §12 he would proceed in this order: he would first set out certain terms and rules, on the basis of which he would proceed to further matters. In line with this established order, then, he begins by spelling out some rules or some conceptions of the wise (§22); he then begins to fashion his argument from them (§41).

[20] As stated in §16, those propositions are the most known which use terms everyone understands. Now terms that enter into every understanding are the most common. They are entity, one, and good. Thus Boethius

here puts forward some conceptions pertaining to entity (§22); then some pertaining to unity, from which his account of the simple and the composite is taken (§31); third he puts forward some conceptions pertaining to good (§37).

[21] Concerning entity: it is considered to be something almost common and indeterminate, and it is determined in two ways: (*a*) on the side of the subject, which itself has being; (*b*) on the side of the predicate, as when we say of a man or anything else not simply that it is but that it is something, such as white or black. Therefore, Boethius first puts forward conceptions taken according to the comparison of being with that which is (§22), and next conceptions taken according to the comparison of what it is to be simply to what it is to be something (§26). With regard to the first: Boethius first presents the difference between what being is and that which is (§22), and then he clarifies this kind of difference (§23).

[Commentary on Rule 1]

[22] Therefore, Boethius says first:

BEING AND THAT WHICH IS ARE DIFFERENT.

We shouldn't refer the divergence here to things (Boethius hasn't talked about them yet), but rather to the accounts or the intentions themselves. We signify one thing in saying "being" and another in saying "that which is", just as we signify one thing in saying "running" and another when we say "a runner". For running and being are signified abstractly, like whiteness, whereas that which is, *i. e.* an entity and a runner, are signified concretely, like something white.

BEING ITSELF NOT YET IS, WHEREAS WHAT HAS TAKEN ON THE FORM OF BEING IS AND EXISTS.

[23] Boethius clarifies the divergence mentioned in §22 in three ways. The first is that being itself isn't signified in the same way as the subject of being, just as running itself isn't signified in the same way as the subject of running. Accordingly, just as we can't say that running itself runs, similarly we can't say that being itself is. Rather, just as that which is itself is signified as the subject of being, so too that which runs is signified as the subject of running. Hence just as we can say of that which runs (or of a runner) that it runs, insofar as it is the subject of the running and participates in it, so too can we say that an entity (or that which is) is, insofar as it participates in the act of being. Boethius says BEING ITSELF NOT YET IS, since being is not attributed to itself as to the subject of being. Instead, THAT WHICH HAS TAKEN ON THE FORM OF BEING (namely by undertaking the very act of being) IS AND EXISTS, *i. e.* subsists in itself, for 'entity' is said strictly and

per se only of substance, whose distinctive feature is subsisting—accidents aren't called entities as though they themselves are, but only insofar as something underlies them, as will be said later.

[Commentary on Rule 2]

WHAT IS CAN PARTICIPATE IN SOMETHING, BUT BEING DOESN'T ITSELF IN ANY WAY PARTICIPATE IN ANYTHING. FOR PARTICIPATION OCCURS WHEN SOMETHING ALREADY IS; SOMETHING IS, HOWEVER, BECAUSE IT HAS TAKEN ON BEING.

[24] He presents the second difference [between being and that which is] here, taken in line with the account of participation. Now participating is almost a taking part. Hence:

- (a) Whenever something particularly receives what pertains universally to something else, it is said to participate in it. For instance, man is said to participate in animal, since it does not have the account of animal in its full generality. Socrates participates in man for the same reason.
- (b) The subject likewise participates in its accident, and so does matter in form, since the substantial or accidental form, which is common in virtue of its account, is determined to this or that subject.
- (c) The effect is similarly said to participate in its cause, especially when it isn't equal to the power of its cause—*e. g.* when we say that air “participates” in sunlight because it doesn't receive it with the brightness there is in the sun.

Putting aside (c), it is impossible that being itself should participate in something according to (a) or (b). For it can't participate in something the way that matter or the subject participates in form or accident, since being itself is signified as something abstract (§23). It likewise can't participate in something the way a particular participates in the universal, for even those things that are said abstractly can participate in something in this way, as whiteness does in color. Rather, being itself is the most common. It is thus participated in by another while it doesn't participate in anything else.

But although that which is (namely an entity) is the most common, it's nevertheless said concretely. Hence it participates in being itself—not in the way in which something less common participates in something more common, but it participates in being itself the way the concrete participates in the abstract.

This is why Boethius says: THAT WHICH IS (*viz.* an entity) CAN PARTICIPATE IN SOMETHING, BUT BEING DOESN'T ITSELF IN ANY WAY PARTICIPATE IN ANYTHING. Boethius proves this on the basis of what has been said in §23, namely BEING ITSELF NOT YET IS, for that which being is clearly

can't participate in anything; it thus follows that participation is suitable for something ONCE IT ALREADY IS. But on this score IT IS SOMETHING that takes on being itself, as stated. Accordingly, it remains that that which is can participate in something, whereas being itself can't participate in anything.

[Commentary on Rule 3]

THAT WHICH IS CAN HAVE SOMETHING BEYOND THE FACT THAT IT IS, WHEREAS BEING HAS NOTHING ELSE MIXED IN WITH ITSELF.

[25] Boethius presents the third difference [between being and that which is] here, taken from the admixture of something extraneous. We should note on this score that anything considered abstractly has truth and that it doesn't have anything extraneous in itself—namely anything that would be beyond its essence of it, *e. g.* humanity and whiteness and anything said in this way. The reason for this is that humanity is signified as that by which something is a man, and whiteness as that by which something is white. Now something is a man, formally speaking, only through what pertains to the account of man. Likewise, something is white formally only through what pertains to the account of white. Hence such abstract items have nothing foreign in themselves.

Matters are otherwise for items that are signified concretely. For a man is signified as what has humanity, and a white thing as what has whiteness. The fact that a man has humanity or whiteness, however, doesn't prevent him from having something else which doesn't pertain to the account of humanity or whiteness (with the sole exception of what is opposed to them); hence a man and a white thing can have something other than humanity or whiteness. This is why whiteness and humanity are signified as parts and aren't predicated of concrete items, just as a part isn't predicated of its whole. Therefore, since being itself is signified as something abstract and that which is as something concrete (§24), it follows that what Boethius says here is true: THAT WHICH IS CAN HAVE SOMETHING BEYOND THE FACT THAT IT IS (*i. e.* beyond its essence), but BEING HAS NOTHING MIXED IN BEYOND its essence.

[Commentary on Rule 4]

YET BEING SOMETHING AND SOMETHING IN THAT WHICH IT IS ARE DIFFERENT.

[26] Boethius now presents conceptions derived from comparing that which is being simply to that which is being something. He presents their divergence (§27) and then assigns the differences (§28).

[27] With respect to the first point, we should note that because that which

is can have something beyond its essence (§25), being must be considered in two ways in it. For since form is the principle of being, then, with regard to any given form that is possessed, its possessor must be said to be somehow. Thus if the form were not beyond the essence of its possessor but rather constitutes its essence, then from having such a form it will be said to have being simply, as man does from having the rational soul. But if it were the sort of form that is extraneous to the essence of its possessor, then according to that form it won't be said to be simply but rather to be something, as a man is said to be white according to his whiteness. This is why Boethius says that BEING SOMETHING (which is not being simply) AND that SOMETHING IS IN THAT IT IS (which is the proper being of the subject) ARE DIFFERENT.

IN THE FORMER CASE AN ACCIDENT IS SIGNIFIED, IN THE LATTER
A SUBSTANCE.

[28] Boethius next presents three differences between being something and being something in that it is. The first is that IN THE FORMER CASE (*i. e.* where it is said of a thing that it is something and that it is not simply) AN ACCIDENT IS SIGNIFIED, since the form which makes it to be of that sort is beyond the essence of the thing, whereas IN THE LATTER (when it is said to be something in that which it is) A SUBSTANCE IS SIGNIFIED, since clearly the form making it to be constitutes the essence of that thing.

[Commentary on Rule 5]

EVERYTHING WHICH IS PARTICIPATES IN THAT WHICH IS BEING
SO THAT IT IS SOMETHING ELSE; IT PARTICIPATES SO THAT IT IS
SOMETHING.

[29] Boethius presents the second difference here, saying that [everything] participates in being itself so as to be some subject simply, whereas it must participate in SOMETHING ELSE so as to be something. For instance, a man participates not only in substantial being but also in whiteness so as to be white.

ACCORDINGLY, THAT WHICH IS PARTICIPATES IN WHAT IS BEING
SO THAT IT BE, BUT IT IS SO THAT IT PARTICIPATE IN ANYTHING
WHATSOEVER.

[30] Boethius presents the third difference, which is taken in order after the other two and drawn as a conclusion from them. Well, this difference is that something must first be understood to be simply, and only then that it is something. This is obvious from the foregoing: something is simply because it participates in being itself, but when it already is (namely by participation in being itself), it remains THAT IT PARTICIPATE in SOMETHING ELSE, namely so as to be something.

[Commentary on Rule 6]

IN EVERYTHING COMPOSITE, BEING AND IT ITSELF DIFFER.

[31] Boethius now presents conceptions about the composite and the simple, which pertain to the account of unity. We should note that the points made above about the divergence between being itself and that which is are in accordance with the intentions themselves. Here Boethius points out how it applies to these matters. He shows this in composites (§32) and then in simples (§33).

[32] Therefore, note first that just as being and that which is differ in simples according to their intentions, so too do they really differ in composites. This is surely evident from the foregoing. For being itself does not participate in anything so that its account is constituted out of many factors (§24). Nor does it have anything extraneous mixed in so that there is accidental composition in it (§25). Hence being itself is not composite. Therefore a composite thing is not its own being. This is why Boethius says that IN EVERYTHING COMPOSITE, BEING AND the composite ITSELF DIFFER, which participates in being itself.

EVERYTHING SIMPLE HAS ITS BEING AND THAT WHICH IS AS ONE.

[33] Boethius here points out how matters stand in simples, wherein being itself and that which is must really be one and the same. For if that which is and being itself were really different, then it would not be simple but composite.

[34] Yet we should note that although something is called simple on the grounds that it lacks composition, nothing prevents something from being simple in a respect (insofar as it lacks composition) which nevertheless is not completely simple. Fire and water are accordingly called simple bodies insofar as they lack the composition stemming from contraries which is found in mixtures; yet each of them is composite—on the one hand, from parts of quantity; on the other hand, from form and matter. Thus if some forms were found not in matter, any one of them is indeed simple inasmuch as it lacks matter and consequently also quantity (which is a disposition of matter). Yet since any given form is determinative of being itself, none of them is being itself but rather has being. For instance, let's postulate in line with Plato's view that an immaterial form subsists which is the Idea and account of material men, and there is another form which is the Idea and account of horses. The immaterial subsistent form, since it is something determined into species, will clearly not be general being itself but instead participates in it. And it makes no difference on this score if we postulate these immaterial forms to belong to a higher level than do the accounts of

these sensible things, as Aristotle held: any given one of them, insofar as it is distinguished from another, is a certain specific form that participates in being itself. Thus none of them will be truly simple.

[35] Now this alone will be truly simple: what does not participate in being, not inherent but subsistent. This can only be one, since if being itself has nothing else mixed in beyond that which being is (§25), it is impossible for that which being is itself to be proliferated through any diversifying factor. And since it has nothing else mixed in beyond itself, it follows that it underlies no accident. Moreover, this sublime and simple one is God himself.

[Commentary on Rule 7]

[36] Boethius now presents two conceptions relevant to pursuit, from which the good is defined. For what all men pursue is called good.

[37] Thus the first conception is:

EVERY DIVERSITY IS DISCORD, WHEREAS LIKENESS IS TO BE PURSUED.

Note here that discord brings in the contrareity of pursuit. Accordingly, discord is said to be what fights off pursuit. Yet everything diverse, insofar as it is such, fights off pursuit. The reason for this is that like is increased and perfected by its like. Now everything pursues its own increase and perfection, as does its like, insofar as such is pursuable by anything. By the same argument, the diverse fights off pursuit, insofar as it decreases and hinders its perfection. Hence Boethius says that EVERY DIVERSITY IS DISCORD (*i. e.* discordant with its pursuit), WHEREAS LIKENESS IS TO BE PURSUED. Yet it does happen by accident that some pursuit hates its like and pursues what is diverse or contrary. For, as mentioned, everything pursues first and in itself its perfection, which is the good for anything and is always proportional to the perfectible; on this score it has a likeness to itself. But other items external to it are pursued or avoided insofar as they contribute to its proper perfection, which is sometimes lacking because of defect and sometimes because of excess. For the proper perfection of any given thing consists in a certain balance. For example, the perfection of the human body consists in a balance of heat; if this were lacking, one pursues something warm through which its heat is increased. On the other hand, if it were to exceed [the balance], one pursues the contrary—namely something cold through which one is brought down to the temperature wherein consists perfection in conformity with nature. So too one potter hates another, namely because he carries off for himself the desired perfection (namely money).

WHATEVER PURSUES SOMETHING IS SHOWN TO BE ITSELF BY NATURE LIKE THE VERY OBJECT THAT IT PURSUES.

[38] Boethius presents the second conception here as a conclusion from §37. For if LIKENESS *per se* IS TO BE PURSUED, as a result THAT WHICH PURSUES SOMETHING IS SHOWN TO BE ITSELF BY NATURE LIKE THE OBJECT IT PURSUES, namely because it possesses a natural inclination towards what it pursues. This natural inclination sometimes follows upon the very essence of a thing. For instance, the heavy pursues being downward according to the account of its essential nature. But at other times it follows upon the nature of some supervenient form, *e. g.* when someone has acquired a habit and desires whatever is appropriate to him according to that habit.

[Epilogue]

THE [RULES] THAT WE HAVE GIVEN ABOVE, THEN, ARE SUFFICIENT; THE CAREFUL INTERPRETER OF THE REASONING WILL APPLY EACH ONE IN ITS ARGUMENTS.

[39] Finally, as an epilogue, Boethius says that the matters set out above are SUFFICIENT for the case at hand, and that anyone who carefully interprets the reasons for his claims will be able to fit any of them to their appropriate arguments, namely by applying them to the requisite conclusions, as will be clear in what follows.

[COMMENTARY ON THE PROBLEM]

[40] Now that Boethius has laid out the principles necessary for the discussion of the problem at hand, he comes here to the problem at hand, and he (*a*) puts forward the problem (§41); (*b*) provides a solution (§57); (*c*) defeats some objections to his solution (§68).

With regard to (*a*) he first presents what the problem presupposes (§41), and then the predicament the problem involves (§42).

NOW THE PROBLEM IS AS FOLLOWS. THE THINGS THAT ARE, ARE GOOD. FOR THE COMMON VIEW OF THE LEARNED MAINTAINS THAT EVERYTHING THAT IS TENDS TO THE GOOD, AND EVERYTHING TENDS TOWARDS ITS LIKE; HENCE THINGS THAT TEND TO THE GOOD ARE THEMSELVES GOOD.

[41] Boethius, therefore, tells us to approach the problem at hand such that we presuppose that all THE THINGS THAT ARE, ARE GOOD. To prove this he brings in an argument based on this premise: anything TENDS TOWARDS ITS LIKE. Accordingly, he said before: WHATEVER PURSUES SOMETHING SHOWS ITSELF TO BE BY NATURE LIKE THE OBJECT THAT IT PURSUES (§38). But EVERYTHING THAT IS TENDS TOWARDS THE GOOD, which he introduces according to the common view of the learned. Accordingly, at

the beginning of his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle says that the wise assert the good to be what all things pursue. The good is the proper object of pursuit, just as sound is the proper object of hearing. Accordingly, just as sound is what is perceived by all hearing, so too the good must be what all pursuit tends towards. Thus since any thing whatsoever (intellectual or sensible or natural) has some pursuit, it follows that every thing pursues the good. Hence we conclude that every thing is good. Our intended problem assumes this.

BUT WE SHOULD LOOK INTO HOW THEY ARE GOOD—IS IT BY PARTICIPATION OR BY SUBSTANCE?

[42] Boethius points out the predicament the problem involves. He makes three points on this score: (a) he proposes the problem (§43); (b) he objects to both sides of the problem (§46); (c) he moves on from this to reject the initial supposition (§48).

First of all, then, Boethius says that having assumed all things to be good we should look into the way in which they are good. Now something is said of another in two ways: (a) substantially; (b) by participation.

[43] The problem, therefore, is whether entities are good by essence or by participation.

[44] To understand this problem, we should note that it presupposes that being something by essence and being something by participation are opposites. This is clearly true for the kind of participation described in §24(b), namely where the subject is said to participate in an accident, or matter in form. For an accident is beyond the nature of the subject, and form beyond the very substance of the matter.

[45] But in the kind of participation described in §24(a), namely where the species participates in its genus, the claim in §44 is true because the species participates in the genus.¹ It is also true on Plato's view, which held that the Idea of animal differs from that of two-footed man. But on Aristotle's view, which held that man truly is that which is animal (as though the essence of animal didn't exist beyond the differentia of man), nothing prevents what is said by participation from being predicated substantially.

However, in §42 Boethius speaks according to the mode of participation where the subject participates in an accident. Hence that which is predicated substantially is contradistinguished from that which is predicated participatively, as is clear from the example he subsequently provides.

IF BY PARTICIPATION, THEY AREN'T THEMSELVES GOOD PER SE IN ANY WAY. FOR WHAT IS WHITE BY PARTICIPATION IS NOT WHITE PER SE IN THAT IT IS, AND THE SAME IN THE CASE OF OTHER QUALITIES. IF THEY ARE GOOD BY PARTICIPATION, THEN, THEY

AREN'T THEMSELVES GOOD PER SE IN ANY WAY. HENCE THEY DON'T TEND TO THE GOOD. BUT IT WAS GRANTED THAT THEY DO. THEREFORE, THEY AREN'T GOOD BY PARTICIPATION BUT RATHER BY SUBSTANCE.

[46] Boethius objects to both sides of the problem: first of all to the claim that things are good by participation (§47), and then to the claim that they are good in their substance (§48).

[47] Thus Boethius says first that IF all things are good by participation, it follows that they would IN NO WAY be GOOD *per se*.

- (a) And this is indeed true if the "*per se*" there were taken as what is put into the definition of that of which it is said, *e. g.* man *per se* is an animal. For what is put into the definition of something pertains to its essence, and thus it isn't said of it by participation—which is what we're talking about now.
- (b) On the other hand, if "*per se*" were taken in some other way, namely insofar as the subject is put into the definition of its predicate, what Boethius says here would be false. For in this way a proper accident is *per se* present in the subject and nonetheless participatively predicated of it.

Hence Boethius takes 'participation' here as the subject participates in an accident, whereas he takes "*per se*" as what is put into the definition of the subject. Thus it follows necessarily that if things are good by participation, they are not good *per se*. He clarifies this by an example. For THAT WHICH IS WHITE by participation IS NOT white *per se*, *i. e.* IN THAT WHICH IT IS, which pertains to (a); similarly for other QUALITIES. So, then, if all entities are good by participation, it follows that not all things are good *per se*, *i. e.* through their substance. It follows from this that the substances of entities DO NOT TEND TOWARDS THE GOOD. But the contrary of this claim WAS GRANTED in §41, namely that all things do tend towards the good. It therefore seems that entities are good not by participation but rather by their substance.

YET FOR THOSE THINGS WHOSE SUBSTANCE IS GOOD, THAT WHICH THEY ARE, ARE GOOD. THAT WHICH THEY ARE, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE FROM THAT WHICH IS BEING. HENCE THEIR BEING IS GOOD, AND SO THE BEING OF ALL THINGS IS GOOD. BUT IF BEING IS GOOD, THOSE THINGS THAT ARE, IN THAT THEY ARE, ARE GOOD—AND BEING AND BEING GOOD ARE THE SAME FOR THEM. HENCE THEY ARE SUBSTANTIAL GOODS, SINCE THEY DO NOT PARTICIPATE GOODNESS. BUT IF BEING ITSELF IN THEM IS GOOD, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SINCE THEY ARE SUBSTANTIAL GOODS THEY ARE LIKE THE FIRST GOOD. CONSEQUENTLY, THEY WILL BE THIS

GOOD ITSELF, FOR NOTHING IS LIKE IT APART FROM IT ITSELF. IT FOLLOWS FROM THIS THAT ALL THINGS THAT ARE, ARE GOD—WHICH IS ABHORRENT. HENCE THEY ARE NOT GOOD IN THAT THEY ARE.

[48] Boethius objects to the other side [of the problem] in this way. Those things WHOSE SUBSTANCE IS GOOD must be good according to that itself which they are, for it pertains to the substance of any given thing whatsoever that it concurs with its being. But they are something in virtue of that which being is. For it was said in §24 that something is when it takes on being.

[49] Hence it follows that the very being of things which are good as a subject is good. Hence if all things are good in their substance, it follows that the very being of all things is good. And since the premises from which Boethius has proceeded in his argument are convertible, he proceeds now conversely.

[50] For it follows conversely that if the being of all things is good, then the things which are, insofar as they are, are good—namely such that being and being good are the same for any given thing. Hence that they are substantial goods follows from the fact that they are good, but not by participation in goodness.

[51] However, Boethius shows immediately that an unacceptable result follows from this. He says THAT IF THE BEING of all things is good, since it follows from this that they are SUBSTANTIAL GOODS; it also follows that they are LIKE THE FIRST GOOD, which is the substantial good for whom being and being good are the same. And it follows further from this that all things are the first good itself, since NOTHING IS LIKE IT APART FROM IT ITSELF, namely with regard to its kind of goodness. But nothing else apart from the first good is good in the same way as it, since it alone is the first good. Yet some things are said to be like it insofar as they are goods derived secondarily from the first principal good.

[52] Thus if all things are the first good itself, since the primary good itself is nothing other than God it follows that all entities are God: WHICH IS ABHORRENT to say!

[53] Hence it follows that the given premises are false. HENCE NOT all entities are SUBSTANTIAL GOODS, nor is the being itself in them good, since we concluded from these premises that all things are God. It follows further that not all things are good insofar as they are.

BUT NEITHER DO THEY PARTICIPATE IN GOODNESS, FOR THEN THEY WOULD NOT TEND TO THE GOOD IN ANY WAY.

[54] Boethius proceeds further to eliminate the initial assumption. He says

that if we add to the fact that entities are substantial goods the other conclusion reached in §46, namely that entities are not good by participation—since it would follow from this that they tend in no way towards the good (§47)—it seems that we can further conclude that in no way are entities good. This conclusion is against to what was said in §41.

[COMMENTARY ON THE SOLUTION]

[55] With the problem set out and arguments on one side and the other adduced, Boethius here presents a solution to the problem: (*a*) he determines the truth concerning the problem (§56); (*b*) he solves the objection (§65); (*c*) he introduces some objections to the solution and solves them (§68).

As regards (*a*), Boethius initially gives a certain supposition (§57), and he points out what follows concerning the goodness of things once that supposition has been made (§59) and how the goodness of things stands in reality without making the supposition (§62).

[56] Boethius does two things with respect to the first point: he puts forward what is necessary for showing that such a supposition can be framed (§57), and he introduces the supposition in §58.

FOR THIS PROBLEM A SOLUTION OF THE FOLLOWING KIND CAN BE USED. THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT, WHILE THEY CANNOT BE ACTUALLY SEPARATED, ARE YET SEPARATED IN THE MIND AND IN THOUGHT. < FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE NO ONE ACTUALLY SEPARATES A TRIANGLE (OR OTHER [GEOMETRICAL FIGURES]) FROM THE UNDERLYING MATTER, STILL, REMOVING IT BY THE MIND, WE SPECULATE UPON THE TRIANGLE ITSELF AND UPON ITS DISTINCTIVE FEATURE APART FROM MATTER. >

[57] Boethius says first that MANY THINGS CANNOT BE ACTUALLY SEPARATED WHICH ARE YET SEPARATED IN THE MIND AND IN THOUGHT, because things are in the soul in one way and in matter in another way. Therefore, something can have an inseparable conjunction with another in virtue of how it is in matter, and yet it doesn't have an inseparable conjunction with it as it is in the soul—since, clearly, the account of the one is distinct from the account of the other. Boethius gives the example of the triangle and other mathematical figures which cannot actually be separated from sensible matter. The mathematician does consider the triangle and its distinctive feature apart from sensible matter by abstracting mentally, since the account of the triangle doesn't depend on sensible matter.

THEREFORE, LET US PUT THE PRESENCE OF THE FIRST GOOD OUT OF OUR MIND FOR A WHILE. (IT CERTAINLY EXISTS: THIS CAN BE KNOWN FROM THE VIEW OF ALL THE LEARNED AND THE UNLEARNED, AND FROM THE RELIGIONS OF THE BARBARIAN PEO-

PLES!)

[58] Boethius now presents the supposition he meant, namely that by mental consideration we remove the first good from the remaining things for the time being. This is indeed possible in the order of what is knowable with respect to us. For although God is the first known in the natural order of knowing, still, with respect to us, his sensible effects are known beforehand. Hence nothing prevents the effects of the highest good entering into our thought without considering the first good itself. So let us remove from our mental consideration the first [good], WHICH we fully agree EXISTS—a point that CAN BE KNOWN FROM THE common VIEW of THE LEARNED as well as THE UNLEARNED, and even from the very RELIGIONS OF THE BARBARIAN PEOPLES (which would be nothing if God does not exist).

PUTTING THIS ASIDE FOR A WHILE, THEN, LET US POSTULATE ALL THINGS THAT ARE TO BE GOOD, AND LET US CONSIDER HOW THEY COULD BE GOOD IF THEY WERE NOT TO DERIVE FROM THE FIRST GOOD.

FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW I PERCEIVE IT TO BE ONE THING THAT THEY ARE GOOD, ANOTHER THAT THEY ARE. FOR LET US SUPPOSE ONE AND THE SAME GOOD SUBSTANCE TO BE WHITE, HEAVY, AND ROUND. THEN THE SUBSTANCE ITSELF WOULD BE ONE THING, ITS ROUNDNESS ANOTHER, COLOR ANOTHER, GOODNESS ANOTHER. FOR IF EACH OF THESE WERE THE SAME AS THE SUBSTANCE ITSELF, HEAVINESS WOULD BE THE SAME AS COLOR [OR] AS THE GOOD, AND THE GOOD AS HEAVINESS—WHICH NATURE DOESN'T ALLOW TO HAPPEN. AND SO IN THEIR CASE, THEN, BEING IS ONE THING, BEING SOMETHING ANOTHER. THEN THEY WOULD INDEED BE GOOD, YET THEY WOULDN'T HAVE BEING ITSELF AS GOOD. HENCE IF THEY WERE TO BE IN ANY WAY, THEY WOULD NOT BE GOODS FROM THE GOOD AND THEY WOULD NOT BE THE SAME AS GOODS, BUT THERE WOULD BE ONE BEING FOR THEM AND ANOTHER BEING FOR GOODS.

[59] Boethius points out what follows concerning the goodness of things once this supposition has been made, clarifying his intention (§60) and proving something he had assumed (§61).

[60] Thus Boethius says firstly that, having removed the first good by the understanding, let us postulate that the rest are good. Since we arrive at knowledge of the first good from the goodness of its effects, LET US therefore CONSIDER how THEY COULD BE GOOD IF they had not proceeded FROM THE FIRST GOOD. Now having made this supposition, goodness itself seems to differ from their very being. FOR if WE SUPPOSE ONE AND THE SAME SUBSTANCE TO BE GOOD, WHITE, HEAVY, AND ROUND, it would follow that in the thing ITS SUBSTANCE WOULD BE ONE THING, ITS ROUNDNESS

ANOTHER, COLOR ANOTHER, GOODNESS ANOTHER. For the goodness of any given thing is understood to be a virtue it has through which it completes a good operation. For virtue is what makes something have the good and renders its work good, as Aristotle makes clear in *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.5. Now Boethius proves that this differs from the substance of a thing by the fact that IF ANY of the foregoing WERE THE SAME AS THE SUBSTANCE of the thing it would also follow that they would all be the same as one another—namely that HEAVINESS WOULD BE THE SAME AS COLOR, AS THE GOOD, as something white, and as roundness, since items the same as one and the same are the same as one another. But the nature of things doesn't permit all these to be the same. Hence it remains that, the foregoing supposition having been made, being itself differs in the case of things from being something (*e. g.* being good or white or whatever is said in this fashion). Hence, under the previously mentioned hypothesis, things would indeed be goods, yet their being would not itself be good. So, then, if they were not in some way from the first good and yet were good in themselves, it would follow that that they are such and that they are good would not be the same in them; instead, being would differ from being good in them.

HOWEVER, IF THEY WERE NOTHING ELSE AT ALL EXCEPT GOODS, AND THEY WERE NEITHER HEAVY NOR COLORED NOR EXTENDED IN SPATIAL DIMENSION AND NO QUALITY WERE IN THEM BUT THAT THEY WERE ONLY GOOD, THEN THEY WOULD NOT SEEM TO BE THINGS BUT THE PRINCIPLE OF THINGS, AND "THEY" WOULD NOT SEEM SO BUT INSTEAD "IT" WOULD SEEM SO. FOR THERE IS ONE THING ALONE LIKE THIS THAT IS ONLY GOOD AND NOTHING ELSE.

[61] Boethius proves what he had supposed, namely that under the aforementioned supposition being good would differ from being simply (or from being anything else) in them. For if there were NOTHING ELSE in them EXCEPT that they are GOOD, namely such that THEY WOULD BE NEITHER HEAVY NOR COLORED NOR distinct IN some SPATIAL DIMENSION (as all bodies are), AND NO QUALITY WERE IN THEM BUT this one alone, [namely] THAT THEY ARE GOOD, then they wouldn't seem to be created things but rather the first PRINCIPLE of things itself, because that which is the very essence of goodness is the first principle of things. Consequently, it would follow that it wouldn't be necessary to say plurally of all of them that THEY SEEM TO BE THE PRINCIPLE of things, but singularly that IT SEEMS to be the first principle of things, inasmuch as all good things would be simply one. For THERE IS ONE THING ALONE that is LIKE THIS so as to be ONLY GOOD AND NOTHING ELSE. But this is clearly false. Therefore, so is the first claim, namely that created things, with the first good removed, would be nothing other than this which it is to be good.

AND SINCE THEY ARE NOT SIMPLE, THEY CAN'T BE AT ALL UNLESS THAT WHICH IS GOOD ALONE HAD WILLED THEM TO BE.

CONSEQUENTLY, SINCE THEIR BEING DERIVES FROM THE WILL OF THE GOOD, THEY ARE SAID TO BE GOODS. FOR THE FIRST GOOD, SINCE IT IS, IS GOOD IN THAT IT IS, WHEREAS THE SECONDARY GOOD, SINCE IT DERIVES FROM THAT WHOSE BEING ITSELF IS GOOD, IS ALSO ITSELF GOOD. BUT THE VERY BEING OF ALL THINGS DERIVES FROM THAT WHOSE BEING ITSELF DERIVES FROM THAT WHICH IS THE FIRST GOOD AND WHICH IS GOOD IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT IS CORRECTLY SAID TO BE GOOD IN THAT IT IS. HENCE THEIR BEING IS ITSELF GOOD, FOR THEN THEY ARE NOT GOOD IN THAT WHICH THEY ARE, IF THEY HAVEN'T BEEN DERIVED FROM THE FIRST GOOD.

[62] Boethius points out what we should judge about the goodness of things according to the truth. He says: Since (*a*) created things don't have simplicity in every way (namely so that there isn't anything in them other than the essence of goodness), and (*b*) they couldn't be in the actual world unless God, who is THAT WHICH ALONE IS (inasmuch as he is the very essence of goodness), HAD WILLED THEM TO BE—it follows that since the being of created things flowed out of THE WILL of him who is essentially good, created things are therefore said to be good. FOR THE FIRST GOOD (namely God) IS GOOD IN THAT HE IS, because he is essentially goodness itself. But THE SECONDARY GOOD (which is created) IS A secondary GOOD because IT FLOWED from the first good which is good through its essence.

Hence the being of all things has derived from the first good. As a result, the being itself of created things is good, and any given created thing, insofar as it is, is good. But created things would not thus only be good in that they are if their being didn't derive from the highest good.

So Boethius's solution comes to this: that the being of the first good is good according to its proper account, since the nature and essence of the first good is nothing other than goodness. Now the being of a secondary good is indeed good, although not according to the account of its proper essence (since its essence isn't goodness itself but humanity or some such). Instead, its being has the feature that it is good from its stance toward the first good, which is its cause. We can compare it to this as to its first principle and ultimate end, the way in which something directed to the end of healthiness is called 'healthy' [and] as something is called 'medical' in that it is from the effective principle of the art of medicine.

[63] In line with the foregoing remarks, we should note that in created goods there is a twofold goodness. (*a*) In that they are called goods due to their relation to the first good. In this sense, their being and anything

in them from the first good is good. (b) Goodness is considered in them absolutely, namely as any one at all is called good insofar as it is perfected in its being and its operation. This perfection is not suitable for created goods according to their essential being itself but according to something added on, which is called their virtue (§60). In this sense, their being itself isn't good, but the first good has perfection in every way in its own being and hence its being is good absolutely and from itself.

[64] After Boethius determined the truth about the problem given above, he here answers an objection wherein the conclusion was drawn that created goods are good in that they are like the first good. Boethius answers the objection (§65) and then brings together what has so far been said (§66).

ACCORDINGLY, THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN SOLVED. FOR ALTHOUGH THEY ARE GOOD IN THAT THEY ARE, THEY NEVERTHELESS ARE NOT LIKE THE FIRST GOOD. FOR IT IS NOT HOWSOEVER THINGS ARE THAT THEIR BEING IS ITSELF GOOD. INSTEAD, SINCE THE BEING OF THINGS CANNOT ITSELF BE UNLESS IT DERIVES FROM THE FIRST BEING (I.E. THE GOOD), CONSEQUENTLY THE BEING IS ITSELF GOOD AND IS NOT LIKE THAT FROM WHICH IT IS. FOR THE LATTER, HOWSOEVER IT IS, IS GOOD IN THAT IT IS, FOR IT IS NOTHING ELSE THAN GOOD. YET THE FORMER, UNLESS IT WERE FROM THE LATTER, COULD PERHAPS BE GOOD—BUT IT COULD NOT BE GOOD IN THAT IT IS. IN THAT CASE IT WOULD PERHAPS PARTICIPATE IN THE GOOD, BUT THEY COULD NOT HAVE BEING ITSELF (WHICH THEY WOULD NOT HAVE FROM THE GOOD) AS GOOD.

[65] Boethius thus says first that from his foregoing remarks the problem has clearly been solved. For THEY ARE NOT LIKE THE FIRST GOOD by the fact that they are good in that they are, since the being itself of created things is not good absolutely, however it stands, but only in its stance toward the first good. But since THE BEING OF created THINGS CANNOT ITSELF BE UNLESS they are derived FROM THE FIRST GOOD, it still IS NOT LIKE the first good in its goodness. For the first good is absolutely good, however it stands, since nothing else is in it but the very essence of goodness. This is so because there is no perfection through addition in it. Instead, it has perfection in every way through its simple being (§63). But a created good perhaps could be good even considered in itself, even if it be granted *per impossibile* that it not proceed from the first good (namely from the goodness which is suitable to it absolutely)—but it wouldn't thus be good in that which it is, since then it would be good through participation in goodness that was added on, but its being itself would not be good if it were not derived from the good from whose stance the being of created things is itself good.

HENCE ONCE THE FIRST GOOD IS TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM IN THE MIND AND IN THOUGHT, ALTHOUGH THEY WOULD BE GOODS, NEVERTHELESS THEY COULD NOT BE GOODS IN THAT THEY ARE. AND SINCE THEY WEREN'T ABLE TO EXIST ACTUALLY HAD NOT THAT WHICH IS GENUINELY GOOD PRODUCED THEM, CONSEQUENTLY BOTH THEIR BEING IS GOOD AND THAT WHICH DERIVES FROM THE SUBSTANTIAL GOOD IS NOT LIKE IT. AND UNLESS THEY WERE TO DERIVE FROM IT, EVEN THOUGH THEY WOULD BE GOODS THEY NEVERTHELESS COULD NOT BE GOODS IN THAT THEY ARE, SINCE APART FROM THE GOOD AND NOT FROM THE GOOD THEY WOULD NOT BE—BECAUSE THAT FIRST GOOD ITSELF IS BEING ITSELF AND THE GOOD ITSELF AND BEING GOOD ITSELF.

[66] Boethius summarizes his remarks and says that if the first good were removed from things by the understanding, all else, even granting them to be good, would still not be able to be good in that which they are. But since they wouldn't be able to be actually except insofar as they are products of the first good, which is truly good, so too their being is good. Yet being flowing from the first good is not like the first, which is substantially good. But had they not flowed from it, although they would be goods they would nevertheless not be goods in that which they are, namely inasmuch as they would not be from the first good. Yet the first good itself is its very being, since its being is its substance, and the good itself because it is the very essence of goodness, and being good itself because in it being and that which is do not differ.

[COMMENTARY ON THE OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES]

[67] Boethius next gives two objections against what has been said. (He presents the second of these in §70 below.)

[First Objection]

YET WON'T IT ALSO BE NECESSARY FOR THOSE THINGS THAT ARE WHITE TO BE WHITE IN THAT THEY ARE WHITE, SINCE THEY DERIVE FROM THE WILL OF GOD IN ORDER TO BE WHITE?

[68] The first objection is as follows. It is said that all things are good in that which they are, since it proceeds from the will of the first good that they be good. Well, then, aren't all white things white in that which they are, since it proceeds FROM THE WILL OF GOD THAT THEY BE WHITE?

[Reply to the First Objection]

NOT IN THE LEAST. FOR BEING IS ONE THING AND BEING WHITE ANOTHER. THIS HOLDS BECAUSE THE ONE WHO PRODUCED THEM SO THAT THEY BE IS INDEED GOOD, BUT NOT WHITE IN THE LEAST. HENCE IT IS IN ACCORD WITH THE WILL OF THE GOOD THAT THEY

BE GOOD IN THAT THEY ARE. BUT IT IS NOT IN ACCORD WITH THE WILL OF SOMETHING NON-WHITE SUCH AS THIS THAT IT IS A PROPERTY THAT IT BE WHITE IN THAT IT IS, FOR THEY DID NOT DERIVE FROM THE WILL OF THE WHITE. THEREFORE, SINCE THE ONE WHO WILLED THOSE THINGS TO BE WHITE WAS NOT WHITE, THEY ARE ONLY WHITE, BUT SINCE THE ONE WHO WILLED THEM TO BE GOOD WAS GOOD, THEY ARE GOOD IN THAT THEY ARE.

[69] Boethius replies that this is NOT IN THE LEAST necessary. For in the case of white things, being simply (which is suitable to them according to their essential principles) differs from that whereby they are white. The reason for such differences between white and good is that God, who makes created good things and white things, is surely good but is not white. So, therefore, it follows upon THE WILL of the first GOOD that created things be good (insofar as he wanted them to be good) and that THEY ARE GOOD IN THAT WHICH THEY ARE (insofar as they are produced by the good), since the being of created things has the account of good by the very fact that it is from the good (§65). However, SUCH A PROPERTY doesn't follow upon the will of God, SO THAT what is created is WHITE IN THAT WHICH IT IS, because it doesn't derive FROM THE WILL OF THE WHITE as good things have derived from the will of the good, so that it could be said that their being is white insofar as they are from the first white! Thus it's obvious that since God (who isn't white) wanted some things to be white, it can only be said of them that they are white, though not in that which they are. But since God (WHO IS GOOD) WANTED all things TO BE GOOD, thus THEY ARE GOOD IN THAT WHICH THEY ARE, namely insofar as their being has the account of good because it is from the good.

[Second Objection]

THUS ACCORDING TO THIS REASONING ALL THINGS MUST BE JUST,
SINCE THE ONE WHO WILLED THEM TO BE IS ITSELF JUST?

[70] Boethius presents the second objection. Someone could say: All things are good in that which they are, since he who is good wanted them to be good; by the same reasoning all things MUST BE JUST, since he who IS JUST WANTED THEM TO BE.

[First Reply to the Second Objection]

NOT EVEN THIS! FOR BEING GOOD PERTAINS TO ESSENCE, WHEREAS BEING JUST PERTAINS TO AN ACT. NOW THAT CASE BEING IS THE SAME AS ACTING, AND SO BEING GOOD IS THE SAME AS BEING JUST. BUT IN OUR CASE BEING IS NOT THE SAME AS ACTING, FOR WE AREN'T SIMPLE. HENCE IN OUR CASE BEING GOOD IS NOT THE SAME AS BEING JUST. HOWEVER, IN OUR CASE, BEING IS THE SAME FOR ALL IN THAT WE ARE. HENCE ALL THINGS ARE

GOOD, BUT NOT ALSO JUST.

[71] Boethius replies that this doesn't follow for two reasons. First, because 'good' signifies a certain nature or essence. We have claimed that God is the very essence of goodness (§62), and that any given thing is called good according to the perfection of its proper nature (§63). But the just is so-called with regard to activity, as any virtue is. Now IN God BEING IS THE SAME AS DOING; accordingly, in him BEING GOOD IS THE SAME AS BEING JUST. But IN OUR CASE BEING IS NOT THE SAME AS DOING, since we don't reach God's simplicity. Hence for us being good men isn't the same as being just men. Instead, being applies to us all insofar as we are, and so too does goodness apply to us all. But the action which justice receives doesn't apply to all. Nor in the case of those to whom it does apply is it the same as their being. Therefore, it remains that not all things are just in that which they are.

[Second Reply to the Second Objection]

FURTHERMORE, 'GOOD' IS GENERIC WHEREAS 'JUST' IS SPECIFIC, AND THE SPECIES DOESN'T DESCEND TO ALL [INSTANCES OF THE GENUS]. CONSEQUENTLY, SOME ARE JUST AND OTHERS SOMETHING ELSE; ALL ARE GOOD.

[72] Boethius presents the second reason here. For 'GOOD' IS something GENERIC of which justice is a species, as are the rest of the virtues. In God, however, the entire account of goodness is found, and so not only is he good but just as well. Yet not every species of goodness is found in all things, but different species in different things. And so it isn't necessary that the species which is justice be derived for all entities, as goodness is derived. Accordingly, some entities are just while others have another species of goodness. Yet ALL things ARE GOOD, insofar as they are derived from the first good.

Here ends my exposition of this book.
Blessed be God in all things.
Amen.