

QUESTION 40

Hope and Despair

Next we have to consider the passions of the irascible part of the soul: first, hope (*spes*) and despair (*desperatio*) (question 40); second, fear (*timor*) and daring (*audacia*) (questions 41-45); and, third, anger (*ira*) (questions 46-48).

On the first topic there are eight questions: (1) Is hope the same thing as desire (*desiderium*) or avid desire (*cupiditas*)? (2) Does hope exist in the apprehensive power or in the appetitive power? (3) Does hope exist in brute animals? (4) Is despair contrary to hope? (5) Is experience a cause of hope? (6) Does hope abound in the young and the inebriated? (7) What is the relation of hope to love (*ordo spei ad amorem*)? (8) Is hope conducive to an operation?

Article 1

Is hope the same thing as desire or avid desire?

It seems that hope (*spes*) is the same thing as desire (*desiderium*) or avid desire (*cupiditas*):

Objection 1: Hope is posited as one of the four principal passions. But as is clear from *De Civitate Dei* 14, in enumerating the four principal passions, Augustine puts avid desire (*cupiditas*) in the place of hope. Therefore, hope is the same as avid desire or desire.

Objection 2: The passions differ from one another because of their objects (*secundum obiecta*). But the object of hope is the same as the object of avid desire or desire, viz., a future good. Therefore, hope is the same thing as avid desire or desire.

Objection 3: If someone replies that hope adds to desire the possibility of attaining the future good, then against this: What is related to the object *per accidens* does not alter the passion's species. But *possible* is related *per accidens* to *future good*, which is the object of avid desire (or desire) and of hope. Therefore, hope is a passion that does not differ in species from desire or avid desire.

But contrary to this: Diverse passions that differ in species belong to diverse powers. But hope exists in the irascible part of the soul, whereas desire and avid desire exist in the concupiscible part. Therefore, hope differs in species from desire or avid desire.

I respond: The species of a passion is taken from its object. Now with respect to the object of hope there are four conditions to attend to:

The first is that the object be something *good*, since, properly speaking, hope exists only with respect to some good. And hope thereby differs from *fear* (*timor*), which has to do with what is bad.

The second condition is that the object be *future*, since there is no such thing as hope with respect to what is present and already possessed. And hope thereby differs from joy (*gaudium*), which has to do with a present good.

Third, it is required that the object be something *arduous* that is attainable with *difficulty*, since no one is said to hope for something insignificant (*minimum*) that is immediately within his power to have. And hope thereby differs from *desire* or *avid desire*, which has to do with a future good simply speaking (*de bono futuro absolute*) and so belongs to the concupiscible part of the soul, whereas hope belongs to the irascible part.

Fourth, it is required that this arduous object be *possible to attain*, since no one hopes for what cannot be attained in any way at all. And on this score hope differs from *despair*.

So, then, it is clear that hope differs from desire in the way that the passions of the irascible part differ from the passions of the concupiscible part. Because of this, hope presupposes desire in the way, explained above (q. 25, a. 1), that all the passions of the irascible part presuppose passions of the concupiscible part.

Reply to objection 1: Augustine puts avid desire in place of hope because (a) both of them have to

do with a future good, and because (b) a good that is not arduous is, as it were, counted as nothing, with the result that avid desire seems mainly to tend toward an arduous good—which is what hope also tends toward.

Reply to objection 2: As has been explained, the object of hope is not a future good absolutely speaking, but a future good along with the arduousness and difficulty involved in attaining it.

Reply to objection 3: The object of hope adds to the object of desire not only possibility but also arduousness, and it is the latter that makes hope belong to a different power, viz., the irascible power, which, as was explained in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 81, a. 2), has to do with the arduous.

Moreover, *possible* and *impossible* are not related altogether *per accidens* to the object of the appetitive power. For the appetite is a principle of movement, and nothing is moved toward a thing except under the notion *possible* (*nihil movetur ad aliquid nisi sub ratione possibilis*), since no one moves toward what he judges to be impossible to attain. And because of this, hope differs from despair in accord with the [specific] differences *possible* and *impossible*.

Article 2

Does hope belong to the cognitive power?

It seems that hope belongs to the cognitive power (*spes pertineat ad vim cognitivam*):

Objection 1: Hope seems to be a certain sort of looking for (*expectatio quaedam*); for in Romans 8:25 the Apostle says, “If we hope for what we do not see, then we look for it with patience.” But looking for (*expectatio*) seems to belong to the cognitive power, the role which is to ‘look forward’ (*expectare*). Therefore, hope belongs to the cognitive power.

Objection 2: Hope seems to be the same thing as confidence (*fiducia*); hence, we call those who have hope ‘confident’, as if we were using ‘hoping’ and ‘confident’ for the same thing. But confidence, like faith, seems to belong to the cognitive power. Therefore, hope does, too.

Objection 3: Certitude is a property of the cognitive power. But certitude is attributed to hope. Therefore, hope belongs to the cognitive power.

But contrary to this: As has been explained (a. 1), hope is directed toward a good. But the good is as such the object of the appetitive power and not of the cognitive power. Therefore, hope belongs to the appetitive power and not to the cognitive power.

I respond: Since hope implies the appetite’s being extended in a certain way toward a good (*extensionem quandam appetitus in bonum*), it manifestly belongs to the appetitive power, since movement toward a thing properly belongs to the appetite. By contrast, the cognitive power’s action is completed not by the knower’s moving toward the things, but rather by the fact that the things known come to exist in the knower.

However, because the cognitive power moves the appetite by presenting the appetite’s object to it, diverse movements occur in the appetitive power in a way that corresponds to diverse conceptions of the apprehended object. For instance, one sort of movement follows in the appetite from the apprehension of a thing as good (*ex apprehensione boni*) and another sort of movement from the apprehension of a thing as bad (*ex apprehensione mali*); and, similarly, one sort of movement follows from an apprehension of a thing as present or as future, or as good or bad simply speaking or as arduous, or as possible or as impossible (*ex apprehensione praesentis et futuri, absoluti et ardui, possibilis et impossibilis*). Accordingly, hope is a movement of the appetitive power that follows upon the apprehension of something as a good which is future and arduous and possible to attain. That is, hope is the appetite’s being extended toward an object of this sort.

Reply to objection 1: Since hope has to do with a good that is possible, there are two ways in

which the movement of hope arises in a man, corresponding to the two ways in which something is possible for a man, viz., (a) by his own power and (b) by someone else's power.

Thus, someone is said only to 'hope for'—and not to 'look for'—what he hopes to attain by his own power. On the other hand, he is properly said to 'look for' what he hopes for through the assistance of someone else's power, so that he is said to 'look for something' (*exspectare*) in the sense of looking for it from another (*ex alieno spectare*), viz., insofar as the prior apprehension (*vis apprehensiva praecedens*) has to do not only with the good he intends to attain, but also that by whose power he hopes to attain it—this according to Ecclesiasticus 51:10 (“I looked for the help of men”). Thus, the movement of hope is sometimes called a 'looking for' because of the cognitive power's prior assessment (*propter inspectionem virtutis cognitivae praecedentem*).

Reply to objection 2: A man believes that he will attain whatever he desires and judges to be possible for him to attain; and from this sort of faith in his prior cognitive movement, the appetitive movement that follows is called 'confidence'. For an appetitive movement is named on the basis of the prior cognitive movement, in the way that an effect is named from a better known cause. For the apprehensive power knows its own act better than it knows the appetite's act.

Reply to objection 3: Certitude is attributed not only to a sentient appetite's movement but also to a natural appetite's movement. For instance, one says that a rock will certainly tend downward, and this is so because of the infallibility that one has in light of the certitude of the cognition that precedes a sentient appetite's movement, or even a natural appetite's movement.

Article 3

Does hope exist in brute animals?

It seems that hope does not exist in brute animals:

Objection 1: As Damascene says, hope has to do with a future good. But having cognition of the future is something that does not belong to brute animals, which have only sentient cognition; for sentient cognition does not have to do with future things. Therefore, hope does not exist in brute animals.

Objection 2: The object of hope is a good that is possible to attain. But *possible* and *impossible* are differences that apply to *true* and *false*, which exist only in the mind, as the Philosopher points out in *Metaphysics* 6. Therefore, hope does not exist in brute animals, which do not have minds (*in quibus non est mens*).

Objection 3: In *Super Genesim ad Litteram* Augustine says, “Animals are moved by what is seen” (*animalia moventur visis*). But hope does not have to do with what is seen; for as Romans 8:24 says, “What someone sees—does he hope for that?” Therefore, hope does not exist in brute animals.

But contrary to this: Hope is a passion of the irascible part of the soul. But the irascible part exists in brute animals. Therefore, so does hope.

I respond: The interior passions of the animals can be discerned from their exterior movements. It is apparent from those movements that hope exists in brute animals. For instance, if a dog sees a rabbit or a hawk sees a bird too far off in the distance (*nimis distantem*), then it does not move toward it—as if having no hope of being able to catch it. But if it sees it close by, then it does move—as if acting on the hope of catching it.

For as was explained above (q. 35, a. 1), the sentient appetite of brute animals, as well as the natural appetite of non-sentient things, follow upon some intellect's apprehension—as does an intellective nature's appetite, which is called a 'will'. The difference is that the will is moved by the apprehension of an intellect that is conjoined to it, whereas the movement of a natural appetite follows upon the apprehension of an intellect which is separate from it and which institutes its nature; and the

same holds for the sentient appetite of brute animals, which act by a certain natural instinct. Hence, in the works of brute animals and of other natural things, the process is similar to that involved in the works of a craft (*in operibus artis*). And it is in this sense that hope and despair exist in brute animals.

Reply to objection 1: Even though brute animals have no cognition of the future, an animal is nonetheless moved by natural instinct toward something in the future as if it did foresee the future. For an instinct of this sort is instilled in brute animals by God's intellect, which foresees future things.

Reply to objection 2: The object of hope is not possible in the sense in which *possible* is a difference of [the genus] *true*, since what is possible in this sense follows upon the relation of a predicate to a subject. Instead, the object of hope is possible in the sense in which *possible* is predicated relative to a given power (*dicitur secundum aliquam potentiam*). For this is the way *possible* is divided in *Metaphysics* 5, viz., into the two senses of *possible* just explained.

Reply to objection 3: Even if what is future does not fall under the visual power, still, on the basis of what an animal sees in the present, its appetite is moved to either pursue or avoid something future.

Article 4

Is despair contrary to hope?

It seems that despair is not contrary to hope (*desperatio non sit contraria spei*):

Objection 1: As *Metaphysics* 10 says, "For a single thing there is a single contrary." But fear is contrary to hope. Therefore, it is not the case that despair is contrary to it.

Objection 2: Contraries, it seems, have to do with the same thing. But hope and despair do not have to do with the same thing. For hope has to do with the good, whereas despair exists because of something bad that impedes the attainment of the good. Therefore, hope is not contrary to despair.

Objection 3: It is a movement that is contrary to a movement, whereas rest is opposed to movement as its privation. But despair seems to imply immobility rather than movement. Therefore, it is not contrary to hope, which implies a movement that involves being extended toward the good that is hoped for.

But contrary to this: *De-speratio* (despair or desperation) is so called because it is contrary to *spes* (hope).

I respond: As was explained above (q. 23, a. 2), there are two sorts of contrariety involved in changes (*in mutationibus invenitur duplex contrarietas*):

One sort has to do with *being directed toward contrary termini* (*secundum accessum ad contrarios terminos*), and this sort of contrariety is found only in the passions of the concupiscible part of the soul, in the way that *love* and *hatred* are contraries.

The second sort has to do with *approaching toward and withdrawing from the same terminus* (*per accessum et per recessum respectu eiusdem termini*), and this sort of contrariety is found among the passions of the irascible part, in the way explained above (q. 23, a. 2).

Now the object of hope, which is an arduous good, has the character of something attractive, as long as it is thought of as being possible to attain; and so hope, which implies a movement of *approaching toward*, tends toward this object. By contrast, insofar as something has the character of being impossible to attain, it has the character of being repellent, since, as *Ethics* 3 explains, "When they come up against something impossible, men leave off." And so it is this object that despair has to do with. Hence, despair implies a movement of *withdrawing from*. And because of this, despair is contrary to hope in the way that withdrawing from something is contrary to approaching toward it.

Reply to objection 1: Fear is contrary to hope by a contrariety in the *objects*, viz., between *good* and *bad*, since this sort of contrariety is found among the passions of the irascible part insofar as they

flow from the passions of the concupiscible part. By contrast, despair is contrary to hope only by a contrariety between *approaching toward* and *withdrawing from*.

Reply to objection 2: Despair does not have to do with the bad as bad (*sub ratione mali*), although it sometimes has to do with the bad *per accidens*, insofar as what is bad makes something impossible to attain (*inquantum facit impossibilitatem adipiscendi*). However, despair can also have its source solely in the abundance of what is good.

Reply to objection 3: Despair implies not just a privation of hope, but also a certain withdrawal from the desired thing by reason of the fact that the thing is judged to be impossible to attain. Hence, despair presupposes desire, just as hope does, since we have neither despair nor hope with respect to what does not fall under our desire. And likewise, because of this, both despair and hope have to do with a good that falls under desire.

Article 5

Is experience a cause of hope?

It seems that experience is not a cause of hope:

Objection 1: Experience belongs to the cognitive power; hence, in *Ethics 2* the Philosopher says, “Intellectual virtue requires experience and time.” But as has been explained (a. 2), hope exists not in the cognitive power, but in the appetitive power. Therefore, experience is not a cause of hope.

Objection 2: In *Rhetoric 2* the Philosopher says, “Old men find it difficult to have hope, because of their experience.” From this it appears that experience is a cause of a lack of hope. But it is not the case that the same thing is a cause of opposites. Therefore, experience is not a cause of hope.

Objection 3: In *De Caelo 2* the Philosopher says, “To say something about everything and not to leave anything out is sometimes a sign of foolishness.” But the fact that a man attempts everything seems to involve a great deal of hope, while foolishness stems from inexperience. Therefore, it seems to be inexperience, rather than experience, that is a cause of hope.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics 3* the Philosopher says, “There are some who are of good hope because they have been victorious many times and over many.” But this pertains to experience. Therefore, experience is a cause of hope.

I respond: As has been explained (a. 1), the object of hope is a future and arduous good that is possible to attain. Therefore, something can be a cause of hope either (a) because it makes something possible for a man or (b) because it makes him judge that something is possible.

In the first way, what causes hope is anything that increases a man’s power—wealth, fortitude, and, among other things, experience as well. For through experience a man acquires the ability to do something with ease, and hope follows from this. Hence, in *De Re Militari* Vegetius says, “No one fears doing what he is confident that he has learned well.”

In the second way, what causes hope is anything that makes someone judge that something is possible for him. And in this sense learning, along with any sort of persuasion, can be a cause of hope. And experience can be a cause of hope in this sense, too, viz., insofar as through experience a man comes to judge that something is possible for him which he had previously thought impossible.

However, in this same way experience can also be a cause of a lack of hope. For just as through experience a man can come to judge that something is possible for him which he had previously thought impossible, so too, conversely, through experience a man can come to judge that something is not possible for him which he had previously thought possible.

So, then, there are two ways in which experience is a cause of hope and one way in which it is a cause of a lack of hope. Because of this, we can say that it is more a cause of hope.

Reply to objection 1: Experience in action (*in operabilibus*) is a cause not only of knowledge but also of a certain habit, because of the action's becoming customary (*propter consuetudinem*), and this makes the operation easier.

On the other hand, intellectual virtue itself likewise gives one the power to do things with ease, since it demonstrates that certain things are possible. And in this way it is a cause of hope.

Reply to objection 2: In the case of old men, there is a lack of hope because of experience insofar as experience causes them to judge that something is impossible (*inquantum experientia facit existimationem impossibilis*). Hence, in the same place the Philosopher adds that many things have turned out badly for them (*eis multa evenerunt in deterius*).

Reply to objection 3: Foolishness and inexperience can be a cause of hope *per accidens*, as it were, viz., by setting aside the knowledge through which one judges truly that something is not possible. Hence, inexperience is a cause of hope in the same way that experience is a cause of a lack of hope.

Article 6

Are youthfulness and inebriation causes of hope?

It seems that youthfulness (*iuventus*) and inebriation (*ebrietas*) are not causes of hope:

Objection 1: Hope implies a sort of certitude and firmness; hence, Hebrews 6:19 compares hope to an anchor. But the young and the inebriated lack firmness, since they have minds that are easily changed. Therefore, youthfulness and inebriation are not causes of hope.

Objection 2: As was explained above (a. 5), anything that increases one's power is in a special way a cause of hope. But youthfulness and inebriation have a sort of weakness adjoined to them. Therefore, they are not causes of hope.

Objection 3: As was just explained (a. 5), experience is a cause of hope. But young people lack experience. Therefore, youthfulness is not a cause of hope.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 3 the Philosopher says, "The inebriated are very hopeful" (*bene sperantes*). And in *Rhetoric* 2 he says, "The young are full of hope (*bonae spei*)."

I respond: As the Philosopher explains in *Rhetoric* 2, there are three reasons why youthfulness is a cause of hope. And these three reasons can be thought of as corresponding to the three conditions of a good that is the object of hope, viz., as has been explained (a. 1), that it is *future*, that it is *arduous*, and that it is *possible*.

For young people have a long future ahead of them and little by way of a past (*multum habent de futuro et parum de praeterito*). And so since memory has to do with the past and hope with the future, they have little memory but live mostly in hope.

Again, because of their impassioned nature (*propter caliditatem naturae*), young people have high spirits, and so their hearts are bigger. But having a big heart makes one tend toward arduous tasks. And so young people are spirited and full of hope.

Similarly, those who have not suffered rejection and have not experienced obstacles in their undertakings are quick to believe that things are possible for them (*de facili reputant aliquid sibi possibile*). And so they are full of hope.

Two of these conditions are likewise present in the inebriated because of wine, viz., (a) an impassioned nature and high spiritedness and, again, (b) a failure to take into account dangers and weaknesses. And for the same reason all foolish people (*omnes stulti*), failing to make use of deliberation, attempt everything and are full of hope.

Reply to objection 1: Even though in the young and in the inebriated there is no firmness as a

matter of fact, they nonetheless have firmness in their own judgment; for they think that they will surely get what they hope for.

Reply to objection 2: Similarly, the young and the inebriated have weakness as a matter of fact, but in their own judgment they have power, since they do not recognize their own defects.

Reply to objection 3: As has been explained (a. 5), it is not only experience, but also inexperience, that is a cause of hope.

Article 7

Is hope a cause of love?

It seems that hope is not a cause of love:

Objection 1: According to Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* 14, the first among the affections of the soul is love. But hope is a certain affection of the soul. Therefore, love precedes hope. Therefore, hope is not a cause of love.

Objection 2: Desire precedes hope. But as has been explained (q. 25, a. 2), desire is caused by love. Therefore, hope likewise follows upon love. Therefore, it is not a cause of it.

Objection 3: As was explained above (q. 32, a. 3), hope is a cause of pleasure. But pleasure exists only with respect to a good that is loved. Therefore, love precedes hope.

But contrary to this: A Gloss on Matthew 1:2 (“Abraham begot Isaac, and Isaac begot Jacob”) says, “That is, faith begot hope, and hope begot charity.” But charity is love. Therefore, love is caused by hope.

I respond: There are two possible things that hope has to do with. For hope has to do with its object, the *good that is hoped for*. But since (a) the good that is hoped for is an arduous good that is possible and (b) it sometimes happens that what is arduous is possible for us through others and not through ourselves, hope also has to do with *what makes something possible for us*.

Therefore, insofar as hope has to do with the *good that is hoped for*, hope is caused by love, since there is hope only with respect to a good that is desired and loved.

On the other hand, insofar as hope has to do with *what makes something possible for us*, love is caused by hope and not vice versa. For from the fact that there is someone through whom we hope that it will be possible for certain goods to come to us, we are moved toward him as toward our good, and so we begin to love him. By contrast, it is not the case that we hope in someone by virtue of the fact that we love him—except *per accidens*, viz., insofar as we believe that we are to be loved by him in return. Hence, being loved by someone makes us hope in him, whereas our love for him is caused by the hope we have in him.

Reply to objection 1 and objection 2 and objection 3: The replies to the objection are clear from what has been said.

Article 8

Does hope facilitate action?

It seems that hope does not facilitate action (*spes non adiuvat operationem*), but instead impedes it:

Objection 1: It belongs to hope to be carefree. But being carefree gives rise to negligence, which impedes an operation. Therefore, hope impedes action.

Objection 2: As was explained above (q. 37, a. 3), sadness impedes action. But hope is sometimes

a cause of sadness; for Proverbs 13:12 says, “Hope that is deferred afflicts the soul.” Therefore, hope impedes action.

Objection 3: As has been explained (a. 4), despair is contrary to hope. But despair, especially in matters of warfare, facilitates action; for 2 Kings 2:26 says, “Despair is very dangerous.” Therefore, hope brings about the contrary effect, viz., it impedes action.

But contrary to this: 1 Corinthians 9:10 says, “He who plows should plow in hope of obtaining fruit.” And the same line of reasoning holds for all other actions.

I respond: Hope is such that it *per se* facilitates action by intensifying it. It does this in two respects:

First, by reason of its *object*, which is a good that is arduous and possible. For the judgment that the good in question is arduous stimulates one’s attentiveness, whereas the judgment that it is possible does not slow down one’s effort. Hence, it follows that a man operates intensely because of hope.

Second, by reason of its *effect*. For as was explained above (q. 32, a. 3), hope is a cause of pleasure, which, as was likewise explained above (q. 33, a. 4), facilitates action.

Hence, hope facilitates action.

Reply to objection 1: Hope has to do with attaining what is good, whereas carefreeness has to do with avoiding what is bad. Hence, carefreeness seems opposed to fear rather than relevant to hope.

Reply to objection 2: Hope is *per se* a cause of pleasure, but, as was explained above (q. 32, a. 3), its causing sadness is *per accidens*.

Reply to objection 3: Despair becomes very dangerous in war because of a certain sort of hope that is adjoined to it. For those who despair of fleeing are weakened with respect to fleeing, but they hope to avenge their own death. And so they fight more fiercely because of this hope, and they thus become extremely dangerous to their enemies.