

QUESTION 158

Anger

Next we have to consider the opposed vices: first, anger (*iracundia*), which is opposed to gentleness (*mansuetudo*) (question 158), and, second, cruelty (*credulitas*), which is opposed to clemency (*clementia*) (question 159).

Concerning anger there are eight questions: (1) Can it sometimes be licit to get angry? (2) Is anger (*ira*) a sin? (3) Is anger a mortal sin? (4) Is anger the most serious sin? (5) What are the species of anger? (6) Is anger a capital vice? (7) Which vices are the daughters of anger? (8) Does anger have a vice that is opposed to it?

Article 1

Can it be licit to get angry?

It seems that it cannot be licit to become angry (*irasci non possit esse licitum*):

Objection 1: In expounding Matthew 5:22 (“He who gets angry with his brother ...”), Jerome says, “In certain codices it is added, ‘without cause’, but in the accurate codices the saying is unqualified and anger is done away with altogether.” Therefore, it is in no way licit to get angry.

Objection 2: According to Dionysius in *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 4, “What is bad for the soul is to be without reason.” But anger is always without reason. For in *Ethics* 4 the Philosopher says, “Anger does not listen completely to reason,” and in *Moralia* 5 Gregory says, “When anger strikes the mind’s tranquility, it in some sense leaves it mutilated and divided.” And in *De Institutis Coenobiorum* Cassian says, “No matter what the cause of the boiling movement of anger might be, it blinds the eye of the heart.” Therefore, it is always bad to get angry.

Objection 3: As a Gloss on Leviticus 19:17 (“You shall not hate your brother in your heart”) points out, “Anger is a desire for retribution (*appetitus vindictae*).” But it does not seem licit to desire vengeance (*appetere ultionem*); instead, vengeance is to be reserved to God—this according to Deuteronomy 32:35 (“Vengeance is mine”). Therefore, it seems that it is always bad to get angry.

Objection 4: Anything that leads us away from being similar to God is bad. But getting angry always leads us away from being similar to God, since, as Wisdom 12:18 says, “God judges with tranquility.” Therefore, it is always bad to get angry.

But contrary to this: In his commentary on Matthew Chrysostom says, “An individual who gets angry *without cause* will be guilty, whereas an individual who gets angry *with cause* will not be guilty. For if there is no anger, then teaching is not profitable, judgments do not stand, and crimes are not held in check.” Therefore, it is not always bad to get angry.

I respond: As was established above when we were talking about the passions (*ST* 1-2, q. 25, a. 3 and q. 46, a. 1), anger is properly speaking the passion of the sentient appetite from which the *irascible power* receives its name. Now as regards the passions of the soul, notice that there are two ways in which evil can be found in them:

(a) Evil can be found in a passion *by the very species of the passion*, which is taken from the passion’s object. For instance, *envy* by its species implies something bad, since envy is sadness at the good of another—something that is in its own right (*secundum se*) contrary to reason. And so as the Philosopher explains in *Ethics* 2, as soon as envy is named, it expresses something bad. Now this feature does not belong to *anger*, which is a desire for retribution, since retribution can be desired both correctly and incorrectly (*potest et bene et male appeti*).

(b) Evil is also found in a passion *with respect to its quantity*, i.e., because of either its excess or its deficiency. And this is the way in which evil can be found in anger, viz., when someone is either *more angry* than he should be according to right reason or *less angry* than he should be according to right

reason (*irascitur plus vel minus praeter rationem rectam*). By contrast, if an individual is angry *in accord with right reason*, then it is praiseworthy for him to be angry.

Reply to objection 1: As was explained above when we were talking about the passions (*ST* 1-2, q. 24, a. 2), what the Stoics called anger and all the other passions were certain affections lying outside the order of reason and, accordingly, they claimed that anger and all other passions are bad. And it is in this way that Jerome is understanding anger; for he is talking about an anger by which an individual is angry at his neighbor in the sense of intending something evil for him.

By contrast, according to the Peripatetics, whose opinion Augustine approves of to a greater degree in *De Civitate Dei* 9, anger and the other passions of the soul are called movements of the sentient appetite regardless of whether or not they are moderated by reason. And on this understanding anger is not always bad.

Reply to objection 2: There are two possible ways for anger to be related to reason:

(a) *antecedently*, and in this way the anger draws reason away from rectitude and thus has the nature of something bad;

(b) *consequently*, viz., insofar as the sentient appetite, in keeping with the order of reason, is moved against sins; and this sort of anger, which is called ‘zealous anger’ (*ira per zelum*), is good.

Hence, in *Moralia* 5 Gregory says, “We must take as much care as possible not to let an instance of anger which is being used as an instrument of virtue dominate the mind and go before it like a queen, but we should instead make sure that, like a handmaid prepared to obey, it never leaves its place behind reason.” Now even if this sort of anger, in the very execution of the act, impedes the judgment of reason in some way, it nonetheless does not destroy the rectitude of reason. Hence, in the same place Gregory says, “Zealous anger *disturbs* the eye of reason, but sinful anger *blinds* it.” And it is not contrary to the nature of a virtue for reason’s deliberation to be interrupted because of the execution of what has already been deliberated about by reason; for an art or craft would likewise be impeded in its act if, when it had to be acting, it were deliberating about what still has to be done.

Reply to objection 3: It is illicit to desire retribution as an evil for the one who is to be punished. However, it is praiseworthy to desire retribution for the sake of correcting vices and preserving the good of justice. And it is possible for the sentient appetite to tend toward this insofar as it is moved by reason. Moreover, as Romans 13:4 explains, when retribution is accomplished in accord with the order of judgment, it is accomplished by God, since the punishing power “is God’s minister.”

Reply to objection 4: We can and should be similar to God in desiring the good, but we cannot be altogether similar to God in our mode of desiring the good. For in us, but not in God, there is a sentient appetite whose movement should be subject to reason. Hence, in *Moralia* 5 Gregory says, “Reason is more firmly erected against sin when a subdued anger bows to reason.”

Article 2

Is anger a sin?

It seems that anger is not a sin:

Objection 1: We lose merit (*demeremur*) by sinning. But, as *Ethics* 2 says, “We do not lose merit by the passions, just as we are not blamed for them.” Therefore, no passion is a sin and, as was established above when we were discussing the passions (*ST* 1-2, q. 25, a. 3), anger is a passion. Therefore, anger is not a sin.

Objection 2: Every sin involves turning toward some mutable good. But through anger an individual turns toward what is bad for someone and not to any mutable good. Therefore, anger is not a sin.

Objection 3: As Augustine says, “No one sins in what he cannot avoid.” But a man is unable to avoid anger, since a Gloss on Psalm 4:5 (“Get angry, and do not sin”) says, “The movement of anger is not within our power.” Likewise, in *Ethics 7* the Philosopher says, “The angry individual operates with sadness.” But sadness is contrary to the will. Therefore, anger is not a sin.

Objection 4: As Damascene says in *De Fide Orthodoxa 2*, a sin “is contrary to nature.” But getting angry is not contrary to a man’s nature, since it is the natural act of a power, viz., the irascible power. Hence, Jerome says in one of his letters, “Getting angry belongs to man.” Therefore, anger is not a sin.

But contrary to this: In Ephesians 4:31 the Apostle says, “Let all indignation and anger ... be removed from among you.”

I respond: As has been explained (a. 1), ‘anger’ properly speaking names a certain passion. Now a passion of the sentient appetite is good to the extent that it is regulated by reason, whereas it is bad if it excludes the order of reason. In the case of anger, there are two things with respect to which the order of reason can be looked at:

(a) The order of reason can be looked at *with respect to the desirable thing toward which the anger tends*, viz., retribution. Hence, if the individual desires this retribution to be accomplished in accord with the order of reason, then the desire belonging to the anger is praiseworthy, and the anger is called ‘zealous anger’ (*ira per zelum*). On the other hand, if the individual desires the retribution to be accomplished in a way that is contrary to the order of reason, then the desire belonging to the anger will be sinful—as, for instance, if he desires that someone be punished who does not deserve it, or that someone be punished beyond what he deserves, or, again, that some be punished in a way that is not in accord with lawful order, or if he desires that someone be punished for the sake of an end other than the appropriate end, which is the conservation of justice and the correction of the sin. And the anger is called ‘sinful anger’ (*ira per vitium*).

(b) Alternatively, the order of reason in the case of anger can be looked at *with respect to the mode of getting angry*, viz., getting angry in such a way that the movement of anger does not flare up without interior and exterior moderation (*non immoderate ferveat, nec interius nec exterius*). If this condition is missing, the anger will not exist without sin, even if the individual desires a just retribution.

Reply to objection 1: A passion can be either regulated by reason or not regulated by reason, and so neither the concept of merit nor the concept of demerit—that is, neither the concept of praise nor the concept of blame—is implied by the passion considered *absolutely*.

However, insofar as a passion is *regulated by reason*, it can have the character of being meritorious or praiseworthy, and, contrariwise, insofar as it is *not regulated by reason*, it can have the character of being demeritorious or blameworthy. Hence, in the same place the Philosopher says, “One who gets angry in some way is either praised or blamed.”

Reply to objection 2: One who is angry desires what is bad for the other not for its own sake, but for the sake of retribution, toward which his desire turns as toward a certain mutable good.

Reply to objection 3: A man is master of his own acts through the judgment of reason. And so movements that precede the judgment of reason are not within a man’s power *universally (in generali)*, i.e., in such a way that *none* of them arises—even though *each* of them is such that reason is able keep it *as a singular movement* from arising. And it is in this sense that it is claimed that the movement of anger is not within a man’s power, viz., in such a way that *no such movement* arises. Nonetheless, since [the movement of anger] is in some sense within a man’s power, it does not completely eradicate the nature of a sin if it is disordered.

Now the Philosopher’s claim that an angry individual “operates with sadness” should not be understood to mean that the individual is sad about the fact that he is angry; rather, he operates with sadness because he is sad about the injury that he believes to have been inflicted on him, and he is moved by this sadness to desire retribution.

Reply to objection 4: The irascible part in a man is naturally subject to reason. And so its act is natural to a man insofar as it accords with reason. By contrast, to the extent that its movement lies outside of the order of reason, it is contrary to man's nature.

Article 3

Is anger a mortal sin?

It seems that every instance of anger is a mortal sin (*omnis ira sit peccatum mortale*):

Objection 1: Job 5:2 says, "Anger kills a foolish man," and it is talking about *spiritual* killing, which is a name for mortal sin. Therefore, anger is a mortal sin.

Objection 2: Nothing merits eternal damnation except a mortal sin. But anger merits eternal damnation; for in Matthew 5:22 our Lord says, "Everyone who gets angry with his brother is in danger of judgment," where a Gloss says, "What is expressed explicitly, one by one, through these three things"—i.e., the three things mentioned here, viz., the judgment, the council, and hell fire—"are different abodes in the state of eternal damnation, corresponding to modes of sinning." Therefore, anger is a mortal sin.

Objection 3: Whatever is contrary to charity is a mortal sin. But anger is of itself (*de se*) contrary to charity. This is clear from Jerome's commentary on Matthew 5:2 ("Everyone who gets angry with his brother ..."), where he says that this is contrary to the love of neighbor (*contra proximi dilectionem*). Therefore, anger is a mortal sin.

But contrary to this: A Gloss on Psalm 4:5 ("Get angry, and do not sin") says, "Anger that does not lead all the way to its effect is a venial sin."

I respond: As has been explained (a. 2), there are two ways in which the movement of anger can be disordered and sinful:

(a) The first way is *on the part of what is desired* in the sense that the individual desires a retribution that is unjust. And on this score anger is by its genus a mortal sin, since it is contrary to both charity and justice. Still, it can happen that this sort of desire is a venial sin because of the incompleteness of the act. This incompleteness occurs either *on the part of the one who has the desire*, e.g., when the movement of anger precludes the judgment of reason, or, again, *on the part of what is desired*, e.g., when an individual desires to vindicate himself in some trivial matter that should be thought of as nothing, so that even if retribution were actually inflicted, it would not be a mortal sin—as, for instance, if someone pulled a child slightly by his hair or something else of this sort.

(b) In the second way, a movement of anger can be disordered *with respect to one's manner of getting angry*, as, for instance, if someone became angry in too fiery a manner interiorly, or if he exteriorly manifested signs of anger in an excessive way. And on this score anger does not have by its genus the character of a mortal sin. Still, it can happen that it is a mortal sin, e.g., if because of the vehemence of his anger an individual falls away from the love of God and neighbor.

Reply to objection 1: This passage establishes not that every instance of anger is a mortal sin, but that foolish people are spiritually killed by getting angry in the sense that if they do not restrain the movement of anger by reason, they will fall into mortal sins such as blaspheming God or injuring their neighbor.

Reply to objection 2: Our Lord said this about anger as an addition to the following statement in the Law, "Anyone who kills will be subject to judgment." Hence, in this place our Lord is speaking of a movement of anger by which an individual desires to kill his neighbor or to inflict some sort of grave injury on him—and if the consent of reason is given to this sort of desire, it will without doubt be a mortal sin.

Reply to objection 3: In a case in which anger is contrary to charity it will be a mortal sin. But as is clear from what has been said, this does not always happen.

Article 4

Is anger the most serious sin?

It seems that anger is the most serious sin:

Objection 1: Chrysostom says, “Nothing is more shameful than the look of an angry man, and nothing uglier than a severe face and, most of all, a severe soul.” Therefore, anger is the most serious sin.

Objection 2: A sin seems to be worse to the extent that it is more injurious; for as Augustine says in *Enchiridion*, “A thing is called evil because it does harm.” But anger does the most harm of all, since it deprives a man of his reason, through which he is the master of his own self; for Chrysostom says, “There is no difference between anger and madness (*insania*), but anger is a sort of temporary demon, and even more troublesome than having demons.” Therefore, anger is the most serious sin.

Objection 3: Interior movements are judged by their exterior effects. But the effect of anger is homicide, which is the most serious [exterior] sin. Therefore, anger is the most serious sin.

But contrary to this: Anger is related to hatred in the way that the mote is related to the beam [see Matthew 7:1-5]. But in *Regula* Augustine says, “... lest anger should grow into hatred and make a beam out of a mote.” Therefore, it is not the case that anger is the most serious sin.

I respond: As has been explained (aa. 2 and 3), the disorder that belongs to anger has to do with two things, viz., that (a) *what is desired* is inappropriate and that (b) *the manner of being angry* is inappropriate.

(a) Now as regards *the desirable thing* that the angry individual desires, anger seems to be the least of sins. For anger desires the evil of someone’s being punished under the concept of a good, viz., retribution. And so *on the part of the evil that it desires*, the sin of anger agrees with those sins that desire evil for one’s neighbor, e.g., it agrees with envy and hatred. But *hatred* desires evil for someone absolutely, *insofar as it is evil*, and the *envious* individual desires evil for another because of *the desire for his own glory*, whereas the *angry* individual desires evil for another *under the concept of just retribution*. From this it is clear that *hatred* is a more serious sin than *envy*, and that *envy* is a more serious sin than *anger*; for it is worse to desire evil under the concept of evil than under the concept of a good, and it is worse to desire evil under the concept of an exterior good, i.e., honor or glory, than under the concept of the rectitude of justice.

On the other hand, as regards *the character of the good under which the angry individual desires evil*, anger agrees with the sin of disordered sentient desire (*convenit ira cum peccato concupiscentiae*), which tends toward a good. And on this score, once again, the sin of anger seems to be a lesser sin than disordered sentient desire—to the extent that the *good of justice*, which the angry individual desires, is better than the *pleasurable good* or the *useful good* desired by someone with disordered sentient desire. Hence, in *Ethics 7* the Philosopher says, “An individual who is incontinent with respect to sentient desire is more shameful than an individual who is incontinent with respect to anger.”

(b) Now as regards the disorder which is found in *the manner of being angry*, anger has a sort of supereminence because of the vehemence and quickness of its movement—this according to Proverbs 27:4 (“Anger has no mercy, and neither does fury when it breaks forth; and who can bear the violence of one who has been provoked?”). Hence, in *Moralia 5* Gregory says, “The heart palpitates when enkindled by the pricks of its anger, the body trembles, the tongue entangles itself, the face is inflamed, the eyes are irritated and those whom one knows are not recognized at all; the angry individual makes sounds with his mouth, but does not know the meaning of what he is saying.”

Reply to objection 1: Chrysostom is talking here about shamefulfulness with respect to the exterior manifestations that arise from the impetus of anger.

Reply to objection 2: This argument goes through with respect to the disordered movement of anger, which, as has been explained, arises from its impetus.

Reply to objection 3: Homicide arises no less from hatred or envy than from anger. However, as has been explained, anger is a less serious sin insofar as it has to do with the character of justice.

Article 5

Are the species of anger appropriately determined by the Philosopher in *Ethics* 7?

It seems that the species of anger are not appropriately determined by the Philosopher in *Ethics* 7, where he says that some angry individuals are *quick-tempered* (*acuti*), some *bitter* (*amari*), and some *obstinate* (*difficiles*) or *harsh* (*graves*).

Objection 1: Individuals are said to be *bitter* when their anger “is hard to quiet and lasts for a long time.” But this seems to involve the circumstance of *time*. Therefore, it seems that the other species of anger can likewise be taken from the other circumstances.

Objection 2: Individuals are said to be *obstinate* (*difficiles*) or *harsh* (*graves*) when their anger does not dissipate unless they torment or punish someone. But this likewise belongs to the anger’s being hard to quiet. Therefore, the *obstinate* (*difficiles*) seems to be the same as the *bitter* (*amari*).

Objection 3: Matthew 5:22 posits three degrees of anger when [our Lord] says, “Anyone who gets angry with his brother ...,” and “Anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ ...,” and “Anyone who says to his brother, ‘You fool!’ ...” These degrees of anger are not related to the species spoken of above. Therefore, it seems that the aforementioned division of anger is inappropriate.

But contrary to this: Gregory of Nyssa says that “there are three species of irascibility (*tres sunt irascibilitatis species*),” viz., the anger that is called *wrath* (*fellea*); *manic anger* (*mania*), which is called *madness* (*insania*); and *fury* (*furor*). These three seem to be the same as the three put forth above, since he says that *wrathful anger* (*fellea ira*) is the anger that has the beginning and the movement, which the Philosopher attributes to *quick-tempered* individuals (*acuti*), whereas *manic anger* (*mania*) is the anger which remains and persists into old age and which the Philosopher attributes to those who are *bitter* (*amari*), and he says that *fury* (*furor*) is the anger which “lies in wait for the time of punishment” and which the Philosopher attributes to the *obstinate* (*difficiles*).

I respond: The division in question can be referred either to the *passion* of anger or, again, to the very *sin* of anger.

Now the way in which it is referred to the *passion* of anger was established above when we were discussing the passion of anger (*ST* 1-2, q. 46, a. 8). And this is the way in which the division seems to be posited by Gregory of Nyssa and Damascene.

Here, however, it is necessary to understand the distinctions among these species insofar as they pertain to the *sin* of anger and as they are posited by the Philosopher. For the disorder of anger can be thought of in two ways:

(a) first, *on the part of the origin itself of the anger*. And this pertains to *quick-tempered* individuals, who get angered too quickly and for any slight reason at all.

(b) second, *on the duration itself of the anger*, viz., the fact that the anger lasts too long. This can happen in two ways. First, because the cause of the anger, viz., the inflicted injury, *remains too long in the man’s memory* and thus from this the man seizes upon a long-lasting sadness; and so this is what harsh (*graves*) and bitter (*amari*) individuals do to themselves. In a second way it happens *on the part of the retribution itself*, which an individual seeks with an obstinate desire, and this pertains to obstinate

(*difficiles*) or harsh (*graves*) individuals, who do not dismiss their anger until they mete out the punishment.

Reply to objection 1: In the species explained above, what is considered is not mainly *time*, but instead (a) how *easy* it is for a given man to get angry and (b) how *firm* he is in his anger.

Reply to objection 2: Both bitter individuals and obstinate individuals have long-lasting anger, but for different reasons. For *bitter* individuals have a permanent anger because of the permanence of their sadness, which they keep closed up inside; and because they do not break out into exterior signs of anger, they cannot be dissuaded by others. Nor do they recede from the anger on their own unless the sadness weakens and, as a result, the anger dissipates. By contrast, in *obstinate* individuals the anger is long-lasting because of a vehement desire for retribution. And so the anger is not dissipated by time, but quiets down only through the act of punishing.

Reply to objection 3: The grades of anger that our Lord posits do not involve different species of anger, but are instead understood in a way corresponding to the progression of a human act. In the first grade among them something is conceived in the heart. And it is with regard to this that He says, “Whoever gets angry with his brother” The second grade occurs when the anger is manifested exteriorly through exterior signs, even before it breaks out into the effect. And on this score He says, “Whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ ..., which is an exclamation of anger. The third grade is when the interiorly conceived sin is led through to its effect. Now the effect of anger is harm to another under the concept of retribution. The least of harms is for this to be done with words alone. And so on this score He says, “Whoever says to his brother, ‘You fool!’”

And so it is clear that the second grade adds something beyond the first, and the third adds something beyond both of them. Hence, if the first grade is a mortal sin in the case of which our Lord is speaking, then, as has been explained (a. 3), then the other grades are mortal sins all the more. And so corresponding to each of them, something is posited that pertains to condemnation. But in the case of the first grade, what is posited is *judgment*, which is a lesser condemnation, since, as Augustine explains, “In a judgment there is still room provided for a defense.” On the other hand, in the case of the second grade He posits *the council*, in which judges confer among themselves about which punishment the individual should be condemned to. In the case of the third grade He posits *hell-fire*, i.e., certain damnation.

Article 6

Should anger be posited among the capital vices?

It seems that anger should not be posited among the capital vices:

Objection 1: Anger is born of sadness. But sadness is a capital vice that is called *acedia*. Therefore, anger should not be posited as a capital vice.

Objection 2: Hatred is a more serious sin than anger. Therefore, hatred should be posited as a capital vice rather than anger.

Objection 3: A Gloss on Proverbs 29:22 (“An angry individual provokes quarrels”) says, “Anger is a gateway to all the vices. When the gateway is closed, interior peace will be given to the virtues; when it is opened, the mind will be armed for every sort of crime.” But no capital vice is a principle for *every* sin; instead, each capital vice is a principle of *some* sins in a *determinate* way. Therefore, anger should not be posited among the capital vices.

But contrary to this: In *Moralia* 31 Gregory posits anger among the capital vices.

I respond: As is clear from what has already been said (*ST* 1-2, q. 84, aa. 3-4), what is called a capital vice is a vice from which many vices can arise. Now anger is such that many vices can arise from it, and this for two reasons: (a) first, *because of its object*, which has a great deal of the character of

desirability insofar as retribution is desired under the concept of the just and the upright—which, as was established above (a. 4), attracts one by its dignity; and (b) *because of its impetuosity*, by which it enjoins the mind to do all sorts of disordered things.

Hence it is clear that anger is a capital vice.

Reply to objection 1: In most cases the sadness from which anger arises is not the vice of acedia, but the passion of sadness that follows upon an inflicted injury.

Reply to objection 2: As is clear from what was said above (q. 118, a. 7; q. 148, a. 5; q. 153, a. 4, and *ST* 1-2, q. 84, a. 4), the nature of a capital vice involves its having a highly desirable end in the sense that many sins are committed because of the desire for that end. Now anger, which desires evil under the concept of something good, has a more desirable end than does hatred, which desires evil under the concept of something evil. And this is why anger, rather than hatred, is a capital vice.

Reply to objection 3: Anger is said to be the gateway of vices incidentally (*per accidens*) in the sense that it removes something that inhibits vices, viz., by impeding the judgment of reason, through which a man draws back from evils. On the other hand, it is a cause directly and in its own right (*directe et per se*) of certain specific sins, which are called its ‘daughters’.

Article 7

Is it appropriate to assign six daughters of anger, viz. brawling, swelling of the mind, vilification, clamoring, disdain, and blasphemy?

It seems that it is inappropriate to assign the following six daughters of anger, viz. brawling (*rixa*), swelling of the mind (*tumor mentis*), vilification (*contumelia*), clamoring (*clamor*), disdain (*indignatio*), and blasphemy (*blasphemia*):

Objection 1: Blasphemy is posited by Isidore as a daughter of pride (*superbia*). Therefore, it should not be posited as a daughter of anger.

Objection 2: As Augustine claims in *Regula*, hatred arises from anger. Therefore, hatred should be numbered among the daughters of anger.

Objection 3: The swelling of the mind seems to be the same thing as pride. But pride is not a daughter of any vice; instead, as Gregory says in *Moralia* 31, pride is “the mother of all vices.” Therefore, swelling of the mind should not be numbered among the daughters of anger.

But contrary to this: In *Moralia* 31 Gregory designates the daughters of anger that are under discussion.

I respond: There are three possible ways to think of anger:

(a) First, *insofar as it exists in the heart*. And there are two vices that are born of anger so considered. One is on the side of the individual against whom the man gets angry and whom he thinks of as unworthy for having done such a thing to him. And thus is posited *disdain (indignatio)*. The other vice is on the part of the man himself, viz., insofar as he thinks up different ways of exacting retribution and insofar as he fills his mind with such thoughts—this according to Job 15:2 (“Will a wise man fill his stomach with burning heat?”). And thus is posited *swelling of the mind (tumor mentis)*.

(b) Anger is thought of in a second way *insofar as it exists in the mouth*. And on this score two sorts of disorder proceed from anger. The one involves a man’s showing his anger in his mode of speaking, as was explained in the case of the individual who says to his brother, “Raca!” And thus is posited *clamoring (clamor)*, by which is meant disorderly and confused speech. The other involves someone erupting into injurious speech. If this is directed against God, it will be *blasphemy (blasphemia)*, whereas if it is directed against one’s neighbor, it will be vilification (*contumelia*).

(c) In the third way, anger is thought of *insofar as it proceeds all the way to a deed*. And on this

score what are born of anger are brawls (*rixae*), by which is meant all the harms inflicted by deeds on one's neighbor out of anger.

Reply to objection 1: The sort of blasphemy into which an individual breaks out with deliberate intent proceeds from the pride of a man who stands up against God; for, as Ecclesiasticus 10:14 says, "The beginning of a man's pride is to apostatize from God." That is, to withdraw from venerating God is the first part of pride, and it is from this that blasphemy arises.

By contrast, the sort of blasphemy into which an individual erupts because of mental agitation arises from anger.

Reply to objection 2: Even if hatred is sometimes born of anger, it still has a prior cause from which it arises more directly, viz., sadness—just as, contrariwise, love is born of pleasure. Now from inflicted sadness an individual is sometimes moved to anger and sometimes to hatred. This is why it was more appropriate to claim that hatred arises from *acedia* than that it arises from anger.

Reply to objection 3: 'Swelling of the mind' is being taken here not for pride, but for the effort or daring (*audacia*) of a man who is intent on retribution, and daring is a vice opposed to fortitude.

Article 8

Is there a vice opposed to anger that stems from a lack of anger?

It seems that there is no vice opposed to anger that stems from a lack of anger:

Objection 1: Nothing through which a man is made similar to God is sinful. But by being completely without anger a man is made similar to God, who "judges with tranquility." Therefore, it does not seem that it is sinful to lack anger altogether.

Objection 2: A lack of something that is not useful for anything is not sinful. But as Seneca shows in the book he wrote about anger, the movement of anger is not useful for anything. Therefore, it seems that a lack of anger is not sinful.

Objection 3: According to Dionysius, it is bad for a man "to exist outside of reason." But if every movement of anger were taken away, then the judgment of reason would still remain intact. Therefore, no instance of a lack of anger is the cause of a sin (*nullus defectus irae vitium causat*)

But contrary to this: In *Super Matthaeum* Chrysostom says, "If one does not get angry when he has a reason for getting angry, then he commits a sin. For unreasonable patience sows vices, nourishes negligence, and lures not only bad individuals but also good individuals into evil."

I respond: There are two ways in which *anger* can be understood:

(a) First, as a *simple movement of the will* by which an individual inflicts punishment *because of a judgment of reason and not because of a passion*. And on this score a lack of anger is without doubt a sin. And this is the way that anger is being understood in the passage from Chrysostom, who in the same place says, "When anger (*iracundia*) has a cause, it is not anger but judgment (*non est iracundia sed iudicium*). For anger properly speaking is understood to be a movement of passion, and when a man gets angry with reason, his anger is no longer from passion, and so he is said to judge and not to be getting angry."

(b) In a second way, anger is understood as a *movement of the sentient appetite*, which occurs *with a passion and a bodily change*. And this movement in a man necessarily follows upon the simple movement of the will, since the lower appetite naturally follows upon the movement of the higher appetite unless something fights it off. And so it is impossible for the movement of anger to be totally lacking in the sentient appetite except through the removal of, or weakness of, the will's movement. And so, as a result, the lack of the passion of anger is once again sinful, just as is the lack of the will's movement to punish in accord with the judgment of reason.

Reply to objection 1: An individual who is totally without anger when he should be angry imitates God with respect to His lack of passion, but not with respect to God's punishing by judgment.

Reply to objection 2: As with all the other movements of the sentient appetite, the passion of anger is useful for a man's more promptly executing what reason dictates. Otherwise, the sentient appetite would exist in a man in vain, even though nature does nothing in vain.

Reply to objection 3: As has been explained, in an individual who is acting in orderly fashion, reason's judgment is a cause not only of the simple movement of the will, but also of the passion that belongs to the sentient appetite. And so just as the removal of the effect is a sign of the removal of the cause, so the removal of anger is a sign of the removal of reason's judgment.