

Bible Passages Exploring
God's Guidance for Our Lives

GOD'S WISDOM

THE BOOK OF WISDOM



CHAPTER 3

FOR MORE PAMPHLETS ON BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.pamphletstoinspire.com

The Book of Wisdom never existed among the Hebrews. Its style has rather the fragrance of Greek eloquence. The Jews claim that it is a work of Philo; it is then said to be a work of Wisdom because in it the coming of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, and his passion are clearly expressed. This is the Prologue Jerome put before the Book of Wisdom; he shows firstly the origin of this book saying: 'The Book of Wisdom never existed among the Hebrews. Its style, that is, its language is so elegant that it 'has rather the fragrance of Greek eloquence', that is, its taste is more Greek than Hebrew. The Greeks are more eloquent and deeper in their statements than the Hebrews. So, since this book has a most elegant style with the deepest teachings, it is clear that it was written in Greek rather than in Hebrew. Secondly, Jerome names its author when he says: 'The Jews claim that it', namely, the Book of Wisdom 'is a work of Philo' as its compiler but that Solomon was the person who discovered it. While Philo was a Jew he was highly skilled in the Greek language. Jerome says of him in the book *De viris illustribus* that 'he was a Jew of Alexandria of the class of priests'. Thirdly, he gives the reason for the title when he says: 'it is then said to be a work of Wisdom because in it the coming of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, and his passion are clearly expressed'. The translation is based on the Douay Rheims version of the Bible.

**THE COMMENTARY ON THE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF WISDOM
ARE THE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SERAPHIC DOCTOR SAINT BONAVENTURE,
OFM**

Chapter 3

Secondly, in two ways he encourages a likeness to the just

In the preceding he withdrew from an imitation of the wicked; now he encourages an imitation of the good, and, firstly, by a commendation of their state; secondly, by a condemnation of the opposite state, as in 3:10: *But the wicked shall be punished according to their own devices.*

**Firstly, in two ways he encourages
by a commendation of their state**

In the first part, from the point of view of the just he treats, firstly, of their deliverance from evil; secondly, of their reward in good: *The just shall shine and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds.*

In the first part he treats of their freedom from the evil of eternal damnation; secondly, from the evil of temporal death: *In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; thirdly, from the evil of present vexation or tribulation: And though in the sight of people they suffered torments, their hope is full of immortality.*

For dreadful are the ends,

that is, the end which is the bitterness of punishment that they shall have at the end, *of a wicked race*, that is, workers or imitators of iniquity, whatever there be in the beginning or in the middle because:

'Not in the same way do the last things agree with the first';
Sirach 41:9:

'The inheritance of the children of sinners shall perish,
and with their posterity shall be a perpetual reproach'.

End of Wisdom 3

(Verse 17). *And if they live long*, namely, in this world, *they shall be nothing regarded*, namely, without any value in themselves; 'Sin is nothing, and people become nothing when they sin'. Or: *they shall be nothing regarded*,

'That is, for all eternity their memory shall be without blessing'. *And without honour*, namely, given by others; 1 Samuel 2:30: 'They that despise me shall be despised'. I say, *their last old age shall be without honour*, when it should be revered; so Leviticus 19:32: 'Honour the aged person'; also here in 4:8: *For venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by the number of years*.

(Verses 18, 19). *And if they die quickly*, namely, preoccupied with death, according to Psalm 54:24: 'Bloody and deceitful people shall not live out half their days'. *They shall have neither hope*, that is, something hoped for after death, namely, life eternal, because 'the hope of the wicked shall perish', as in Proverbs 10:28. *Nor speech of comfort in the day of trial*, which will be in the judgment.

Judgment day is called a day of trial for the good, because then they shall be recognized by God, just as the brothers of Joseph were recognized by him, Genesis 45:1.

Also, for the wicked, for their hidden actions shall be made known; 1 Corinthians 4:5: 'The Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts'. Also, for God, because God will be known by the Saints; 1 Corinthians 13:12: 'Then I shall know even as I am known'. Also for Christ as man because then he will be seen openly by all; Isaiah 40:5: 'All flesh together shall see that the mouth of the Lord has spoken'; also Isaiah 52:10: 'All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God';

also Revelation 1:7: 'Every eye shall see him'. Also for the world itself, in which then nothing will be concealed or hidden, according to Psalm 17:16:

'The foundations of the world were discovered'. *Nor in the day*, I say, *of trial*, repeat: *shall they have speech of comfort*, that is, pleasant or consoling, but a most bitter dismissal; so Matthew 25:41: 'Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire'.

(Verse 1). *However, the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them*. 'In the first chapter, the opinion that the wicked held against Christ is expressed; now their stupidities are condemned in that they think that the Saints, whom they slaughter for confessing Christ, are dead'. But it can be continued in this way: I have said well that *they follow the devil that are of his side*.

However, meaning *but*; *the souls of the just* etc., 'that is, of the Martyrs', this is also true of the other just, but the Martyrs in a special way are called just because 'Whoever neglects a loss for the sake of a friend, is just', as in Proverbs 12:26. The Martyrs especially do this because they give up the loss of goods, earthly friends and even their own bodies for the sake of Christ, as is clear in Hebrews 11.

I say, *the souls of the just*; he does not say: bodies, because Job 9:24 says that 'the earth', that is, a body made from the earth, 'is delivered into the hands of the wicked'. He does not say: temporal goods; Job 1:12:

'Behold, all that he has, is in your hand'. *However, the souls are in the hand of God*, that is, in God's protection and so they are secure; Psalm 90:1 'He that dwells in the aid of the most High, shall abide under the protection of the God of Jacob'; John 10:28: 'No one shall pluck them out of my hand'. *And the torment of death shall not touch them*, namely, eternal death, so Job 5:19 says:

'In six troubles he shall deliver you, and in the seventh, evil shall not touch you', that is, the torment of hell. This torment is described in Job 24:19: 'Let him pass from the snow waters to excessive heat';

also in Psalm 10:7: 'He shall rain snares on sinners, fire and brimstone and storms of winds shall be the portion of their cup'. By the name death, as understood in his community, eternal death is here understood, because it is the true death; but temporal death is like a shadow of death, according to John 5:24: 'Comes not into judgment but is passed over from death to life'.

(Verse 2). *In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure was taken for misery.* Note that evil and unbelieving people look on the death of the Saints as a death caused by a separation of the union of a soul with a body, a torment from the sorrow of what had been joined, a destruction in a loss of a soul that they think perishes with a body; they look on it as *utter destruction* from the point of view of the body's subsequent return to dust. In accord with this we read: *In the sight of the unwise they, namely, the just, seemed to die, namely, an eternal death while in fact they cross to a better life.* 'God provides such grace to the Christian faith that death, that stands as something contrary to life, might become a means by which one crosses to life'. He says: *In the sight of the unwise, who 'have set their eyes bowing down to the earth', that is, who reflect only on things present not on future things; so to such they certainly seem to die, but in the eyes of the wise they seem to be born, for which reason the death of the Saints is called a birth, according to Job 11:17: 'When you shall think yourself consumed, you shall rise as the day star'. And their departure, from the body, was taken, namely, by the wicked, for misery, that is, as solitary with no value, while it could be a consolation for them, according to Philippians 1:23: 'Having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ'; Saint Bernard says: 'The Saints desire death and are patient in life'. But for the reprobate there is *misery* in the departure of their death, and this, because, as the same Bernard says: 'for them there is sorrow in their departure, horror in passing, shame in the sight of God'.*

(Verse 3). *And from a just going away, that is, from a way of justice, they went into destruction;* 'That is, in the reckoning of the wicked' because 'they think the palm of martyrdom is a trouble and destruction'; they think that for the soul it is a going away into nothing, for they think the soul is reduced to nothing; and repeat: *the just went away, in the opinion of the wicked, into utter destruction, that is, reduced to dust from the point of view of the body; this destruction or utter destruction is from us, that is, from the first parents; Romans 5:12: 'By one man death entered into this world'.*

Or: He calls temporal death *destruction* because it cuts one off from this present life; he calls eternal death *utter destruction*, because it cuts one off from eternal life; Baruch 3:19: 'They are cut off, and are gone down to hell'. And in this way it has been changed or gone from one deadly punishment into another deadly punishment, according to Job 24:19: 'Let him pass from the snow waters to excessive heat'. Such err when so thinking; so below in Wisdom 5:4: *We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour.* Wisdom 3:3: *But they are in peace;* 'Of perpetual quiet, now in hope, then in fact'; Revelation 14:13: 'From henceforth now, says the Spirit that they may rest from their labours'. The end of the just is peace; so Isaiah 32:17: 'The work of justice shall be peace'.

And though in the sight of people they suffered torments, their hope is full of Immortality. Here is treated freedom from the evil of present trouble, and, firstly, freedom in hope; secondly, in fact, as in: *Afflicted in few things, in many they shall be well rewarded;* thirdly, the cause of both, as in: *Because God has tried them and found them worthy of God.*

(Verse 15). *For the fruit of good labours is glorious;* 'That is, eternal joy'; 1 Corinthians 3:8: 'Each shall receive his or her own reward, according to each one's own labour'. *And the root of wisdom never fails,* intransitive; 'for wisdom is the root of this fruit'. This root does not fail because, it bears the fruit of perpetual salvation'; Sirach 1:25: 'The root of wisdom is to fear the Lord'. This root is known to few; Psalm 13:3: 'There is no fear of God before their eyes'; Sirach 1:6: 'To whom has the root of wisdom been revealed?'

But the children of adulterers shall not come to perfection, and the seed of the unlawful bed shall be rooted out. Here he specifies the punishment for incontinence that the reprobate thought was nothing and, firstly, he treats of the punishment to be inflicted on them in the future; secondly, in this world, as in: *And if they live long;* thirdly, the reason for the punishment, as in: *For dreadful are the ends of a wicked race.*

(Verse 16). *But the children of adulterers shall not come to perfection and the seed of the unlawful bed shall be rooted out.* I have said well that the continent shall be rewarded; *the children of the adulterers, namely, imitators of paternal incontinence; shall not come to perfection,* 'that is, from an eternal wasting away',

Exodus 20:5: 'Putting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children', namely, the imitators of the paternal crime. *And the seed, add: a product, of the unlawful bed, namely, of adultery, shall be rooted out;* 'in the future', when they are put beyond the limits of the earth of the living; so Baruch 3:19: 'They are cut off, and are gone down to hell'.

A different interpretation of *children* and *seed*, namely, of the disciples of heretics who are here threatened with the punishment of the senses and the punishment of the damned because they adulterate the word of God.

Of such, 2 Corinthians 2:17 says: 'We are not as many, adulterating the word of God'.

(Verse 14). *And the eunuch, that has not wrought iniquity with his hands, nor thought wicked things against God, for the precious gift of faith shall be given to him, and a most acceptable lot in the temple of God.* Here from the point of view of the male sex, he treats of the merit of continence; secondly, its reward, as in: *the precious gift of faith shall be given to him*; thirdly, the reason for the reward: *For the fruit of good labours is glorious.*

So the text adds: *And the eunuch, 'who has made himself a eunuch for the kingdom of heaven', Matthew 19:12. That has not wrought iniquity with his hands,* that is, has not committed an act of the sin of incontinence, but is pure in body. *Nor thought wicked things against God,* that is, he did not sin by consent or in his will, but is pure in heart; for both purities are needed;

'Where God when judging shall have found corruption of the mind, at the same time the Lord will condemn the incorruptibility'. Repeat, I say, that such a *eunuch* is happy, now in hope, but finally in fact. *For the precious gift of faith shall be given to him,* in the present; *of faith* that makes one happy in hope, according to John 20:29: 'Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed'. He calls the gift of faith *the precious gift* because it is given out of divine election and makes people to be chosen; Philippians 1:29: 'For to you it is given for Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him'. *And a lot,* that is, a lot in the future *in the temple of God*; 'In heaven'; Psalm 10:5: 'The Lord is in his holy throne, the Lord's throne is in heaven'.

But against this: Because Revelation 21:22 says: 'And I saw no temple therein', namely, in the heavenly city.

It has to be said that there is not a material but a spiritual temple there.

Most acceptable. Note that a lot is acceptable in the good things of nature, more acceptable in the good things of grace, most acceptable in the good things of glory. This is 'the best gift' spoken of in James 1:17.

(Verses 4, 5). Therefore, it is said: *And though,* words used instead of although, *in the sight of people*; 'Because the crown of glory is before God'; *they suffered torments,* namely, various and heavy torments as is clear in the Martyrs of whom we read in Hebrews 11:37: 'They were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword'. *Their hope,* namely, the just, according to Proverbs 14:32: 'The just has hope in his or her death'; *is full of immortality,* immortality, I say, not like the immortality of the first parents, namely, with the possibility of dying; not like that of the damned in hell, namely, with a perpetual desire to die; Revelation 9:6: 'They shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them'; not like children in limbo, namely, deprived of the glorious life, but like that of the Blessed in heaven; Romans 5:2: 'We glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God'.

And rightly do they hope because, *afflicted in few things,* 'Bodily'; *in many they shall be well rewarded*; Matthew 25:23: 'Because you have been faithful over a few things, I will place you over many things'; Luke 22:29: 'And I dispose to you, as my Father has disposed to me, a kingdom'. And what these many things are is stated in Isaiah 64:4: 'The eye has not seen, O God, besides you, what things you have prepared for them that wait for you'.

But there is a doubt about what is said, namely: *afflicted in few things,* because Hebrews 11:37 says: 'They were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword'.

It must be said that their torments were many in themselves, but few in comparison: firstly, in comparison with their reckoning, according to Genesis 29:20: 'They seemed' namely, to Jacob, 'but a few days, because of the greatness of his love'. Secondly, in comparison with the passion of Christ;

Lamentations 1:12: 'O all you who pass by the way'; also in Psalm 140:6: 'Falling upon the rock', namely, Christ, 'their judges', that is, the Apostles and other Martyrs. Thirdly, in comparison with a future reward; Romans 8:18: 'The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come'; also, 2 Corinthians 4:17: 'For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, works for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory'. Fourthly, in comparison with eternal affliction; Job 6:16: 'They that fear the hoary frost, the snow shall fall upon them'.

Fifthly, in comparison with what is owed and of obligation, that is, of the punishment due for what has been omitted and of the obligation due to what has been committed; Psalm 115:12: 'What shall I render to the Lord, for all the things that he has rendered to me?'

Because God has tried them and found them worthy of God. Here the cause of the preceding is treated, and, firstly, their chastisement; secondly, their purgation: *As gold in the furnace he has proved them*; thirdly, future reward: *And in time there shall be respect had to them.*

I have said well, that *in many they shall be well rewarded, because God has tried them*; 'That is, God has chastised them with various troubles'; 2 Corinthians 6:9: 'As chastised, and not killed'.

But against this: 'God tempts no one', as found in James 1:13. It has to be said that God does not tempt to learn as we do; Daniel 1:12: 'Try, I beseech you, your servants for ten days'; or to deceive as does the devil; Matthew 4:3: 'And the tempter coming said to him: If you are the Son of God'; also 1 Corinthians 7:5: 'Lest Satan tempt you'; but to teach as a master to a disciple; Psalm 25:2: 'Prove me, O Lord, and try me, burn my inmost feelings and my heart'.

And found them worthy of God, namely, 'by sharing in my happiness', something acquired through tribulations; hence Acts 14:21: 'Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God'; also Tobit 3:21: 'Life, if it be under trial, shall be crowned'.

(Verse 6). *As gold in the furnace he has proved them*, namely, the soul by purging them in the fire of tribulation but not destroying them; 'Just as gold is not destroyed in a furnace, but tested, so the Martyrs do not fail but are prepared for glory'; Sirach 2:5: 'For gold and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable people in the furnace of humiliation', namely, by present tribulations; Job 23:10: 'God has tried me as gold that has passed through the fire'. *And as a victim of a holocaust* that is totally burnt in the sacrifice of the Lord's body; *he has received them*, namely, in their body by approving or accepting their devotion; Romans 12:1: 'Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God'.

And in time, namely, of retribution: 'There is not a perpetual death of the Saints, but a copious reward on the day of judgment'; *there shall be respect had to them*, that is, in the eye of mercy that the Psalmist requests saying: 'O look upon me, and have mercy on me'. I say, *respect had to them*, that is, the just who now seem to be forsaken by God, according to Psalm 21:2: 'O God my God, look upon me, why have you forsaken me?' Also, why have you disdained me, according to Psalm 43:24: 'Why do you turn your face away?'

(Verses 12, 13). *Their wives are foolish*, as if to say: not only them but also their women, that is, *their wives are foolish*, namely, devoid of wisdom; *and their children wicked*, because imitators of paternal crime, of crime, I say, against themselves and against a neighbour and against God, and so most wicked.

Their offspring is cursed, 'that is, a [cursed] work, for the wisdom that God created as a blessing does not curse, but shows that the work of the reprobate is worthy of an eternal cursing'. These can be explained allegorically of heretics, so that we may say: *Wives*, 'that is, carnal pleasures, or improper interpretations or dogmas'; and *children*, 'that is, improper works'; and *their offspring*, that is, disciples. Or: *offspring cursed*, not in general, but *theirs*, in so far as they are misused.

For happy is the barren and the undefiled, that have not known bed in sin. Here he shows the reward of a continent life, regarded by the reprobate as nothing; and, firstly, he shows this from a feminine point of view; secondly, from a masculine point of view: *And the eunuch, that has not wrought iniquity with his hands.*

So he says: *For happy is the barren and the undefiled*, as if to say: I have said well, that their women and their children are procreated cursed because of their lust, while on the contrary *happy is the barren*, that is, from a chaste body; he states the consequence as an antecedent; *and undefiled*, in mind; Luke 23:29: 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne'; *that have not known bed in sin*, from a knowledge of experience, called 'adulterers'. The gravity of the sin of adultery is treated in almost the whole of the end of the book of Sirach, and Proverbs 6:30: 'The fault is not so great when a man has stolen, for he steals to fill his hungry soul'; and Proverbs 6:32: 'But he that is an adulterer, for the folly of his heart shall destroy his own soul'.

This of spiritual adultery, saying: 'Happy is the chaste and continent soul that is polluted neither by heresy nor idolatry'. *She shall have fruit*; 'A fruit of eternal happiness'; namely, either thirtyfold owing to spouses, or sixtyfold owing to widows, or a hundredfold owing to virgins. Of this multiple fruit it is said in the parable of the seed in Luke 8:8: 'And being sprung up, yielded fruit a hundredfold etc.' *In the visitation of holy souls*; 'On the day of judgment, when God will visit holy souls to reward them and they shall visit God in contemplation'.

(Verse 11). *For those who reject wisdom, and discipline, are unhappy, and their hope is vain, and their labours without fruit, and their works unprofitable. For, that is, because; those who reject, 'By doing evil', wisdom, about what is eternal, discipline, about temporal matters; or rather: wisdom, of the faith, discipline, of conduct; are unhappy, namely, the persons, that is, unworthy of happiness.*

But, on the other hand, 'Blessed is the person who finds wisdom', Proverbs 3:13; and also there: 'My child, reject not the correction of the Lord'; also in Hebrews 12:5: 'Neglect not the discipline of the Lord'. *And their present hope is vain, namely, in effect; 'By which they think what is temporal will be eternal and sins will not be punished'; Sirach 34:1: 'The hopes of one who is void of understanding are vain and deceitful'.*

And their labours without fruit; 'Of eternal reward'; Ecclesiastes 10:15: 'The labour of fools shall afflict them'. On the contrary there is said to the just: 'For you shall eat the labours of your hands, blessed are you, and it shall be well with you'.

From this it is clear that the life of the wicked is burdensome; so Wisdom 5:7: *We have walked through hard, but unfruitful, ways;*

Hence Habakkuk 2:13: 'The people shall labour in a great fire, and the nations in vain, and they shall faint'. *And their works unprofitable, in working; unprofitable, 'because they do not merit a heavenly home', Galatians 5:21: 'They who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God'.*

From the preceding it is clear that, as a consequence, there are four evils which are: unhappiness of a person, emptiness of hope, no profit in work, lack of value in work or a work of demerits.

The just shall shine and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds. After having dealt with freedom from evil, he goes now to the reward in good, firstly, as far as the garment of the body is concerned; secondly, in what concerns the honour of judiciary power, as in 3:8: They shall judge nations, and rule over people; thirdly, in what concerns the glory of divine enjoyment, as in 3:9: They that trust in the Lord, shall understand the truth, and they that are faithful in love shall rest in him, for grace and peace is to his elect.

(Verse 7). I have said well that *in time there shall be respect had to them, because the just shall shine*, namely, by a gift of clarity in judgment about the substance of the body, according to Matthew 13:43: 'Then shall the just shine as the sun'; however, the sun shall shine sevenfold more than now; so Isaiah 30:26: 'The light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days'. *And shall run to and fro like sparks*, that is, able to run being endowed with the gift of fleetness for the working or movement of the body, according to Isaiah 40:31: 'They that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall take wings as eagles';

'Certainly, wherever the spirit may have wished to be, immediately the body will be there'. I say, *like sparks among the reeds*, that burn and consume. A bed of reeds indicates here the body of the reprobate because externally it has a splendid appearance, internally it is devoid of truth, carries no fruit of good work, is carefully moistened with the swamp of carnal concupiscence, is moved by the wind of pride, and is ready for eternal burning. The Saints are said to run in this bed of reeds, crushing them, Malachi 4:3: 'You shall tread down the wicked'. Four qualities of a body can be noted in a spark, namely, clearness, subtlety, fleetness, and active power, and, through these, impassibility can be understood.

(Verse 8). *They shall judge nations*. This is said especially of perfect Saints who *shall judge* and not be judged. There are four orders in judgment as on Psalm 1:5 says: 'Therefore the wicked shall not rise again in judgment'.

But how will the Saints judge when it is written in John 5:22: 'The Father has given all judgment to the Son'?

It has to be said that there is a judgment of authority by which the whole Trinity shall judge; of dispute by which only Christ as man; of dignity as an assessor; of approbation by which all the good; of comparison by which the good, that is, the less evil; Matthew 12:41: 'The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it'.

And they shall rule over people, namely, after judgment; Revelation 5:10: 'We shall reign on the earth', that is, over those who are earthly. Or: *They shall rule over people*, after death; Matthew 15:27: 'The dogs also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters', that is, from the kindnesses of the Blessed. *And their Lord*, Christ, *shall reign* with them or in them; Revelation 19:16: 'King of kings and Lord of lords'; *forever*; Luke 1:33: 'Of his kingdom there shall be no end'; Psalm 144:13: 'Your kingdom is a kingdom of all ages'.

They that trust in him. Here he treats the glory of enjoyment, and he treats this under three headings, namely, under knowledge of truth, under a clinging to goodness, as in: *they that are faithful in love*, under a perfection of understanding as in: *for grace and peace is to the elect*.

(Verse 9). Therefore, he says: *They that trust in the Lord, shall understand the truth, and they that are faithful in love shall rest in the Lord, for grace and peace is to the elect*, as if to say, they shall not only judge, but also *trust in the Lord*, namely, God, in the present, according to Psalm 124:1: 'They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion'; *They shall understand the truth*, from an open vision; 1 John 3:2: 'We shall see him as he is'; 'An understanding of truth is given in accord with true trust'. *And they that are faithful in love*, that is, loving the Lord faithfully and inseparably, like the Apostle who in Romans 8:35 says: 'Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ?'

Sirach 6:15: 'Nothing can be compared to a faithful friend'. *They shall rest in the Lord* 'Because in the future they shall not be able to be torn from his company whom already they held here in faith and hope'. Therefore, the rest of the understanding of faith in God comes through love. *For grace*; 'Of eternal abundance'; Psalm 16:15: 'I shall be satisfied when your glory shall appear'; also: 'They shall be inebriated with the plenty of your house'. *And peace*, 'eternal', Isaiah 32:18: 'My people shall sit in the beauty of peace'; also Philippians 4:7: 'And the peace of Christ which surpasses all understanding'; *is to the elect*, to the Saints, whom God chooses from this world; John 15:16: 'You have not chosen me but I have chosen you out of the world'.

This can also be expounded of personal merit that consists in knowledge of the truth through faith, in conformity to the human and divine will through love, so that *grace* is referred to the knowledge of faith and *peace* to the tranquillity of love.

Secondly, he encourages a likeness of the just by a triple rebuttal of the opposite state

But the wicked shall be punished according to their own devices, who have neglected the just, and have revolted from the Lord. He shows, firstly, the false error of the wicked in their freedom from punishment; secondly, their Erroneous opinion about the reward of a continent life, as in: *for happy is the barren*; thirdly, the penalty for incontinence, as in: *The children of adulterers shall not come to perfection*.

(Verse 10). So there follows: *But the wicked shall be punished according to their own devices*. I have said well that the just shall be rewarded, *according to their own devices*, that is, from the merit of the bad thoughts, words and actions coming from their evil devices; *shall be punished*, 'that is, a punishment', 'When the just shall enter into rest, the wicked shall go to eternal punishment'. *Who have neglected the just*, 'that is, justice'; or masculine, *the just*, 'that is, God', and this by omitting good; Jeremiah 48:10,

according to another reading:

'Cursed be the one that does the work of the Lord negligently'; 'It is a grave damage that comes from negligence'.

And have revolted from the Lord, by openly committing evil; Jeremiah 2:19: 'Know you, and see that it is an evil and a bitter thing for you, to have left the Lord your God'; 'evil', on account of the punishment of the damned; bitter, on account of the punishment of the senses;

'Those who give up discipline and wisdom, draw back from the Lord'; this is indeed evil.