On the Law of Nature in the Three States of Life, and the Proofs That This Law Is Summarized in the Decalogue

Thus far, we have inquired in general concerning nature as the guide of man in pursuit of the actions proper to himself, and we have laid the firm and immovable foundations on which the rest depends.[1] But, because the actions of men vary in accordance with [different] types of life, we must distinguish the types of life, and we must adapt for each one its own proper end, composed from those three [ends that I mentioned above].[2] Truly, no consideration will be more pleasant, none more charming, none more useful in common life, none, in short, more worthy or magnificent than this one.

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1 Niels Hemmingsen, *De lege naturae apodictica methodus* (Wittenberg: Rhaw, 1562), sig. G5v–K5v. Images appear courtesy the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek under the terms of use for nonprofit, educational purposes, available at: http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10191732-4. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of classical and early Christian sources are the translator's.

2 Hemmingsen refers to his earlier remark, not included in this selection: "There is, moreover, a threefold end that belongs to each thing. One is seen from the most perfect state of each thing; the second is understood from the actions proper to each thing; the third, which also exists as the end of Goods, is taken from the order of things." See Hemmingsen, *De lege naturae*, sig. F5r.

Therefore the types of life are, in general, twofold, as can be understood from what I have said above, and as Aristotle[3] bears witness in the *Ethics*:[4] the contemplative [*theoreticum*] and the active [*practicum*].

The contemplative type of life busies itself in contemplation and inquiry. From here [come] the sciences and the arts [*scientiae et artes*], in which life's greatest aid has been placed. To this [pertains] that saying of Hipparchus: "For everyone, by far the most precious of all things for living is art [*ars*]."[5] For, as

[3] Aristotle, one of the most important philosophers of antiquity, was born in 384 BC and died in 322. In addition to being tutor to Alexander the Great, he wrote works such as the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Politics*, the *Poetics*, and the *Rhetoric*, in addition to works on logic, metaphysics, and the natural sciences. Unless otherwise noted, all biographical information for classical authors is taken from the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edition, ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth [hereafter *OCD*] (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Biographical information for early Christian authors is taken from the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed., ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[4] Cf. *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by R. Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1.5 (1095b14–19), though Aristotle there divides life into three types (while admitting that the first type is "fit only for cattle" and thus in a sense subhuman):

> For people seem, not unreasonably, to base their conception of the good—happiness, that is—on their own lives. The masses, the coarsest people, see it as pleasure, and so they like the life of enjoyment. There are three especially prominent types of life: that just mentioned, the life of politics, and thirdly the life of contemplation.

See also 10.7–8 (1177a12–1179a32); and *Eudemian Ethics*, translated by B. Inwood and R. Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1.4.2–3 (1215a33–1215b6):

> Since there are three things that rank as conducive to happiness, the ones that were earlier described as the greatest possible human goods, namely virtue, wisdom and pleasure, we see also that there are three lives, chosen by all who have the means to do so—that of politics, that of philosophy, and that of enjoyment. Of these, the life of philosophy tends to be occupied with wisdom and contemplation of the truth, the political life with fine actions (these being the products of virtue), and the life of enjoyment with bodily pleasures.

[5] A quotation from fr. 2 of Hipparchus Comicus' lost comedy Ζωγράφος ("The Painter"), preserved in Stobaeus' *Anthology*. Hipparchus flourished around 260 BC and wrote New Comedy.

another poet says, "There is no greater consolation in life for human misfortune than art; for while the mind [*animus*] is free for its own learning, it sails past misfortune all unknowing."[6] Moreover, as to the fact that the arts ought to lead us as if by the hand to God, Plato bears witness, who says that the arts contain the sweetest report of the gods. But here we must watch out lest we devote ourselves to idle curiosities and useless things rather than to aids that are useful for life. It is sufficient to have noted these things concerning the contemplative type of life.

The active type of life looks to actions and busies itself in them on account of some end that is useful in life.

This type of life is, moreover, threefold: the domestic [*oeconomicum*], the political, and the spiritual. This entire type, which we call the *active*, has an end, which is the preservation of itself through actions proper to itself, which look to God as their ultimate goal [*scopum*]. For in every type of life, actions must be so ordered that they not wander away from the end itself of Goods, or from the end of Ends.

Accordingly, the end of the domestic [type of life] is the preservation of the family and the household through domestic actions that look to God as the end of Goods.

Because the reason [*ratio*] of preserving the whole is the same as that of preserving a part, λόγος [reason] ought to be in charge in this type of life and manage the household by its own prudence. Ἐπιθυμία [desire] ought, by means of a certain moderation and temperance, to be subject to reason, lest the affections attempt anything contrary to right reason. Θυμὸς [the spirited faculty] ought to assist reason as a παραστάτης [right-hand man] and check the affections (if there is ever need) by its own courage.[7] To all of these things, justice is added as a moderator that brings it about that husband and wife, master and slave, *paterfamilias* and *materfamilias*, spouses and families, render the duties owed to one another, in order that the household may thus be preserved sound, united in the sweetest harmony.

In order that we may better understand the reason that pertains to preserving the household, let us propose for ourselves the following demonstration, which relies on the foundations propounded above.

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6 The source of this quotation is uncertain. Hemmingsen attributes it to a "poet," but the Latin is not metrical, and so he must be paraphrasing.

7 For Plato's tripartite theory of the soul, see *Republic* 4, especially 435b and following.

Whatever by itself preserves the domestic state[8] in a sound condition is commanded by the law of nature. That spouses embrace one another in mutual love, beget and rear children, protect them, instruct them in honorable morals, guide them with discipline, provide for them with the things that are necessary; and, in turn, that children revere their parents, obey and be grateful to them, and similar comparable duties: these things preserve the domestic state. Therefore, these things are commanded by the law of nature. The major premise is immovable. The minor premise is shown from the contraries and the consequents. When these duties are violated, families fall into ruin, as many sad examples teach. Therefore, we see that by means of these duties households stand fast, flourish, and are preserved sound, especially when these domestic duties are referred to God as their ultimate end, as was said above.

From this demonstration flow the domestic commandments, many of which are found in Xenophon,[9] Aristotle, Plutarch,[10] and other famous philosophers. Many expressions of the philosophers pertain to this matter, all of which are contained in the fourth and sixth commandments.[11] However, we shall rehearse a few for the sake of example.

Concerning the mutual duty of spouses, Clement of Alexandria[12] cites the following verses from an ancient tragedy:

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8 *Status*, used here and in what follows (including in the expression "political state" below) in the general sense of "condition, circumstances."

9 Xenophon, an Athenian, who was born around 430 BC and died in 354, was author of numerous works such as the *Anabasis*, the *Cyropaedia*, a Socratic *Apology* and *Symposium*, and the *Oeconomicus*.

10 Plutarch, a Greek who achieved high position in the administration of the Roman Empire, was born before AD 50 and died after 120. Among his many works are the famous *Parallel Lives* and many treatises on moral philosophy.

11 That is, the fourth and sixth commandments in the Lutheran numbering, "Honor your father and your mother" and "You shall not commit adultery."

12 Clement of Alexandria, who was born around AD 150 and died around 215, was a Christian theologian. In addition to the *Paedagogus*, he wrote the hortatory *Protrepticus* and the *Stromateis*, or *Miscellanies*. Clement found Christianity to be the fulfillment of both the Old Testament and Greek philosophy.

οὐ χρυσὸς, οὐ τυραννὶς, οὐ πλούτου χλιδή,
τοσοῦτον εἶχεν διαφόρους τὰς ἡδονὰς,
ὥς ἀνδρὸς ἐσθλοῦ καὶ γυναικὸς εὐσεβοῦς
γνώμη δικαία, καὶ φρονοῦσα τἀνδρικὰ.[13]

That is:

So great is the pleasure neither of gold nor of
sovereignty, no splendor is more delightful,
than the friendly harmony of dutiful spouses,
who bravely cherish a mutual love.

And Euripides:[14]

ὅστις δὲ τοὺς τεκόντας ἐν βίῳ σέβει,
ὁδ' ἐστὶ καὶ ζῶν καὶ θανὼν θεοῖς φίλος.[15]

That is:

Whoever reverences his parents in life,
this one is dear to the gods both alive and dead.

And Menander:[16]

Βούλου γονεῖς προπαντὸς ἐν τιμαῖς ἔχειν, ἱκανῶς βιώσῃς γηροβοσκῶν τοὺς γονεῖς.[17]

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[13] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 3.12.84.

[14] The Athenian tragedian Euripides was probably born in the 480s and died in 407–406. Of his ninety plays, eighteen survive, including such works as the *Medea*, the *Hippolytus*, and the *Bacchae*.

[15] Euripides, fr. 852[N].

[16] Menander (?344/43–292/21 BC) was an Athenian writer of New Comedy. He wrote over one hundred plays, of which none survives complete (though the *Dyskolos* is nearly so). Several collections of maxims are attributed to Menander (see next n.), but most are not actually by him.

[17] Hemmingsen combines two different lines of Menander, *Sentences* 113 (with a slight textual variant) and 365. Throughout this translation, Menander is cited from the edition edited by S. Jaekel (Leipzig: Teubner, 1964).

That is:

> Whoever shows honor to his parents will live abundantly and will be dear to his own.[18]

Homer,[19] who tells of a certain youth killed in the Trojan War because he did not pay to his parents τὰ θρεπτήρια [the return children owed their parents for rearing them] gives the antithesis of this view.[20]

Thus far have I spoken concerning domestic life from the sources [*fontibus*] of the law of nature. From these the moral philosopher, who undertakes to give instruction concerning the domestic state, ought to seek its principles and demonstrations.

The end of political life is a calm and peaceful state of polities through political actions, all of which ought to be referred to this: that a just harmony of political order be maintained, with proportionate justice [*iure analogo*] preserved among men, and that God be established in human society as the ultimate end of human society. One must watch out, therefore, lest political actions wander away from this end of Goods. Because the reason of preserving the whole is the same as that of preserving the individual parts, insofar as it pertains to the type of actions, the same virtues are required here as we said were required in individual men and then in individual families. For the preservation of polities, therefore, prudence, temperance, courage, and justice are required,[21] and those in the following order, [namely,] that prudence alone command, but the rest, each in its own place and order, obey, as Plato[22] teaches. For in the harmony of

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18 My English translation here is a translation of Hemmingsen's own verse-translation, rather than a translation of the Greek lines directly.

19 Homer was the most famous, and probably the earliest, of the Greek epic poets whose works have survived. Two epics are attributed to him, the *Iliad* (perhaps around 750 BC) and the *Odyssey* (perhaps around 725).

20 The reference seems to be to Homer, *Iliad* 4.477–9 and/or 17.300–3; in each of these instances death is what *prevents* the young man from returning care to his parents. If Homer nods, we must allow the same concession to Hemmingsen.

21 That is, the four cardinal virtues.

22 Plato (around 429–347 BC) is, along with Aristotle and Socrates himself (the latter of whom Plato immortalized), the most significant philosopher of ancient Greece.

these [virtues] consists that which is most difficult in life, namely, τὸ εὖ ἄρχειν καὶ τὸ εὖ ἄρχεσθαι, that is, rightly commanding and rightly obeying. Therefore, all of these virtues are required, both in the one who commands and in the one who obeys the command. He who commands has need of courage, by which he may preserve the citizens in their duty and turn harmful things away from the citizens; he has need of temperance in order that he (by indulging in vicious affections) may not destroy the harmony of human society; he has need of justice by which he may exercise rule over contracts, distribute honors and services, confer rewards and decree punishments, with the owed proportion preserved in each individual instance—that is, in some a geometrical proportion, as in duties and rewards, and in others an arithmetical proportion, as in contracts.[23]

It is necessary to apply prudence to all of these as a moderator. Not less are the virtues mentioned above required for obeying well and lawfully—courage, temperance, justice—to which prudence must be applied as a moderator. These virtues, kept unharmed on each side, preserve τὴν ἰσότητα *Geometricam & Arithmeticam* [geometrical and arithmetical proportion],[24] without which commonwealths are not able to stand.

In order, however, that the reason requisite for preserving a polity may stand out more clearly, let us look to the following demonstration, which relies on the foundations propounded above.

Whatever preserves the political state is commanded by the law of nature. This [state], however, is by no means able to be preserved without the ordering of superiors and inferiors, that is, of magistrates and subjects. Accordingly, the ordering of magistrates and subjects is commended [to us] by the law of nature. For if the rending of human society is contrary to nature, so also ἀναρχία [anarchy],

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Plato wrote in the form of dialogues. He himself never appears as a character, though Socrates figures prominently in many of them. His most well-known works include the *Apology*, the *Republic*, the *Symposium*, and the *Phaedrus*.

23 Cf. Aristotle's discussion of justice in *Nicomachean Ethics* 5.

24 *A Greek-English Lexicon*, comp. Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott [herein *LSJ*] (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) notes that this Greek noun is often used in political contexts (for instance, in Plato's *Laws* 757a and Aristotle's *Politics* 1302a7) in addition to its mathematical and geometrical use; see *LSJ* s.v. ἰσότης I.A.2.

which brings this [rending] about, will be contrary to nature. Therefore, nature requires the ordering of superiors and inferiors.

Moreover, because the political state cannot be sound unless there is just dealing with allies, courageous dealing with enemies, [and][25] moderate and prudent dealing with all, it follows that the law of nature requires those four virtues in political society to which many others that are required for the soundness of polities are subjected as subordinate types [*species*]; concerning these Cicero, having followed nature as his guide, wrote elegantly and wisely in his books *On Duties*, and we later shall rehearse a catalogue of them with the addition of short definitions and the expressions of learned men.[26]

Very many expressions [of the ancients] pertain to this matter, but we shall note down a few for the sake of example. In Homer one finds the sweetest expressions by which the duties of magistrates and subjects are, as it were, painted—these, taken one by one, are able to supply the place of whole statements, such as these:

Ἤπιος πατὴρ, "kind father"; as by this name the paternal affection of the magistrate toward his subjects is signified, so a similar affection is required in his subjects.

Βασιλεὺς ["king"], as it were βάσις τοῦ λαοῦ, that is, the support or foundation of the people. For as a building rests upon its foundation and falls to the ground when this has been torn out from under it, so the people supports itself on the laws and power of the magistrate as though on a foundation; when the laws and the magistrate have been taken away, [the people] is destroyed.

Xenophon, explaining a verse of Homer concerning Agamemnon (Ἀμφότερον βασιλεὺς τ' ἀγαθὸς, κρατερός τ' αἰχμήτης [both a noble king and a strong warrior]),[27]

[25] Hemmingsen often makes use, especially in catalogs, of the figure of asyndeton (the omission of conjunctions). Because this stylistic feature is less common in discursive prose in English, "[and]" has been added before the last item in such lists in this translation.

[26] Marcus Tullius Cicero was born in 106 BC and died in 44 BC and was among the most important statesmen, orators, and philosophers of his or any period of Roman history. A great number of his works survive, including letters, speeches, and works on rhetoric and various types of philosophy (especially political philosophy and moral philosophy). Here Hemmingsen refers to Cicero's famous treatise *De Officiis*. The catalogue does not appear in this translated excerpt.

[27] Homer, *Iliad* 3.179, cited in Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.2.2.

teaches that the good king is not he who has care for his own life but he who renders blessed and happy those whom he commands. He says that a king is chosen for the following reason, οὐχ ἵνα ἑαυτοῦ καλῶς ἐπιμελῆται, ἀλλὰ, ἵνα καὶ οἱ ἑλόμενοι διὰ τοῦτον εὖ πραττῶσι,[28] that is, "not so that he may take care for himself, but so that, in fact, those who have chosen him may be well and be happy on account of him."

Ἡγεμὼν, "leader": because he leads the people with wisdom and discipline straight on to virtue and happiness.

Κοσμήτωρ ["commander"]: because he fixes order for the multitude, of which no adornment is more beautiful and nothing more useful in the commonwealth. Therefore Ischomachus rightly instructs his wife, when he says: ἐστὶ οὐδὲν οὕτως ὦ γύναι οὔτ' εὔχρηστον οὔτε καλὸν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς τάξις, that is, "There is nothing, O wife, either so useful or so honorable for men as order."[29]

Μέδων ["protector" or "ruler"]: because the magistrate ought to watch over the soundness of his commonwealth with exceeding care and concern.

Ποιμὴν λαῶν, "shepherd of the people": by this image is signified what sort of care the magistrate ought to have for his citizens. As it is necessary for a shepherd to have care for his sheep, so [it is necessary] for a magistrate [to have care] for his subjects. Sometimes Plato calls the magistrate ἐπίσκοπος, and Xenophon [calls him] ἔφορος, that is, "overseer," because the magistrate ought diligently to observe what the individual citizens are doing. He will spur individuals on to performing their duties; he will summon them to obedience by two things, namely, rewards and punishments. It does not suffice, as Xenophon says, for the citizens to have honorable laws, unless those who are the overseers should also be νομοφύλακες [guardians of the laws],[30] on the one hand praising those who do what has been commanded and, on the other hand, punishing those who transgress the laws.[31]

Furthermore, how great a care the magistrate ought to have for the safety of his citizens is indicated in a verse of Homer: οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὕδειν βουληφόρον

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28 Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.2.3. Hemmingsen's text is slightly different from that found in Xenophon.

29 Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 8.3.

30 Hemmingsen uses this term in the dedicatory epistle to Lord Erik Krabbe as well.

31 Paul similarly describes the role of the magistrate in Romans 13:3–4.

ἄνδρα,[32] that is, "It is not right for a prince, who ought to deliberate about many things, to snore the whole night through." And Sophocles: ὅν πόλις στήσειε, τούτου χρὴ κλύειν,[33] that is, "The one whom the commonwealth has established [as magistrate], him it is right to obey." The same one [says]: καλῶς μὲν ἄρχειν, εὖ δ' ἂν ἄρχεσθαι θέλειν,[34] that is, "Command well and obey well." The poet adds to this a reason sought from nature. He says that a just command, in which the greater give commands rightly and subjects obey justly, preserves the commonwealth; and, on the other hand, that this same [commonwealth] perishes utterly[35] whenever there is ἀναρχία [anarchy]. There are, moreover, the following words of the poet:

> ἀναρχίας δὲ μεῖζον οὐκ ἔστιν κακόν.
> αὕτη πόλεις ὄλλυσιν, ἥδ' ἀναστάτους
> οἴκους τίθησιν, ἥδε ἐν μάχῃ δορὸς
> τροπὰς καταρήγνυσι, τῶν δ' ὀρθουμένων
> σῴζει τὰ πολλὰ σώματα ἡ πειθαρχία,
> οὕτως ἀμύντε' ἐστὶ τοῖς κοσμουμένοις.[36]

That is:

> There is no greater evil than anarchy:
> it overturns cities, it utterly
> makes families to perish, in time of war
> it turns the lazy to flight. But, in contrast,
> to obey the command is the safety of many,
> and therefore those who are in charge ought
> to watch over obedience.

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[32] Homer, *Iliad* 2.61.

[33] Sophocles, *Antigone* 666; Hemmingsen's text differs slightly from Sophocles'. The Athenian tragedian Sophocles was born in the 490s BC and died in late 406 or early 405. A frequent victor at the City Dionysia, he wrote more than 120 plays, of which seven survive, including *Antigone* and *Oedipus the King*.

[34] Sophocles, *Antigone* 669.

[35] *Funditus*, "from the very bottom, from the foundation": cf. his discussion above regarding the βασιλεὺς [king] as the βάσις τοῦ λαοῦ [foundation of the people].

[36] Sophocles, *Antigone* 672–77. Again, Hemmingsen's text differs slightly from Sophocles'.

Here must be observed what I have spoken of above concerning the ultimate end of political life, which is, that all things in human society be referred to God as their ultimate goal [*scopum*]. The thought of this end instructs each one: both him who commands, that he not command his subjects [to do] anything against God and him who obeys, that he not obey a prince in illicit things, that is, in those that conflict with natural and divine law. For here the answer of Socrates in Plato has a place. This man, when his friends were urging that he yield to the Athenian assembly in order to avoid the punishment of death, answered: Ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἄνδρες ἀθηναῖοι ἀσπάζομαι μὲν καὶ φιλῶ, πείσομαι δὲ τῷ θεῷ μᾶλλον ἢ ὑμῖν.[37] "I indeed respect and love you, O men of Athens, but I shall obey God rather than you." Also pertinent to this is the remark of the Theban maiden in the same poet,[38] who, when she was commanded to prefer the edict of the king to the laws of nature, answered with courageous mind in the following words: "In no way do I judge that your decrees have so much force that, although you are a man, you are able to violate the unwritten, but nevertheless most firm, laws of the gods. For they thrive and have force not for a brief time, but always."[39] From these [remarks] it is evident what are the sources, what are the goals of civil laws,[40] and how it is right to recall all things in civil government to their own principles.

The end of spiritual life is its preservation through actions harmonious with this life. Things of this sort are: to know God; to worship him once he has been known; to fear him; to glorify him; and so forth. The domestic and political states ought to be referred to this spiritual life as to their ultimate goal. He who wanders away from it turns the order of nature upside down and calls down penalties upon himself.

For the preservation of this life, the virtues mentioned above are required: prudence, courage, temperance, and justice—although the species [*differentiae*] of these virtues vary to some degree because of the reason of their object [*obiecti rationem*]. The following, moreover, is a demonstration:

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37 Plato, *Apology* 29d2–4.

38 That is, Sophocles.

39 Sophocles, *Antigone* 453–57.

40 The Latin term for "goals" here is *metae*, a metaphor ultimately deriving from Roman circus races. Again, there is an echo of the dedicatory epistle to Lord Erik Krabbe.

Whatever preserves the state of the spiritual life is commanded by the law of nature.

To know God, and to refer all things to him as to the end of Goods, preserves the state of the spiritual life.

Accordingly, as these things are commanded by the law of nature, so those things that are contrary to them are forbidden. The major axiom [*axioma*] is dependent on the principles rehearsed previously. The minor is demonstrated in the following way: The supreme action of the supreme virtue, occupying[41] itself with the most noble object, is the end of man.

To worship God, once he has been known, is the supreme action of the supreme virtue of man, occupying itself with the most noble object. Therefore, this is the end of man, insofar, indeed, as pertains to the spiritual life. The philosopher deduces this demonstration of the minor axiom in the following way: The state of the best life has been placed in happiness. This happiness consists in three things: in the act of the highest power in man, which is the intellect; in the most noble habit, which is virtue; and in the most worthy object, which is God.

Man's right reason progresses all the way to this point. But when an attempt is made to construct the actions harmonious with this life from the conclusion of the demonstration I have set out, the whole way goes astray, just as Paul bears witness in Romans 1 together with our experience. Socrates declares that God must be worshiped and refutes his adversary, who thinks otherwise, with many arguments. He further adds that God must not be worshiped with a worship different from that which has been instituted by God himself. But, when Socrates begins to progress from here, he wanders away from the true God as a blind man and becomes entangled in dreadful errors.

Next, many opinions [*gnomae*] that one reads everywhere in the poets and philosophers are harmonious with our demonstration.

Concerning the oneness of God, it has pleased [me] to note down the following few [statements] out of many. All the Sibyls proclaim that God is one. The Erythraean Sibyl, as Lactantius relates, prophesies thus: Εἷς θεὸς, ὃς μόνος ἐστὶν ὑπερμεγέθης ἀγενητος.[42] That is, "God is one, who is alone greatest and eternal."

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[41] The participle modifies "action."

[42] Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 1.6. The Christian apologist Lactantius (c.250–c.325), at one time a teacher of rhetoric and later tutor to Constantine's son Crispus, is the author, most famously, of *On the Deaths of the Persecutors and the Divine Institutes*.

This same [Sibyl] bears witness that he created all things in the following verses:

> ἀλλὰ θεὸς μόνος εἷς πανυπέρτατος, ὃς πεποίηκεν,
> οὐρανὸν ἠέλιόν τε, καὶ ἀστέρας, ἠδὲ σελήνην,
> καρποφόρον γαίαν τε, καὶ ὕδατος οἴδματα πόντου.[43]

That is:

> But there is one God alone over all things, who made the heaven and the sun and the stars and the moon, and, together with these, the fruitful earth and the waves of the sea.

And another Sibyl, speaking in the character of God, prophesies thus:

> εἷς μόνος εἰμὶ θεὸς, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἄλλος.[44]
> [I alone am the one God, and there is no other.]

Justin Martyr[45] attributes [the following] verses on the oneness of God to Pythagoras in his book *On the Sole Government of God*:[46]

> Εἴ τις ἐρεῖ θεὸς εἰμὶ, παρὲθ ἑνὸς, οὗτος ὀφέλλει
> Κόσμον ἶσον τούτῳ στήσας εἰπεῖν, ἐμὸς οὗτος.[47]

That is:

> If anyone except the One should say, "I am God," this one ought to display a world that he has created similar to this one and to say, "This is mine."

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43 Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 1.6.

44 Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 1.6. Hemmingsen's text is slightly different from that of Lactantius.

45 Justin Martyr, who was born around AD 100 and died around 165 when he was martyred, was an early Christian apologist who, though he wrote in Greek, composed works addressed to the Roman emperor (the *First Apology*) and the Roman Senate (the *Second Apology*). He is also the author of the *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*.

46 The Latin title is *De monarchia*. Although attributed to Justin Martyr, its actual author is unknown.

47 [Justin Martyr], *On the Sole Government of God* 2.

Many expressions of this type are found in Plato, Xenophon, Sophocles, Euripides, Homer, Menander, and others, which, since I am pursuing brevity, I leave aside.

Concerning the providence of this one God, one finds the following expressions among others: Πάντῃ γὰρ ἐστὶ πάντα καὶ βλεπει θεός, "God is present everywhere and sees all things."[48] Likewise, ὀξὺς θεοῦ τ' ὀφθαλμὸς εἰς τὰ πάντα ὁρᾷν, "The eye of God is so keen that it contemplates all things."[49]

Xenophon calls God σοφὸν δημίουργον καὶ φιλόζῴον, that is: "the wise and loving creator of living beings."[50] The same one says, "You will know that God is so great and of such a kind that he sees all things simultaneously, and hears all things simultaneously, and is present everywhere, and simultaneously has care for all things."[51] He teaches that this one God must be worshiped both by many other arguments [that I do not include here] and he adds that the same thing is signified by the form of man, which stands upright toward heaven. A Latin poet, having imitated him, speaks in the following way:

> He gave to man a face held high, and commanded him
> to see the heaven and to lift his face upright to the stars.[52]

Concerning the worship of God, the very ancient poet Philemon, as Justin relates, speaks thus: θεῷ δὲ θύε διὰ τέλους δίκαιος ὤν,[53] that is, "Sacrifice to God in justice." The same one [says]:

> If anyone, bringing a sacrifice, O Pamphilus, of a multitude of bulls or goats, or, by Jove, of other things of this sort, or of works of gold, presenting cloaks of crimson also, or should judge that through animals of ivory or emerald he wins over to himself the kindness of God, he errs and has a fickle mind. It is

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48 Menander, *Sentences* 688.

49 Menander, *Sentences* 605, though Hemmingsen substitutes a singular form of "God" for the plural of the original.

50 Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.4.7.

51 Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.4.18. Cf. *Cyropaedia* 8.7.22.

52 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.85–86.

53 This actually is cited in Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* 5.14, not [Justin Martyr], and is attributed to Menander, not Philemon.

> right, rather, that he offer himself as a good man, that he not be a debaucher of virgins or an adulterer, that he not look at and desire another's possessions, or wife, or house, or property, child, maidservant, horses, cattle, etc. Nay, rather, my Pamphilus, do not desire one little pin.[54] For God, present before you, sees—[God,] who is delighted by just works, not by unjust ones.[55]

It is exceedingly pleasant to know by heart expressions of this kind concerning the oneness of God, concerning creation, providence, and worship; one finds many [expressions] of this kind in the philosophers and poets.

I have spoken concerning domestic, political, and spiritual life, and what actions are proper to each one in general, and I have given demonstrative proof [*demonstravi*] of them. Now, because the law of GOD [*lex DEI*], which we customarily call the Decalogue, is said to be a summary [*epitome*] of the law of nature, I shall briefly show how the commandments of the Decalogue are harmonious with those things that have been said [above].

That the first table [*primam ... tabulam*], therefore, pertains immediately to the state of the spiritual life, there is no doubt. For it teaches in summary [*in summa*] that God must be worshiped and praised and shows how it is right for this to be done.

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[54] The Latin is *aciculae ... funiculum*, literally, "the cord of a small pin," translating the Greek βελόνης … ἄμμ'.

[55] [Justin Martyr], *On the Sole Government of God* 4; this statement the author does attribute to Philemon.

Demonstration of the First Table
[***Demonstratio Primae Tabulae***]

God must be worshiped by the whole man, as has been demonstrated above. Man, moreover, consists of soul [*anima*] and body. Therefore, God must be worshiped with mind [*animo*] and body, that is, with the heart [*corde*],[56] according to

[56] Hemmingsen here uses three different Latin terms for man's internal aspect: *anima*, *animus*, and *cor*.

the first commandment; with the mouth and tongue, according to the second;[57] with life and external morals, according to the third.[58]

The manner of the worship of God is here disclosed in the most beautiful order. It takes its beginning from the heart, next makes itself known in the mouth and tongue, [and] afterward declares itself in life and external morals. By the word *heart*, all the interior powers of the soul should be understood, to wit, that the illuminated mind correctly understand the things that belong to God, that the affections burn with the love of God, that the will be so consecrated to God of its own accord that it wishes for nothing except what accrues to the glory of God. This worship of the heart, which the worship of the mouth and the external life follows by nature, the Gentiles also understood by the light of nature [*naturali luce*], although afterward they wandered away from the true God in their endeavor [to perform it].

General Demonstration of the Second Table
[*Demonstratio Secundae Tabulae Generalis*]

Whatever preserves the domestic and political state is commanded by the law of nature; whatever disturbs and overturns it is prohibited by the same.

As, moreover, the works commanded in the second table preserve the domestic and political state, so those prohibited in the same disturb and overturn it.

The former things, therefore, are commanded, the latter forbidden.

The major [premise] is the principle that was made clear above. We shall confirm the minor [premise] by means of demonstrations of the individual commandments of the second table.

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57 That is, the third commandment ("You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain") in other numbering systems. Hemmingsen follows the numbering of Luther (and Augustine).

58 That is, the fourth commandment ("Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy,") in other numbering systems.

Demonstration of the Fourth Commandment
[*Demonstratio Quarti Praecepti*]

Whatever preserves the domestic and political state belongs to natural justice [*iuris ... naturalis*],[59] as those things that are their contraries conflict with nature.

Analogous duties of superiors (as of parents and the magistrate); and of inferiors (as of children and subjects), preserve the domestic and political state.

Therefore, these duties are commanded by the law of nature [*lege naturae*], and the things that are contrary to them are prohibited as hostile and harmful to human society.

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[59] Hemmingsen in this instance employs the phrase *ius naturalis* rather than his usual *lex naturae*.

The order in this table is worth noting. For as in the first table the beginning is made from the foundation of the worship of God, so here [it is made] from obedience toward superiors, which is the mother of all the duties that are required in the following commandments.

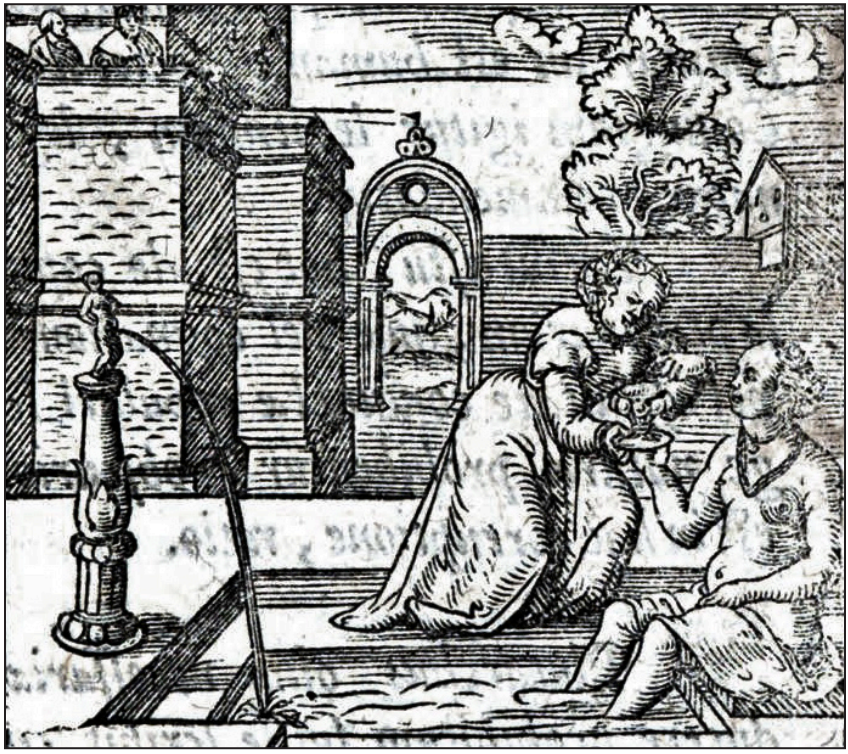
Demonstration of the Fifth Commandment
[*Demonstratio Quinti Praecepti*]

Whatever disturbs human society, whether in the domestic or the political state, is forbidden by the law of nature.

Hatreds, reviling, quarrels, [and] murders disturb human society. Therefore, hatreds, reviling, and murders are forbidden by natural justice [*iure naturali*]. On the contrary: because mutual love, friendly conversations, kindness, concord,

[and] the pursuit of preserving and defending one another preserve human society, they are therefore required by nature.

Demonstration of the Sixth Commandment
[*Demonstratio Sexti Praecepti*]



Whatever conflicts with integrity [*honestate*] in the domestic or political state is forbidden by the law of nature.

Promiscuous lusts and incest conflict with integrity, which nature demands in every state of life. Therefore, promiscuous lusts and incest are forbidden by the law of nature. On the contrary: the honorable and lawful bond of spouses is the seed-bed [*seminarium*] of human society. Therefore, lawful marriage is commended by the law of nature.

Concerning incest, that is, concerning the bond of persons who are prohibited from being joined by the law of nature either because of the female spouse's relationship [to the man] by blood or marriage:[60] the reasoning in the case of this corruption is more obscure.

Plutarch writes that it was prohibited for kinsmen to get married, and his reasoning is most honorable and upright—namely, so that just as those joined by blood love each other in turn, thus the chain of kinship might connect more people by means of love [*caritate*] when marriages had been spread abroad into many walls[61] and did not remain within the same ones. It is clear that in such a way the love of the human race creeps forth [*serpere*] and is extended.[62] Cicero, too, teaches this in Book 5 of *On Ends*.[63] Therefore, who does not see that marriages of kinsmen—that is, of those related by blood or marriage—is prohibited by the law of nature? To this is added the natural judgment present in all men of sound mind by which all judge that one must keep away from those persons whom relationship either by blood or by marriage has joined together most closely. "There is somehow present in human modesty," says Augustine,[64] "something natural and praiseworthy, such that it keeps back lust (which is still lust, even though it is procreative) from the one to whom modest honor is owed on account of kinship—concerning which [lust] we see even conjugal chastity itself to blush with shame."[65] Because in the perversity of human nature [the force][66] of this

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60 That is, the marriage of someone else in her family to someone else in his family.

61 That is, when marriages entered into many different households rather than all remaining confined within the same households.

62 Cf. Plutarch, *Roman Questions* 6 and 108. On the subject of kin-marriage in ancient Rome, see also Tacitus, *Annals* 12.5–7.

63 The Latin title is *De finibus bonorum et malorum*.

64 Augustine (354–430) is the most important Western theologian of the ancient Church and was bishop in the North African city of Hippo. Among his most famous and important works are the *Confessions*, *On the Trinity*, and the *City of God*. He also wrote numerous works against the Donatists, Manichaeans, and Pelagians, in addition to a large collection letters and sermons.

65 Augustine, *City of God* 15.16.

66 Hemmingsen has no subject for this sentence; I have supplied *vis*.

law concerning the illicit union of persons who are kin is rather weak in many people, we should give thanks to God, who repeats this law in Leviticus 18 and warns that many nations were exterminated because of the violation of this law.

Now we can inquire whether, according to the law of nature, only two people ought to be joined in one marriage—namely, one man and one woman—and not one man and many women, especially because we see that certain of the holy patriarchs had two and sometimes more wives at the same time. Because one must judge not by examples but by the law of nature, I declare clearly that whoever has more wives [than one] at the same time violates the law of nature.

Four reasons for this response are sought from nature.

First, conjugal association requires an equal obligation of husband and wife insofar as it pertains to the use of bodies. However, when one husband has more wives, or one woman has more husbands, equality in obligation cannot be preserved. Because inequality is contrary to nature, it is also contrary to nature if more persons than two, one man and one woman, are joined in one marriage.

The second reason dictates that no one ought to obligate himself to something impossible. Now, however, it cannot happen that one man be obligated equally to more wives in the same way as [he is] to one only. Wherefore the union of one man with more women conflicts with nature.

Third, domestic peace cannot be preserved when one husband has more wives [than one]. It cannot but happen that the women be jealously inflamed against each other, whence arise quarrels; from these [arises] a household disorder that conflicts with nature.

Fourth, it is the justice of nature [*ius naturae*] that no one does to another what he does not wish to be done to himself. Therefore, a husband who does not wish his wife to be married to more men [than one] ought [himself] to be content with one. When this ἀνάλογον [proportionate] justice is violated, violence is done to the law of nature, and injustice [*iniuria*] is done to the other spouse.

Demonstration of the Seventh Commandment
[*Demonstratio Septimi Praecepti*]

Whatever destroys human society and whatever overturns households and polities conflicts with nature.

Deceit, thefts, [and] robberies destroy human society and overturn households and polities.

Therefore, these things are forbidden by the law of nature. And, on the contrary: whatever preserves human society both in the domestic realm and in the political realm, this belongs to natural justice [*iuris … naturalis*].

The distinction of property,[67] faithfulness, and integrity [*candor*] in contracts preserves human society. Therefore, these things are commanded by the law of nature.

Demonstration of the Eighth Commandment
[*Demonstratio Octavi Praecepti*]

Whatever makes for the preservation of the society of men is required by the law of nature.

Trustworthiness in the professions and truth between men makes for the preservation of human society. Therefore, these things are required by the law of nature.

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[67] That is, the right to ownership: some property belongs to certain people, other property to others.

The minor [premise] is illustrated by the antithesis: it is clear that lies and untrustworthiness in the professions destroy the society of men, and that, for that reason, they are forbidden by the law of nature.

Demonstration of the Ninth and Tenth Commandments
[*Demonstratio Noni and Decimi Praecepti*]

No one wishes that another desire [*concupiscere*] his goods unjustly. Therefore no one ought to desire [*appetere*] another's goods unjustly.

The consequent is proved by the following rule of nature: That which you do not wish to be done to you, you ought not to do to another.

These are the demonstrations of the commandments of the Decalogue sought from the principles immediately relevant to the preservation of human society. As I frequently stated that all the states of life must be referred to God as their

ultimate end, the reasons for the commandments must also be sought from the will and nature of God, in the following way:

GOD is the source and giver of all goods. Therefore God must be worshiped, and gratitude must be shown to him by his creation.

GOD is a lover of order and gratitude. For that reason, he gave the fourth commandment.

GOD does not wish his own image to be destroyed. Therefore he prohibits murder.

GOD is most pure and most chaste. Therefore he requires purity and chastity from the rational creation.

GOD is most just. Therefore he abhors evil deceit, theft, fraud, murders; and he is delighted by the virtues that contend with these vices.

GOD is true. Therefore he is offended by lying and loves the truth.

> GOD is holy and pure. Therefore he does not wish our minds to be defiled by the impurity of lusts.

Therefore, the second table can be demonstrated from the law of the love of neighbor, which is natural, in the following way:

He who loves his neighbor, shows the honor owed to him, and renders his proportionate duty according to the fourth commandment: [this one] does no injury to him, either in his own person, which is forbidden by the fifth commandment; or in a person joined [to him by marriage], according to the proscription of the sixth commandment; or in possessions, as the seventh law demands; or in words, according to the prohibition of the eighth law; nor in his heart does he desire the things that belong to him, which is forbidden by the last two commandments. Thus, the laws of the second table are the effects and duties proper to love.

Moreover, since man is a social animal [*animal sociale*], and it is proper to virtue to unite the minds of men to each other and to join them in friendship for their mutual uses (as Cicero bears witness), I shall append a list of the virtues together with definitions, so that the parts of virtue, which ought to shine in every life, may be held in view.

In the exposition of the virtues, however, let us principally follow Cicero, both on account of his brevity and on account of his clarity and quality.

Virtue, ἀρετὴ, is defined by Cicero in the following way: "Virtue is a habit of the mind consistent with nature, moderation, reason."[68] The ancients, moreover, [define it] thus: "Virtue is the art of living well and correctly." To this is opposed vice, κακία,[69] a habit of the mind that, by the judgment of nature, conflicts with right reason. As, moreover, virtue unites the minds of men to each other and adapts them to one another's mutual uses, as has been said, so vice alienates the minds of men and turns them away from one another's mutual uses. Therefore, as nature dictates that the former must be sought, so this same teacher instructs us that the latter must be avoided.

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[68] Cicero, *On Invention* 2.53.159. Also cited in Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus* 31.1.

[69] "Vice" is personified in Hemmingsen's earlier use (not included in this selection) of Xenophon's account of Prodicus' "Choice of Hercules."

The commendation of virtue in Menander [is relevant] to this: ὅπλον μέγιστόν ἐστι ἡ ’ρετὴ βροτοῖς.[70] That is, “Virtue is the greatest armor for mortals.”

Also [relevant is the remark] of Isocrates to Demonicus: τῆς ἀρετῆς οὐδὲν κτῆμα σεμνότερον, οὐδὲ βεβαιότερον.[71] That is, “No possession is more worthy of respect nor firmer than virtue.”

And Menander: Καρπὸς τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐστὶν εὔτακτος βίος,[72] “The fruit of virtue is a well-ordered life.” It can easily be inferred from the contrary effects what one ought to think about vice, which is opposed to virtue.

According to Plato and Cicero, the parts of virtue are four: prudence, justice, courage, and temperance. I remarked above that these four parts of virtue are required for the preservation of human nature and for uniting men together in society; I must now speak of them in order.

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70 Menander, *Sentences* 582.

71 Isocrates, *To Demonicus* 5. Isocrates, who lived from 436 BC to 338, was an important Athenian orator and the founder of a rhetorical academy, one very different from Plato’s Academy in goals and outlook. Twenty-one of his orations (including his *Panegyric*), as well as nine letters, survive.

72 Similar to Menander, *Sentences* 418, which reads: καρπὸς δ’ ἀρετὴς δίκαιος εὔτακτος βίος.