

Ethics Demonstrated in Geometrical Order

Benedict Spinoza

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[Brackets] enclose editorial explanations. Small ·dots· enclose material that has been added, but can be read as though it were part of the original text. Occasional •bullets, and also indenting of passages that are not quotations, are meant as aids to grasping the structure of a sentence or a thought. Every four-point ellipsis indicates the omission of a brief passage that seems to present more difficulty than it is worth. This version contains some awkward repetitions of the word ‘God’. They could be avoided through the use of pronouns, but *they* present us with an unattractive choice. Using ‘he’, ‘him’, ‘his’ etc. of God invites the reader, over and over again, to think of God as a person; while using ‘it’, ‘itself’ etc. pokes the reader in the ribs, over and over again, with reminders that God is *not* a person. The former choice misrepresents Spinoza’s doctrine (his other name for God is ‘Nature’), while the latter misrepresents his style. Writing in Latin, which lacks the distinction between personal and impersonal pronouns, he didn’t have this problem.

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Part IV: Human Bondage, or the Power of the Affects

Preface

[In Spinoza's use of the term, 'affects' include emotions (such as anger) and immoderate desires (such as ambition). All they have in common is their tendency to influence human conduct, mostly for the worse.] 'se [Bondage' is my name for man's lack of power [Latin *impotentia*; often translated as 'weakness'] to moderate and restrain the affects. 'It's a good name', because anyone who is subject to affects is under not under his own control and is at the mercy of fortune, 'i.e. of whatever mood or passion *happens* to come over him'. He is so much in its power that often, though he sees what would be better for him, he is compelled to go after something worse. In this Part I shall demonstrate the cause of this 'bondage', and shall show what is good and what is bad in the affects. Before starting on that, though, I want to say a few words about perfection and imperfection, good and bad.

'PERFECT' AND 'IMPERFECT'

[In the passage that follows, Spinoza relies on the fact that the Latin word from which 'perfect' comes often means 'completed', 'made all through'.] If you finish something that you have set out to make, you will call it 'perfect'—and so will anyone who knows or thinks he knows what you were aiming at. Suppose you are building a house, and haven't yet finished it; someone who knows what you are aiming at will say that your construct is 'imperfect'; but as soon as he sees that the work has been carried through to the end that you wanted to give it, he will call it 'perfect'. Now consider someone who sees a work that isn't like anything he has seen before, and who doesn't know what its maker is up to. He of course can't know whether what he sees is perfect or imperfect.

This seems to have been the first meaning of the words 'perfect' and 'imperfect'. But after men began to 'form universal ideas, constructing 'mental' *models* of houses, buildings, towers, etc., and began to 'prefer some models of things to others, it came about that everyone called 'perfect' what he saw agreed with *his* universal idea of this kind of thing, and called 'imperfect' what he saw agreed less with the model in *his* mind, even when its maker thought he had entirely finished it.

That is the only reason I can find why men commonly describe as 'perfect' or 'imperfect' *natural things* that haven't been made by human hand. For they form universal ideas of natural things as much as they do of artificial ones. They treat these universal ideas as *models* of things, and believe that Nature (which they think always acts with a purpose) looks to these ideas and sets them before itself as models 'for what it aims to achieve'. So when they see a natural thing that doesn't agree with *their* model for that kind of thing, they believe that Nature itself has failed or erred, and left the thing imperfect.

[Spinoza will refer to two supposed kinds of cause: a *final* cause is the end or aim or purpose for which something is done; and *efficient* cause is what you and I would simply call a 'cause', with no adjective. With final causes thought of as *effective*, the difference is like that between *pulling* and *pushing*; and Spinoza, as we shall see, thinks there are no pulls, only pushes.] So we see that men are given to calling natural things 'perfect' or 'imperfect' on the basis not so much of 'knowledge of the things as of 'pre-conceived ideas about them. For I showed in the Appendix of Part I that Nature never acts with an end in view. The eternal and infinite being we call 'God' or 'Nature' *necessarily acts* as it does, just as it *necessarily exists*—and it's the same necessity in each case, as I showed in **16**. So the questions

Why does God or Nature act thus and so? and

Why does God or Nature exist? have exactly the same answer. In the case of the second question, we know that the answer doesn't involve ends or purposes; God or Nature doesn't *exist* for the sake of some end. So God or Nature doesn't *act* for the sake of any end either. A so-called 'final cause' is nothing but a human appetite that is being thought of as the *basic* cause of something. [In Spinoza's usage, an 'appetite' is a desire, whether conscious or unconscious; he reserves 'desire' for the conscious ones.] For example, when we say that having-somewhere-to-live was the final cause of a certain house, all we mean is that some man, because he imagined the conveniences of domestic life, had an appetite to build a house. So when having-somewhere-to-live is thought of as a final cause, it is really just this particular appetite. It is really an *efficient* cause, and it is thought of as a *basic* cause because men usually don't know the causes of their appetites. For as I have often said before, they are conscious of their actions and appetites, but not aware of the causes that drive them to want something.

As for the common remarks about Nature occasionally failing or going wrong and producing 'imperfect' things—I number these among the fictions that I discussed in the Appendix of Part I.

So perfection and imperfection are only ways of thinking, i.e. notions that we are led to invent by our comparisons among the individual members of some species or genus. This is the basis for explaining why I said in **1D4** that by 'reality' and 'perfection' I mean the same thing. The explanation goes as follows. We are accustomed to think of absolutely all the individual things in Nature as belonging to one genus, the most general genus, the notion of *being* or *existing thing*. So we compare individual things in Nature to one another, in the light of this genus; we find that some have more being or more reality than others; and so

we say that those ones are more 'perfect' than others. And to the extent that we attribute to a thing something that involves negation—a limit, a terminus, lack of power, or the like—we call it 'imperfect'. That's because the thing doesn't affect our mind as much as do the things we call 'perfect', and not because the thing lacks something that belongs to it—something that belongs to its nature, something it ought to have—or because Nature has erred. For nothing belongs to a thing's nature except what its efficient cause gives it, so a thing can't *lack* something that belongs to its nature! And the efficient cause works as it does because of *its* nature, which it has necessarily, so whatever follows from it is also necessary.

·'GOOD' AND 'BAD'·

'Good' and 'bad' also stand for ways of thinking, or notions we form because we compare things to one another. They don't indicate anything positive in things, considered in themselves. For one and the same thing can at the same time be good, and bad, and neither; as music is good for someone who is melancholy, bad for someone who is mourning, and neither good nor bad for someone who is deaf.

But though this is so we should retain these four words. We want to form an idea of man as *a model* of human nature that we may keep in view; and so it will be useful to us to retain 'good' and 'bad' with the meanings I have indicated. From here on, therefore, I shall apply 'good' to anything that we know for sure to be a means to getting ever nearer to the model of human nature that we set before ourselves. And I shall call 'bad' anything that we know for sure prevents us from becoming like that model. And I shall also characterize men as 'perfect' or 'imperfect' to the extent that they approach more or less near to this model.

Please note that when I say that someone passes from

a lesser to a greater perfection or vice versa, I don't mean that he is changed from one essence or form to another, .i.e. that he becomes a different kind of being. All I mean is that his intrinsic power of acting—so far as it depends on him and not his circumstances—is increased or diminished. [Between those two sentences Spinoza inserts the remark, which is bewildering in this context: 'For example, a horse is destroyed as much if it is changed into a man as if it is changed into an insect.' It may be this sentence that Spinoza is referring to after his demonstration of 39.]

Finally, I shall, as I have said, use 'perfection' in its general sense to mean 'reality', so that a thing's perfection is just its essence as something that exists and acts. Its perfection has nothing to do with how long it lasts, for no particular thing is called 'more perfect' just because it stayed in existence for a longer time. The link between •perfection and •essence doesn't yield a link between •perfection and •duration, because a thing's essence doesn't involve any definite time of existing, so that how long a thing will last can't be determined from its essence. But any thing whatever, whether more or less perfect, will always be able to stay in existence by the same force by which it began to exist; so in this respect—that is, in respect of their *intrinsic* ability to survive—all things are equal.

Definitions and Axiom

D1: By 'good' I shall understand what we certainly know to be useful to us.

D2: By 'bad' I shall understand what we certainly know prevents us from being masters of some good.

Explanation: On these definitions, see the preceding preface.

D3: I call an individual thing 'contingent' if we can't find in

its essence anything that necessarily requires it to exist or necessarily excludes it from existing.

D4: I call an individual thing 'possible' if we don't know whether the causes that would be needed to produce it *are* bound to produce it.

In the first note on **I33** I didn't distinguish 'possible' from 'contingent', because there was no need *there* to distinguish them accurately.

D5: By 'opposite affects' I shall mean affects that pull a man in different directions though they are of the same genus—such as greed for food and greed for wealth. These are both species of *love*, and they are opposite not intrinsically but because of circumstances—it is a matter of *fact* rather than of *logic* than one can't fully indulge both greed and love at the same time.

D6: I have explained in the two notes on **III18** what I shall mean by an 'affect toward' a future thing, a present one, and a past. Another point to be noted: just as we can distinctly imagine spatial distance only up to a certain limit, the same holds for imagining temporal distance. We ordinarily imagine as being the same distance from us, and thus being all on the same plane, all the physical objects that are further away than we can clearly imagine (say, more than 200 feet away). And similarly with past or future events: if they are further off than we can ordinarily clearly imagine, we mentally place them all at the same time.

D7: By the 'end' for the sake of which we do something I understand *appetite*.

D8: By 'virtue' and 'power' I understand the same thing. That is (by **III7**) the *virtue* of a man is his very essence or nature insofar as it gives him the power to do things that are purely upshots of his nature.

Axiom

There is no individual thing in Nature that isn't surpassed in strength and power by some other thing. Given *any* individual thing, there is another more powerful one that can destroy it.

Propositions

1: Nothing positive that a false idea has is removed by what is true in a true idea.

Falsity consists only in the *lack* of knowledge which inadequate ideas involve (by **II35**), and such ideas aren't called 'false' because of anything *positive* that they contain (by **II33**). On the contrary, in being related to God they are true (by **II32**). So if •what is positive in a false idea were removed by •what is true in a true idea, then a true idea would be removed by itself, which (by **II4**) is absurd. So **1** follows.

Note on 1: This proposition is understood more clearly from the second corollary to **II16**. For an imagining is an idea that is more informative about the present constitution of the person's body than it is about the nature of anything outside him; but it represents the body in a confused way, not clearly, which is how it happens that the mind is said to err.

For example, when we look at the sun, we see it as being about 200 feet away from us. In this we are deceived if we don't know its true distance; but when we *do* know its true distance, that removes our •error but not our •imagining of the sun—i.e. our seeing it *as* 200 feet away. It leaves our imagining untouched, because it is the idea of the sun that is informative about the sun only through the sun's affecting our body. So even when we come to know how far away the sun is we shall still see it *as* being quite close. For, as I said

in the note on **II35**, we picture the sun as being so near not •because we don't know how far away it is but •because the mind's conception of the sun's size depends •only• on how the body is affected by the sun. Thus, when the sun shines on a pond and the rays are reflected to our eyes, we see it as being in the water although know where it really is.

It's the same with all the other imaginings by which the mind is deceived—that is, every case of perceiving something as F when really it isn't F. It makes no difference *what kind of* bodily state the imagining reflects—whether it reflects the body's basic constitution or rather its changing for the better or the worse—in any case the imagining is not *contrary to the true*, and doesn't disappear in the presence of the truth.

It does of course happen that when we wrongly fear something bad our fear disappears when we hear news of the truth. But it also happens that when we *rightly* fear some bad thing that *is* going to come our fear vanishes when we hear *false* news. So what makes an imagining x disappear is not *the truth* in something true, but just the occurrence of some other imagining that is *stronger* than x and •conflicts with x, i.e. •excludes the present existence of whatever it was we imagined in x. I showed in **II17** how this happens.

2: To the extent that we are a part of Nature that can't be conceived through itself without bringing other things in, we are acted on.

We say that we are acted on when there occurs in us •something of which (by **III D2**) we are only the partial cause, that is (by **III 1**) •something that can't be deduced from the laws of our nature alone. So **2** follows.

3: The force by which a man stays in existence is limited, and infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes.

This is evident from the axiom of this Part. Take any man you like: according to the axiom there is something else more powerful than him, and something else again more powerful than *it*, and so on, to infinity. So **3** follows.

4: (i) It is impossible for a man not to be a part of Nature, and (ii) it is impossible for a man to undergo only changes that can be understood through his own nature alone (changes of which he is the total cause).

Corollary: A man •can't avoid being subject to passions, •follows and obeys the common order of Nature, and •accommodates himself to it as much as the nature of things requires.

[Here and in what follows, a *passio* on the part of *x* can be a *passion* of *x*'s but can also be an episode in which *x* is *passive*. Spinoza evidently doesn't distinguish these.]

(i) The power by which an individual thing stays in existence is the very power of God or Nature (by the corollary to **I24**)—not insofar as it is infinite but insofar as it involves the individual's actual essence (by **III7**). [Where the text has 'involves', Spinoza's Latin literally means 'can be explained through'. The proposition means, roughly, that the cause of a thing's staying in existence is *Nature*, considered not just as a set of universal causal laws but also as bringing in detailed facts about that individual.] And what holds for any individual holds for any man. So a man's power, considered as involving his actual essence, is part of God's or Nature's infinite power, that is (by **I34**, a part of Nature's essence.

(ii) If a man could undergo only changes that could

be understood through his nature alone, it would follow (by **III4** and **III6**) that he couldn't perish—i.e. that necessarily he would always exist. The cause of his lasting for ever would have either •finite power, meaning that

•the man himself would have the resources to protect himself from •potentially harmful changes that could come from external causes, or •infinite power, meaning that

the power of •Nature as a whole would direct all individual things in such a way that the man could undergo no changes except ones that helped him to stay in existence.

But the former option is absurd (by **3**, whose demonstration is perfectly general and can be applied to all individual things). So the latter option would have to be right: the man's lasting for ever would have to follow from God's infinite power; and (by **I16**) the only way for that to happen would be for the order of the whole of material and mental Nature to follow from the necessity of the divine nature *considered as involving the idea of this man*. [Meaning, roughly, that all the basic laws of physics and psychology could be derived from an accurate account of this one man.] And so (by **I21**) the man would be infinite. But, as the first part of this demonstration shows, that is absurd.

•Neither option is possible, so a man can't possibly undergo only changes of which he himself is the adequate cause.

5: What sets the limits to how strong a given passion is, to how it grows and to how long it lasts, is not the power of the person whose passion it is (the power by which he tries to stay in existence), but the amount by which that power is less than the power of some external cause.

The detailed facts about your passion can't be explained through your nature alone (by **III D1** and **III D27**); that is, (by **III 7**), how far your passion goes can't be settled just by the power by which you try to stay in existence, but (as I have shown in **II 16**) its limits must depend on how your power compares with the power of some external cause.

6: The force of someone's passion = affect can be greater than all his power, so that the affect stubbornly clings to him.

How strong and growing and long-lasting someone's passion is depends on how *his* power compares with the power of an external cause (by **5**). The difference between those can be greater than his power; that is, the external cause may have more than twice the power the man has. And so (by **3**) the passion can surpass all his power etc.

7: An affect can't be restrained or removed except by another affect that is opposite to it and stronger than it.

An affect considered as •mental is an idea by which the mind affirms of its body either a greater or lesser force of existing than it had before (by the General Definition of the Affects at the end of Part III.). So when someone's mind is troubled by some affect, his body is at the same time in a state by which its power of acting is either increased or diminished.

This state of the body (by **5**) gets its force for staying in existence from its cause, and (by **II 6**) that cause must be a bodily one. So it can't be restrained or removed except by a *stronger* cause that •drives the body in the opposite direction (by the Axiom and **III 5**). If such a •stronger• cause *does* intervene, then (by

II 12), the mind will come to have the idea of a •bodily• state stronger than its previous state and opposite to it, that is (by the General Definition of the Affects), the mind will come to have an affect stronger than and opposite to the previous one, which will abolish the previous one. So **7** follows.

Corollary: An affect considered as •mental can't be restrained or removed except by the •idea of an opposite state of the •body that is stronger than the •bodily• state involved in the affect. That is because an affect can't be restrained or removed except by *an affect* stronger than it and opposite to it (by **7**), i.e. (by the General Definition of the Affects) except by *an idea of a state of the body* stronger than and opposite to the previous state.

8: The •so-called• knowledge of good and evil is nothing but an affect of pleasure or unpleasure of which we are conscious. [The noun 'evil' translates the same word—in Latin a noun or an adjective—that is translated as the adjective 'bad'.]

We call 'good' or 'bad' what tends for or against our staying in existence (by **D1** and **D2**), that is (by **III 7**), what increases or lessens our power of acting. And so, by the definitions of 'pleasure' and 'unpleasure' in the note on **III 11**, when we see that a thing gives us pleasure or unpleasure we call it 'good' or 'bad'. So •knowledge of good and evil is nothing but •an idea of pleasure or unpleasure which follows necessarily from the pleasure or unpleasure itself (by **II 22**). But really this idea *is* the pleasure or unpleasure: we have here merely two ways of conceptualizing the same thing (see **II 21** and its note). So •the knowledge of good and evil is nothing but •the affect •of pleasure or unpleasure• when we are conscious of it.

9: When we have an affect whose cause we imagine to be with us right now, the affect is stronger than it would have been if we hadn't imagined this.

An imagining is an idea by which the mind considers an external thing as present (see its definition in the note on ^{II}17), though it is more informative about the constitution of the person's body than it is about the external thing (by the second corollary to ^{II}16. Now, by the General Definition of the Affects, an affect considered as informative about the person's body is just an imagining. But by ^{II}17 an imagining is more intense while we don't imagine anything that excludes the present existence of the external thing that is imagined. Hence, an affect whose cause we imagine to be with us right now is more intense, stronger, than if we hadn't imagined it to be with us.

Note on 9: I said in ^{III}18 that when we imagine a future or past thing we have the same affect as we would if we were imagining something present; but I expressly warned then that this is true only about the thing's image taken in isolation, for *it* is just the same whether we have imagined the thing as present or not. But I didn't deny that the affect is weakened when we consider as present to us *other* things that exclude the present existence of the future thing toward which we have the affect. I omitted this point back there because I had decided to treat the powers of the affects in this Part.

Corollary: Other things being equal, the image of a future or past thing (i.e. one we consider in relation to a future or past time, the present being excluded) is weaker than the image of a present thing; and so an affect toward a future or past thing is milder, other things being equal, than an affect toward a present thing.

10: Our affect toward a future thing will be more intense if we imagine that the thing will soon be present than it would have been if we had imagined the thing to be further off in the future. We also have a more intense affect from the memory of a thing we imagine as recent than we would have if we imagined it to be long past.

In imagining that a thing will soon be present, or that it is recent, we imagine something that excludes the thing's being present, but the exclusion is *less* severe or strong or obvious than the exclusion that would be involved in imagining the thing to be further off in the past or in the future. (This is self-evident.) And so (by 9) to that extent our affect toward it will be more intense.

Note on 10: From the note after D6 it follows that if we have affects toward two objects each of which is separated from the present by an interval of time longer than that we can determine by imagining [= longer than we can have any imaginative or intuitive *sense of*], our affects toward the two will be equally mild even if we know that the objects are separated from one another by a long interval of time. I mean that this will be so *other things being equal*; it's a point just about the effect of temporal distance on the affects; two affects of the kind described here might have different strengths because, for instance, one is a fear of falling ill fairly soon while the other is a fear of dying in agony next year.

11: An affect toward something we imagine as necessary is more intense, other things being equal, than an affect toward a thing we imagine as possible or as contingent = not necessary.

In imagining a thing to be necessary we affirm that it exists. On the other hand, to the extent that we imagine a thing not to be necessary, to that extent

we deny its existence (by the first note on ^I33), and therefore (by 9), •an affect toward a necessary thing is more intense, other things being equal, than toward one •imagined as• not necessary. [To make the second premise of this argument less puzzling, think of it in terms of imagining x to be ‘possible’ in the sense of D4. That is close to imagining x as not *inevitable*, which involves making some room in one’s mind for the thought of x as not happening at all. But the premise seems quite implausible when thought of in terms of imagining x to be ‘contingent’ in the sense of D3; for one might think x to be ‘contingent’ in *that* sense while regarding it as quite inevitable for causal reasons.]

12: An affect toward something that we know doesn’t exist right now, and which we imagine as •possible •in the future•, is more intense, other things being equal, than one toward a thing we imagine as •contingent.

It is stipulated that we imagine certain things that exclude x’s present existence (•because we know that it doesn’t exist right now•), and our imagining it as •contingent doesn’t involve having any image of something that implies x’s existence (by D3); •so *that* frame of mind doesn’t include anything that positively suggests that x will come about•. But imagining x to be •possible in the future involves imagining certain things that imply its existence (by D4), i.e. (by ^{III}18) that encourage hope or fear. So an affect toward a thing that is •imagined as• possible is more violent, •other things being equal, than an affect toward one imagined as contingent•. [To see how this is meant to work, consider: according to D4 the thought of x as •possible includes a thought *about* things that might cause x to happen. The making-x-happen element is buried in the thought that x is possible, but not in the thought that x is •contingent.]

Corollary: An affect toward something that we imagine as contingent is much milder if we know that it doesn’t exist in the present than it would be if we imagined the thing as with us in the present.

[The text of the demonstration of this is faulty, and different repairs have been proposed. It isn’t hard to see intuitively how Spinoza would think that this corollary follows from 12 aided by the corollary to 9 and by 10. It may be worth noting that 12 is not used in any later demonstration, that this corollary to it is used only once, in an off-hand manner, in the demonstration of 17; and that 17 is not heard from again in the rest of the work.]

13: An affect toward a thing that is •imagined as• contingent and that we know doesn’t exist in the present is milder, other things being equal, than an affect toward a thing that is •imagined as• past.

Imagining a thing as contingent doesn’t involve having any image of something else that implies the thing’s existence (by D3); and knowing that it isn’t in the present involves imagining things that exclude its present existence. But imagining a thing x as being in the past involves imagining something that brings x back to our memory, or that arouses the image of x (see ^{II}18 and the note on it), and therefore brings it about that we consider x as if it were present (by the corollary to ^{II}17). And so (by 9) an affect toward a contingent thing that we know doesn’t exist in the present will be milder, other things being equal, than an affect toward a thing that is •imagined as• past.

14: True knowledge of good and evil can't restrain any affect through the •truth that it contains, but only through its relative strength •as an affect.

An affect is an idea by which a mind affirms of its body a greater or lesser force of existing than before (by the General Definition of the Affects). So (by 1) it has nothing positive that could be removed by the presence of the true. Consequently the *truth of* any true knowledge of good and bad can't restrain any affect.

But knowledge of good and bad is itself an affect (see 8), so *as an affect* it can restrain another affect that is weaker than it is (by 7)

15: A desire arising from a true knowledge of good and evil •is not made invulnerable by its coming from that source. On the contrary it• can be extinguished or restrained by many other desires arising from •other• affects by which we are tormented.

[What follows slightly simplifies and re-arranges Spinoza's extraordinarily difficult demonstration.] According to ^{III}37 a desire of yours arising from an affect is strong in proportion as the affect is strong; and by 8 true knowledge of good and evil is just an affect. Since it is *true* knowledge etc., it belongs to the *active* aspects of your nature (see ^{III}3 which connects activeness with having adequate ideas, which are connected with truth); and that means that it comes purely from •your nature, which means that its strength and ability to grow is limited to what •your nature can give it. The strength and growth potential of affects by which you are tormented, on the other hand, is not limited in that way, and can draw on the power of external causes,

which (by 3) is indefinitely much greater than your own power. And the violence of these affects generates strength in the desires arising from them. By 7 the stronger can restrain or extinguish the weaker. So 15 follows.

16: A desire arising from a true knowledge of good and evil, when the knowledge concerns the future, can quite easily be restrained or extinguished by a desire for things that are attractive now.

A desire arising from a true knowledge of good and evil can be restrained or extinguished by some rash desire (as 15 implies), and that holds for the special case where the true knowledge of etc. concerns things that are good *now*. So it is even *more* true that some rash desire can restrain or extinguish a desire arising from true knowledge etc. relating to *the future*, because, by the corollary to 9, an affect toward a thing we imagine as future is milder than one toward a present thing.

17: [This proposition says in effect that the x-can-be-restrained-by-y thesis of 16 is even truer—the restraining is even easier—if x concerns contingent things. Spinoza says that this can be proved from the corollary 12, by an argument like the one for 16.]

Note on 14–17: With this I believe I have shown why men are moved more by opinion than by true reason, and why the true knowledge of good and evil creates disturbances of the mind, and often yields to low desires of all kinds. Hence that words of the poet •Ovid•, 'I see and approve the better; I follow the worse'. Ecclesiastes seems to have had the same thing in mind when he said: 'He who increases knowledge increases sorrow' [*Ecclesiastes* 1:18]. In saying these things I don't mean to imply that ignorance is better than knowledge, or that when it comes to moderating the affects the fool is

on a par with the man who understands. I'm saying them because we *must* come to know both our nature's •power and its •weakness, so that we can settle what reason •can do in moderating the affects and what it •can't do. I have been focussing on the dark or negative side of this matter here, because I said that in this Part of the work I would treat only of man's •weakness, having decided to treat reason's •power over the affects separately in Part V.

18: A desire arising from pleasure is stronger, other things being equal, than one arising from unpleasure.

[In this demonstration, 'IIIAD1' refers to the first Affect Definition in Part III. Similarly for other 'IIIAD' references from now on.] Your desire is your very essence (by IIIAD1), that is (by III7), it is your effort to stay in existence. So a desire arising from pleasure is aided or increased by the affect of pleasure itself; whereas a desire arising from unpleasure is lessened or restrained by the affect of unpleasure. (Both these points come from the definition of 'pleasure' in the note on III11.) And so the limits on the strength of a desire of yours arising from pleasure must be set by the combination of •your power and •the power of the external cause, whereas the limits on the strength of a desire arising from unpleasure must be set by •your power alone. So the former is stronger than the latter.

Note on 18: With these few words I have explained men's weakness and inconstancy, and why men don't follow the precepts of reason. Now it remains for me to show what reason prescribes to us—•which affects are in harmony with the rules of human reason and •which affects conflict with them. But before starting to demonstrate these things in my long-winded 'geometrical order', I want first to sketch the dictates of reason themselves, so that everyone can more

easily grasp my thought.

Since reason demands nothing contrary to Nature, it demands that everyone

- love himself,
- seek his own advantage (his *real* advantage),
- want what will really lead him to a greater perfection,

and—unconditionally—

- try as hard as he can to stay in existence.

This, indeed, is as necessarily true as that the whole is greater than its part (see III4). Further, since *virtue* (by D8) is simply *acting from the laws of one's own nature*, and (by III7) no-one tries to stay in existence except from the laws of his own nature, it follows:

- (i) that the basis of virtue is this same effort to stay in existence, and that a man's happiness consists in his being able to succeed in this;
- (ii) that we ought to want virtue *for its own sake*, and that there is nothing preferable to it, nothing more useful to us, for the sake of which we ought to want virtue;
- (iii) that people who kill themselves are weak-minded and completely conquered by external causes that are opposed to their nature.

Let me remind you of postulate P4 in the Physical Interlude in Part II: 'For a human body to be preserved, it needs a great many other bodies by which it is continually regenerated, so to speak.' From this postulate it follows that we can never escape the need for outside help to stay in existence, or find a way of life in which we don't have to deal with things outside us. And consider our mind: our intellect would of course be *less* perfect if the mind were isolated and didn't understand anything except itself. So there are many things outside us that are useful to us and should therefore be sought.

Of these, I can think of none more excellent than those that are in complete harmony with our nature. For example, if two individuals with completely the same nature are joined to one another, they compose an individual twice as powerful as each of them separately. (See the account of ‘individuals’ in the Physical Interlude in Part II.) So there is nothing more useful to a man than a man. Men, I repeat, can wish for nothing more helpful to their staying in existence than •that all men should be in such harmony that the minds and bodies of them all would be like *one* mind and *one* body; •that all together should try as hard as they can to stay in existence; and •that all together should seek for themselves the common advantage of all.

From this it follows that men who are governed by reason—i.e. men who are guided by reason to seek their own advantage—want nothing for themselves that they don’t want also for other men. So they are just, honest, and honourable.

Those are the dictates of reason that I said I would sketch here, before starting to demonstrate them in a more laborious geometrical way. In sketching them I have been trying to attract the attention of those who believe that the principle *Everyone is bound to seek his own advantage* is the basis not of virtue and morality [*pietas*] but of moral laxity! Having now briefly indicated that this is the reverse of the truth, I shall now get back to demonstrating that with the same method that I have been using all through. I shall reach the end of *that* part of my task in the note on 37.

19: Everyone, from the laws of his own nature, necessarily wants what he judges to be good and is repelled by what he judges to be bad.

Knowledge of good and evil (by 8) is itself a conscious affect of pleasure or unpleasure. And so (by ^{III}28),

everyone necessarily wants what he judges to be good and is repelled by what he judges to be bad. And a man wants this ‘from the laws of his own nature’ because his *wanting*—his appetite—is nothing but *his very essence or nature* (see the definition of ‘appetite’ in the note on ^{III}9, and see also ^{III}AD1. So 19 follows.

20: The more a man successfully tries to seek his own advantage, i.e. to stay in existence, the more he is endowed with virtue. Conversely, to the extent that a man neglects his own advantage, i.e. neglects to do things favourable to his staying in existence, he is weak.

A man’s virtue is his power, the limits of which are set purely by his own essence (by D8), that is, (by ^{III}7) purely by his efforts to stay in existence. So the harder anyone tries to stay in existence, and the more he succeeds, the more he is endowed with virtue = power. And so (by ^{III}4 and ^{III}6) to the extent that he neglects to do things favourable to his staying in existence, he is weak.

Note on 20: No-one, therefore, unless he is defeated by causes that are external and contrary to his nature, neglects to seek his own advantage or to stay in existence. No-one, I say, is driven *by the necessity of his own nature* to avoid food or to kill himself. Those who do such things are compelled by outside causes, which can happen in many ways. Someone may kill himself because •he is compelled by someone else who twists his right hand (with a sword in it) and forces him to direct the sword against his heart; or because •he is forced by the command of a tyrant (as Seneca was) to open his veins, so that in doing this bad thing he is avoiding something even worse; or finally because •hidden external causes act on his imagination and affect his body in such a way that his body takes on another nature, contrary to

its former nature, this new deformed nature being one of which there cannot be an idea in his mind (by **III10**). But that a man should from the necessity of his own nature try not to exist, or try to be changed into something different, is as impossible as that something should come from nothing. Anyone who gives this a little thought will see it.

21: No-one can want to be happy, to act well and to live well, unless at the same time he wants to be, to act, and to live—that is, to actually exist.

The demonstration of this is self-evident; indeed, the proposition itself is self-evident! It can also be derived from the definition of 'desire'. For (by **IIIAD1**) a man's desire to live happily, or to live well, etc., is his very essence, that is (by **III7**) the effort through which he tries to stay in existence. So **21** follows.

22: No virtue can be conceived prior to this virtue, that is, prior to the effort to stay in existence.

A thing's effort to stay in existence is its very essence (by **III7**). So the notion of a virtue that is prior to this one, i.e. to this effort, is the thought of the thing's very essence being prior to itself (by D8), which is self-evidently absurd. So **22** follows.

Corollary: The effort to stay in existence is the first and only foundation of virtue. For no other principle can be conceived prior to this one (by **22**) and no virtue can be conceived without it (by **21**).

23: When a man is caused to do something because of inadequate ideas that he has, he can't be said unqualifiedly to be 'acting from virtue'; for THAT he must be caused to act as he does because he understands and thus has adequate ideas.

To the extent that a man is caused to act by inadequate ideas that he has, he

•is acted on (by **III1**),
that is (by **III D1** and **III D2**) he
•does something that can't be grasped purely
through his essence,
that is (by D8) he
•does something that doesn't follow from his
virtue.

But to the extent that he is caused to act by his understanding something, he

•is active (by **III1**),
that is (by **III D2**)
•does something that is grasped through his
essence alone,
that is (by D8) he
•does something that is entirely caused by his
virtue.

24: To say without qualification that someone 'acts from virtue' is just to say that he acts, lives, and stays in existence (three labels for one thing!) by the guidance of reason, on the basis of seeking his own advantage.

Acting from virtue is nothing but acting from the laws of our own nature (by D8). But we *act* only to the extent that we *understand* (by **III3**). So our acting from virtue is nothing but our acting, living, and staying in existence by the guidance of reason, and (by the corollary to **22**) on the basis of seeking our own advantage.

25: No-one tries to stay in existence for the sake of anything else.

The effort through which each thing tries to stay in existence is defined purely by its essence (by **III7**). Given just this essence, it follows necessarily that the thing tries to stay in existence—but this doesn't follow

necessarily from the essence of anything else (by **III6**). This proposition is also evident from the corollary to **22**. For if a man tried to stay in existence for the sake of something else, then the latter thing would be the first foundation of ·his· virtue (this is self-evident). But the corollary to **22** says that that is absurd. So again **25** follows.

26: The only thing that reason makes us try to get is understanding; and our mind, to the extent that it uses reason, doesn't judge anything to be useful to it except what leads to understanding.

A thing's effort to stay in existence is nothing but the thing's essence (by **III7**); and that essence, existing as it does, is conceived to have a force for staying in existence (by **III6**) and for doing the things that necessarily follow from its given nature (see the definition of 'appetite' in the note on **III9**). But the essence of ·our· •reason is nothing but •our mind in its aspect as something that understands clearly and distinctly (see the definition of 'reason' in the second note on **II37–40**). Therefore (by **II40**) what reason leads us to try to do, ·in trying to preserve *itself*·, is simply to *understand*. So the first part of **26** follows.

Next, since this effort through which the reasoning mind tries to stay in existence is nothing but understanding (by the first part of this demonstration), this effort for understanding (by the corollary to **22**) is the first and only foundation of virtue; and (by **25**) we don't try to understand things for the sake of some ·further· end. On the contrary, to the extent that the mind reasons it can't conceive anything to be good for it except what leads to understanding (by D1); ·so there can be no question of its seeking understanding

as a means to something *else*·. So the second part of **26** follows.

27: The only things we know for sure to be good (or to be bad) are things that really lead to understanding (or that can prevent us from understanding).

All the mind wants in reasoning is to understand, and it doesn't judge anything else to be useful to it except as a means to understanding (by **26**). But (by **II4** and **II41** and **II43** and the note on it) the mind knows things for sure only to the extent that it •has adequate ideas, or (what is the same thing, by the ·second· note on **II37–40**, to the extent that it •reasons. So **27** follows.

28: (i) The mind's greatest good is knowledge of God; (ii) its greatest virtue is to know God.

(i) The greatest thing the mind can understand is God, that is (by **ID6**, an absolutely infinite being without which (by **I15**) nothing can exist and nothing can be conceived. And so (by **26** and **27**), the mind's greatest advantage, or (by D1) its greatest good, is knowledge of God. (ii) Next, only in *understanding* is the mind *active* (by **III1** and **III3**, and only in understanding can it be said without qualification to act from virtue (by **23**). So the unqualified or unconditional virtue of the mind is understanding. But the greatest thing the mind can understand is God (already demonstrated). So the greatest virtue of the mind is to understand or know God.

29: (i) A particular thing whose nature is entirely different from ours can neither help nor hinder our power of acting, and (ii) absolutely nothing can be either good or bad for us unless it has something in common with us.

(i) The power of each •particular thing, and consequently the power by which each •man exists and acts, is subject to causal influences only from other particular things (by **I28**) whose nature must (by **II6**) be understood through the same attribute through which human nature is conceived. [That is: if you are asking about causal influences on a man's mind, you must look to other *minds*, or anyway other particulars *thought of under the attribute of thought*. And if you are asking about causal influences on a man's body, you must look to other bodies.] So our power of acting, however it is conceived—whether as mental or as physical—can be influenced by the power of another particular thing that has something in common with us, and not by the power of a thing whose nature is completely different from ours; and the limits on what something can be •influenced by are limits on what it can be •helped or •hindered by.

(ii) And because we call 'good' or 'bad' what causes pleasure or unpleasure (by **8**), that is (by the note on **III11**) what increases or lessens, helps or hinders, our power of acting, something whose nature is completely different from ours can't be either good or bad for us.

30: Nothing can be bad ·for us· because of what it has in common with our nature. To the extent that a thing is bad for us it is contrary to us ·in its nature·.

We call 'bad' what causes unpleasure (by **8**), that is (by the definition of 'unpleasure' in the note on **III11**) what lessens or restrains our power of acting. So if a thing were bad for us because of what it has in common with us, then the thing could lessen or restrain what it has in common with us, and that (by **III4**) is absurd. So nothing can be bad for us because of what it has in common with us. On the contrary, to the

extent that something is bad ·for us·, i.e. to the extent that it can lessen or restrain our power of acting, it is contrary to us (by **III5**).

31: To the extent that a thing agrees with our nature, it is necessarily good.

To the extent that a thing agrees with our nature it can't be bad (by **30**). So it must either be •good or •indifferent. Suppose the latter is the case, namely that the thing is neither good nor bad ·for us·: in that case nothing will follow from its nature that helps the preservation of our nature, i.e. that helps the preservation of the nature of the thing itself, ·because it and we have *the same* nature·. But this is absurd (by **III6**). ·That knocks out the 'indifferent' option, leaving only the 'good' one·. So, to the extent that the thing agrees with our nature it must be good.

Corollary: The *more* a thing agrees with our nature the *more* useful it is to us (the better it is for us), and conversely the more a thing is useful to us the more it agrees with our nature.

[The demonstration of this doesn't cast any further light.]

32: To the extent that men are subject to passions they can't be said to agree in nature.

Things that are said to agree in nature are understood to agree in the powers that they *have* (by **III7**), but not the powers that they *lack*, and consequently (see the note on **III3**) not in their passions either. So to the extent that men are subject to passions, they can't be said to agree in nature.

Note on 32: This is also self-evident. If someone says 'Black and white agree only in not being *red*' he is saying outright that black and white don't agree in anything. Similarly, if someone says 'A stone and a man agree only in that each

•is finite, •lacks power, •doesn't exist from the necessity of its nature, and •is indefinitely surpassed by the power of external causes', he is saying that a stone and a man don't agree in anything; for things that agree only in a negation, or in what they *don't* have, really agree in nothing.

33: Men can disagree in nature to the extent that they are tormented by passive affects; and to that extent also one and the same man is changeable and inconstant.

The nature or essence of our ·passive· affects can't be explained through our essence or nature alone (by **II D1** and **II D2**), but must be determined by how the *power* of external causes compares with our own power—i.e. (by **III 7**) by how their *nature* compares with our own. ·So the details of what any given passive affect is like come partly from the external causes that contribute to its existence·. That is why •there are as many species of each ·kind of· affect as there are species of objects by which we are affected (see **III 56**); it is why •men are affected differently by one and the same object (see **III 51**), and in being affected differently disagree in nature. And finally it is why •one and the same man (by **III 51** again) has different affects ·at different times· toward the same object, and to that extent is changeable, etc.

34: To the extent that men are tormented by passive affects they can be contrary to one another.

Suppose that Peter is a cause of Paul's unpleasure •because he has something similar to a thing that Paul hates (by **III 16**), or •because he has sole possession of something that Paul also loves (see **III 32** and the note on it), or on account of other causes (for the main ones see the note on **III 55**). This (by **III AD7**) will have the result that Paul hates Peter. Hence (by **III 40**

and the note on it) Peter hates Paul in return, and so (by **III 39**) they try to harm one another; that is (by **30**), they are contrary to one another. But an affect of unpleasure is always a passive one (by **III 59**). So **34** follows.

Note on 34: I have said that Paul hates Peter because he imagines that Peter owns something that Paul also loves. At first glance this seems to imply that these two men are injurious to one another because •they love the same thing, and hence because •they agree in nature. If this were right, **30** and **31** would be false.

But if we examine the matter fairly we shall see that there is no inconsistency here. What the two men agree in is *love for x*, where x is the same thing in each case. *This* doesn't make them troublesome to one another; on the contrary, by **III 31** these loves encourage one another, and so (by **III AD6** each one's pleasure is encouraged by the other's. Their enmity comes from the fact that Peter has the idea of *x-which-I-own* while Paul has the idea of *x-which-I-don't-own*. It is in that respect that they are contrary to one another; it is a difference between their natures; it is why one has pleasure and the other unpleasure.

All the other causes of hate depend purely on the men's disagreeing in nature, not on anything in which they agree. We can show this in each case, by means similar to those I have just used in the Peter-Paul example.

35: Only to the extent that men live by the guidance of reason are they sure always to agree in nature.

To the extent that men are tormented by passive affects, they can be different in nature (by **33**), and contrary to one another (by **34**). But they are said to be *active* to the extent that they live by the guidance of reason (by **III 3**). Hence, whatever follows from the rea-

soning aspects of a man's nature must be understood through his nature alone (by **III D2** as its immediate cause, not having any causal input from anything else). But because each man is led by the laws of his own nature to want what he judges to be good, and tries to avoid what he judges to be bad (by **19**), and also because what we *judge to be* good or bad when we follow the dictate of reason must *be* good or bad (by **II 4**), it follows that to the extent that men live by the guidance of reason they are sure to do only things that are good for human nature, and thus good for each man, i.e. (by the corollary to **31**) things that agree with the nature of each man. Hence, to the extent that men live by the guidance of reason they are sure always to agree among themselves.

First corollary: No individual thing in Nature is more useful to a man than another man who lives by the guidance of reason.

What is most useful to a man is what most agrees with his nature (by the corollary to **31**)—that is, obviously, a man. But a man acts entirely from the laws of his own nature when he lives by the guidance of reason (by **III D2**), and only to that extent is he sure to agree always with the nature of the other man (by **35**). So the corollary follows.

Second corollary: Men are most useful to one another when each man most seeks his own advantage for himself.

The more each one seeks his own advantage and tries to stay in existence, the more virtue he has (by **20**), or—the same thing (by **D8**)—the greater is his power of acting according to the laws of his own nature, that is (by **III 3**), the greater is his power of living from the guidance of reason. But men agree in nature most when they live by the guidance of reason (by

35). Therefore (by the first corollary to **35**), men will be *most* useful to one another when each man *most* seeks his own advantage.

Note on 35 and its corollaries: What I have just shown is also confirmed by daily experience, which provides so much and such clear evidence for it that *Man is a God to man* is a common saying. Still, men don't often live by the guidance of reason. Instead, they live in such a way that they are usually envious and burdensome to one another. But they can hardly lead an entirely solitary life, which is why most people approve of the definition of man as 'a social animal'. And surely we gain much more than we lose by living in the society of our fellow men.

So let satirists laugh as much as they like at human affairs, let theologians curse them, let misanthropes do their utmost in praising a life that is uncultivated and wild, despising men and admiring the lower animals. Men still find from experience that by helping one another they can have their own needs met more easily, and that only by joining forces can they avoid the dangers that threaten on all sides. Also: thinking about how *men* behave is greatly preferable to thinking about how *the lower animals* behave—preferable and more worthy of our knowledge. No more of that now; I shall treat the topic more fully elsewhere.

36: The greatest good of those who seek virtue is common to all, and all can enjoy it equally.

To act from virtue is to act by the guidance of reason (by **24**), and anything that reason leads us to attempt is a case of *understanding* (by **26**). And so (by **28**) the greatest good of those who seek virtue is to know God, and that (by **II 47** and the note on it) is a good that is common to all men; all men can have it to the extent that they are of the same nature.

Note on 36: You may ask: ‘What if the greatest good of those who seek virtue were *not* common to all? Wouldn’t it follow from that (see 34) that men who live by the guidance of reason, and who thus (by 35) agree in nature, would be contrary to one another?’

The answer to this is that the antecedent of your conditional supposition is *absolutely impossible*, so that we can’t coherently theorize about what would be the case *if it were true*, any more than we can speculate about how things would be if twice two equalled five. The proposition that *man’s greatest good is common to all* doesn’t just *happen* to be true; rather, it arises from the very nature of reason, because it is deduced from the very essence of man in his capacity as a reasoner, and because man could neither be nor be conceived if he didn’t have the power to enjoy this greatest good. For (by II47 it belongs to the essence of the human mind to have an adequate knowledge of God’s eternal and infinite essence.

37: If someone seeks virtue, then (i) the good that he wants for himself he also wants for other men; and (ii) the intensity of this desire is proportional to how much he knows of God.

(i) By 24, anyone who seeks virtue lives according to the dictate of reason, and so (by 26) the good that he wants for himself is understanding. And men are most useful to us when they live by the guidance of reason (by the first corollary to 35); and so (by 19) reason guides us into trying to bring it about that other men do live in that way. Putting the two bits together: the good that everyone who seeks virtue wants for himself he also wants for other men.

(ii) Desire, considered as a mental phenomenon, is the very essence of the mind (by IIIAD1). Now the essence of the mind consists in knowledge (by II11). which

involves knowledge of God (by II47), without which the mind can neither be nor be conceived (by I15). Hence, for someone who seeks virtue, the greater the knowledge of God that his mind involves the more intense will be his desire that others have the good he wants for himself.

Another demonstration: The good that a man wants for himself and loves, he will love more constantly if he sees that others also love it (by the corollary to III31. So (by the corollary to III31), he will try to bring it about that others *do* love it too. And because this good is common to all (by 36) and all can enjoy it, (i) he will try to bring it about that all enjoy it. And (ii) the more he enjoys this good the harder he will try (by III37).

First note on 37: Someone who is led not by reason but by some affect to get others to love what he loves and to live according to his way of thinking is acting only from impulse; and he makes himself hated—especially by people whose preferences are different from his and are led by a similar impulse to try to get other men to live according to *their* way of thinking! And since the greatest good that men pursue *from an affect* is often something that only one person can possess, those who love such a thing are divided in their minds: though happy to sing the praises of the thing they love, they fear to be believed! But someone who is led by reason to try to guide others is not acting by impulse; he is acting kindly, generously, and with the greatest harmony of mind. I classify under ‘religion’ any of our wants and actions that we cause through having the idea of God or through knowing God. I label as ‘morality’ [*pietas*] the desire to do good that arises in us because we are living by the guidance of reason. I classify under ‘being honourable’ [*honestatem*] the desire by which a man who lives by the guidance of reason

is bound to join others to himself in friendship. I call 'honourable' [*honestum*] anything that is praised by men who live by the guidance of reason, and I call 'base' [*turpe*] anything that is contrary to the formation of friendship.

I would add that in making these points I have shown what the foundations of *the civil State* are. I shall take that up in the next note.

From what I have said you can easily see how true virtue differs from weakness: true virtue is simply living by the guidance of reason; so weakness consists purely in allowing yourself to be guided by things external to you, so that your conduct is dictated by •the state of external things in general, not by •your own nature in particular.

These are the things I promised, in the note on **18**, to demonstrate. They make it clear that a law against killing animals owes more to empty superstition and womanish compassion than to sound reason. Our reason for seeking our own advantage teaches us that we must unite with men, but not with the lower animals or with anything else whose nature is different from human nature. We have the same right against them that they have against us. Indeed, because each individual's virtue = *power* settles what *right* it has, men have a far greater right against the lower animals than they have against men. I'm not denying that the lower animals can *feel*. But I do deny that their having feelings debars us from considering our own advantage, using them as we please, and treating them in whatever way best suits us. For their natures are unlike ours, and their affects are different in nature from human affects (see the note on **III57**).

It remains now for me to explain what justice and injustice are, what wrong-doing is, and what merit is. I shall do that in the following note.

Second note on 37: I promised in the Appendix of Part I to explain what praise and blame, merit and wrong-doing,

and justice and injustice are. As for as praise and blame, I explained them in the note on **III29**. This is the place to deal with the others. But first I should say a little about man in the state of Nature and man in a civil or governed State.

Everyone, by the highest right of Nature,

- exists, and
- does the things that follow from the necessity of his own nature; and therefore
- makes his own judgments about what is good and what is bad,
- considers his own advantage according to his own way of thinking (see **19** and **20**),
- seeks revenge (see the second corollary to **III40**), and
- tries to preserve what he loves and to destroy what he hates (see **I28**).

If men lived by the guidance of reason, everyone would have and act upon this right of his (by the first corollary to **35**) without any injury to anyone else. But because men are subject to the affects (by the corollary to **4**), which far surpass the power = virtue of the men (by **6**), they are often pulled in different directions (by **33**) and are opposed to one another (by **34**), while also needing one another's help (by the note on **35**). So: for men to live in harmony and be helpful to one another, they have to give up their natural right and to make one another confident that they won't do anything that could harm others. How can men who are necessarily subject to affects (by the corollary to **4**), and are inconstant and changeable (by **33**), create mutual confidence and trust? The answer is made clear by **7** and **III39**. No affect can be restrained except by a stronger affect pulling the opposite way, and everyone refrains from doing harm to others out of timidity regarding a greater harm to himself.

Society can be maintained on these terms, provided it claims *for itself* everyone's right of avenging himself and of

judging for himself what is good and what is bad. This will give society the power to prescribe a common rule of life, to make laws, and to enforce them—not by reason (which can't restrain the affects—see the note on 17) but by threats. This society, held in place by its laws and by the power it has of preserving itself, is called a 'civil State', and those who are under the protection of its laws are called 'citizens'.

This makes it easy for us to understand that in the state of Nature there is no common agreement about what is good and what is bad, because in the state of Nature everyone considers only his own advantage, deciding what is good and what is bad on the basis of his own way of thinking, and taking account only of his own advantage. No law obliges him to submit to anyone but himself. So in the state of Nature there is no place for the notion of wrong-doing.

But in the civil State it is decided by common agreement what is good and what is bad, and everyone is obliged to submit to the State. So wrong-doing is simply *disobedience*, which can be punished only by the law of the State. And *obedience* is regarded as a merit in a citizen because it leads to his being judged worthy of enjoying the advantages of the State.

Again, in the state of Nature there is no-one who by common consent is the owner [*dominus*, literally = 'master'] of anything: nothing in the state of Nature can be said to be this man's and not that man's. Instead, everything belongs to everyone. So in the state of Nature there is no room for the notion of *intending to give to each what is his* or that of *intending to deprive someone of what is his*. This means that in the state of Nature nothing can be called 'just' or 'unjust'. That can happen only in the civil State, where common consent decides who owns what.

All this makes it clear that the notions of just and unjust, wrong-doing and merit, are applicable to someone on

the basis not of his state of mind but of how he relates to something external to him, namely the laws of the State. That's enough on this topic.

38: Anything that enables a human body to be affected in many ways and to affect external bodies in many ways is useful to the man whose body it is, and how useful it is depends on how able it makes the body to do how many of those things. This is praise for sensory acuity and physical dexterity. **And anything that makes a body less capable of these things is harmful.**

The better a body is at these things, the more its mind is capable of perceiving (by ^{II}14). So anything that makes a body capable of these things is necessarily good = useful (by 26 and 27), and useful in proportion to *how* capable of doing these things it makes the body. On the other hand (by the converses of the three propositions just cited), it is harmful if it renders the body less capable of these things.

39: (i) Things that preserve of the proportion of motion and rest in the parts of a human body are good; and (ii) things that alter that proportion are bad.

(i) To stay in existence a human body requires a great many other bodies (postulate P4 in the Physical Interlude in Part II). But what constitutes the *form* of the human body—that is, the set of features that make it *that body* and not a different one—is the proportion in which its parts communicate their motions to one another (by The Definition in the Physical Interlude in Part II). So things that enable the parts of a human body to preserve that same proportion of motion and rest to one another thereby preserve that body's form. So they bring it about that the body can be affected in many ways and can affect external bodies in many

ways (by Postulates 3 and 6 ·in the Physical Interlude· in Part II). So they are good (by **38**).

(ii) Things that cause a change in the proportion of motion and rest in a human body's parts bring it about (by The Definition again) that that body

- takes on another form, i.e.
- is destroyed, and thereby
- is made completely incapable of being affected in many ways.

So (by **38**) those things are bad.

(The link between change-of-form and destruction is self-evident. I pointed it out on page 85.)

Note on 39: I shall explain in Part V how much these things can harm or help the mind. But here it should be noted that I understand a body to *die* when its parts come to have a different proportion of motion and rest to one another. I'm willing to maintain that a human body can be changed into another nature entirely different from its own—and thus die—even when its blood is circulating and the other so-called 'signs of life' are maintained. For no reason compels me to hold that a body dies only if it is changed into a corpse.

Indeed, experience seems to urge a different conclusion. Sometimes a man goes through such changes that it would hard to maintain that he was still the same man. I have heard stories about a Spanish poet who suffered an illness after which he had so completely forgotten his past life that he didn't believe that the stories and plays he had written were his work. If he had also forgotten his native language, he could easily have been taken for a grown-up infant.

If this seems incredible, what are we to say about infants? An elderly man believes their nature to be so different from his own that he couldn't be persuaded that he ever *was* an infant if he didn't infer that he was from the example of others! But I don't want to provide superstitious folk with

material for raising new questions, so I prefer to leave this discussion unfinished.

40: Things that are conducive to men's having a common society = to their living together in harmony are useful, whereas ones that bring discord to the State are bad.

Contributing to men's living harmoniously is contributing to their living by the guidance of reason (by **35**). And so (by **26** and **27**) such things are good. And (by the same reasoning) things that arouse discord are bad.

41: In itself pleasure is not bad, but good; but unpleasure is inherently bad.

Pleasure (by **III11** and the note on it) is an affect by which the body's power of acting is increased or aided. Whereas unpleasure is an affect by which the body's power of acting is lessened or restrained. And so (by **38**) **41** follows.

42: Cheerfulness cannot be excessive, but is always good; melancholy, on the other hand, is always bad.

Cheerfulness (see how it is defined in the note on **III11**) is a pleasure which, on its bodily side, involves all parts of the body being equally affected. That is (by **III11**, the body's power of acting is increased or aided ·right across the board·, so that all of its parts maintain the same proportion of motion and rest. And so (by **39**) cheerfulness is always good, and can't be excessive ·in the way it might be if it involved some parts of the body and not others·.

Melancholy (see its definition in that same note) is an unpleasure which on its bodily side involves a lessening or restraining, clear across the board, of the body's power of acting. So (by **38**) it is always bad.

[In the next proposition and the next two demonstrations, the Latin word *titillatio* (literally = ‘tickling’) is left untranslated, as it was in Part III. Spinoza’s account of it in the note on **III11** ties it to *localized* pleasure—the pleasure of a swallow of good wine, or of a back-rub, or the like—whereas pain is localized unpleasure.]

43: (i) *Titillatio* can be excessive and bad; and (ii) to the extent that that can happen, pain can be good.

(i) *Titillatio* is a pleasure which in its bodily aspect involves some parts of the body being pleased more than all the others. The power of this affect can be so great that it surpasses the other actions of the body (by **6**), remains stubbornly fixed in the body, and so prevents the body from being capable of being affected in a great many *other* ways. Hence (by **38**) it can be bad.

(ii) Pain, being an unpleasure, can’t be good in itself (by **41**). But how intense a pain is, and how much it grows, are fixed by how the power of some external cause compares with our power (by **5**); there are no limits to the different ways in which, and different extents to which, an external power can surpass our own power (by **3**); so there are no limits to the different kinds and degrees of pain that are conceivable. So it’s conceivable that a pain should be just right in its degree and kind to restrain *titillatio* that would otherwise be excessive; a pain like *that* would prevent the body from being made less capable etc. (by the first part of **43**); and so to that extent it would be good.

44: (i) Love can be excessive, and (ii) so can desire.

(i) Love is pleasure accompanied by the idea of an external cause (by **IIIAD6**). So (by the note on **III116**, *titillatio* accompanied by the idea of an external cause is love. And so (by **43**) love can be excessive.

(ii) The greater the affect from which a desire arises, the greater the desire (by **III37**). Now, an affect (by **6**) can swamp the rest of a man’s actions, so that a desire arising from such an affect can swamp the rest of his desires. So it can be excessive in the same way that I have shown in **43** that *titillatio* can be excessive.

Note on 44: Cheerfulness, which I have said is good, is easier to think about than actually to find in human life. The affects by which we are daily tormented generally concern one part of the body that is affected more than the others. Usually, then, our affects are excessive, and keep the mind obsessed with some one object to the exclusion of everything else. Men are liable to a great many different affects, so that it’s not often that one man is always agitated by the very same affect; but there *are* people in whom one affect is stubbornly fixed. We sometimes encounter men who are so affected by one object that they think they have it with them even when they don’t.

When this happens to a man who isn’t asleep, we say that he is delirious or insane; and we take the same view of anyone who burns with love, and dreams night and day only of his beloved. For we usually laugh at such people. But when a greedy man thinks of nothing but gain or money, and an ambitious man of nothing but glory, we don’t think *they* are mad, because they are harmful and therefore fit to be hated. But greed, ambition, and lust really *are* kinds of madness, even though we don’t classify them as diseases.

45: Hate can never be good.

We try to destroy the man we hate (by **III39**, that is (by **37**), we try to do something bad. So **45** follows.

Note on 45: Note that here and in what follows I use ‘hate’ only to refer to ‘hate toward men’.

First corollary: Envy, mockery, disdain, anger, vengeance, and the rest of the affects that are related to hate or arise from it are bad. This too is evident from **37** and **III39**.

Second corollary: Whatever we want because we have been affected with hate is base; and ·if we live· in a State it is unjust. This too is evident from **III39**, and from the definitions of ‘base’ and ‘unjust’ (see the notes on **37**).

Note on those corollaries: I recognize a great difference between *mockery* (which in the first corollary I said was bad) and *laughter*. For laughter and joking are pure pleasure, and so they are good in themselves (by **41**), provided they are not excessive. There’s nothing against our having pleasure, except grim and gloomy superstition. Why should it be more proper to relieve our hunger and thirst than it is to rid ourselves of gloom?

Here is what I think, and what guides me in my life. No god or anyone else—unless he is envious of me!—takes pleasure in my weakness and my misfortune, or counts as virtuous our tears, sighs, fears, and other such signs of a weak mind. On the contrary, the greater the pleasure we have, the more we move upwards in perfection, that is, the more fully we share in the divine nature. So it is the part of a wise man to use things and delight in them as far as possible—though not *ad nauseam*, for there is no delight in that.

It is the part of a wise man, I repeat, to refresh and restore himself in moderation with pleasant food and drink, with scents, with the beauty of green plants, with decoration, music, sports, the theatre, and other things of this kind, which anyone can use without harming anyone else. For a human body has many parts with different natures, constantly needing new and varied nourishment, so that the whole body can be equally capable of doing all the things in its potential repertoire, and thus that the mind may also be

capable of taking in many things at once.

This way of life agrees best both with my principles and with common practice. So this is the best way of living, and is to be commended in every way. I don’t need to go on any longer, or any more clearly, on these matters.

46: Anyone who lives by the guidance of reason tries as hard as he can to repay any hate, anger, and disdain that others have toward him with love or nobility.

All affects of hate are bad (by the first corollary of **45**). So someone who lives by the guidance of reason will try as hard as he can to avoid being tormented by affects of hate (by **19**), and so (by **37**) he will try to bring it about that others don’t have those affects either. Now, hate is increased by being returned, whereas it can be destroyed by love (by **III43**) so that the hate turns into love (by **III44**). So anyone who lives by the guidance of reason will try to repay others’ hate, etc. with love = with nobility (see how that is defined in the note on **III59**).

Note on 46: If you try to avenge wrongs ·that you have suffered· by *hating* in return, you’ll live a miserable life indeed. Whereas if you devote yourself to battling against hate with love, you’ll have a fight that you can take pleasure in, with no fear ·of coming to any harm in it·; you can take on many men as easily as one, and you’ll have the least need of help from luck! Those whom you conquer will take pleasure in their ‘defeat’, which comes not from weakness but from an increase in their powers. All these things follow so clearly just from the definitions of ‘love’ and of ‘intellect’ that there is no need to demonstrate them separately.

47: Affects of hope and fear cannot be good in themselves.

There are no affects of hope or fear without unpleasure. For fear is an unpleasure (by ^{III}AD13, and there is no hope without fear (see the explanation following ^{III}AD12–13). Therefore (by 41) these affects can't be good •in themselves; when there is any good in them it's because they •restrain excesses of pleasure (by 43).

Note on 47: A further point: these affects show a lack of knowledge and weakness of mind; and because of that these also are signs of a weak mind: confidence and despair, gladness and regret. [On 'regret', see comment inserted in the second note on ^{III}18.] For although confidence and gladness are affects of pleasure, they presuppose that an unpleasure—hope and fear—has preceded them. So the more we try to live by the guidance of reason, the more we try to avoid depending on hope, to free ourselves from fear, to conquer fortune as much as we can, and to direct our actions by the certain counsel of reason.

48: Affects of overestimation and scorn are always bad.

These affects are contrary to reason (by ^{III}AD2 and ^{III}AD22). So (by 26 and 27) they are bad. [On the word 'overestimation' see the comment added to the end of the note on ^{III}26.]

49: Overestimation easily makes the man who is overestimated proud.

If we see that someone has too high an opinion of us because he loves us so much, we shall (by the note on ^{III}41) find it easy to exult—i.e. (by ^{III}AD30) to have pleasure—at being esteemed, and we'll also find it easy to *believe* the good things we hear being said of us (by ^{III}25). And so our self-love will lead us to

think more highly of ourselves than we should, which means (by ^{III}28) that we shall easily become proud.

50: (i) Pity is bad in itself, and (ii) in a man who lives by the guidance of reason it is also useless.

(i) Pity (by ^{III}AD18) is an unpleasure, and therefore (by 41) it is in itself bad. (ii) The good that comes from pity—namely trying to free the pitied man from his suffering (by the third corollary on ^{III}27—we want to do purely from the dictate of reason (by 37), and it's only when we act on the dictate of reason that we know for sure that we are doing good (by 27). So pity is bad in itself, and in a man who lives by the dictate of reason it is useless.

Corollary: A man who lives by the dictate of reason tries as hard as he can not to be touched by pity. **Note on 50 and its corollary:** Someone who rightly knows that all things follow from the necessity of the divine nature, and happen according to the eternal laws and rules of Nature, won't find anything worthy of hate, mockery or disdain, or anyone whom he will pity. Instead, as far as human virtue allows he will try—as the saying goes—'to act well and rejoice'. A further point: someone who is easily touched by the affect of pity, and moved by the suffering or tears of others, often does things that he later regrets—both because affects never enable us to know for sure that we are doing good, and because we are easily deceived by false tears. I'm saying this specifically about those who live by the guidance of reason. •For someone who *doesn't* live in that way, pity is better than nothing•. Someone who is not moved to help others either by reason *or* by pity is rightly called inhuman, because (by ^{III}27) he seems to be unlike a man.

51: Favour is not contrary to reason; it can agree with reason and arise from it.

Favour is *love* toward someone who has benefited someone else (by **IIIAD19**), and so it comes from the *active* aspects of the mind (by **III59**), which implies (by **III3**) that it comes from the *understanding* aspects of the mind. So it agrees with reason, etc.

Alternate demonstration: Someone who lives by the guidance of reason wants for others the good he wants for himself (by **37**). So when he sees someone benefiting a third person, his own effort to do good is aided, so that (by the note on **III11**) he will have pleasure. And this pleasure will be accompanied by the idea of the person who has benefited the third party. So he will (by **IIIAD19**) favour that person.

Note on 51: Indignation, as I define it in **IIIAD20**, is necessarily bad (by **45**). But ·don't think that I mean to condemn civil punishments·. When the sovereign power ·of the State·, in its resolve to preserve peace, punishes a citizen who has wronged someone else, I don't say that it is *indignant* toward the citizen. It punishes him not because it has been aroused by hate to destroy him, but from a sense of duty.

52: (i) Self-satisfaction ·can arise from reason, and (ii) self-satisfaction that ·does arise from reason is the greatest self-satisfaction there can be.

(i) Self-satisfaction is pleasure born of a man's thinking about himself and his power of acting (by **IIIAD25**). But his true power of acting = his virtue is reason itself (by **III3**), and when a man thinks about *that* he thinks clearly and distinctly (by **II40** and **II43**). So self-satisfaction arises from reason.

(ii) When a man is thinking about himself, the only things he perceives clearly and distinctly (= ade-

quately) are the things that follow from his power of acting (by **II2**), that is (by **III3**), things that follow from his power of understanding. So this kind of reflection is the only source for the greatest self-satisfaction.

Note on 52: Self-satisfaction is really the highest thing we can hope for. Because it is more and more encouraged and strengthened by praise (by the corollary to **III53**), and more and more disturbed by blame (by the corollary to **III55**), we are guided most by ·our wish for· honour, and can hardly bear a life in disgrace. (·You might think: 'That can't be right! Whatever it is that we *live for* must provide us with a higher goal than that'. Not so. We don't 'live for' anything·; as I showed in **25**, no-one tries to stay in existence for the sake of any ·further· end.)

53: Humility is not a virtue; that is, it doesn't arise from reason.

Humility is an unpleasure that arises from a man's thinking about his own weakness (by **IIIAD26**). Moreover, to the extent that a man knows himself by true reason, it is assumed that he *understands* his own essence, that is (by **III7**) his own power. So if a man when thinking about himself perceives some weakness, the source of this is not ·his ·accurate· understanding of himself but rather ·some limitation on his power of acting (as I showed in **III55**). If a man gets the thought of his lack of power from his understanding that something else is more powerful than he is, and from his measuring his power by that comparison, that *can* come from reason, i.e. from his understanding himself distinctly; ·but it isn't humility! It doesn't come from a depressed sense of how weak he is, but from an accurate estimate of how his powers compare

with those of some other things. So humility—the unpleasure arising from a man’s reflecting on his own weakness—doesn’t arise from accurate thinking = reason, and is not a virtue but a passivity.

54: (i) Repentance isn’t a virtue = doesn’t arise from reason. (ii) Someone who repents what he has done is doubly wretched or weak.

Clause (i) is demonstrated as **53** was. Clause (ii) is evident simply from how ‘repentance’ is defined in **IIIAD27**: the repentant person first allows himself to be conquered by a bad desire, and then allows himself to be conquered by unpleasure.

Note on 54: Because men rarely live from the dictate of reason, more good than harm is done by humility and repentance, and by hope and fear. Since men will inevitably act wrongly, it is preferable that they should act wrongly in the direction of those affects. If weak-minded men were all equally proud, ashamed of nothing, and afraid of nothing, how could they be united or restrained by any bonds? A mob without fear is a terrifying thing. So it is not surprising that the old testament prophets, thinking of the welfare of the whole community and not just of a few, so warmly commended humility, repentance, and reverence. In fact, those who are subject to these affects can be guided far more easily than others, so that in the end they may live by the guidance of reason, that is, be free and enjoy the life of the happy.

55: Extreme pride and extreme despondency are both cases of extreme ignorance of oneself.

This is evident from **III28–29**.

56: Extreme pride and extreme despondency both indicate extreme weakness of mind.

The primary basis of virtue is keeping oneself in existence (by the corollary to **22**), doing this by the guidance of reason (by **24**). So someone who is ignorant of himself is ignorant of the basis of all the virtues, and thus ignorant of all the virtues. From that it follows that he doesn’t *act from* virtue, because acting from virtue is simply acting by the guidance of reason (by **24**), and anyone who acts by the guidance of reason must know that he is doing so (by **II43**). So someone who is ignorant of himself, and consequently of all the virtues, doesn’t act from virtue at all, and D8 makes it evident that this means that he is extremely weak-minded. And so (by **55**) extreme pride and extreme despondency indicate extreme weakness of mind.

Corollary: The proud and the despondent are highly liable to affects.

Note on 56 and its corollary: Yet despondency can be corrected more easily than pride, since pride is an affect of pleasure, whereas despondency is an affect of unpleasure. That implies (by **18**) that pride is stronger than despondency.

57: The proud man loves the company of parasites or flatterers, but hates to be with noble people.

Pride is pleasure arising from a man’s thinking more highly of himself than he should (see **IIIAD28** and **IIIAD6**). The proud man will try as hard as he can to encourage this opinion (see the note on **III13**), so he will love to be with parasites and flatterers (I have omitted the definitions of these because they are too well known), and will shun the company of noble people, who will value him as he deserves!

Note on 57: It would take too long to list here everything that is bad about pride, since the proud are subject to all the affects (though less to love and compassion than to any of the others).

But I oughtn't to go on suppressing the fact that 'proud' is also used in a different sense from mine, a sense in which a man is called 'proud' if he thinks less highly of others than he should. So 'pride' in this sense should be defined as 'pleasure arising from a man's false opinion that he is superior to others'. And 'despondency' taken as naming opposite to this pride would need to be defined as 'unpleasure arising from a man's false opinion that he is inferior to others'.

On this basis, we can easily grasp that •the proud man must be envious (see the note on ^{III}55) and hate those most who are most praised for their virtues, that •his hatred of them is not easily conquered by love or benefits (see the note on ^{III}41), and that •he takes pleasure only in the company of those who humour his weakness of mind, •thereby turning a mere fool into a madman!

Although despondency is the opposite of pride, the despondent man is very near to the proud one. His unpleasure arises from his judging his own weakness against the power = virtue of others; so it will be relieved, i.e. he will have pleasure, if his imagination lingers on the faults of others. Hence the proverb: *Misery loves company*.

On the other hand, the more he thinks he is inferior to others, the more unpleasure he will have. That is why •no one is more prone to envy than the despondent man is, and why •he is especially watchful over men's actions (so as to find fault with them, not improve them), and why •eventually despondency is the only thing he praises and exults over—though in such a way that he still seems despondent.

These things follow from this affect as necessarily as it follows from the nature of a triangle that its three angles are

equal to two right angles. As I have already explained, when I call affects like these 'bad' I mean this only in relation to the welfare of humans. The laws of Nature concern the common order of Nature, of which man is a part. I want to remind you of this in passing, so that you won't think that my aim has been only to tell about men's vices and follies rather than to demonstrate the nature and properties of things. For as I said in the Preface of Part III, I consider men's affects and properties to be on a par with other natural things. And human affects, though they aren't signs of man's power, do indicate the power and skill of Nature—just as much as do many other things that we wonder at and take pleasure in thinking about. •Having said this, I shall now return to the topic of what in the affects brings advantage to men and what brings them harm.

58: Love of esteem is not opposed to reason, but can arise from it.

This is evident from ^{III}AD30 and from the definition of 'honourable' in the first note on 37.

Note on 58: Vainglory [Spinoza writes: the love of esteem (*gloria*) which is called •empty (*vana*)] is self-satisfaction that is nourished only by the opinion of the multitude. When that stops, so does the self-satisfaction, which (by the note on 52) is the highest good that each person loves. That is why someone who exults at being esteemed by the multitude is made anxious daily, and struggles, sacrifices, and schemes to preserve his reputation. For the multitude is fickle and inconstant; unless one's reputation is guarded it is quickly destroyed. Indeed, because everyone wants to be applauded by the multitude, each one is ready to put down the reputation of someone else. And, since what is at stake is thought to be the highest good, this gives rise to a fierce desire on the part of each to crush the other in any way he can. The one

who finally comes out on top exults more in having harmed the other than in having benefited himself. So this love of esteem—this kind of self-satisfaction—really is •empty, because it is nothing.

What matters regarding *shame* can easily be inferred from what I have said about *compassion* and *repentance*. I have only this to add: shame is like *pity* in that it is not a virtue •but can still have something good about it. Specifically, shame is good to the extent that it indicates that the ashamed person wants to live honourably. (In the same way *pain* is said to be good to the extent that it is a sign that the injured part is not yet decayed.) So although a man who is ashamed of some deed has real unpleasure, he is still more perfect than a shameless man who has no desire to live honourably.

I undertook to discuss affects of pleasure and unpleasure, and now I have done that. As for desires: of course they are good or bad according to whether they arise from good or bad affects. When a desire is generated in by a passive affect, it is *blind* (as you can easily work out from what I said in the note on **44**), and would be useless if men could easily be led to live by the dictate of reason alone. I shall now show this, briefly.

59: For everything that we are caused to do by a passive affect, we could be caused to do that very same thing by reason, without that affect.

Acting from reason is simply doing things that follow from the necessity of our nature all by itself (by **III3** and **III D2**). But unpleasure is bad to the extent that it decreases or restrains this power of acting (by **41**). So unpleasure •reduces our powers, and so it• can't cause us to do anything that we couldn't do if we were led by reason.

Furthermore, pleasure is bad to the extent that it prevents one from being able to act (by **43** and **44**), so bad pleasure can't cause us to do anything that we couldn't do if we were guided by reason.

[Two sentences are omitted: they are *extremely* obscure, and seem not to contribute anything to the demonstration.]

All affects are related to pleasure, unpleasure, or desire (see the explanation of **III AD4**). •But **59** is about passive affects, and a desire can't be one of those, because• (by **III AD1**) a desire is just an effort to *act*. •So the ground is covered by what has been demonstrated concerning passive or bad unpleasure and passive or bad pleasure•. So **59** has been demonstrated.

Alternate demonstration: An action is called 'bad' to the extent that it arises from the person's being subject to hate or some •other• bad affect (see the first corollary to **45**). But no action is good or bad in itself (as I showed in the Preface of this Part). Rather, one and the same action can be now good, now bad. Therefore, an action which is now bad = arises from some bad affect is one that we can (by **19**) be led to by reason.

Note on 59: An example will make this clearer. Consider an act of beating, in which a man clenches his fist and moves his whole arm forcefully up and down: considered in that way just as a physical event, this act is •a sheer exercise of power, and considered as such it• is a virtue, which is to be explained in terms of the structure of the human body. If a man moved like that because of anger or hate, that would be an example of the general fact (shown in Part II) that one and the same action can be joined to any images whatever. So we can be led to one and the same action both by images of things that we conceive confusedly and by ones that we

conceive clearly and distinctly.

This makes it obvious that if men could be guided by reason they would have no use for desires arising from passive affects.

Now let me show why I describe as 'blind' any desire arising from a passive affect.

60: A desire arising from a pleasure or unpleasure that is related to one or more parts of the body but not to them all takes no account of the welfare of the whole man.

Suppose that one part of a body is •strengthened by the force of some external cause so that it prevails over the other parts (by 6). This *prevailing* won't lead the part to try to lose •some of• its powers so as to allow the body's other parts to perform their function. For that would require it to have a force = power to lessen its own powers, which (by ^{III}6) is absurd. So that part will try, and consequently (by ^{III}7 and ^{III}12) the mind also will try, to keep things as they are. So the desire arising from such an affect of pleasure doesn't take account of the whole.

The demonstration goes through in the same way if we start by supposing that some part of a body is •weakened by an external cause so that other parts of the body prevail over it. That would involve an affect of *unpleasure*; •the upshot would again be a bodily imbalance, and again• the desire arising from the affect would not take account of the whole.

Note on 60: Therefore, since pleasure is (by the note on 44) usually related to just one part of the body, we usually want to stay in existence without regard to our health as a whole. Also, by the corollary to 9 the wants that grip us most tightly take account only of the present and not the future.

61: A desire arising from reason cannot be excessive.

Desire (by ^{III}AD1) is a man's essence, insofar as it is conceived to be determined, from any given state of it, to do something. [This seems to mean: 'A man's *desire* to do x is just the aspects of his nature that tend to cause him to do x.'] And so a desire arising from reason, that is (by ^{III}3) a desire generated in a man by his *active* aspects, is his essence = nature considered as the source of actions that flow purely from his essence alone •with no input from external causes• (by ^{III}D2). So if this desire could be excessive, then unaided human nature could exceed itself, i.e. do more than it can; which is a plain contradiction. So such a desire cannot be excessive.

62: In conceiving things by the dictate of reason, the mind is affected in the same way whether the idea is of a past, a present, or a future thing.

Everything that the mind conceives under the guidance of reason it conceives in terms of the same kind of eternity = necessity (by the second corollary to ^{II}44), and is accompanied by the same certainty (by ^{II}43 and the note on it). So whether the idea is of a past, present, or future thing,

- the mind conceives it with the same necessity,
- the mind has the same certainty about it, and
- the idea is equally true (by ^{II}41), that is (by ^{II}D4) it has the properties of an adequate idea.

So far as the mind conceives things by the dictate of reason, therefore, it is affected in the same way, whether the idea is of a past, present, or future thing.

Note on 62: If we could have adequate knowledge of how long things last, finding out *by reason* how long they last, we would regard future things with the same affect as we do

present ones, and the mind would want the good it thinks of as future just as it wants the good it thinks of as present. And then it would necessarily prefer a greater future good to a lesser present one, and wouldn't want *at all* something that would be good right now but would cause something bad in the future. I shall soon demonstrate this.

But we can have only a quite inadequate knowledge of how long things do or will last (by **III31**), and our ideas about that are based on the imagination (by the note on **III44**), which is not equally affected by the image of a present thing and the image of a future one. That is why our true knowledge of good and evil is merely abstract = universal; and our more specific judgments about what in the present is good or bad for us—judgments concerning the order of things and the connection of causes—owe more to imagination than to reality. So it is no wonder that the desire arising from a knowledge of good and evil, when it looks to the future, can rather easily be restrained by a desire for the pleasures of the moment. On this see **16**.

63: Anyone who is guided by fear, and does good to avoid something bad, is not guided by reason.

The only affects of the *active* mind—that is (by **III3**), the only affects that are related to reason—are pleasure and desire (by **III59**). And so (by **IIIAD13**) someone who is guided by fear, and does good out of timidity concerning something bad, is not guided by reason.

Note on 63: Religious zealots, who know how to censure vice better than how to teach virtue, don't try to guide men by reason. Rather, they try to restrain them through fear, so that they flee from bad outcomes rather than loving virtues. Such narrowly dogmatic people aim only to make others as wretched as they themselves are, so it is not surprising that they are generally resented and hated.

Corollary: By a desire arising from reason, we *directly* follow the good and *indirectly* flee what is bad.

A desire arising from reason can arise solely from an affect of pleasure that is not passive (by **III59**), that is, from a pleasure that can't be excessive (by **61**). But it can't arise from *unpleasure*, and therefore this desire (by **8**)—since it doesn't come from bad pleasure or from unpleasure—comes from knowledge of the good, not knowledge of the bad. So from the guidance of reason we go directly for the good, and we flee from what is bad only insofar as that is an automatic by-product of our pursuit of the good.

Note on the corollary: Consider the example of the sick and the healthy. The sick man eats things he dislikes out of timidity regarding death, whereas the healthy man enjoys his food, and in this way enjoys life better than if he feared death and directly wanted to avoid it. Similarly, a judge who condemns a guilty man to death—not from hate or anger etc., but only from a love of the general welfare—is guided only by reason.

64: Knowledge of evil is inadequate knowledge.

Knowledge of evil (by **8**) is unpleasure of which we are conscious. But unpleasure is a passage to a lesser perfection (by **IIIAD3**), and so (by **III6** and **III7**) it can't be understood through a man's essence itself. Hence (by **III D2**) it is something passive which (by **III3**) depends on inadequate ideas. Therefore (by **II29**) knowledge of evil is inadequate.

Corollary: From this it follows that a human mind that had only adequate ideas would form no notion of evil.

65: By the guidance of reason we follow the greater of two goods or the lesser of two evils.

A good that prevents us from enjoying a greater good

is really an evil. For 'good' and 'evil' or 'bad' (as I have shown in the Preface of this Part) are said of things on the basis of how they compare with other things. And by the same reasoning a lesser evil is really a good. Thus, (by the corollary to **63**) by the guidance of reason we want = follow only the greater good and the lesser evil.

Corollary: By the guidance of reason, we shall follow a lesser evil as a greater good, and reject a lesser good that is the cause of a greater evil. For the so-called 'lesser evil' is really good, and the so-called 'lesser good' is bad. So (by the corollary to **63**) we want the former and reject the latter.

66: By the guidance of reason we want a greater future good in preference to a lesser present one, and a lesser present evil in preference to a greater future one.

If the mind could have an adequate knowledge of a future thing, it would have the same affect toward it as toward a present one (by **62**). So when we are attending just to reason, the thing will be the same, whether the greater good or evil is supposed to be future or present. And therefore by the guidance of reason (by **65**) we want the greater future good in preference to the lesser present one, etc.

Corollary: By the guidance of reason, we shall want a lesser present evil that is the cause of a greater future good, and reject a lesser present good that is the cause of a greater future evil. This corollary relates to **66** as the corollary to **65** does to **65**.

Note on 66 and its corollary: Compare these results about the guidance of •reason• with the ones I presented in this Part up to **18**, concerning the powers of •the affects, and you'll easily see how a man who is led only by an affect = by opinion differs from one who is led by reason. For the

former willy-nilly does things in utter ignorance, whereas the latter complies with no-one's wishes but his own, and does only what he knows to be the most important in life, which he therefore wants above all. That's why I call the former a slave, and the latter a free man.

I want now to note a few more things about the free man's character and manner of living.

67: A free man thinks about death less than he thinks about anything else; his wisdom is a meditation on life, not on death.

A free man, i.e. one who lives by the dictate of reason alone, isn't led by fear of death (by **63**), but wants the good directly (by the corollary to **63**), i.e. (by **24**), he acts, lives, and keeps himself in existence on the basis of his seeking his own advantage. That is, his practical thoughts always have the form 'I'll do this to get the good result x', never 'I'll do this so as to avoid the bad result y'. So he thinks of nothing less than of death. Instead his wisdom is a meditation on life.

68: If men were born free, they would form no concept of good and evil so long as they remained free.

As I have said, a free man is one who is led solely by reason. So someone who was born free and remained free would have only adequate ideas, and so would have no concept of evil (by the corollary to **64**). And since good and evil are correlates, he would also have no concept of good.

Note on 68: It is evident from **4** that no man is born free; and the only way we can even have the *thought* of a man born free is by having a thought that is restricted to the man himself—i.e. to the aspects of God = Nature that •constitute the causing of this one man, •with no thought of his environment•.

This and the other things I have now demonstrated seem to be what Moses intended in his story—in the book of *Genesis*—about the first man. For in that story the only power of God that is thought about is the power by which •God created •the first• man, i.e. the power that God exercised to the man's advantage. •So in the story Adam starts off *free*•. We are then told •that God forbade the free man to eat •fruit• from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and •that if he were to eat of it he would immediately start fearing death rather than wanting to live; and then •that the man acquired a wife whose nature agreed completely with his own, and he knew that there could be nothing in Nature more useful to him than she was; but •that after he believed the lower animals to be like himself he immediately began to imitate their affects (see **III27**) and to lose his freedom; and •that afterwards this freedom was recovered by the church fathers, guided by the spirit of Christ, i.e. by the idea of God—the idea that is the sole basis for a man's being free and wanting for other men the good he wants for himself (as I have demonstrated in **37**).

69: A free man exhibits as much virtue • = power• in avoiding dangers as he does in overcoming them.

An affect can't be restrained or removed except by an opposite affect that is stronger than it is (by **7**). Now, blind daring and fear are affects that can be conceived as equally strong (by **3** and **5**). So it takes as much virtue of the mind to restrain daring as it does to restrain fear, that is (by **IIIAD40–41**), a free man •avoids dangers by the same virtue of the mind by which he tries to •overcome them. (See **III59**) on the equation of virtue of the mind with strength of character.)

Corollary: In a free man, a timely flight is considered to show as much resoluteness as fighting; which is to say that

a free man chooses flight with the same resoluteness or presence of mind as he chooses battle.

Note on the corollary: I have explained in the note on **III59** what I mean by 'resoluteness'. And by 'danger' I mean anything that can be the cause of something bad—unpleasure, hate, discord, or the like.

70: A free man who lives among the ignorant tries his hardest not to take favours from them.

Everyone follows his own way of thinking in judging what is good (see **III39**). So an ignorant person who has conferred a favour on someone else will value it according to his own lights, and will suffer unpleasure if he sees that the recipient values it less than he does (by **III42**). But a free man tries to join other men to him in friendship (by **37**), not so as •to repay them with benefits that they value as he does, but rather •to bring it about that he *and they* are led by the free judgment of reason, and •to do only things that he himself knows to be most excellent. Therefore, a free man will do all he can to avoid the favours of the ignorant, wanting not to be hated by them, and wanting to be guided not by their wishes but only by reason.

Note on 70: I say 'all he can'. For even ignorant men are still *men*, who in time of need can bring *human* help—which is the best kind. So it often happens that it is necessary •for a free man• to accept favours from them, and hence to return thanks to them in a way they will appreciate. I would add that when we decline a favour we should take care not to seem to disdain what is offered, or to be meanly afraid of having to repay them—for that would get us hated by the very act of trying to avoid their hate. So in declining favours we must take account of what is useful as well as of what is

honourable.

71: The greatest gratitude is the gratitude that only free men have toward one another.

Only free men •are very useful to one another, •are united by the strongest bonds of friendship (by **35** and its first corollary), and •are equally loving in their attempts to benefit one another (by **37**). So (by ^{III}**AD34**) only free men are maximally grateful to one another.

Note on 71: The ‘gratitude’ that men are led by blind desire to display toward one another is more like a bargain or an inducement than ·genuine· gratitude.

Ingratitude is not an affect. Still, it is base, because it generally indicates that the man has too much hate, anger, pride, greed, or the like. When someone stupidly doesn’t know the value of a favour he has received, *that’s* not ingratitude. Still less is it ingratitude when someone isn’t moved by the gifts of a loose woman who is trying to seduce him, or by what a thief offers him to buy his silence, or by the gifts of other people like those. On the contrary, he shows firmness of mind in not allowing any gifts to corrupt him to the detriment of himself or of society at large.

72: A free man always acts honestly, not deceptively.

If a free man in his freedom did anything deceitful, he would do it by the dictate of reason (that’s what we mean in calling him ‘free’). So it would be a virtue to act deceptively (by **24**), and hence everyone would be better advised to act deceptively so as to stay in existence. This self-evidently implies that men would be better advised to agree only in words but to be opposed to one another in fact. But this is absurd (by the corollary to **31**). So **72** follows.

Note on 72: You may ask: ‘What if a man could save himself from the present danger of death by treachery? Wouldn’t

the principle of staying in existence urge him, *outright*, to be treacherous?’ The reply to this is the same. If reason recommended this, it would recommend it to all men. And so reason would recommend, *outright*, that men be deceitful whenever they make agreements, join forces, and establish common laws—which would be to urge that they really they have no common laws, which is absurd.

73: A man who is guided by reason is more free •living under a system of laws in a State than he is •living in solitude and having only himself to obey.

A man who is guided by reason isn’t led by fear to obey ·the laws of the State· (by **63**). Rather,

•being guided by reason in his endeavour to stay in existence,

that is (by the note on **66**),

•wanting to live freely,

he wants to hold to considerations of the life and welfare of the community (by **37**), and therefore (as I have shown in the second note on **37**) he wants to live according to the laws of the State. So a man who is guided by reason wants to abide by the common laws of the State in order to live more freely.

Note on 73: These and similar things that I have presented concerning a man’s true freedom are related to strength of character, that is (by the note on ^{III}**59**), to resoluteness and nobility. I don’t think it is worthwhile at this point to demonstrate separately all the properties of strength of character, much less that a man who is strong in character hates no-one, is angry with no-one, envies no-one, is indignant with no-one, despises no-one, and is not at all proud. For these results, and everything relating to true life and religion, are easily proved from **37** (everyone who is led by reason wants others also to have the good he wants for himself) and **46**

(hate is to be conquered by returning love).

To this I shall add something that I have already said in the note on **50** and elsewhere, namely: A man who is strong in character has in the forefront of his mind •that whatever happens does so from the necessity of the divine nature, and therefore •that whatever he thinks is injurious and bad—and whatever strikes him as immoral, dreadful, unjust, and base—arises from the fact that he conceives the things themselves in a way that is disordered, mutilated, and confused. [Spinoza says that things that are base etc. arise from confusion etc., but he almost certainly means that *thinking of things as base etc. arises from confusion etc.*] For this reason, he tries above all to conceive things as they are in themselves, and to get rid of obstacles to true knowledge, such as hate, anger, envy, mockery, pride, and the other things I have discussed. And so, as I said in the note on **50**, he tries as hard as he can to act well and to rejoice.

I shall demonstrate in Part V how far human virtue can go in attaining these things, and what it is capable of.

Appendix

In this Part I haven't arranged my doctrines concerning the right way of living in such a way that they could be seen at a glance. Instead, I have presented them in a scattered fashion, taking up each at the point where I could most easily deduce it from what had gone before. So I propose now to collect them here and arrange them under their main headings.

1 app: All our efforts or desires follow from the necessity of our nature in such a way that they can be understood either •through our nature alone as their •entire• immediate cause, or •through our nature considered as a part of Nature, a part that can't be understood without reference to other individuals.

2 app: •The desires that follow from our nature in such a way that they can be understood through it are the ones that relate to the mind conceived of as consisting of adequate ideas. •Other desires relate to the mind as conceiving *inadequately*. What fixes the strength and growth of those ideas is not human power but the power of external things. So •the former are rightly said to be *active* and •the latter to be *passive*. For the former are always signs of our power, whereas the latter indicate our weakness and mutilated knowledge.

3 app: Our *actions*—i.e. desires that are shaped by man's power = reason—are always good; but other desires can be either good or bad.

4 app: So it is especially useful in life for us to perfect our intellect = reason as much as we can; and men's highest happiness consists in just this. Perfecting the intellect is nothing but understanding God, God's attributes, and God's actions, which follow from the necessity of God's nature; and happiness is nothing but the satisfaction of mind that stems from intuitively knowing God. So the ultimate end of the man who is led by reason—i.e. his highest desire, by which he tries to moderate all his other desires—is that by which he is led to conceive adequately both himself and everything that falls within the scope of his understanding.

5 app: So there is no rational life without understanding, and things are good only to the extent that they aid a man to enjoy the life of the mind that is determined by understanding. On the other hand, things that prevent man from being able to perfect his reason and enjoy the rational life—those are the ones, the only ones, I call bad.

6 app: But because all the things of which a man is the •complete• efficient cause must be good, nothing bad can

happen to a man except by external causes, i.e. to the extent that he is a part of the whole of Nature, whose laws human nature is compelled to obey, and to which it is forced to adjust itself in almost endlessly many different ways.

7 app: A man *has to* be a part of Nature and *has to* follow the common order of Nature. But if he lives among individuals whose nature agrees with his own, this will aid and encourage his power of acting. Whereas if he is among individuals whose nature doesn't at all agree with his, he will scarcely be able to accommodate himself to them without greatly changing himself.

8 app: When we judge something to be bad, i.e. an obstacle to our existing and enjoying a rational life, it is permissible for us to get it out of our way in whatever manner seems safest. On the other hand, when we judge something to be good, i.e. useful for preserving us and letting us enjoy a rational life, it is permissible for us to take it for our own use, and to use in any way. And—this is an absolute rule—everyone is entitled by the highest right of Nature to do whatever he thinks will be to his advantage.

9 app: Nothing can be more in harmony with the nature of any thing than other individuals of the same species. And so (by 7 app) nothing helps a man to stay in existence and enjoy a rational life more than a man who is guided by reason. Also, the most excellent particular thing we know of is a man who is guided by reason; so our best way of showing what our skill and understanding are good for is by educating men so that at last they live under the sway of their own reason.

10 app: To the extent that there is hatred or envy between men, they are contrary to one another; and so they have reason to fear one another—all the more so because men can do more than other individuals in Nature.

11 app: Minds, however, are conquered not by weapons but by love and nobility.

12 app: It is especially useful to men to relate closely to one another, binding themselves by whatever bonds are apt to make them *one*, and—another absolute rule—to do whatever will strengthen their friendship.

13 app: But this takes skill and alertness. Although men are ·unstable and· changeable (for few of them live by the rule of reason), ·there is something fairly steady in their make-up, namely· their usually being envious and more inclined to vengeance than to compassion. So one needs a notably powerful mind to put up with each one in the light of his ·level of· understanding, and to restrain oneself from imitating his affects.

But those who are good at finding fault with men—at scolding vices rather than teaching virtues, and at shattering men's minds rather than helping them to become strong—are burdensome to themselves as well as to others. That is why many people, over-impatient . . . , have preferred to live among the lower animals rather than among men. (They are like adolescents who can't take parental scoldings in their stride, and escape into the army. They prefer the hardships of war and the discipline of an absolute commander to the conveniences of home and the admonitions of a father; and are willing to bear any burden so long as they can get revenge on their parents!)

14 app: So although men for the most part conduct themselves ·not under the guidance of reason, but· on the basis of their own lust, their forming a common society still brings more advantages than disadvantages. So it is better to bear their injuries patiently, and devote one's energies ·not to revenge, but· to things that help to bring men together in harmony and friendship.

15 app: Harmony is created by things related to •justice, •fairness, and •honourable conduct. •I include the third of those• because it's not only injustice and unfairness that men can hardly bear, but also what is thought base, i.e. what tramples on the accepted practices of the State. But especially necessary for bringing people together in love are things that concern religion and morality [*pietas*]. On this, see both notes on **37** and the notes on **46** and **73**.

16 app: A common basis for harmony is fear, but •that •sort of harmony• is without trust, and •it isn't based on reason, because• fear arises from weakness of mind and so has nothing to do with the exercise of reason. (Nor does pity, though it looks like morality.)

17 app: Men are also won over by generosity, especially those who aren't in a position to get what they need to sustain life. It is far beyond the powers and resources of any private person to bring aid to everyone who needs it, for no-one's wealth is equal to that task. And anyway no-one has what it takes to be friends with everyone! So the care of the poor falls upon society as a whole; it's an issue of *general* welfare.

18 app: In accepting favours and in returning thanks, care of a different kind must be taken. See the notes on **70** and **71**.

19 app: A purely sensual love, i.e. sexual lust stimulated by physical beauty, easily turns into hate unless (which is worse) it is a sort of madness—in which case it owes more to discord than to harmony, •and so barely qualifies as 'love' at all•. This applies to absolutely *all* 'love' that has a cause other than freedom of mind. See the corollary to **III31**.

20 app: As for marriage: it certainly agrees with reason, if the desire for intercourse is generated not only by physical

attractions but also by a love of begetting children and bringing them up wisely; and if in addition the love of the man and of the woman is caused not only by physical beauty but also—and mainly—by freedom of mind.

21 app: Another source of harmony is flattery, but •that 'harmony'• is achieved through a servility that is either •base or •perfidious—that is, the flatterer either •*does* put himself on a much lower level than the person he flatters or he •*pretends* to do so•. No-one is more taken in by flattery than the proud, who wish to be first—and are not!

22 app: In despondency there is a false appearance of morality and religion. And though despondency is the opposite of pride, still the despondent man is very like the proud one. See the note on **57**.

23 app: Shame also contributes to harmony, •but• only in those things that can't be hidden. •Our shared shame concerning some kinds of *public* behaviour tends to produce some uniformity in our conduct by steering us all away from these, but there can be any amount of variety and potential conflict in the shameful things we do in *private*•. Also, because shame itself is a sort of unpleasure, it doesn't involve the exercise of reason.

24 app: The other unpleasant affects toward men are directly opposed to justice, fairness, being honourable, morality, and religion. And though *indignation* •at someone else's bad behaviour• looks like fairness, •it is not to be encouraged, because• it would be a lawless society where anybody *x* was allowed to •pass judgment on the deeds of someone else *y*, and to enforce the rights of •*y*'s victim, whether that be• *x* himself or some third person.

25 app: Courtesy, i.e. the reason-based desire to please men, is related to morality (as I •implicitly• said in the first note on

37). But if the desire to please men arises ·not from reason but· from an affect, it is ·not courtesy but· *ambition*—a desire through which men, while seeming to behave morally, stir up discord and quarrels. ·This is in strong contrast with a different way of pleasing men·. Someone who wants through words or deeds to help others to enjoy the highest good along with him will chiefly aim to get them to love him, but not to create in them the kind of admiration that would lead to his doctrines' being named after him or would give anyone cause to envy him. In ordinary conversations this man, ·unlike the ambitious one·, will beware of talking about men's vices, and will take care to speak only sparingly of human weakness, but will speak generously of men's virtue = power, and of how it can be perfected so that men will be moved not by fear or dislike but only by an affect of pleasure, trying as hard as they can to live by the rule of reason.

26 app: The only particular things in Nature whose minds we can enjoy, and with which we can join in friendship or in some kind of settled society, are *men*. Apart from men, then, the principle of seeking our own advantage doesn't require us to preserve anything else in Nature. Rather, it teaches us, given any particular thing other than a man, to destroy it or to preserve it and adapt it to our use in any way we like.

27 app: The chief benefit we get from things outside us—apart from the experience and knowledge we acquire from observing and manipulating things—lies in the preservation of our body. So the things most useful to us are the ones that can feed and maintain our body, so that all its parts can perform their functions properly. ·The maintenance of all the functions is important· because: the greater a body's ability to affect and be affected by external bodies in a great many ways, the more the ·corresponding· mind is capable of thinking (see **38** and **39**).

But there seem to be very few things of this kind in Nature. So to nourish the body in the required way, we have to use many different kinds of food. Indeed, the human body is composed of a great many parts of different kinds, requiring a steady intake of various kinds of food so that the whole body may be equally capable of doing everything that its nature permits, and thus so that the mind can be capable of conceiving many things.

28 app: But the power of a single man would hardly be sufficient for him to bring this about ·for himself·, so what is needed is for men to help one another ·to get what is needed for the support of life·. Money has provided a convenient instrument for acquiring all these aids; which is why the image of money looms larger than anything else in the thoughts of the multitude, for they can imagine hardly any sort of pleasure without the accompanying idea of money as the way to it.

29 app: This is a great vice in those who seek money not because they are poor or because they need it because they take pride in the money-making skill that they have acquired. These people feed their bodies in the usual ways, but sparingly, because of their thought that anything they devote to the preservation of their bodies *costs money*. On the other hand, those who know what money is really for, and limit their wealth to what they *need*, live contentedly with little.

30 app: •Pleasure consists in an •increase in a man's mental and bodily power; and whatever •increases a man's power because it· helps the parts of the body to perform their function is •good; so everything that brings •pleasure is •good. ·But there is a down-side to this, for three reasons·:

Things don't act *in order* to bring us pleasure;

The way things act is not adjusted to suit our advantage;
and thirdly

Pleasure is usually related to one part of the body in particular.

This has the result that most affects of pleasure are excessive unless we are thoughtful and alert, and so the desires generated by them are also excessive. And a further point about pleasure should be noted: when we follow our affects, we put the highest value on the pleasures of the moment, and can't feel as strongly about future things. See the notes on **44** and **60**.

31 app: Religious zealotry, on the other hand, seems to maintain that what brings unpleasure is good, and what brings pleasure is bad. But, as I have already said (see the note on **45**), only someone who is envious would delight in my weakness and misfortune. For as we come to have greater pleasure we pass to a state of greater perfection, and thus participate even more in the divine nature. And pleasure that is governed by the true principle of our advantage can't ever be bad. But someone who is led by fear, and does the

good only to avoid the bad, is not governed by reason.

32 app: But human power is very limited and infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes; so we aren't unrestrictedly able to adapt things outside us to our use.

·When things go against us·, if we are conscious that

•we have done our duty, that •we hadn't the power to avoid those things, and that •we are a part of the whole of Nature, whose order we follow,

then we shall patiently put up with events that go against our advantage. If we understand this clearly and distinctly, the part of us that is defined by understanding—the *better* part of us—will be entirely satisfied with this and will try to stay satisfied. For to the extent that we understand, we can't want anything except what is necessary = inevitable, and we can't be satisfied with anything except what is true. To the extent that we rightly understand these things, the efforts of the better part of us are in harmony with the order of the whole of Nature.