

The Logical Conviviality of Thomistic Biblicism

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Abstract

Thomistic Biblicism may be understood as an approach that brings together the philosophical and theological resources of Thomas Aquinas with the witness of Sacred Scripture, particularly through the complementary relationship between faith and reason. At the heart of this approach is Aquinas's effort to articulate the intellectual content of Christian faith by drawing upon Aristotelian philosophy without reducing revelation to philosophy. Biblical Thomism, in particular, seeks to recover the profoundly biblical character of Aquinas's theology by examining the dynamic relationship between Scripture and speculative theology, as well as the interaction between doctrine, moral teaching, and Christian life. The present study proposes the expression "logical conviviality" to describe this relationship. *Conviviality*, from the Latin *con-vivere*, meaning "to live with," suggests a harmonious and mutually enriching coexistence. Applied to Thomistic Biblicism, it refers to the ordered coexistence of biblical revelation, rational inquiry, metaphysical reflection, and theological tradition. Thomism, as a systematic philosophical and theological tradition, cannot simply be identified with a form of Biblicism that accepts isolated biblical texts without philosophical or theological interpretation. Rather, Aquinas integrates Scripture with reason, tradition, metaphysics, and rigorous logical analysis. The "logical conviviality of Thomistic Biblicism," therefore, denotes a relationship in which reason does not compete with revelation but serves it, while revelation provides the horizon within which reason operates. This paper examines this relationship through three major works of Aquinas: *The Summa Theologiae*, the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, and the *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*. It argues that, for Aquinas, Scripture provides the foundational content of sacred doctrine, while logic, philosophy, and metaphysics provide the intellectual means through which that content is clarified, defended, and contemplated.

Keywords: Aristotelianism, Biblicism, Conviviality, Logicality, Thomism, Rationalism.

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INTRODUCTION

The logical conviviality of Biblical Thomism, or Thomistic Biblicism, may be described as the harmonious coexistence of reason and revelation under the sovereignty of truth. It is, metaphorically, logic at table with Scripture: logic questions, listens, distinguishes, orders, and ultimately serves the contemplation of revealed truth. Biblical Thomism, therefore, should not be understood as the application of Aristotelian logic to Scripture in a way that turns biblical interpretation into mere proof-texting. Rather, it refers to a theological rationality whose fundamental principles are received from revelation, while its mode of exposition remains rigorous, systematic, and logical. For Aquinas, Scripture functions as the *principium cognoscendi*, the principle of knowing; logic functions as an *instrumentum*, an instrument; and theology is a

scientia subalternata, a science whose first principles are received from a higher source, namely, divine revelation. [1] The resulting relationship is neither one of domination nor one of separation. Reason serves revelation, while revelation provides reason with a horizon that exceeds what unaided philosophical inquiry can attain.

Consequently, logicality in Aquinas is ministerial rather than magisterial. If Biblicism is understood narrowly as the conviction that Scripture is self-interpreting and can be treated as a collection of context-free propositions, then such Biblicism would indeed stand in tension with Thomism. Aquinas's approach is different. Scripture is inspired by God, but it is communicated through human authors, languages, literary genres, historical circumstances, and ecclesial

¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 1–2

tradition. Its meaning must therefore be approached with interpretive care. Aquinas recognizes the multiple senses of Scripture: the literal or historical sense, the allegorical or Christological sense, the moral or ethical sense, and the anagogical or eschatological sense. These senses are not arbitrary alternatives. The spiritual senses are grounded in the literal sense, which provides the foundation for theological interpretation. [2] Aquinas's logic does not flatten these dimensions of Scripture; rather, it helps to order them and to distinguish their proper relationships.

At a deeper level, Thomistic Biblicism possesses a Christological epistemology. Christ is the *Logos* proclaimed in John 1:1; Scripture is the historical expression of God's Word; and human reasoning participates, however imperfectly, in divine intelligibility. Logic, therefore, is not alien to Scripture, and Scripture is not opposed to rationality. Theology becomes an ordered contemplation of the revealed *Logos*. In Aquinas's major works, this logicity is neither formalistic nor fideistic. Scripture provides the first principles, logic provides disciplined articulation, metaphysics supplies ontological depth, and charity and contemplation provide the ultimate orientation of theological inquiry. [3]

I. Logical Conviviality in the *Summa Theologiae*

The *Summa Theologiae* represents Aquinas's most mature and systematic synthesis of philosophy, theology, and biblical revelation. [4] Its architecture demonstrates that reason and revelation are not competing authorities but distinct elements within a unified theological science.

A. Sacred Doctrine as a Rational Science

At the beginning of the *Summa Theologiae*, particularly in Question 1, Aquinas asks whether sacred doctrine can properly be called a science. [5] His answer is significant. Theology is a science, not because human beings discover its first principles independently through natural reason, but because those principles are received from divine revelation. Philosophy begins from principles accessible to natural reason, whereas sacred doctrine begins from principles revealed by God. Logic therefore serves theology as an instrument of rational

organization and exposition. It does not supply the content of revelation or establish its ultimate authority. This relationship illustrates precisely what may be called logical conviviality: reason organizes revelation without replacing it. [6]

B. Scripture as Primary Authority

The *Summa Theologiae* is saturated with Scripture. Biblical citations frequently appear both in the objections and in the authoritative *sed contra* sections of Aquinas's articles. The familiar structure of the *Summa* (objections, authoritative contrary position, central response, and replies to objections) demonstrates that theological reasoning is conducted within an authoritative framework. The *sed contra* frequently invokes Scripture, indicating that revelation ultimately governs the theological argument. Logic constructs and orders the argument, but Scripture provides the revealed authority from which sacred doctrine proceeds. [7]

C. Analogy and Biblical Language

Aquinas is particularly attentive to the figurative and analogical character of biblical language. Scripture calls God a rock, shepherd, king, father, and by many other names. Such expressions cannot be understood in a purely univocal sense, as though divine and human realities possessed exactly the same mode of being. Aquinas's doctrine of analogy therefore becomes essential to responsible biblical interpretation. Human language can genuinely refer to God, but it does so analogically. Logical analysis consequently protects biblical theology from crude anthropomorphism, skepticism, and equivocation. [8]

D. The Harmony of Faith and Reason

A central conviction of Aquinas is that grace perfects nature rather than destroying it. By analogy, faith does not destroy reason; it elevates and perfects it. Reason can prepare the human intellect for revelation, while revelation elevates reason beyond the limits of natural cognition. This reciprocal relationship provides one of the clearest illustrations of Thomistic logical conviviality. Faith and reason remain distinct, but they are not enemies. Their ultimate harmony rests upon the unity of truth and upon the fact that both the created order

² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 10; Christopher R. J. Holmes, "Revisiting the Literal Sense of Scripture, in Dialogue with Thomas Aquinas," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 27, no. 3 (2025): 331–350, DOI 10.1111/ijst.12759.

³ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 1–2; *Super Ioannem*, cap. 1; Matthew Levering, *Participatory Biblical Exegesis* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), especially pp. 55–61.

⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 1–7; Piotr Roszak, "Text, Method, or Goal? On What Really Matters in Biblical Thomism," *Religions* 14, no. 1 (2023): 3.

⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 2, 8.

⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 8; Piotr Roszak and Krzysztof Krzemiński, "What Is Scripture for Thomas Aquinas?" *Religions* 16, no. 7 (2025): 845, DOI 10.3390/rel16070845.

⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 8–10; Sławomir Zatwardnicki, "What Place Does Scripture Have in Thomas Aquinas's Reasoning?" *Collectanea Theologica* 94, no. 1 (2024): 107–166, DOI 10.21697/ct.2024.94.1.04.

⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 9; I, q. 13, aa. 1–6.

accessible to reason and the revealed order received in faith originate in God. [9]

II. Logical Conviviality in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*

The *Summa Contra Gentiles* presents a somewhat different methodological context. Aquinas writes for readers who may not accept Christian revelation as an authoritative starting point, including Jews, Muslims, and philosophers outside the Christian tradition. Consequently, he makes extensive use of philosophical demonstration while still affirming the superiority and necessity of revelation for truths that exceed natural reason.

A. Demonstration before Revelation

The first three books of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* make substantial use of philosophical reasoning concerning God, creation, providence, and humanity's ultimate destiny. Aquinas subsequently turns more explicitly to revealed doctrines such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the sacraments. This method demonstrates that reason possesses a genuine sphere of operation. Nevertheless, its autonomy is not absolute. Reason can reach certain truths about God, but revelation discloses mysteries that natural reason cannot discover by itself. [10]

B. Two Orders of Truth

Aquinas distinguishes between truths that can be reached by natural reason and truths that can be known only through revelation.

Truths accessible to reason include:

- the existence of God;
- divine simplicity;
- natural law;
- the immortality of the soul, insofar as it can be argued philosophically.

Truths known through revelation include:

- the Trinity;
- the Incarnation;
- the Resurrection;
- sacramental grace.

The distinction does not imply two competing kinds of truth. Rather, it reflects different modes of access to the one truth. Since God is the source of both

creation and revelation, there can ultimately be no contradiction between genuine philosophical truth and genuine revealed truth.

C. Scripture after Philosophy

Biblical citations occur less frequently in the more philosophical sections of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* than in the *Summa Theologiae*. [11] This difference should not be interpreted as a reduction in Aquinas's esteem for Scripture. It reflects a deliberate adaptation of theological method to the intended audience. Aquinas first establishes what can be established by natural reason and subsequently demonstrates the harmony between philosophical conclusions and Christian revelation. This methodological flexibility is another expression of logical conviviality: the same truth is approached through different intellectual routes according to the epistemic situation of the audience. [12]

III. Logical Conviviality in the *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*

Aquinas's *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* belongs to an earlier period of his intellectual development. Nevertheless, it already contains many of the methodological features that would later reach greater maturity in the *Summa Theologiae*.

A. Scriptural Foundation

Peter Lombard's *Sentences* is itself a theological synthesis drawing extensively upon biblical and patristic authorities. Aquinas's commentary therefore remains deeply rooted in Scripture, with biblical texts functioning as major sources of theological evidence. [13]

B. Dialectical Reasoning

The commentary also reveals the characteristic scholastic method of disputation. Questions are raised, authorities appear to conflict, objections are formulated, and apparent contradictions are examined before a reasoned resolution is proposed.

Underlying this procedure is the conviction that truth cannot contradict truth. Apparent contradictions therefore require clarification. Either an authority has been misunderstood, the relevant distinctions have not been sufficiently identified, or the relationship between the propositions has not yet been properly established. [14]

⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 8; *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 7, 9.

¹⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 9; *De rationibus fidei*, cap. 2; Sławomir Zatwardnicki, "What Place Does Scripture Have in Thomas Aquinas's Reasoning?" 2024.

¹¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 9; Sławomir Zatwardnicki, "What Place Does Scripture Have in Thomas Aquinas's Reasoning?" *Collectanea Theologica* 94, no. 1 (2024): 129–166.

¹² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 9; *De rationibus fidei*, cap. 2; Zatwardnicki, 2024.

¹³ Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, Prologus; *In I Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1; Piotr Roszak and Jörgen Vijgen, eds., *Towards a Biblical Thomism* (Pamplona: EUNSA, 2018), Introduction, pp. 11–20.

¹⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, Prologus; *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 8; Jörgen Vijgen, "Biblical Thomism: Past, Present and Future," *Angelicum* 95, no. 3 (2018): 371–398.

C. Patristic Mediation

Compared with the later *Summa*, Aquinas's commentary relies extensively upon the Fathers of the Church, including:

- Augustine of Hippo;
- Jerome;
- Gregory the Great;
- and other patristic authorities.

Reason thus operates within tradition. Scripture remains foundational, tradition mediates and interprets Scripture, and logic orders the relationship between the various authorities. Logical conviviality consequently consists in the ordered coexistence of biblical revelation, rational inference, metaphysical intelligibility, ecclesial tradition, and theological authority within *sacra doctrina*. Reason does not stand above Scripture as an external judge. It operates from within the horizon of revelation in order to clarify, distinguish, defend, and synthesize its intelligible content.

IV. Philosophical Dimensions of Thomistic Biblicism

Several philosophical dimensions illuminate Aquinas's understanding of the relationship between Scripture and reason.

A. Epistemology

For Aquinas, human knowledge begins with sensory experience. The intellect abstracts universal concepts from the data of experience, while faith introduces truths that exceed the capacities of unaided

natural reason. Revelation therefore does not abolish natural knowledge; rather, it extends and elevates it.

B. Metaphysics

The concept of being, *esse*, is fundamental to Aquinas's metaphysics. Since God is subsistent Being itself, scriptural affirmations concerning God cannot be fully understood without some degree of metaphysical clarification. Biblical theology therefore has an implicit ontological dimension.

C. Logic

Aristotelian logic serves theology by helping the theologian to:

- define concepts;
- distinguish meanings;
- resolve apparent contradictions;
- establish relationships between propositions;
- clarify doctrinal claims.

Its function remains ministerial rather than magisterial.

D. Hermeneutics

Aquinas recognizes the literal, allegorical, moral, and anagogical senses of Scripture. Yet the spiritual senses remain grounded in the literal sense. Logical analysis therefore provides a safeguard against arbitrary interpretation by helping to establish the relationships among the different dimensions of biblical meaning. [15]

V. Comparative Matrix¹⁶

Theme	<i>Summa Theologiae</i>	<i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i>	<i>Commentary on the Sentences</i>
Primary audience	Students of theology	Non-Christians and philosophers	Academic theological formation
Starting point	Revelation	Natural reason	Patristic and biblical tradition
Use of Scripture	Extensive and foundational	More selective, especially in philosophical sections	Extensive through Lombard's text
Use of philosophy	Integrated with theology	Foregrounded before revealed doctrines	Developing scholastic method
Role of logic	Organizes revealed truth	Demonstrates rational truths and defends faith	Reconciles authorities and clarifies doctrine

VI. Aquinas Does Not Apply Logic to the Bible; He Thinks Biblically Through Logic

The claim that Aquinas does not apply logic to the Bible; he thinks biblically through logic offers a particularly concise description of Aquinas's intellectual method. It captures the distinction between two fundamentally different ways of relating reason and revelation. Aquinas does not place Scripture under an autonomous logic; rather, he reasons from within the biblical horizon through disciplined theological reasoning. The first approach treats logic as an

autonomous instrument standing outside Scripture and judging its claims according to independently established criteria. The second understands logic as the disciplined intellectual activity of a mind already formed and oriented by revelation. Aquinas belongs decisively to the second approach.

The philosophical significance of this distinction is considerable. Modern thought often imagines reason as autonomous: reason evaluates religion, examines revelation, and determines which

¹⁵Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 10; *Super Epistolam ad Galatas*, cap. 4, lect. 7; Holmes, "Revisiting the Literal Sense of Scripture," 331–350.

¹⁶Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 1–10; *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 9; *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, Prologus; Zatwardnicki, 2024, 107–166.

claims can be accepted. Aquinas does not reject reason, but he refuses to make it sovereign over revelation. Reason remains vigorous, critical, and analytical, yet it recognizes that it receives truths whose ultimate source lies beyond its own natural capacity.¹⁷ Within this framework, reason can analyze, distinguish, synthesize, and defend revealed truth. Aquinas therefore does not treat philosophy as an external tribunal before which Scripture must appear. Rather, he begins with the Word of God and employs rational argument to disclose its coherence, respond to objections, distinguish genuine mystery from contradiction, and formulate doctrine with precision. Faith and reason are thus neither rivals nor completely independent domains. Revelation supplies the content and horizon of theological inquiry, while logic provides the form and discipline through which that inquiry proceeds. Aquinas's achievement is not the subordination of Scripture to philosophy but the demonstration that reason, when rightly ordered to revelation, can serve the deeper contemplation of biblical truth.¹⁸ The distinction becomes even clearer when we consider what it would mean to "apply" logic to Scripture. Such an expression may imply that logic possesses an authority independent of revelation and that Scripture must conform to standards imposed from outside. In that model, logic becomes judge and Scripture becomes defendant. This is close to the rationalist conception in which autonomous reason constitutes the final criterion of truth.

Aquinas's theology does not permit such an arrangement. Truth is ultimately one because its source is one. God is both the author of creation, which makes natural reason possible, and the author of revelation, which provides the principles of sacred doctrine. Consequently, authentic reason cannot ultimately contradict authentic revelation. Apparent conflicts must instead be attributed to defective reasoning, inadequate interpretation, or incomplete understanding. [19] Logic, therefore, cannot be the ultimate source of theological content. It is a means by which theological content is clarified and articulated. Aquinas's reasoning begins with realities disclosed by revelation and received within the Church's faith: creation *ex nihilo*, divine simplicity, providence, covenant, Incarnation, grace, redemption, Resurrection, and beatitude. These realities establish the theological horizon within which reasoning occurs. [20]

This relationship may be compared to the relationship between grammar and language. Grammar does not create meaning, but without grammatical order

meaningful speech becomes difficult or impossible. In a similar way, logic does not create revelation; it makes its rational articulation possible. The revealed content constitutes the material principle of theology, while its systematic organization constitutes the formal dimension of theological science. Aquinas's theology is therefore rationally structured without becoming rationally autonomous. [21] This also explains the role of Aristotelian philosophy in Aquinas. Aristotle supplies conceptual resources—act and potency, substance and accident, matter and form, efficient and final causality—not because these categories possess authority over revelation, but because they provide an effective philosophical vocabulary for articulating truths already received through faith. Whenever Aristotelian philosophy conflicts with revealed doctrine, Aquinas does not modify revelation to protect Aristotle. Philosophy remains subordinate to the truth revealed by God. It is therefore ministerial rather than magisterial. The same principle is evident in Aquinas's treatment of theological mystery. Logic does not eliminate mystery. Instead, it helps distinguish genuine mystery from contradiction. The doctrine of the Trinity, for example, cannot be comprehended exhaustively by human reason, but logical analysis can demonstrate that the doctrine is not formally contradictory when the relevant distinctions are properly understood. [22] Logic therefore protects mystery from incoherence without pretending to remove mystery. This corresponds to Aquinas's understanding of theology as *scientia*. Theology is a science because it reasons systematically from first principles. Yet its first principles are received from divine revelation rather than independently discovered by natural reason. The structure of the *Summa Theologiae* illustrates this discipline. Aquinas states objections as strongly as possible, presents an authoritative position, develops his central response, and then answers the objections individually. Logic thus provides the architecture of theological reasoning, while revelation provides its ultimate authority.

At its deepest level, this approach reflects Aquinas's understanding of truth. God is *ipsa veritas*, Truth itself. Every genuine act of reasoning therefore participates analogically in the divine Logos. Human logic is not an autonomous construction detached from reality but a finite participation in the intelligibility of creation and, ultimately, in the divine source of all

¹⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 8; Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (London/New York: Routledge, 2003).

¹⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 1–2, 8; *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 9.

¹⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 8; *Summa contra Gentiles* I, ch. 7; Piotr Roszak, "Exegesis and Contemplation: The Literal and Spiritual Sense of

Scripture in Aquinas's Biblical Commentaries," *Espiritu* 65, no. 152 (2016): 481–504.

²⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 3, 22, 44–46; I–II, qq. 109–114; III, q. 1; Suppl., qq. 69–86.

²¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 2, 5, 8.

²² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 27–32, especially q. 32, a. 1.

intelligibility. [23] Thus, Aquinas does not reason *over* Scripture but *from within* Scripture. Revelation determines the horizon, principles, and ultimate purpose of theological inquiry.

Reason, Revelation, and the Participatory Structure of Intellect

The claim that Aquinas thinks biblically through logic can be developed further. It does not merely describe a method of theological reasoning; it expresses a distinctive understanding of the relationship between intellect, being, and truth. Aquinas rejects the conception of reason as an autonomous faculty confronting reality from an external and supposedly neutral standpoint. Human intellect does not generate intelligibility. It participates in an intelligibility that precedes it. Logic is therefore not an instrument through which consciousness imposes rational form upon revelation. It is the finite articulation of an intelligibility already grounded in reality and ultimately in the eternal Logos. [24] To think biblically *through* logic is consequently to understand “through” as a term of mediation rather than domination. Logic is not the origin of theological cognition. It is the mode through which theological cognition is articulated.

Revelation does not interrupt rationality. Rather, it discloses a horizon within which rationality can discover its fuller significance. Since Scripture is divine revelation, its intelligibility is not imposed externally by logical analysis. It derives from the divine Logos who is both the source of revelation and the ground of intelligibility. The relationship between Scripture and logic is therefore more profound than the relationship between an object and an analytical tool. Logic functions as the formal grammar through which the intelligibility of revelation is articulated. The theologian does not stand above revelation as an examiner. Instead, the intellect enters into revelation's own rational order and allows its conceptual operations to be shaped by what it contemplates. [25] This position entails a rejection of epistemologies that make subjective consciousness the ultimate starting point of knowledge. Aquinas holds that being precedes knowing. Reality is ontologically prior to cognition, and intellect is measured by reality rather than reality by intellect. [26] Revelation therefore does not become rational simply because it satisfies standards established independently by human consciousness. Rather, human consciousness becomes more fully rational insofar as it conforms itself to the intelligible order of reality disclosed by revelation. In this sense, revelation communicates more than additional

information. It transforms the horizon within which intelligibility is perceived. Logic remains fully active, but it no longer operates autonomously. It becomes internally oriented toward realities whose source transcends discursive reasoning.

This explains the contemplative character of Aquinas's theology. Discursive reasoning, *ratio*, is not the final perfection of the intellect. Its ultimate orientation is toward *intellectus*, the direct apprehension of truth. Theology therefore employs logic not because logical inference is the highest human activity, but because finite intellect ordinarily advances toward contemplation through discursive mediation. [27] Logical precision can thus be understood as an intellectual discipline that clears away conceptual confusion and prepares the mind for contemplation. It does not replace contemplation; it serves it. The autonomous thinker asks how revelation can become intelligible to reason. Aquinas's deeper question is how reason itself reaches its proper fulfillment within the intelligibility disclosed by the Logos. Theology is therefore neither irrational nor merely rational. It represents the fulfillment of rationality when the finite intellect recognizes that it does not constitute the source of intelligibility but participates in it.

The Ontology of Truth and the Logos

The relationship between reason and revelation in Aquinas ultimately becomes a claim about the ontology of truth itself. Because God is Truth, and because the created intellect participates in divine intelligibility, every genuine act of knowing has a participatory character. Logic searches for harmony because truth possesses unity. Apparent contradiction arises not from God but from human limitation, misunderstanding, or inadequate conceptualization. Rational inquiry therefore has a corrective function: it clarifies rather than replaces revelation. This participatory understanding also illuminates Aquinas's transcendental metaphysics. Being (*ens*), truth (*verum*), goodness (*bonum*), and unity (*unum*) are convertible transcendentals. Wherever being is present, truth and intelligibility are present as well. Logic therefore does not impose order upon reality from outside; it articulates the intelligibility already present in being. Scripture, as divine revelation, participates in this intelligibility in a unique manner. To think biblically, therefore, is to allow the revealed vision of reality to shape one's understanding of being, truth, goodness, creation, history, and human destiny. [28] Revelation is exceptional not because it violates rational order, but

²³ Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate* q. 1, aa. 1, 2, 8; q. 12, aa. 1–3; q. 14, aa. 1, 8.

²⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 14, 79, 84; *De veritate* q. 1.

²⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 2, 8–10; Second Vatican Council, *Dei Verbum*, §§ 11–13, 24.

²⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 84, aa. 1–6; *De veritate* q. 1, aa. 2, 9; John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*.

²⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 8; II–II, q. 180, aa. 1–2.

²⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II–II, q. 180, aa. 1–2; q. 182, a. 1.

because it discloses the ultimate source of rational order. The Incarnation of the Logos is simultaneously the revelation of God and the revelation of the deepest ground of rational intelligibility. [29] Christ is therefore not merely an object about whom theology thinks. He is the eternal Logos through whom creation itself exists and through whom every act of genuine intellectual understanding is possible. Logic cannot stand above Scripture because both creation's intelligibility and Scripture's revelatory content ultimately depend upon the same divine Logos. [30]

This is one of the most distinctive aspects of Aquinas's intellectual achievement. His contribution is not simply that he "baptized Aristotle," nor merely that he reconciled faith and reason in a conciliatory manner. More profoundly, he re-situated rationality within a metaphysics of participation. Logic is not an autonomous faculty confronting revelation from outside. Neither is it a neutral mechanism that theology happens to borrow. It is the finite activity of an intellect whose being, intelligibility, and capacity for truth are grounded in the eternal Logos. For this reason, Aquinas's achievement is ultimately architectonic. He does not merely show that reason can coexist with revelation. He demonstrates that reason discovers its proper metaphysical identity within a universe created and sustained by the divine Logos. He begins with the God who speaks and permits divine revelation to shape the horizon, principles, movement, and goal of intellectual inquiry. [31]

Logic is therefore neither diminished nor enthroned. It is transformed. It becomes the disciplined form of an intellect conformed to revelation, moving from faith toward understanding, from discursive reasoning toward contemplation, and from finite concepts toward participation in infinite Truth. Aquinas does not place the Bible under logic, nor does he place logic above the Bible. He locates both within the eternal Logos. Revelation provides the content of truth; logic provides its formal articulation; metaphysics clarifies its ontological implications; tradition preserves and interprets it; and theology brings these dimensions together within *sacra doctrina*. The result is neither Biblicism without reason nor rationalism without revelation. It is a form of biblical rationality. [32]

VII. Appraisal

Aquinas's approach avoids two opposite errors: rationalism and fideism. Rationalism would subordinate revelation to autonomous human reason. Aquinas rejects this position by maintaining that certain truths

(particularly the Trinity and the Incarnation) surpass the natural capacity of human reason. They can be known only because God reveals them. Fideism, by contrast, would treat reason as irrelevant or even harmful to faith. Aquinas equally rejects this approach. He maintains that reason can establish a number of truths about God and can contribute substantially to the clarification, defense, and systematic organization of revealed doctrine. Aquinas's position is therefore best described not as the dominance of one side over the other but as an ordered complementarity between revelation and rational inquiry.

Later thinkers have challenged aspects of this synthesis. Martin Luther criticized the extensive employment of Aristotelian philosophy in theology, while Karl Barth argued for a more exclusive grounding of theology in divine revelation. By contrast, Catholic thinkers such as Étienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain regarded Aquinas's synthesis of faith and reason as one of the enduring achievements of Christian philosophy. Nevertheless, Aquinas's contribution remains distinctive. He neither confines theology to isolated biblical statements nor permits philosophical rationality to become an independent judge of revelation. His method places Scripture, reason, tradition, metaphysics, and contemplation within an ordered theological whole.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The logical conviviality of Thomistic Biblicism, or Biblical Thomism, is best understood as Aquinas's carefully ordered harmony of Scripture, reason, metaphysics, tradition, and theological reflection. In the *Commentary on the Sentences*, this harmony appears in an emerging scholastic form through Aquinas's dialectical engagement with biblical and patristic authorities. In the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, he adapts his method to audiences who do not necessarily accept biblical authority as a starting point, relying more extensively on philosophical demonstration before relating his conclusions to revealed doctrine. In the *Summa Theologiae*, the synthesis reaches its most mature expression: Scripture supplies the first principles of sacred doctrine, philosophy contributes conceptual clarity, metaphysics provides ontological depth, and logic provides the disciplined structure through which revealed truth is articulated and defended.

The distinctive character of Aquinas's approach lies precisely in this ordered relationship. Reason is neither sovereign over revelation nor irrelevant to it.

²⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate* q. 1, a. 1; *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 5, 11, 16; John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*.

³⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 14–15; *De veritate* q. 3, aa. 1–2; *Super Ioannem*, cap. 1; Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*.

³¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 14, 79, 84; *De veritate* q. 1; Edward Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*.

³² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 1–10; *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 9; *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, Prologus; Roszak, "Text, Method, or Goal?"

Scripture is neither reduced to isolated proof-texts nor detached from rational inquiry. Theology emerges as a disciplined intellectual activity in which revelation and reason cooperate in the pursuit and contemplation of truth. The phrase logical conviviality therefore captures something essential about Thomistic Biblicism. Biblical revelation, logical inference, metaphysical intelligibility, theological authority, and ecclesial tradition do not exist as isolated or competing elements. They mutually inhabit an ordered Thomistic epistemology in which each has a proper role. [33] Biblical Thomism should consequently not be equated simply with Protestant-style Biblicism. Aquinas accords canonical Scripture an exceptionally high evidentiary status, but his theological method simultaneously presupposes ecclesial authority, the testimony of the Fathers, theological reasoning, and the development of theological conclusions from the revealed deposit of faith. The ultimate achievement of Aquinas is therefore not simply that he placed Aristotle and the Bible in conversation. It is that he showed how reason, when properly ordered, can become a faithful servant of revelation without surrendering its intellectual integrity. His theology presents a vision in which faith seeks understanding, reason receives illumination, logic serves truth, metaphysics discloses the depth of being, and contemplation brings the intellect toward its final fulfilment in God. In this sense, Thomistic Biblicism is genuinely convivial: Scripture and reason do not merely coexist; they meet within the unity of truth, under the horizon of the Logos, and in service of the contemplation of God.

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³³ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, aa. 1–10; *Summa contra Gentiles* I, chs. 3, 9; Second Vatican Council, *Dei Verbum*, §§ 8–13, 21, 24.