A ONE-PAGE SHEET

The Consolation of Philosophy

Boethius

C. AD 524 · H. R. JAMES, 1897

"*Thou hast ceased to know thy own nature.*"

PHILOSOPHY, BOOK I · H. R. JAMES, 1897

A visit in prison

Boethius, a Roman officer awaiting death, is visited by Lady Philosophy. She comes as a physician of the mind, not merely to pity him, and she means to treat his grief as a sickness.

Fortune's gifts are not our own

Wealth, office, and fame can be taken as quickly as they are given. Because they are unstable, they cannot be the true good, however much we have loved them.

A forgotten nature

His deepest wound is not the lost consulship. He has forgotten what he is: a rational creature, able to know the good, and not a mere plaything of chance.

Where true h

Men call many th
perfect good is or
Fortune's borrow

God governs

Philosophy leads
ruled, even when
whether He does

Hard fortun

Welcome and unv
amend. A bitter t
the world is withe

What a Christian reader should weigh

Boethius was a Christian, and later ages loved this book, yet Lady Philosophy never names Christ, the Cross, or the church. The comfort she offers is providence, the h
Christian may receive that counsel and still notice the silence, and remember a fuller consolation than Philosophy, in this prison dialogue, is made to speak.