

14. *The division of this freedom*

S. It now remains to divide this freedom. For although this definition is common to every rational nature, there is a good deal of difference between God and rational creatures and many differences among the latter.

T. There is a free will that is from itself, which is neither made nor received from another, which is of God alone; there is another made and received from God, which is found in angels and in men. That which is made or received is different in one having the rectitude which he preserves than in one lacking it. Those having it are on the one hand those who hold it separably and those who hold it inseparably. The former was the case with all the angels before the good were confirmed and the evil fell, and with all men prior to death who have this rectitude.

What is held inseparably is true of the chosen angels and men, but of angels after the ruin of the reprobate angels and of men after their death. Those who lack rectitude either lack it irrecoverably or recoverably. He who recoverably lacks it is one of the men in this life who lack it although many of them do not recover it.

Those who lack it irrecoverably are reprobate angels and men, angels after their ruin and men after this life.

S. You have satisfied me with God's help on the definition of liberty such that I can think of nothing to ask concerning such matters.

ON THE FALL OF THE DEVIL

Chapters

1. The verse 'What do you have that you have not received?' applies to angels too; from God come only good and being and every good is being and every being is good
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14. And it would be the same if the angel were given only the will for rectitude; it is because it was given both that it can be just and happy
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17. Why the angel that abandons it cannot regain justice
18. How the bad angel makes himself bad and the good angel makes himself good, and that the bad angel owes thanks to God for the

goods he received but abandoned, just as the good angel does who retained what he had received

19. That the will as such is good and that no thing is evil
20. How God is the cause of evil and willing and action, and how they are received from him
21. That the bad angel could not foresee that he would fall
22. That he knew that he ought not to will what he sinned by willing and that he ought to be punished if he were to sin
23. That he ought not to know that he would be punished if he sinned
24. That even the good angel ought not to know this
25. That the good angel by this fact alone that he now has knowledge of the fall of the devil is said no longer to be able to sin, though for him this works for glory
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27. How evil came to an angel when he was good
28. That the power to will what is unfitting was always good, and willing itself is good insofar as it exists

1. *The verse 'What do you have that you have not received?' applies to angels too; from God come only good and being and every good is being and every being is good*

Student. Does the phrase from St Paul, 'What do you have that you have not received?' [1 Cor. 4: 7], apply only to men or to angels as well?

Teacher. No creature has anything of itself. How can something that does not have being of itself, have anything of itself? In short, if there is only one who creates and whatever is created is from that one, it is clear that he who creates and what he has created is all there is.

S. That is clear.

T. Also, the Creator himself and what has been created can only be from that same Creator.

S. That too is clear.

T. He alone has of himself all that he has, while other things have nothing of themselves. And other things, having nothing of themselves, have their only reality from him.

S. I do not quite see what you mean by 'other things have their only reality from him'. For who else brings it about that the many things we see pass from being to non-being are not what they were even if they do not pass wholly into nothingness? Or who else makes something not to be save the one who makes whatever is to be? Again, if something is only because God makes it, it is necessary that what is not is not because he does not make it. For just as the things which are from him have some being, so the things which are not or which pass from being to non-being have it from him that they are nothing.

T. It is not only the one who makes that which was not, to be, or that which is, not to be, who is said to make a thing to be or not to be. He who could bring it about that something is not, yet does not do so, is said to make it be, and he who could make something be, yet does not, is said to make it not be. Just as both he who strips someone and he who could prevent this but does not are said to cause someone to be nude or undressed. But the former is properly said to cause it and the latter improperly. When the latter is said to make another nude or unclothed, all that is meant is that when he could have he did not bring it about that the other was not stripped or remained dressed.

In this way God is said to do many things that he does not, as when he is said to lead us into temptation when he does not prevent temptation that he could, and to cause what is not since he could make it be and does not. But if you consider the things which pass into non-being, you will see that it is not God who causes them not to be. For not only is there no essence he does not make, but nothing he does make could last if he did not preserve it, for when he stops preserving what he made, it is not the case that he turns what was a being into non-being, as if he caused non-being, but only that he stops causing it to be. And even when in anger, as it were, he destroys something by taking away its existence, the non-being is not from him; rather when God's creative and preserving causality is removed, the thing reverts to the non-being it had of itself before it was created and does not have from God. If you were to ask someone for the cloak you had lent when he was naked, he does not receive his nakedness from you, but by the fact that you take back what is yours, he reverts to the condition that was his before you clothed him. Indeed, just as from the highest good only good comes, so from the highest being only being comes, and all being comes from the highest being.

Since the highest good is the highest being, it follows that every good is being and every being is good. Hence nothing and non-being do not come from God, from whom come only good and being.

S. I clearly see now that just as good and being are from God alone, so only good and being come from God.

T. Take care not to think, since we read in Sacred Scripture (or say in quoting it) that God causes evil or non-being, that I am criticizing or denying what is said there. But, in reading Scripture, we ought not to attend so much to the impropriety of the words that covers truth as pay attention to the propriety of the truth that is hidden under various kinds of verbal expression.

S. To do what you suggest would occur only to someone stupid or desirous of cavilling over Scripture.

T. Let us turn the discussion back to where it began and see if it can be maintained that only man, and not the angel, has all that he has from God.

S. It is obvious that the phrase applies to angels as well as men.

2. *Why it seems that the devil lacked perseverance because God did not give it to him*

S. It follows that the angel who perseveres in truth, does so because he has perseverance, and he has that because he received it, and he received it because God gave it to him. It also follows that he 'who does not persevere in the truth' [John 8: 44] does not persevere because he does not have perseverance, and he does not have it because he did not receive it, and he did not receive it because God did not give it to him. So tell me what his fault is, seeing that he did not persevere because he was not given perseverance, without which gift he could do nothing. I am in fact certain, unless I misunderstand, that the devil could only be justly damned by him who is supremely just and he could not be justly damned if the fault was not his.

T. Why do you conclude from the fact that the good angel receives perseverance because God gave it to him, that the bad angel does not receive it because God does not give it to him?

S. From this: if for the good angel the giving is the reason for its having received, the reason the bad angel lacks the gift will be that he has not received it; and given that the giving has not taken place, it follows necessarily that he has not received it. Indeed, we all know

that when we do not receive what we want, it's not being given is not a result of our not receiving it, but we do not receive it because it is not given. Those who raise this question do so, as far as I can see, because of this argument: If the good angel received perseverance because God gave it to him, then the bad angel did not receive it because God did not give it to him. I do not remember ever having heard a response to this.

3. *That God did not give it because he did not accept it*

T. But that does not follow. It can be the case that something's not being received is not explained by the fact that it was not given, even though the giving is always the cause of receiving.

S. Then, given the not-giving, it is not necessary that not-receiving follow, and then there could be a receiving even where there is no giving.

T. Not so.

S. Give me an example.

T. If I offer you something and you take it, my giving does not derive from your receiving, but you receive it because I offer it, and the giving is the cause of the receiving.

S. Right.

T. What if I offer the same thing to someone else and he does not take it? Is it because I do not give that he does not take?

S. It seems rather that you are said not to give it to him because he does not take it.

T. So here it is not non-giving that is the cause of the not-taking, whereas were I to imagine myself not to have given, that would indeed be the cause of your not receiving. It is one thing for something to be the cause of something else and another that, given the thing, something else does not follow. Burning is not the cause of the fire, but fire the cause of burning, but given burning, it is always the case that there is fire.

S. I will grant you that.

T. Do you see then that, if you have received because I have given, it does not follow that he who has not received has not received because I did not give to him, yet it follows logically that, if I had not given, he would not have received?

S. Happily I do see that.

T. Do you still doubt that just as an angel who perseveres does so because he accepts the perseverance that God gives him, so the angel who does not persevere is not given perseverance by God because he does not take it?

S. There is still something I do not understand. You have enabled me to see sufficiently only this, that, from the fact that the good angel receives because God gives, it does not follow that the bad angel did not receive because God did not offer it to him. If you indeed want to say that God did not give him the gift of perseverance because he did not receive it, I ask you why he does not take it. Either this is because he did not have the capacity (or) because he did not want to. If he did not have the capacity or the will to take it, God did not give it to him. And if God did give it to him, it is certain he would have had it. But if he cannot have the capacity or the will to accept perseverance save as a gift from God, in what did he sin by not taking that for which God did not give him either the capacity or the will to receive?

T. But God did give him the will and the capacity to receive perseverance.

S. Then he received what God gave him and he had what he received.

T. He received it and he had it.

S. Then he received and had perseverance.

T. He did not accept it and therefore did not have it.

S. But did you not say that God gave and that he received the will and capacity to accept perseverance?

T. Yes. But I did not say that God gave him the acceptance of perseverance, but only the will and the ability to accept it.

S. But if he willed to and could, he received perseverance.

T. The conclusion does not follow necessarily.

S. I do not see why if you will not show me.

T. Have you never undertaken something with the will and the capacity to carry it out and then not done so because you changed your mind before completing it?

S. Often.

T. Then you could have wanted to persevere in that in which effectively you did not persevere.

S. I willed but did not persevere in my desire and thus did not persevere in the activity.

T. Why did you not persevere in the desire?

S. Because I did not want to.

T. And yet as long as you did will to persevere in the activity, you willed to persevere in that will?

S. I cannot deny that.

T. Why then say that you did not will to persevere in that willing?

S. I would answer again that I wanted to persevere, but did not persevere in that willing, if I did not see the prospect of an infinite regress, with you forever asking me the same thing and I always answering the same.

T. Then you should not say, 'I did not will to persevere in willing because I did not will to persevere or to will my willing'. When you are asked why you did not persevere in the action that you had willed and could persevere in, answer, 'Because I did not persevere in willing it'. And if you are asked why you have not persevered in willing it, you should introduce another motive for the defect of that willing, and not the not persevering in the will to will. For your answer only repeats what was asked, that is, you did not persevere in the will to persevere in the activity.

S. I see that I did not understand what I was saying.

T. So tell me in a word what is persevering in the doing of something, as the argument requires.

S. I want to say, to bring it to term, to complete it.

T. Let us then say, in a similar fashion, that to persevere is to will it all the way.

S. All right.

T. When then you do not bring to term what you willed and could do, why did you not bring it to term?

S. Because I did not will it all the way.

T. Let us similarly say that the devil, who had the will and the capacity to receive perseverance and the will and the capacity to persevere, did not receive perseverance and did not persevere because he did not will it all the way.

S. But I will ask you again why he did not will it all the way. For when you say that he did not will all the way what he willed, that is like saying: what he willed before he did not will later. Why then is it the case that he no longer wills what he willed before, except that he does not have the will? I do not mean the will that he had before, when he willed, but the one he no longer has, when he does not will.

Why does he not have this will, save because he did not receive it? And why did he not receive it, except because God did not give it?

T. I say again: it is not the case that he does not have it because God did not give it, but God does not give it because he has not accepted it.

S. Show me that.

T. He freely abandons the will he had and, just as he accepted having it as long as he had it, so he was able to accept the hanging on to what he abandoned and because he abandoned it he does not accept it. Therefore his not accepting to hang on to what he abandoned is not because God did not give it, but God did not give it because he did not accept it.

S. But is it not clear that he does not will to keep it because he abandoned it, but he abandons it because he does not want to keep it? When something is had, not wanting to keep it precedes abandoning it, and one wills to let something go because he does not want to keep it.

T. The will to retain is not always prior to the will to abandon.

S. Show me when it is not.

T. When you do not want to retain something for its own sake but let it go, like a burning coal in the bare hand; then perhaps the not wishing to hang on to it is prior to the desire to abandon it, and thus you wish to abandon because you do not wish to retain. Before you have it, in fact, you do not want to hold it in your hand, and you could not let go of it before you had it. But when you hold something only for the sake of something else, you want to abandon it only for the sake of something else, and you want more the other thing that you cannot have unless you abandon what you have, then the will to abandon is prior to not wanting to retain. For when the miser wills to keep his money and prefers food which he can only have if he gives up some money, his will to give or abandon the money comes before his willing not to keep it. For he does not will to give because he does not will to keep it, but he wills not to keep it because he has to give it in order to get food. Prior to having money, he wants to have and keep it, and, when he has, it is not the case that he does not will to keep it when there is no need to let it go.

S. That is true.

T. So not wanting to keep does not always precede letting go, but sometimes wanting to let go comes first.

S. I cannot deny it.

T. So I say that the devil did not will what he should have willed when he should have willed it, not because he lacked the will (and lacked it because God did not give it to him), but because, willing what he ought not to have willed, he drove out the good will when the bad will supervened. Therefore God did not give him the good will to persevere, and he did not receive it, not because God did not give it, but on the contrary, God did not give it because he gave up willing what he should have willed, by abandoning and not retaining it.

S. I grasp what you say.

4. *How he sinned and wanted to be like God*

T. Do you still doubt that the devil did not will to keep what he had because he willed to abandon it and not vice versa, that is, that he willed to abandon what he had because he did not wish to keep it?

S. I do not doubt that it could be that way, but you have not yet made me certain that it was. First show what he wished to keep that he did not have, in order that he might will to abandon what he had, as you showed in the case of the miser. Then if nothing can be shown to contradict it, I will confess that I do not doubt.

T. You do not doubt that he sinned, because he could not be unjustly condemned by a just God, but you are asking how he sinned?

S. Yes.

T. If he had served justice with perseverance, he would neither sin nor be unhappy.

S. So we believe.

T. No one serves justice except by willing what he ought, nor abandons it save by willing what he ought not.

S. No one doubts that.

T. Therefore by willing something that at the time he ought not to will, he abandoned justice and thus sinned.

S. That follows, but I am asking what he willed.

T. Whatever he had, he should have willed.

S. Certainly he should have willed everything that he had received from God, nor could he have sinned by willing that.

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 T. Hence he willed something that he did not have and that he ought not to have willed then, as Eve willed to be like a god before God willed it.

S. I cannot deny that either.

T. But the only things he could will were justice, or what was useful to himself or the fitting.¹ And happiness, to which every creature aspires, is constituted by the fitting.

S. We can see this in ourselves, since we do in fact will only that which we see as just or pleasant.

T. The devil certainly could not have sinned by willing justice.

S. True.

T. So he sinned by willing something that pleased him and that he did not have and that he should not then have willed, but that could increase his happiness.

S. He could not sin in any other way.

T. And you recognize, I think, that, by inordinately willing more than he had received, his will exceeded the limits of justice.

S. I see clearly now that the devil sinned either by willing what he should not have or by willing what he should have. And it is evident enough that he willed more than what he should have, not because he did not will to maintain justice, but he did not maintain justice because he willed something else, something that required the abandonment of justice, as you have helped me see in the example of the miser apropos of money and food.

T. And when he willed what God did not want him to will, he inordinately willed to be like God.

S. But if God can only be thought of as unique, as that than which nothing greater can be thought, how could the devil will what he could not think? He was not so obtuse of mind that he failed to know that nothing other than God can be thought to be like him.

T. Even if he did not will to be wholly equal to God, but something less than God against the will of God, by that very fact he inordinately willed to be like God, because he willed something by his own will, as subject to no one. It is for God alone thus to will something by his own will such that he follows no higher will.

S. So it is.

T. Not only did he will to be equal to God in presuming to have

¹ The Latin is *commodum*. An Italian translator renders this as *piacere*. Sometimes 'pleasant' will be used when the context seems to support it.

his own will, but he even willed to be greater by willing what God did not want him to will, because he put his own will above God's.

S. I do not think anything could be clearer.

T. Therefore although the good angel accepted perseverance because God gave it, the bad angel did not receive it, not because God did not give it, but God did not give it because he did not receive it, and therefore he did not receive it because he did not will to.

S. You have responded so satisfactorily to what I asked that I cannot waver as to the truth of what you say or the rigour of your proof.

5. *That before the bad angels fell the good angels could sin*

T. Do you think that the good angels too could sin, before the bad angels fell?

S. I think so, but I would like an argument to that effect.

T. You know for certain that if they had not been able to sin, they would have served justice necessarily, not freely. But then they would not have merited from God the grace to be saved while the others fell, since they would have retained a rationality they could not have lost.

S. So reason shows.

T. Therefore [if that were the case], those who fell, if they had not sinned but could have, would have been so much greater than the others and more truly just and would have merited grace from God. From which it would follow that the elect among men would be better and higher than the good angels and would not substitute for the reprobate angels because men who take their place would not be as they should have been.

S. So those suppositions have to be rejected.

T. And the good angels could have sinned prior to the fall of the bad, in just the way that we have shown that the latter did in fact sin.

S. I do not see how it could be otherwise.

6. *How the good are confirmed in their condition and the evil in their fallen state*

T. Therefore, the angels that loved the justice that they had, rather than the more that they did not have, received as reward in justice that

good their will renounced out of love of justice, and they remained in secure possession of what they had. And they were so elevated that they could have whatever they willed and not see what more they could have willed, and thus they cannot sin. But those who preferred to the stability of the justice in which they had been created what God did not yet will to give them according to his just decision, lost the good that they had and did not obtain that which induced them to depreciate justice. Thus the angels are divided into those who, adhering to justice, can enjoy all the goods they will, and those who, having abandoned justice, are deprived of whatever good they desire.

S. Nothing could be more just nor beautiful than this distinction. But if you can tell me, I would like to hear what the advantage was that the good angels justly renounced, thereby achieving perfection, and that the bad angels, by unjustly desiring, fell.

T. I do not know what it could have been, but whatever it was, it is sufficient to know that it was something that could have increased their greatness and which they had not received when they were created, in order that they might achieve it by merit.

S. Then we have looked into this matter sufficiently.

7. *The question whether the will and its turning toward what it should not is the very evil that makes them bad, and why it is that a rational creature cannot of himself turn from evil to good as he could from good to evil*

S. But I do not know how it is that, when I want to think we have exhausted the question, I then see other problems germinating, so to say, from the roots of the question resolved. Indeed, although I see clearly that the perverse angel could not have fallen into an immoderate demand of the good except through some immoderate desire, I am not a little worried as to whence comes this immoderate will. For if he was good, then he fell from so much good into so much evil on account of a good will. Again, if he was good, God gave it to him to be so, since he had nothing of himself. Therefore, if he willed what God gave him to will, how did he sin? Or if he had this will of himself, he had some good that he did not receive. But if it is evil, it is something, and so again it seems that it can only be from God, from whom is everything that is something. So too it can be asked how he sinned by having the will that God gave him, or how God

could give him an evil will. Therefore if this evil will was from the devil himself, and is something, he has something of himself and not every essence is good, nor will evil be nothing, as we are wont to say, since a bad will is something. Or, if a bad will is nothing, he was gravely damned on account of nothing and for no reason. And what I say of will can be said of concupiscence or desire, since both concupiscence and desire are instances of willing; and just as there is a good and bad will, there is a good and bad concupiscence and a good and bad desire.

But if it is said that the will is a thing and is good when it turns to that which it ought to will, and is called an evil will when it turns to what it should not, it seems to me that what has been said of the will can be said of the turnings of the will. I am also puzzled when I consider this inclination to evil on the part of the will, because God makes such a nature, that he then raised to such a height, capable of turning from what it ought, yet incapable of returning to what it ought after having turned away, since it seems that such a creature ought to have from its Creator the power to do the good for which it was created rather than the evil it was created to avoid. This is something that can also be asked of our nature, since we believe that no man can have a single good will except as a gift from God, while he can always have a bad will if God should only permit it.

8. *That the will and its turning are not evil itself*

T. I do not think it can be denied that either the will or the turning of the will are real [things]. For although they are not substances, they cannot be shown not to be essences, since there are many essences besides what are properly called substances. Nor is a good will more real than a bad will, nor more good than the other is evil. For the will to give mercifully is not more real than the will to take violently, nor is the latter more evil than the former is good. If then an evil will is the same evil thanks to which one is called evil, the good will will be the same good whereby one is called good. But a bad will will be nothing if it is the very evil that we believe to be nothing. Therefore a good will will be nothing, since it is no more real than a bad will. And then we will not be able to deny that the good itself whereby the good are good is nothing, since it is a good will that will be nothing. But no one doubts that it is false that a good

will or good itself is nothing. Therefore a bad will is not itself the evil which makes men evil, just as a good will is not itself the good which makes men good.

What I have said of will can also be said of the inclination of will. The conversion from theft to giving is no greater than that which converts the same will from generosity to avarice. And so too for the other things that I said of the will.

S. What you say is what I too think.

T. Therefore neither a bad will nor a depraved conversion of will is the very evil whereby an angel or man becomes evil, which we say to be nothing, nor a good will or a good conversion of will the good whereby they become good.

9. *That injustice is evil itself and is nothing*

S. So what is the evil that makes them bad and the good that makes them good?

T. We should hold that justice is the good whereby they are good or just, both angels and men, and that whereby the will itself is called the good and just; and injustice is the evil that is only a privation of the good, and makes angels and men bad and makes their will bad. So we should say that injustice is nothing but the privation of justice. As long as the will originally given to a rational nature is simultaneously oriented to its rectitude by the same act with which God gives it, thus not only inclined to rectitude, but created right, that is, oriented to what it ought do, as long as, I say, the will remains in that rectitude that we call truth or justice, it was just. But when it distanced itself from what it ought and turned against it, it did not remain in the original rectitude in which it was created. And when it abandoned it, it lost something great, and acquired in exchange only the privation of justice we call injustice and that has no positive being.

10. *How evil seems to be something*

S. When you say that evil is the privation of the good, I agree, but none the less I see that good is a privation of evil. And just as I perceive in the privation of evil something else comes to be that we call good, so I note that in the privation of the good something comes

to be that we call evil. Wherefore although evil can be shown by some arguments to be nothing, since evil is only vice or corruption, which are only in some essence,² and the more they are there, the more toward nothingness they turn it, and if the same essence came wholly to nothing, vice and corruption would be found to be nothing, although, I say, in these and other ways evil can be proved to be nothing; my mind cannot agree except on the basis of faith alone, unless we can eliminate the difficulties that prove to me on the contrary the reality of evil.

For when the word 'evil' is heard, our hearts irrationally tremble at what they understand in the meaning of this word, if it means only nothing. Again, if this word 'evil' is a noun, it is significant. But if it is significant, it signifies. But it can only signify something. How then can evil be nothing if its name signifies something? Finally since there seems to be such tranquillity and repose while justice remains, in many instances justice seems nothing more than the quieting of evil, as with charity and patience, whereas when justice goes, such diverse and onerous and multiple feelings occupy the mind which like a cruel master forces this poor homunculus to be concerned with so many laborious and base actions and to take on the grave burden of these actions: if it is thus, it will seem strange that nothing gives rise to all these.

11. *That evil and nothing cannot be shown from their names to be something but only a quasi-something*

T. I do not think it is absurd for you to say that nothing is something, since no one can deny that 'nothing' is a noun. If it cannot be shown that nothing is real just because there is the word 'nothing', how would one think to prove that evil is real just because there is the word 'evil'?

S. An example that solves a problem by raising another is worthless, but I do not know what this nothing itself would be. If you want to show me what I understand evil to be, show me first what I understand nothing to be, then you can deal with the other arguments rather than those having to do with the word 'evil' that lead me to think it is something.

² That is, inhere in something as its property or accident.

T. Since for nothing to be does not differ from something is not, how can we say what it is for something not to be?

S. If there is not anything signified by this word, it does not signify something. But if it does not signify something, it is not a noun. But it is a noun. Therefore, although no one says that nothing is something, but we are always driven to say that nothing is nothing, still no one can deny that the word 'nothing' is significant. But if this noun does not signify nothing but something, what it signifies seems to be something and not nothing. But if what it means is something and not nothing, how can it be signified by the word 'nothing'? Indeed, if 'nothing' is used correctly, nothing truly is, and therefore it is not something. Wherefore if what is signified by this word is something and not nothing, it follows that it is falsely and incongruously named by 'nothing'. But if, following common opinion, what is called 'nothing' is truly nothing and is not in fact real, the necessary consequence is that the word 'nothing' does not signify something and then it does not signify nothing. How is it then that the word 'nothing' is not devoid of meaning and signifies some thing, and does not signify some thing, that is, something real, but signifies nothing?

T. Perhaps there is no contradiction between signifying nothing and something.

S. But if there is no contradiction, either the word 'nothing' signifies nothing and something as taken differently, or we must find the reality that is something and nothing.

T. And if both conclusions can be affirmed, that is, if there are different ways of understanding the meaning of the word and that the same reality is both something and nothing?

S. Let us look at both.

T. It is clear that the word 'nothing' in no way differs in meaning from the expression 'not something'. Moreover it is evident that 'not something' indicates that every thing, whatever expresses any reality, should be excluded from the mind nor anything whatsoever of its meaning be retained. But since the negation of a thing must necessarily include in its meaning the thing negated—no one could understand what is meant by non-man unless he understands what man is—this term not-something, by negating what is, signifies something. Since then taking away everything that is something signifies

nothing, it makes up the essence that must be retained in the mind of the listener: therefore 'not-something' signifies no thing or reality.

The expression 'non-being' then, according to these diverse considerations, in a way signifies reality and being and yet in no way signifies reality and being, for it signifies them by way of denial and not positively. Thus the word 'nothing' which does away with everything that is something and by so doing does not signify nothing but something, does not do so positively. So it is not necessary that nothing be something just because its name in a certain way signifies something; rather, it is necessary that nothing be nothing, because its name signifies something in this way. Similarly, there is nothing against the word 'evil' being meaningful if it thus signifies something by excluding it and positively signifies nothing.

S. I cannot deny that, following your argument, the word 'nothing' in some way signifies something, but it must be understood that the something which in this way is signified is not called 'nothing', nor when we hear the word do we take it for the reality that is signified in this way. So I ask why this name is spoken, and what do we understand when we hear it: what I want to ask is, what is it? This is what the word properly signifies and since a word is because it signifies it, not because in the way stated above it signifies by denying something. Indeed it is accounted a name of its signification, which is called 'nothing'. I ask how that can be something if it is properly called 'nothing', or how it is nothing if its name signifies something, or how something and nothing can be the same. That is what I am asking about 'evil' and of what it means and what 'evil' is the name of.

T. And you rightly pose this problem because although by the foregoing argument both 'nothing' and 'evil' signify something, evil and nothing are not what they signify. But there is another argument according to which they signify something and that something is signified, but not a true but a quasi-something.

There are many cases where the grammatical form does not correspond with the reality signified. For example, 'to fear' is an active verb, grammatically speaking, but in reality to fear is passive. So too 'blindness' grammatically indicates some thing, but in reality it is nothing positive. Just as we say that someone has sight and that sight is in him, so we say that he has blindness and that blindness is in

him, although blindness is not something real but the lack of it, and to have blindness does not mean to say one has something but rather is deprived of it. In fact blindness is nothing other than non-sight or the absence of sight where it ought to be found. But non-sight or the absence of sight is certainly no more real where it ought to be found than where it ought not to be found. Many other things are expressed as reality from the point of view of the form of discourse, because we speak of them as if they existed, when no positive reality is involved.

It is in this way that 'evil' and 'nothing' signify things, that is, what is signified is not something in reality but only in grammatical form. 'Nothing' signifies simply non-being or the lack of all that is real. And evil is only non-good or the absence of good where good ought to be found. But that which is only an absence of reality is certainly not real. Hence evil in truth is nothing and nothing is not real, and yet in a way evil and nothing are something because we speak of them as if they were real, as when we say, 'He did nothing' and 'He did evil', that is, that what he did was nothing or evil—in the same way that we say 'I did something and I did a good thing'. So we deny that what someone says is in any way something: 'What you say is nothing'. For 'what' or 'this' which are properly said only of realities, here are not said of realities but of quasi-realities.

S. You have satisfied me with respect to 'evil' from whose meaning I sought to prove that it signifies something.

12. *That the angel cannot have its first act of willing from itself, and that many things can be said to be from an alien capacity but not from an alien incapacity*

S. But there remains for you to show me how I should respond to the other arguments that tend to persuade me that evil is a positive reality.

T. To get to the heart of the matter we must begin by backing up a bit. And you need to understand what I will say, not just in pieces, but remembering the whole as joined in a single intuition.

S. I will do all I can, but if at times I am slower than you might wish, do not fail to wait for me.

T. Let us then say that in this moment God creates an angel and wills to make him happy, not all at once, but in stages. So let us say

that he has been created and is capable of volition but does not yet will anything determinate.

S. Stipulate what you like but keep my question in mind.

T. Do you think that the angel can of himself will anything?

S. I am not quite sure of what you mean by 'of himself'. Something that has nothing that it has not received, which we said above is true of every creature, cannot do anything 'of itself'.

T. By 'of himself' I mean with what he now has. For example, what has feet, and the other conditions for walking, can walk of itself. But what has feet, but unsound ones, cannot walk of itself. In this sense, then, I ask you if that angel, who is capable of willing, but does not yet will anything, can will something of himself.

S. I think he can, if he wills.

T. You are not answering my question.

S. Why?

T. I asked about one who does not yet will anything and about the capacity before it is used, and you answered with an example of one who wills and thus of an actuated capacity. Whatever is, by the very fact that it is, can be. But not everything that exists had the capacity to exist before it existed. So when I ask if he who does not will anything can will, I am asking you about the capacity that precedes willing, and what can move it to will. But you, when you answered that 'if he wills, he can', are speaking of the possibility which is actuated in the very act of willing. It is indeed necessary that he can will if he is willing.

S. I know that there are two kinds of power: one that is not yet actuated and one that is already actuated, but I also know that whatever can be, while it is, if at one time it was not, could be before it existed. If it had not the capacity to be, it would never have been. So I think I have answered well, since he who can will because he is willing, necessarily could have willed before he did so.

T. Do you not think that what is nothing has absolutely nothing and therefore has no capacity, and without a capacity it cannot in any way do anything?

S. I cannot deny that.

T. I think that before the world came to be it was nothing.

S. What you say is true.

T. Therefore it has no capacity of any sort before it is.

S. That follows.

T. So it did not have the capacity to be before it was.

S. But I say, if it was incapable of being, it was impossible for it to be at any time.

T. It was both possible and impossible before it was. That in which there was no capacity to exist before it was, was impossible; but for God, in whose capacity it was that it should come to be, it was possible. It is because God could make the world before it came to be that the world is, not because the world itself had the capacity before it was.

S. I am unable to counter your argument, but linguistic usage tells against it.

T. That is not surprising. Many things in common parlance are said improperly, but when we are trying to get to the bottom of the truth we must as far as possible and as the argument requires set aside the distracting improprieties. It is due to this impropriety of language that we often say, 'A thing can', not because it can, but because something else can. So too we say, 'A thing cannot', when in effect it is something else that cannot. If I should say, 'A book can be written by me', the book certainly can do nothing and it is I who can write the book. And when we say, 'That one cannot be conquered by the other', we intend to say that the latter cannot conquer the former.

This is the origin of our saying that God cannot do anything that is contradictory or perverse because God is so powerful in justice and beatitude, indeed, since beatitude and justice do not differ in him, but are one good, he is so omnipotent in simple goodness that no reality is capable of harming the highest good. That is why God cannot corrupt or lie. Very well, that which does not exist does not of itself have a capacity to exist, but if something else is capable of making it be, in that sense it can exist—by the capacity of the other. Although capacity and incapacity can be of various kinds, for now it is sufficient to say that there are many things that *can*, not by their own power, but by that of another, and many things that *cannot*, not by their own incapacity but by that of another. Now, when I posed the problem about the hypothetical angel just created, and created capable of willing, but which does not yet will anything, and asked you if he can will anything of himself, I spoke of his own capacity, and it is with respect to it that I ask you to respond.

S. If he is capable of willing, if there is nothing lacking in him save actually willing, I do not see why he could not will of himself.

Anyone who is capable of seeing and is put in a bright place but with his eyes closed, sees nothing, but he can see of himself. Why then is one who does not will unable to will of himself in the way that one who does not see is able to see by himself?

T. Because one who does not see has sight and the will with which he can open his eyes, whereas we are speaking of one who has not yet any effective willing. Tell me then if a thing that moves itself from not willing to willing, wills of itself to move.

S. If I say that it moves without willing, it will follow that he moves because of another, not of himself, except perhaps in the manner of one who instantly closes his eyes to parry a blow or is forced to will what he did not before in order to avoid some harm. I do not know then if he first willed himself to move by this act of will.

T. No one is forced to will something out of fear or from the sense of some harm or the desire for some useful thing not had if he does not have a natural will to avoid that harm or pursue the useful things: that is what moves him to the further willing.

S. I cannot deny it.

T. Hence whatever is moved to will, first wills itself so to move.

S. It is so.

T. Therefore what wills nothing, can in no way move itself to will.

S. I cannot contradict that.

T. It follows that an angel already capable of willing, yet who wills nothing, cannot have its first willing from itself.

S. I must agree that a thing that wills nothing cannot of itself will anything.

T. But he cannot be happy if he does not will happiness. And I say happiness, not happiness with justice, but the happiness that all desire, even the bad. All in fact will to be well. Therefore prescinding from the fact that every nature is good [ontologically], two kinds of good and evil are usually distinguished: the moral good, which is called justice to which the evil that is injustice is opposed, and the good that it seems to me can be called the useful, to which the harmful is opposed. Not everyone wants justice nor do all flee injustice. On the other hand not only every rational nature, but every subject capable of sensation, tends to the useful and avoids the harmful. For no one wills but what he takes to be useful to him. In this sense all want things to be well with them and do not want things

to go badly for them. It is of happiness in this sense that I now speak, because no one can be happy who does not will happiness. And no one can in fact be happy either by having what he does not want or by not having what he wants.

S. There is no denying that.

T. One who does not will justice ought not to be happy.

S. I will not deny that either.

13. *If it had only the will for happiness, it could neither will anything else nor not will it, and the will, whatever it willed, would be neither just nor unjust*

T. Let us say then that God gives him, as his first volition, only the will for happiness, and see whether because he has this volition, he is now capable of willing something other than what he has been given to will.

S. Go on. I am eager to hear.

T. It is obvious that he does not yet will anything other than happiness, because it has not been given to him to will anything else.

S. True.

T. So what I am asking is whether he is capable of moving himself to will something else.

S. I do not see how he can move himself to will something other than his happiness, since he does not will anything else. For if he wills to move himself to will something else, he already wants that something else.

T. Therefore just as when he has not received any volition he is not able of himself to will, so having received only the will for happiness, he is not able of himself to will anything else.

S. That is so.

T. And can he not determine himself to will that which he believes will lead to his happiness?

S. I do not know how to answer. If in fact he cannot, I do not see how one who cannot will what he believes leads to happiness can be said to will happiness. If he can, I do not see why he cannot will something else.

T. But what does he who seems to will something, not for its own sake, but for something else really will? That which he is said to will or that by means of which he wills it?

S. Certainly that which he wills by means of the other.

T. So one who wills something for the sake of his happiness, really wills nothing other than his happiness. Hence he can will that which leads to happiness while willing only his happiness.

S. That is clear enough.

T. Then I ask you if, having only the will for happiness, he is able not to will it.

S. He cannot simultaneously will and not will.

T. True, but that is not what I asked. I asked if he could abandon this will, to move himself to will not to will happiness.

S. If in fact he does this unwillingly, he does not do it. If willingly, he wills something other than happiness. But he does not. So it is clear, I think, that he can in no way of himself not will that which alone he is given to will.

T. You understand well, but tell me whether he who wills only happiness and cannot not will it, can will happiness more the more he understands it?

S. If he cannot will happiness more the more and better he understands it, either he does not will happiness at all or he wills something else for the sake of which he does not will the better. But we agreed that he loves happiness and nothing else.

T. Therefore he wills to be happy to the degree that he knows it.

S. Without a doubt.

T. Then he wills to be like God.

S. Nothing is clearer.

T. So what do you think, can the will to be like God be unjust?

S. I cannot call it just, because he would want what does not befit him, nor unjust, because he would will it necessarily.

T. But we said that one who wills only happiness, wills only the useful.

S. Yes.

T. If then he who wills only the useful cannot have something more and more truly useful, he would will a lesser advantage, but one accessible by him?

S. Indeed, he cannot not will the less, if the greater is impossible for him.

T. And would the will of one who wills the less useful and the unclean things in which irrational animals delight be unjust and blameworthy?

S. But how can his will be unjust and reprehensible if he wills that which he is not given the capacity not to will?

T. Yet it is obvious that the will itself that wills either the more or less useful is the work and gift of God, as are life and being endowed with senses, which do not involve morality and in which there is neither good nor evil.

S. There is no doubt there.

T. So to the degree that the will is a being, it is good, and so far as concerns morality it is neither good nor evil.

S. Nothing is clearer.

T. But the angel cannot be happy if he does not have a morally good will. If in fact he wills what he cannot and ought not to be, he cannot be perfectly and worthily happy.

S. That is obvious.

14. *And it would be the same if the angel were given only the will for rectitude; it is because it was given both that it can be just and happy*

T. Let us now consider the will for justice and see if the same angel to whom is given to will only what befits his nature, could will something else or could of himself not will what he has been given to will.

S. It must be exactly the same here as it was with the will for happiness.

T. Then this angel would have a will that is neither moral nor immoral. For just as above there could not be an unjust will if he willed something unfitting, since he could not not will it, so if he should will what is fitting, his will would not be just, since it was so given to him that he could not will otherwise.

S. That is so.

T. So neither by willing happiness alone nor by willing only that which befits its nature could that angel be called moral or immoral, because his will would be necessitated; on the other hand, if he neither can nor ought to be happy if he does not will and if his will is not morally good, God must harmonize the two wills in him such that he wills to be happy but wills it justly. Thus, when the moral good is present, his will to be happy is modified so as to eliminate going beyond, without destroying his capacity to go beyond. That is,

although by willing to be happy he can surpass the measure, because his will is good he does not want to surpass it, and in this way, having a just will for happiness, he can be and ought to be happy. Such an angel, by not willing that which he ought not, although able to, would merit the capacity never to will that which he ought not and, always following justice, of never being deprived of any moderate desire; if he should abandon justice by an immoderate will, he would be deprived of all that he desires.

S. Nothing could be thought to be more fitting.

T. Remember that, when we first considered the will to be happy alone, without the limit we have added, that keeps it under the will of God, we said that there would be neither justice nor injustice in it, whatever it willed.

S. I remember.

15. *That justice is something real*

T. Do you think that that which when added to the will so modifies it that it can only will what it ought is something real?

S. No one who understands at all would think it nothing.

T. And I think that you have understood that this reality is nothing other than justice.

S. It could not be thought to be anything else.

T. So justice is certainly something.

S. And something very good.

16. *That injustice is only the absence of befitting justice*

T. Should that will will and not will according to justice before receiving justice?

S. There is no 'can' to entail the 'ought' because it has not received it.

T. But after it has, do you doubt that it should, at least when it is not subject to violence?

S. I think that will is always obligated, whether it retains what it accepted or willingly abandons it.

T. You judge rightly. But what would this will have if, without being forced either by need or violence, it should abandon the justice that has been attributed to it with such wisdom and with such

usefulness for it? And abandon it by spontaneously using its power, or by willing more than it ought to? Would anything remain of this will beside what we first considered, before the addition of justice?

S. Since only justice was added, if justice is taken away, certainly nothing would remain but what was there before, but with this difference, that the justice received would make it indebted and the same justice abandoned would leave in it beautiful traces of itself. By the very fact that it remains indebted to justice it shows that it had been adorned by justice. It is only right that once it receives justice, it ought always to be just unless it lose it because of violence. A nature that received justice, if only at one time, is shown to be more noble and to bear the sign of always having a quasi absolute good than a nature that never had or ought to have had it.

T. You reason well. But add to this that the more a nature has this good, and ought to have it, it is praiseworthy, just as a person who ought to have it and does not is accounted more blameworthy.

S. I am in complete agreement.

T. Make clearer to me the good that reveals the nature praiseworthy and the person blameworthy.

S. To have and to ought to have justice shows the natural dignity of a nature, and not having it constitutes personal dishonour. For it was made worthy by him [God] who gave it but it does not have it because it abandons it. The obligation came from him who gave justice, the not-having it from him who abandoned it. He is obliged because he received it, he does not have it because he abandoned it. T. Accordingly, what is blameworthy in that will is not that it did not remain in justice, but that it does not have justice.

S. The only thing I blame in it is the absence of justice, or not having justice. For as I already said, the worthiness adorns it, not having it demans it, and the more the having adorns it the more not having demans. Thus not having justice because of its own fault demans the will only because being fit to have it, thanks to the goodness of the giver, constitutes its dignity.

T. So you do not think the will that lacks the justice it is not meant to have is unjust or that there is injustice in it?

S. Who would not agree?

T. If it should be unjust or if injustice be in it, I think you would have nothing to complain of it.

S. Nothing at all.

T. So the only thing you find reprehensible is its injustice and its being unjust.

S. There is nothing else with which I could find fault.

T. So if the only thing you find blameworthy is the absence of justice and its not having justice, as you said a short while ago, and again it is indeed the injustice in it and its being unjust that you find reprehensible, it is obvious that its injustice and being unjust are nothing other than the lack of justice and not having justice.

S. It could not be otherwise.

T. Therefore just as the absence of justice and not having justice have no essence, so injustice and being unjust have no being, and so are nothing rather than something.

S. No other conclusion is possible.

T. And you will also remember the conclusion to which we came that, once justice is lost, the justice received being abandoned, nothing remains but what was there prior to receiving justice.

S. That is what we concluded.

T. But the will is not unjust nor is there any injustice in it prior to receiving it.

S. No.

T. So, when it has lost justice, either there is no injustice in it and it is not unjust, or injustice and being unjust are nothing.

S. No conclusion seems more necessary.

T. But you conceded that this will has injustice in it and is unjust after it abandoned justice.

S. I must grant that.

T. So injustice and being unjust are nothing.

S. You make me think I understand what I thought I had not understood.

T. I think you have also grasped why the same absence of justice is not called injustice before justice has been given but only when justice has been abandoned, and not-having-justice is equivalent to being unjust, and both are blameworthy—although injustice is nothing other than the absence of justice and being unjust is nothing other than not having justice. The reason is that the absence of justice is not blamed where justice is not meant to be. Just as not having a beard is no disgrace in a man who does not yet have one, but when he should have one it is disgraceful that he does not, so not having justice does not deform a nature that ought not to have it, but

debases one meant to have it. And just as having a beard denotes a virile nature, so not having one takes away from virile character.

S. I now see that injustice is only the absence of justice where justice ought to be.

17. *Why the angel that abandons it cannot regain justice*

T. When earlier we spoke of an angel that was given only the will for happiness, we saw that he would not be able to will anything else.

S. Yes.

T. Now, justice having been abandoned and only the prior will for happiness remaining, can the deserter go back to the will for justice by himself, something that was not given to him beforehand to do?

S. Much less. Before it was due to a condition of nature that he could not have it, but now it is by reason of his fault as well.

T. So there is no way in which he could acquire justice when he does not have it, either before receiving it or after having abandoned it.

S. He cannot have anything of himself.

18. *How the bad angel makes himself bad and the good angel makes himself good, and that the bad angel owes thanks to God for the goods he received but abandoned, just as the good angel does who retained what he had received*

T. But is there not some way, at least when he has it, that he can give himself justice?

S. How could he?

T. We use 'make' or 'do' in many ways. For we say that we make something when we make a thing to be and when we could make a thing not be and do not. In this second sense the angel could give himself justice, because he could take it away or not take it away. Similarly, one who remains in the truth in which he has been created and does not, as he could, cause himself not to have it, in a sense gives it to himself yet receives the whole from God. From him they receive both the having and the capacity to keep or abandon it. God gives the latter in order that they may give themselves justice in some sense. If they could in no way take justice away from themselves, there would be no sense in which they could give it. He who gives

himself something in this sense, receives from God the capacity to do so.

S. I can see that by not taking it away they are able to give themselves justice, but they give it to themselves in one sense, and take it away in another.

T. Therefore you see that they should thank God for their goodness in either case, and the devil is not any less obligated to God for what is from God alone just because he threw away what God gave him and did not will to accept what God offered him.

S. I see.

T. Therefore the bad angel ought always to thank God for that happiness of which he is deprived just as the good angel for that which he gives himself.

S. Very true.

T. I think that you are aware that God can in no way make someone unjust save in the sense of not making him just when he could. Before receiving justice, in fact, no one is just or unjust and, after having received it, no one becomes unjust unless he willingly abandons justice. Thus just as the good angel is made just because he does not deprive himself of justice when he could, so God makes the bad angel unjust by not giving him justice when he could.

S. That is easily grasped.

19. *That the will as such is good and that no thing is evil*

T. Let us turn now to a consideration of the will and recall the conclusions to which we have come: namely, that the will for happiness, whatever it wills, is not an evil but a good before receiving justice. From which it follows that, when it abandons the justice received, if it is the same essence that it was before, it is something good insofar as it exists, but insofar as justice is not in the thing that it was in, it is called evil and unjust. For if to will to be like God were evil, the Son of God would not will to be like the Father. Or if to will lesser pleasures were evil, the will of brute animals would be called evil. But neither the will of the Son of God nor the will of the irrational animal is said to be evil because they are not unjust.

From this it follows that no will insofar as it exists is evil but is evil because it is the work of God, nor is it evil except insofar as it is unjust. Therefore since only a bad will or what is due to a bad will

is called evil, such as a bad man and a bad action, nothing is clearer than that no thing is evil nor that evil is anything but the absence in the will, or in something because of will, of that justice which has been abandoned.

20. *How God is the cause of evil and willing and action, and how they are received from him*

S. Your discourse is a concatenation of true, necessary and evident arguments, such that I can refute none of them, but I do see something following that I do not think I should allow and which does not seem avoidable if what you say is true. But if to want to be like God is not nothing nor is it evil but rather something good, this desire can only come from him from whom all that is comes. Therefore if the angel has nothing he has not received, what he has he received from the one who gave it. What could he receive from him that he did not give? So if he has a desire to be like God, he has it because God gave it.

T. But why wonder that, just as God is said to lead into temptation when he does not free from temptation, we admit that he gives a bad will by not impeding it when he could, since the capacity of willing anything depends on him alone?

S. So put, it does not seem impossible.
T. Therefore if there is no giving without a receiving, then just as we are accustomed to call giving both what is willingly conceded and what is permitted by not disapproving, so it is not incongruous that to receive should mean both one taking what is offered and presuming what is illicit.

S. What you say seems to me neither improper nor unusual.
T. So what do we say contrary to truth when we say that when the devil wills what he ought not, this is received by him because God permits it, and that he has not received it because God did not agree with it?

S. There seems nothing in conflict with the truth there.
T. So when the devil turned his will to what he should not, both his will and this turning were something real, and yet he could not have this reality except from God, since he could not will nor move his will if it had not been permitted by God, who causes all substantial and accidental natures to be, both universal and individual

Insofar as the will and its movement or turning are real they are good and come from God. But insofar as they are deprived of some justice that they ought to have, they are not absolutely bad but bad in a sense, and what is bad in them does not come from the will of God or from God insofar as he moves the will. Evil is injustice, which is only evil and evil is nothing. But the nature in which injustice is found is something evil, because it is something real and differs from injustice which is evil and is nothing. Therefore, what is real is made by God and comes from him; what is nothing, that is evil, is caused by the guilty and comes from him.

S. It is certain that God creates the natures of all things, but who could admit that he causes the actions of a bad will or the deprived movement of the will by which the evil will moves itself?

T. What wonder if we say that God causes the singular actions that come from the bad will, when we allow that he makes the singular substances which come to be unjust by will and bad action.

S. I have nothing to say against it. I cannot in fact deny that every action is a reality nor that whatever is has its being from God. Your argument neither accuses God nor excuses the devil, but rather absolves God and accuses the devil.

21. *That the bad angel could not foresee that he would fall*

S. But I want to know whether the angel who abandoned justice foreknew this of himself.

T. When you ask if the angel who did not remain in the truth foresaw his fall, clarity must be had as to what prevision you mean. For if you mean a foreseeing that requires knowledge of an object founded in a certain concept, I reply that he cannot have known that which could equally well not have been. That which is capable of non-being cannot be foreseen with absolute certainty. Thus it is clear that he could not have foreseen with certainty his fall since it was not necessary. For let us suppose that in fact he did not fall, do you think he could have foreseen that which would not be?

S. It seems that that which in the future might not be cannot be foreseen, nor can that which is foreseen with certainty not be in the future. But now I recall that famous question concerning the divine knowledge and free will. For although it is asserted with such authority and is held with such profit that no human argument can

put in doubt the compatibility of divine foreknowledge and free will, still, they do seem incompatible to reason when it thinks of them. That is why we find in this matter a tendency to affirm one of the two to the point of obscuring the other and thus run the risk of sinking in the sea of incredulity; others are in danger of falling while they fight against the adverse winds that buffet them. Thus although it is true that the divine foreknowledge embraces all the acts brought about by free will and that none of these acts is determined necessarily, none the less it seems that that which is foreseen by God might not come about.

T. I will answer briefly now: Divine foreknowledge is not properly called *foreknowledge*. He who has always present all things does not have foreknowledge of the future, but knowledge of the present. Therefore since foreknowledge of a future event is going to be considered differently than knowledge of a present thing, what is called divine foreknowledge and what is properly foreknowledge do not have the same consequences.

S. I agree.

T. So let us return to the question we have in hand.

S. What you say makes sense, but with the understanding that you do not refuse to tell me what God deigns to manifest to you when I ask you to respond to the problem that I have raised. Its solution is in fact most necessary, if anyone can find it or if it is possible to find it. Indeed I confess that, prescinding from the divine authority to which I defer without hesitation, I have not yet read a satisfying argument that enables me to grasp the solution.

T. When we get to it, if we do,³ it will be as God gives; now however, by the argument given above it is clear that the apostate angel could not foresee his own ruin by that knowledge which makes what is known necessary. Hear another argument that excludes his foreseeing his own fall not only with secure foreknowledge but even with conjecture or presentiment.

S. I await that argument.

T. If, while still retaining a good will, he knew that he would fall, either he would have willed that it should come about or not.

S. One of the two must be true.

T. But if, along with foreknowledge, he also had the will to fall, he would already have fallen because of this bad will itself.

S. What you say is self-evident.

T. Therefore he did not know that he would be ruined before he fell, by willing his own ruin.

S. I have no objection to that conclusion.

T. But if he knew that he would fall and did not will it, he would be more miserable the more he willed to stand firm.

S. That cannot be denied.

T. And he would be more just the more he wished to stand firm and the more just he was the happier he deserved to be.

S. I cannot deny it.

T. So if he foresaw that he would fall while not willing to fall, he would be more unhappy because of that which should make him happier, which is absurd.

S. I cannot deny this consequence, but I see that it not only comes about without contradiction, but in a laudable way and by the disposition of divine grace. Often indeed—to cite only a couple of examples of the suffering of the just—the more one is virtuous, the more he is saddened, because of compassion, by the disgrace of another, and often he who has the greater constancy in virtue is persecuted with more insistence and cruelty by the unjust.

T. It is not the same with man and angel. Human nature, indeed, because of original sin has become subject to innumerable sufferings, and because of this capacity for suffering divine grace fashions our incorruptibility. But the angel, without any preceding sin, merited the suffering of some evil.

S. You have answered my difficulty. It is clear that this argument not only excludes that the bad angel foresaw with certainty his own fall, but also that he could foresee it with probability.

T. There is another argument that seems to me to demonstrate that he could not in any way foresee his own future prevarication. He would have had to foresee it either as forced or as spontaneous. But he had no reason to suspect that he could be forced and, as long as he willed to persevere in truth, he could not in any way think of abandoning it voluntarily. We already showed earlier in fact that so long as he had right will, he wanted to persevere in this will. And, willing to maintain with perseverance the rectitude he had, I do not see how he could have had even a remote suspicion that, without the intervention of any other cause, he would have abandoned it of his own will. I do not deny that he knew that he could change his will, but I say that he could not think of changing spontaneously, without

³ See Anselm's *De Concordia*.

some other motive, a will that he intended to maintain with perseverance.

S. He who listens carefully to what you say clearly sees that the bad angel could not in any way know with certainty or even only with probability that he would do the evil that he did.

22. *That he knew that he ought not to will what he sinned by willing and that he ought to be punished if he were to sin*

S. But I also want you to make me see if he knew that he ought not to will that which by prevaricating he willed.

T. There can be no doubt, if you recall what was said above. If he knew that he ought not to will what unjustly he willed, he would have been ignorant that he ought to retain the will that he abandoned. Wherefore he would neither be just in retaining it, nor unjust in abandoning a justice of which he was unaware. Nor could he not have willed more of that which he had if he had been unaware of having the obligation to be content with which he had received. Finally, since he was rational, and nothing prevented him from using reason, he could not be unaware what he should and what he should not will.

S. I do not see how your argument could be refuted, but it seems to me to give rise to a problem. If indeed he knew that he ought not to abandon what he had received, he knew that he would be punished if he abandoned it. So how could he spontaneously will that which would make him unhappy, he who had received as an inseparable inclination of his will to be happy?

23. *That he ought not to know that he would be punished if he sinned*

T. Just as it is certain that he could not be ignorant of the fact that he should be punished if he were to sin, so is it that he ought not to have known that having sinned he would be punished.

S. And how could he have ignored this, if he was so rational that his rationality could not be impeded from knowing the truth because it was weighed down as we are with a mortal body?

T. Because he was rational, he could understand that he would justly be punished if he sinned, but since God's judgements are a deep abyss and his ways inaccessible to us [Rom. 11: 33], he was

unable to know whether God would do what he justly could do. But, even if one should say that he could not believe that God would have condemned the creature he had made with so much goodness because of his guilt, he would not in fact express something impossible, especially since no example of justice punishing injustice would have preceded, and the angel was certain that the number that were created to enjoy God had been established with so much wisdom as to have nothing superfluous and to be unable to be lessened without leaving something incomplete, and that God's wonderful work could not remain partially incomplete. On the other hand, he could in no way know, if man had already been created man, that God would put human nature in place of the angelic and the angelic in the place of the human should he fall. Rather he had to think God would reconstitute every nature in the way it had been made for itself and not for another; much less could he have thought, if man had not yet been created, that God would have created him to take the place of another nature. What is absurd about any of that?

S. That seems to me most probable.

T. Let us return then to what I said, that is, that the bad angel need not know that he would be damned. If indeed he had known it, he would have been unable to will spontaneously that which would render him unhappy while he had and willed felicity. And then he would not have been virtuous in not willing that which he ought not, because he could not do otherwise. And for the same reason consider if he should have known what you ask. For if he should know it, either he would have sinned or not.

S. One or the other.

T. If such punishment had been foreseen he would sin without need and without any contrary force and would be that much more deserving of punishment.

S. Yes.

T. So he could not have enjoyed such foreknowledge.

S. One who truly sinned ought not to have known the punishment.

T. And if he would not have sinned, he would have acted either because of a good will alone or out of fear of punishment.

S. No other hypothesis is admissible.

T. But that he had not avoided sin only out of love of justice, his very act demonstrates.

S. No doubt.

T. But if he avoided it out of fear, he would not have been just.

S. Thus it is clear that there is no way he could have known that an established penalty would have followed his sin.

24. *That even the good angel ought not to know this*

S. But since we think that the angel who remained in the truth and the one who did not were granted equal knowledge at the moment of their creation, I do not see why this knowledge must be denied to the one that had a good will so tenacious as to be sufficient to avoid sin.

T. Yet the good angel neither could have nor should have contemned the penalty he foresaw.

S. So it seems.

T. Therefore just as the love of justice alone, so the hatred of punishment alone, would have sufficed for not sinning.

S. Nothing is plainer.

T. He would therefore have had two reasons for not sinning, one honourable and useful, the other neither, that is, the love of justice and the hatred of punishment. For it is not honourable not to sin solely out of hatred of punishment, and such a hatred is useless to avoid sinning, where only the love of justice suffices.

S. There is nothing I can say against that.

T. What then? Is not his perseverance much more attractive with a single motive that is worthy and useful, because spontaneous, than if it is joined with another motive unworthy and useless?

S. What you say is so self-evident that, while earlier I wanted him to know, now I am content that he should have been unaware, except that now we cannot deny that he knew, because after the example of the fallen angel, he could not ignore it.

25. *That the good angel by this fact alone that he now has knowledge of the fall of the devil is said no longer to be able to sin, though for him this works for glory*

T. But if now both the one and the other, the good and bad angel, were certain that such a penalty would follow such a fault, just as the knowledge of one is different from that of the other, so the cause of

their knowledge and its end differ. Indeed, what the one knows by his own experience, the other learns only from the example of the other. The first knows it because he did not persevere, the other in another way because he did persevere.

Wherefore just as the knowledge of the first redounds to his dishonour, because in a blameworthy way he did not persevere, so the knowledge of the other is to his glory, because he persevered in a manner worthy of praise. If then it is said that the second, by the sole fact that he has this knowledge, can then not sin, it is clear that, just as his knowledge acquired with a praiseworthy perseverance turns to his glory, so the impossibility of sinning due to this knowledge turns to his glory. Just as the bad angel is worthy of blame because he cannot return to justice, so the good angel is worthy of praise because he cannot depart from it. As the one cannot now return because he turned away from it solely because of a bad will, so the other can no longer depart from it because he is maintained in justice solely by a good will. Hence it is manifest that, just as the inability to recuperate what has been abandoned is due to the punishment for sin, so the reward of virtue in the other is that he cannot abandon what he has retained.

S. Your meditation on this knowledge and inability of the angel would be attractive if, as you say, this knowledge and this inability to sin were in the good angel as the proper result of his having persevered. But it does not now seem to me that he has acquired them because he has persevered, but because the other has not.

T. If it were as you say, the good angel would be able to rejoice in the fall of the apostate angel, because this fall enabled him to acquire the knowledge that now impedes him from sinning and from being unhappy, not because he merited it, but because the other did not. All of which is absurd.

S. It seems much more absurd that the virtuous angel rejoiced in the fall of the sinning angel, as you showed; so much more is it necessary that you make me see that the first did not acquire the knowledge of which we speak because of the sin of the other.

T. You need not say that the good angel came to this knowledge just because the bad angel sinned, but that the good angel came to it having seen the example of the one who fell because he sinned. If in fact neither had sinned, God would have given this knowledge to both of them, because of their perseverance, in another way, without

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T. You need not say that the good angel came to this knowledge just because the bad angel sinned, but that the good angel came to it having seen the example of the one who fell because he sinned. If in fact neither had sinned, God would have given this knowledge to both of them, because of their perseverance, in another way, without

the example of the fall. No one will say that God could not have given this knowledge to the angels in another way. When one sinned, God taught the other with the example of the first what he wanted to teach him, not by impotence, as if he could not teach him in another way, but through a greater power, that is by that which draws good even from evil, lest evil be deprived of meaning in the reign of omnipotent wisdom.

S. What you say pleases me very much.

T. It will please you too that the good angel cannot now sin for this reason alone: that he knows the sin of the bad angel to have been followed by punishment, which inability does not deprive him of praise, but is the reward for having served justice. But you know, because it was made clear above, that he cannot sin because, thanks to the merit of his perseverance, he has progressed to the point where he does not see what more he could desire.

S. I have forgotten nothing that you have achieved by your inquiring reason.

26. *What horrifies us about the word 'evil' and the works that injustice is said to do if both are nothing*

S. Although you have responded to all my questions, I still wait for you to explain what horrifies us when we hear the word 'evil' and what causes the actions of injustice such as in theft, and just—if evil is nothing.

T. I will reply briefly. That evil which is vice is always nothing; the evil that is suffering is sometimes without doubt nothing, as with blindness, and sometimes real, like sadness and sorrow, and we always detest the suffering that is something real. When then we hear the word 'evil' we do not fear the evil that is nothing, but that which is something real and follows the lack of the good. Many sufferings follow on injustice and blindness and those in fact are nothing, but these sufferings are evil and are something real and it is these we fear when we hear the word 'evil'.

When we say that injustice causes theft or that blindness causes a man to fall in a ditch, we do not intend to say that injustice and blindness cause something real, but that if justice were in the will and sight in the eye, theft would not come about and one would not fall in the ditch. It is as when we say that the absence of the pilot causes

the ship to go aground, or the absence of a bridle makes the horse run off, which are equivalent to: if the pilot and bridle had been present the wind would not have taken the ship nor the horse run off. For as the ship is governed by the pilot, so is the horse by the bridle; so too a man's will is governed by justice and his feet by sight.

S. You have satisfied me with respect to the evil that is injustice, such that all that this question raised in my mind has been clarified. The question concerning this evil seems to arise from the fact that, if it were some essence, it would be caused by God, from whom it is necessary that every thing that is comes, and from whom it is impossible that injustice and sin come. But the evil that in some way is something seems to cause difficulties for the true faith.

27. *How evil came to an angel when he was good*

S. So would you please reply briefly to my fatuous request, so that I can reply to one who asks me. It is not always easy to reply wisely to the questions of the unwise. So I ask you whence comes for the first time that evil which is called injustice or sin in the angel who was created just.

T. Tell me whence comes the non-being in something real.

S. That which is nothing neither comes nor goes.

T. Then why do you ask where the evil that is injustice comes from?

S. Because when justice departs from where it was, we say that injustice has come.

T. Speak more clearly and properly, and ask me about the departure of justice. A well-formed question is easier to answer, whereas the ill-formed one makes it more difficult.

S. Why does justice depart from the just angel?

T. Speaking properly, it does not depart from him, but he abandons it by willing what he ought not.

S. Why does he abandon it?

T. When I say that by willing what he ought not he abandons it, I show openly why and how he abandons it. He abandons it because he wills what he ought not to will, and in this way it is by willing what he ought not that he abandons it.

S. Why does he will what he ought not?

T. No cause precedes this will except that he can will.

S. And he wills because he can?

T. No. Because the good angel could will similarly yet does not. No one wills what he can will because he can, without some other cause, although if he is unable to will he never does.

S. Why then does he will?

T. Only because he wills. For this will has no other cause by which it is forced or attracted, but it was its own efficient cause, so to speak, as well as its own effect.

28. *That the power to will what is unfitting was always good, and willing itself is good insofar as it exists*

S. If the power to will and the willing itself are something real, they are good and come from God.

T. Both the one and the other are something real. And the power was only a good and spontaneous gift of God; the willing was good with respect to its being, but since it actuated unjustly it was an evil and in no way from God, from whom comes whatever is real. From God we have not only that which he gives us spontaneously but also that which we unjustly appropriate because God permits it. And insofar as God is said to do what he permits to come about, so he is said to give that which he permits to be stolen. Since therefore, God permitting, the bad angel abused the power God freely gave, he has from God the fact that he can use it, which is nothing other than his willing. For willing is nothing but using the power of willing, just as speaking is using the power of speech.