



## The Problem of Evil with Dr. David Schenk

### Lesson 12: Anselm's "On the Fall of the Devil"

#### Outline:

##### The Fall

- If there were no devils, there would be no fall.
- The origin of sin is in the fall of angels.
- If we are capable of seeing the answer, surely the angels were too.
- Knowing what is capable of precipitating the fall of the angels does not protect us against it. Seeing what it is helps, but it does not stop someone from falling.

##### The Problem of Evil

- Of all the created beings, Lucifer was the most loving, selfless, honest, decent, wise, and knowing.
- How can that being ever come to rebel? Everything so far is unequivocally good.

##### Anselm, On the Fall of the Devil

- The angels that become devils to have libertarian free will, as do those angels that do not fall. However, more than just libertarian free will is needed.
- Even among the angels of Heaven, some ignorance is needed to choose a lesser good.
- How do they first become proud? What is the source of the fall? How can that first fragment enter a system, which was never intended to have such a thing?
- God gives all of the angels a choice between two competing goods, happiness and justice.
  - Those that choose happiness over justice, they do it at the expense of justice. In squishing their desire for justice out of themselves, when chasing after happiness, they have turned themselves into monsters.
  - When they make their wrong choice, they expect to get away with it. If they did not expect to get away with it, they would never choose damnation.
  - Those who chose justice over happiness, they are rewarded with happiness (joy) that they thought they were sacrificing.
  - Why did they choose happiness, and not justice? They just choose, there is no special reason.
- Quarrel for Anselm from Dr. Schenk
  - To say "they just chose" it seems too random or arbitrary.



- When the angels that fall make their wrong choice, it is not obvious (they are smarter, more honest, and more upright).
- They have to be torn between two things that are both morally really praiseworthy.
- **What has them torn needs to be a conflict between two great moral impulses.** Any choice you make has you genuinely morally torn.
- What else do you need?
  - You need stubbornness. You need some kind of bias in order for the whole thing to go off kilter. What are we talking about when we talk about partisanship?
  - This is a kind of loyalty and commitment to something that is good, and being capable of falling in love with it too much. They can't bring themselves to relent.
  - In their love of God, the angels that become devils fall so in love with some facet of God that they emphasize it over other facets of God.
  - The flaw that brings down an angel, must in its beginning be something unequivocally flawless.
    - Its pursuit must be a genuine virtue.
    - This virtue has to be one that in its own essence risks deformation, and that fact about it has to be a good thing.
    - It has to be a virtue that in its deformation into a vice, it is fallen into unintentionally. It cannot start as an intentional error. It has to be one where when you fall into the vice, you're being dishonest.
  - When they unintentionally fall into this deformation of some virtue, they do not mean to deform it. They are also not doing it innocently. They realize that it will deform that virtue. They are so committed to the good thing that they are doing, that they do not relent.
  - This virtue is love. What brings an angel first to become a devil is love. Love by being love makes us partisan, and in doing so capable of falling.