



The Problem of Evil with Dr. David Schenk

Lesson 16: How Angels Might Fall, Beauty

Outline:

How could love of beauty ever become sinful?

- What is the essence of beauty? The essence of beauty is to enchant.
- The essence of enchantment is to draw us into a consuming desire for the enchanting object.
- The beauty enchanting the angels is a lesser beauty than God, but it cannot be the case that they somehow fail to know this.
- Angels have seen God face to face.
- Consider human enchantment with great beauty:
 - If I insist on bringing a specific beauty into heaven, then we have put our own moral and aesthetic reasoning before His.
 - This degrades into a kind of blackmail. Who is to be the judge? Who is to be in charge of who gets to Heaven?
 - Even love of beauty can become twisted.
- The falling angels are trying to add to the beauty of creation, and in doing so they put their own judgement before God's. They even find the audacity to blackmail him. So they fall.
- If I let my love of the mountain overcome me, this is the rebellion of an aesthetic heart.

Anselm

- Anselm says that falling angels just choose between two competing goods.
- By contrast. Dr. Schenk says that the angels are torn, and torn for good reasons.
 - Love or Honesty: This makes the dilemma thoroughly moral. This is the kind of conflict that can turn angels into devils.
- Love entails enchantment. Love means getting carried away with the beloved. This always risks putting us off kilter.
- Think of something that you really loved, and then lost. Or worse, God tells you that you have to surrender it (Abraham and Isaac).
 - The angels that fall become so enchanted with something that is good and beautiful that when God tells them to relent, they cleave to it.
 - To stand before God himself and say "no" or try to lie is damnation.
- What makes a cynic? Disappointed moral ideals. High hopes that got dashed by a world that won't live up to them.
- The angels tell themselves that love is a lie. What they used to call good is all a sham. All that really matters is your own pleasure, power, and revenge.