

*aequales angelis sunt:*  
**Angelology, Demonology, and the Resurrection of the Body  
in Augustine and Anselm**

**Seamus J. O'Neill**  
**The Memorial University of Newfoundland**

*The future state of the redeemed human being in heaven is difficult, if not impossible, to pin down in this life. Nevertheless, Augustine and Anselm speculate on the heavenly life of the human being, proceeding from certain theological premises gathered from Scripture, and their arguments often both mirror and complement one another. Because Anselm and Augustine hold the premise that human beings in heaven are “equal to the angels” (Luke 20:36), our understanding of the heavenly condition of the human can be illuminated by angelology, and vice-versa; each reveals the nature of the other. The paper examines aspects of the positions of Augustine and Anselm on the original state of the angels, their fall, and their confirmation, and then explores the condition of prelapsarian Adam and the transformation of the elect in order to illuminate how these figures conceive the afterlife. The angelologies (and demonologies) of Augustine and Anselm help one to understand the heavenly goal of human life, how the redeemed state of human beings differs from their original condition in Eden, and why there is no redemption for the fallen angels.*

## **I. Introduction**

The second of Augustine’s mystical visions in the *Confessions* occurs in communion with his mother, St. Monica, during a conversation concerning “what quality of life the eternal life of the saints will have, a life which ‘neither eye has seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man’.”<sup>1</sup> The reference to 1 Corinthians should not leave us confident in our abilities in this life to understand what eternal heavenly reward awaits the saints and holy men and women upon the casting of the General Judgement.<sup>2</sup> Despite Augustine’s and Anselm’s general reluctance to weigh in definitively on such arcane and inscrutable matters, they nevertheless, pressed as they are to engage in related disputes, often profess on this topic more than they seem inclined. While revelation is the primary source of our faith in what we are to hope for, faith and hope being supernatural virtues, both figures marshal philosophical arguments to disclose the heavenly life, and the careful reader gleans precious details, embedded within sundry discussions, revealing their insights into the glories of heaven. Given Christ’s pronouncement that the elect “are equal to angels and are sons of God,” both Augustine and Anselm work with the premise that all heavenly citizens after the General Judgement will enjoy the present life of the holy angels;

---

<sup>1</sup> *Confessions* 9.10(23), hereafter abbreviated as *conf.* I use the English text Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998); “qualis futura esset uita aeterna sanctorum, quam ‘nec oculus uidit nec auris audiuit nec in cor hominis ascendit.’” All Latin citations from Augustine throughout are from Augustine, *Corpus Augustinianum Gissense*, Prof. Dr. Cornelius Mayer, ed. (Basel: Schwabe, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Cor. 2: 9.

in like manner, the eternal bliss of the faithful angels is elucidated by understanding the human's heavenly redeemed state: as equals, each reveals the nature of the other.<sup>3</sup>

In the following, I examine aspects of the positions of Augustine and Anselm on the original state of the angels, their fall, and confirmation. Then I explore the condition of prelapsarian Adam and the transformation of the elect, to try to understand how these figures conceive the afterlife. We shall see how the angelologies (and demonologies) of Augustine and Anselm help to explain to what degree the redeemed state of the human differs from the original condition in Eden, the heavenly goal of human life, and why there is no redemption for the fallen angels. While some of the analysis is speculative, inasmuch as that of Augustine and Anselm on this topic is similarly so, the question is not born of vain *curiositas*; neither angelology nor demonology are mere metaphysical and hypothetical testing grounds, but rather, their understanding of why a share of the greatest of God's creation fell to such depravity and how the remainder was elevated, has far-reaching effects on the soteriology, Christology, theodicy, doctrines of atonement, and, indeed, basic ontologies and ethics of these giants of Western thought. We are not here trifling with prancing on the points of pins.<sup>4</sup>

## II. The Creation and Fall of the Angels

The angelic fall from heaven is as captivating a story as it is horrific. That a portion of the pinnacle of rational life could plunge from such lofty heights to proportionally depressed depravity does not bode well for us humans, feeble and small. For those unfamiliar with the tale, though accounts and speculations differ within the Christian tradition and its tributaries, the basic idea is that God created the angels on the first day with the proclamation, "Let there be light."<sup>5</sup> Whether it happened instantaneously, or during the period between their genesis and the creation of human beings, a portion of these creatures, the height of creation, freely, knowingly, and willingly, disavowed God and His order and fell from their station. According to one chilling interpretation of Luke 10:18, Christ refers to this very plunge when he claims that, before his incarnation, he "saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." The good angels remained and were rewarded, while the fallen, led by Lucifer, the 'light-bearer,' the brightest and most beautiful of the angels, were transformed into demons or devils.<sup>6</sup> Thereby, the seraphic Lucifer became 'Satan'—a title, meaning "the adversary."

---

<sup>3</sup> Luke 20:36 (all biblical texts Revised Standard Version).

<sup>4</sup> For a recent discussion on the relative importance of angelology and demonology for Catholic theology generally, see the General Introduction to Serge-Thomas Bonino, OP, *Angels and Demons: A Catholic Introduction*, trans. Michael J Miller (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 1-8.

<sup>5</sup> Gen. 1:3.

<sup>6</sup> The well-known passage in Isaiah referring to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is often interpreted as referring to Lucifer, the 'Light Bearer': "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of the Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!" (Isaiah 14:12).

At a 2009 lecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Fr. Vincent Lampert, an exorcist for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, coolly relayed that his mentor, Fr. Carmine De Filippis, was once informed by Satan himself that he no longer goes by the name “Lucifer”: through his willed obstinacy, Lucifer becomes someone and something else, no longer consenting to God’s rational order. From their lofty station the good angels now intervene benevolently in human affairs, while the Devil and his minions until the Last Day are loosened upon the world, prowling the earth for the ruin of souls. Whether one believes the story, or considers the yarn more fancy than fact, the account of both the fall and confirmation of the angels, either way, serves as a model for considering the four last things: death, judgement, heaven, and hell.

To understand how Augustine and Anselm conceive the present bliss of the angels, that is, our hoped-for end, we can begin by considering the original angelic constitution. According to Anselm, the highest attainable blessedness within creation could only be gained by its greatest creatures: those that enjoy the faculty of reason. In Aristotelian fashion, the goal is reached when one achieves one’s divinely allotted end. Anselm therefore warns that “It ought not to be doubted that the nature of rational beings was created by God righteous in order that, through rejoicing in him, it might be blessedly happy.”<sup>7</sup> It is necessary for both Augustine and Anselm, however, that unless one knew with certainty, having attained such beatitude, that it would never be lost, one would fail to secure the fullest blessedness, for one would always fear its loss. Thus, the rational creature’s true felicity requires two things: 1) enjoyment of the highest good, which is God, and 2) the assurance of the permanence of this beatitude.<sup>8</sup> In fact, as Augustine points out, he is better off who currently suffers bodily torment while remaining certain of his eternal union with God in the hereafter than he who, “even in that great felicity of Paradise, was uncertain of his fate.”<sup>9</sup>

Augustine and Anselm are decided that the faithful angels possess this complete, eternal elation; this piece of orthodoxy serves as a theological premise. There is no fall possible now for Michael and Gabriel, just as there is no realizable redemption for

---

<sup>7</sup> Anselm, *Cur Deus homo?* 2.1, hereafter, *CDH*. I use the English text in Brian Davis and G.R. Evans, eds., *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works including Monologion, Proslogion, and Why God Became Man* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008). See also p. 288 and p. 316. A similar argument appears in the Anselm, *De casu diaboli*, p. 206 in the same edition.

<sup>8</sup> See Augustine, *City of God* 11.11-13, hereafter abbreviated as *civ. Dei*. One is reminded here of Plato’s *Symposium* wherein Socrates points out that one always only loves what one lacks. The reason is that even when one possesses the object of one’s desire, one still desires to maintain this in the future, a state of affairs that is not yet present. That is, he still desires what he lacks—the future enjoyment of his present good, which he might lose. We see here how one cannot hope, in Plato’s view, for an eternal possession of such a good. The Christian, however, has such hope. This is why the Christian virtue of hope is a supernatural perfection of the will. Without the revelation of the possibility of the eternal end and the grace to desire it, one could never hope for such a goal. The logic of the *Symposium* does not allow for it; the Christian logic, however, demands it.

<sup>9</sup> Augustine, *civ. Dei* 11.12. I use the text in Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Marcus Dodds (New York: Random House, Inc., 1950); “. . . quam erat ille homo sui casus incertus in magna illa felicitate paradisi.”

Beelzebub and Behemoth. As Augustine writes, “For what catholic Christian does not know that no new devil will ever arise among the good angels, as he knows that this present devil will never again return in to the fellowship of the good?”<sup>10</sup> We will deal with some arguments supporting this dogma below. First, however, to understand the angelic end, we must address a more foundational question, fundamental to the angelologies of Augustine and Anselm: were the faithful angels primitively certain that they would never lapse? As for the lost angels, they never could have been assured of their future blessedness because they would never attain it; if they had expected it, they believed in error. Perhaps, however, they knew they would fall, or maybe their fate was obscure. In any of these three cases, Augustine writes, their “destiny was incompatible with the plenitude of blessedness which we believe the holy angels enjoyed.”<sup>11</sup>

Thus, Augustine tends toward the conviction that the faithful angels always saw their eternal constancy. This creates a problem, however, since it seems thereby that from the beginning there were two classes of angels: 1) those certain that they would remain in possession of the highest good, and 2a) those that were either unclear as to their future, 2b) positive they would fall, or 2c) believed they would remain but were deceived. If one should praise the resolute and blame the recreant, justice demands that they at least began on an equal footing.<sup>12</sup> Both Anselm and Augustine recognize the problem: it would both tarnish the glory of the faithful and diminish the fault of the apostate if there was a distinction among their original ranks whereby the fallen plummeted from a lesser order.

Augustine supplies a solution, which he nevertheless is disinclined to embrace. He writes, “And because the evil angels could not be certain of [their blessedness], it follows either that the angels were unequal, or that, if equal, the good angels were assured of the eternity of their blessedness [only] after the perdition of the others.”<sup>13</sup> That is, the original equality can be maintained only if both the now-fallen and now-faithful were likewise uncertain of the duration of their blessedness from the beginning. The confirmation of both apostasy and loyalty would only come at a later time, after some inscrutable trial. Augustine raises this possible solution in the *De civitate Dei* (AD 413/427) and moves on without settling on its probability.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Augustine, *civ. Dei* 11.13; “quis enim catholicus christianus ignorat nullum nouum diabolum ex bonis angelis ulterius futurum, sicut nec istum in societatem bonorum angelorum ulterius rediturum?” See also Augustine’s *On Admonition and Grace* 27, hereafter abbreviated as *corrept.*

<sup>11</sup> Augustine, *civ. Dei* 11.11; “... ipsa de tanta felicitate cunctatio eam beatæ uitæ plenitudinem, quam in sanctis angelis esse credimus, non habebat.”

<sup>12</sup> Augustine writes, “Or, if it seems hard to believe that, when the angels were created, some were created in ignorance either of their perseverance or their fall, while others were most certainly assured of the eternity of their felicity—if it is hard to believe that they were not all from the beginning on an equal footing, until these who are not evil did of their own will fall away from the light of goodness, certainly it is much harder to believe that the holy angels are now uncertain of their eternal blessedness . . . ” (*civ. Dei* 11.13).

<sup>13</sup> Augustine, *civ. Dei* 11.13; “... restat, ut aut in pares fuerint, aut, si pares fuerunt, post istorum ruinam illis certa scientia suæ sempiternæ felicitatis accesserit.”

<sup>14</sup> Later, in the same text, however, he confirms the original equality. See also Augustine, *civ. Dei* 12.1: “That the contrary propensities in good and bad angels have arisen, not from a difference in their nature and origin,

In a similarity late text, the *De correptione et gratia* (426/427), Augustine explicitly addresses the same issue. Again, because we know from Scripture that we, having attained eternal life in union with God, will know that we, like the angels, will never fall thereafter, so too must the holy angels know in an even more complete way the same truth regarding their own constancy: “they have known this by sight, which we have known by faith.”<sup>15</sup> Augustine then turns to the Devil and his minions, about whose original state he is absolutely clear: though greatly blessed, they were originally unaware of their future misery, yet were then free to warrant the full blessedness of the steadfast angels: “there was something which might be added to their blessedness, if by free will they had stood in the truth until they should receive that fullness of the highest blessing as the reward of that continuance,” namely, that they would not be able to fall again, and they would know this truth with certainty.<sup>16</sup> As to whether the holy angels were in this same aboriginal situation as the now fallen, however, Augustine is silent. The text suggests a transition when Augustine moves to consider the Devil and fallen angels, but nothing with certainty can be said.

Peter Lombard, as one would expect, notices Augustine’s ambiguity on this very point and weighs in on the conundrum. Lombard references a similar discussion in a third text, the *De Genesi ad litteram* (401/415), in which Augustine suggests that perhaps God did not reveal to the would-be fallen angels that they would desert, but did disclose to the loyal angels that they would hold their post.<sup>17</sup> Again, however, this creates two groups of angels, if not ontologically distinct, then at least epistemologically unlike, thereby obliterating the aboriginally equal inception. Lombard suggests, however, that Augustine raises this only as an opinion, and does not believe it himself, but rather, really believes (conveniently) what Lombard will affirm: originally that none of the angels was fully blessed, and the confirmation of the faithful came only later.<sup>18</sup> The problem, however, is that Augustine explicitly rejects this option in the *De Genesi ad litteram*. Although he too wishes to maintain one, equal, species of angels at the moment of creation, he nevertheless concludes, “But I have been constrained by the question whether [Lucifer] had any foreknowledge of his fall before he fell, to insist that not even for a moment were the angels

---

since God, the good Author and Creator of all essences, created them both, but from a difference in their wills and desires, it is impossible to doubt.”

<sup>15</sup> Augustine, *corrupt.* 27. I use the text in Augustine, *Anti-Pelagian Writings*, Philip Schaff (ed.), series: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 5 (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971).

<sup>16</sup> Augustine, *corrupt.* 27.

<sup>17</sup> See Augustine, *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis* 11.18, hereafter abbreviated as *Gn. litt.* and Peter Lombard, *Sentences* 2. D4. 1(19). 2, hereafter abbreviated as *sent.* For the former text in English, I use Augustine, *On Genesis*, trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (New York: New City Press, 2002). For the latter text in English, I use Peter Lombard, *The Sentences*, trans. Giulio Silano (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2008). See also Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 11. 19, 25.

<sup>18</sup> See Lombard, *sent.* 2. D4. 1(19). 4: “As for those who remained steadfast, however, either they foreknew their future blessedness by God’s revelation, and so they were in some fashion blessed in the certainty of hope; or they were uncertain of their blessedness, and so they were no more blessed than those who fell. This latter view is the one that seems more probable to me.”

uncertain of their blessedness.”<sup>19</sup> Lombard’s solution postpones the angelic confirmation of certainty, and Augustine, at least in this text, will not suffer such a diminution of their original beatitude.

Lombard’s solution, however, first raised but rejected by Augustine, is exactly the explanation that Anselm will embrace.<sup>20</sup> In fact, in the *De casu diaboli*, Anselm argues that it really should not matter one way or the other whether or not the angels knew their future fates. For Anselm, our blessedness consists in aligning our own wills to the divine will. He writes, “When such a [rational] being desires what is right . . . he is voluntarily subordinating himself to [God’s] will and governance, maintaining his own proper station in life within the natural universe, and, to the best of his ability, maintaining the beauty of the universe itself.”<sup>21</sup> If an angel, then, knows he will fall but willed against it, he would unjustly founder though he deserved happiness. Not only is this cruel, but the angelic willing alone should be enough to remain steadfast.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, if the angel wills to fall, then he does so justly. The allegiance and apostasy both hinge on the will: one receives what one elects in either case. In true Catholic fashion, the punishment for evil is getting what you thought you wanted, an idea underlying the *contrapasso* in Dante’s *Comedy*. In the end, Anselm is not as concerned as is Augustine about this angelological puzzle.

Despite this side-stepping of the problem, Anselm nevertheless maintains that the angels were created on an equal footing. If 1) complete blessedness requires certainty of its eternal constancy, and 2) some angels fell, then 3) it follows that at least some of the angels never were fully blessed to begin with. If 4) they were created on equal footing, then 5) it follows that no angel, lacking certainty of his future fate, originally knew if he would retain his station. In fact, Anselm argues that not only did the angels who remained loyal eventually gain the certainty of their sempiternal blessedness, but, in addition, there was a further transformation, a supplementary greatness bestowed upon them at their confirmation. Anselm writes, “For the elevation of the place which is humanity’s due, on a level with the good angels, is higher than the devil’s former place to the same degree that these good angels have earned higher standing as a result of their steadfastness after the ruin of the bad ones.”<sup>23</sup> Lucifer and Gabriel originally occupied the same place: after the angelic fall, Lucifer was fired, and Gabriel was promoted. The moment of angelic promotion was also the flash of demonic ruination. Thus, as we shall see, for fallen humanity to be elevated to the present angelic realm, not only must it ascend beyond the original state of Adam, but even further still above the initial condition of Raphael,

---

<sup>19</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 11.19, 26.

<sup>20</sup> See Anselm, *De casu diaboli* 24-25, hereafter abbreviated as *DCD*. The angels’ knowledge was confirmed, and they were unable to sin again once they witnessed the aftermath of the fall of the other angels.

<sup>21</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.15.

<sup>22</sup> See Anselm, *DCD* 21.

<sup>23</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18.

Michael, and all angels. In what, then, did these dual transformations, angelic and demonic, consist?

### III. The Angelic Transformation and the Angelic Body

With respect to any creature, no matter how exquisite and fully actualized in its potential, a distinction remains between its own goodness and God, the source of all good. However, according to the Anselmian position, in addition to this natural, species privation of good, or their ‘due’ good, there was some further good, appropriate to their nature, that the angels lacked at their creation—they still had some upward mobility. Anselm argues that whereas the would-be faithful angels were happy in their place, loving the great privilege bestowed unto them, the imminently-doomed angels prized, rather, this higher good that they lacked more than the gift that they possessed. This desire for a good beyond what God had justly given was the proud ambition precipitating their ruination.<sup>24</sup> Thus did these angels fall from their exalted apogee. However, the remaining angels, who did not covet this prosperity beyond their just allotment, were granted this very crown for their steadfastness. God promoted them from their earliest establishment to an even greater eminence. Anselm writes, “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”; the last shall be first, and the first last.<sup>25</sup>

What this preternatural good could have possibly been is beyond human divining, but it seems to be more than just the addition of the celestial reassurance of sempiternal blessedness. If it were this alone, one would assume that Anselm would say so given his explicit discussion of this condition in *CDH* and *DCD*. Instead, he writes, “I do now know what [this advantage] 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.”<sup>26</sup> Whatever this majesty is, it further sunders angels from demons, the loyal from the fallen. Some went down while others went up; no angel retains its aboriginal constitution. Indeed, no creature now holds this bygone primeval angelic station.

Anselm does not, as far as I am aware, discuss the ontological state of heaven at length, or really even at all, whether it be somehow localized, or consist in some rarefied material. Rather, he describes heaven as more of a union of the angelic and human with the divine; for Anselm, the rectitude and blessedness of rational creatures consist, as mentioned

---

<sup>24</sup> According to Anselm, “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” (*DCD* 8). I use the English text in Brian Davis and G.R. Evans, eds., *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works including Monologion, Proslogion, and Why God Became Man* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008). See also *DCD* 27: “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.”

<sup>25</sup> Anselm, *DCD* 8.

<sup>26</sup> Anselm, *DCD* 8.

above, in freely submitting our own wills to the will of God, an Augustinian idea at the root of the Doctor of Grace's demonology. Interestingly, however, Augustine's spatial cosmology suits Anselm's interpretation of both the fall and elevation of the angels rather well, and makes one wonder whether or not Augustine had something similar to Anselm's speculations in mind when locating heaven among the physical stratifications of the cosmos, despite his rejection of what would be Anselm's position on angelic creation. In the *De Genesi ad litteram*, for example, Augustine describes the spatial divisions within the hierarchy of the cosmos along elemental lines, associating the particular bodies of the beings that inhabit each level with the prevalent element constituting the domain. In descending order, the elements rank: fire/ether, air, water, and earth. The highest level of the cosmos is the ethereal heaven, which Augustine calls "luminous," "celestial," "sidereal," the "heaven of ether," and simply "heaven," without qualification. This acme of the ontological hierarchy is material, albeit fashioned out of the most rarefied kind of matter. It might sound odd that Augustine envisions heaven as a physical place. However, the materiality of heaven is entirely in keeping with Augustine's understanding of the goodness of material creation and his requirement that all existing things, save God, possess matter. In Augustine's view, this heaven is the province of the faithful angels who fought (or, perhaps, will fight) against Lucifer and his apostate company, as described (in varying accounts) in the book of *Enoch* and (at least) alluded to in many passages in Scripture.

There is a long history of debate in the Platonic and Christian traditions concerning the ontological nature of angels and demons. The ancient and early medieval positions of Platonists and Christians generally decree that they have bodies. This is a little-known fact, but those familiar with the current Catholic position and their Catechisms know that angels and demons are "non-corporeal beings."<sup>27</sup> To put it all too simply, the change seems to have come about mainly through the influence of the Neoplatonic Pseudo-Dionysius (5-6<sup>th</sup> century) as transmitted and popularized by Hugh of St. Victor (1096-1141).<sup>28</sup> The belief in the incorporeality of the angels would be solidified in the late thirteenth century by Aquinas and Bonaventure, who both agreed that angels did not have bodies, but thereby found themselves in the curious (and anti-Aristotelian) position of trying to explain how a disembodied being could be individuated, appear to the Virgin Mary, stroll with Tobias, or wrestle with Jacob.

Augustine's outdated, yet more down-to-earth position avoids such conundrums. If one grants the existence of angels and demons, which Augustine is obliged to do by tradition and Scripture (and perhaps even personal experience!), then their nature and

---

<sup>27</sup> See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 328: "The existence of the spiritual, non-corporeal beings that Sacred Scripture usually calls 'angels' is a truth of faith. The witness of Scripture is as clear as the unanimity of Tradition."

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Louis Coulange, *The Life of the Devil*, trans. Stephen Haden Guest (Whitefish, Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2003).

activity is more easily comprehended if they, like humans, have material bodies.<sup>29</sup> When compared to that of the Angelic and Seraphic Doctors, the position is less “metaphysically expensive.” In fact, though familiar with the (by his time prevailing) view that angels are incorporeal, even a figure as late as Peter Lombard (1096-1164) seems to have thought that Augustine’s position was preferable to the then-contemporary consensus.<sup>30</sup>

So what kind of bodies do angels have according to Augustine? While he expresses caution in the *Enchiridion* about pontificating on angelic nature and the organization of angelic society, he is often concerned about the constitution of the resurrected human body.<sup>31</sup> This interest forces him to comment on the nature of the angelic body with a little more authority than he seems otherwise inclined to wield. The beings that inhabit each sector of Augustine’s cosmos are composed mainly of the element that each level comprises. In the *De Genesi ad litteram*, Augustine refers to the acme of the cosmos as “luminous heaven,” a realm of “sidereal fire.”<sup>32</sup> Because the angels inhabit this spatial realm, Augustine writes therefore that, “it must be believed that angelic bodies, such as we hope to possess, are very light and ethereal.”<sup>33</sup> That is, angels have fiery or ethereal bodies.<sup>34</sup> In the *Retractions*, Augustine is adamant in stressing that this is a *material* body. Therein he writes, “If this [ethereality] be understood about bodies without the members which we now have and without substance, though incorruptible yet of flesh, it is an error.”<sup>35</sup>

Many other texts confirm Augustine’s belief that angels possess material bodies. Speaking of the afterlife in *Sermon 45*, Augustine writes, “We shall not be told to sigh, because we are already singing praises. That’s how mortal flesh will be transfigured into an angel’s body. That too is how sighs will be transformed into praises.”<sup>36</sup> In another sermon Augustine confirms,

---

<sup>29</sup> See Augustine, *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love 59*, hereafter abbreviated as *ench.* Augustine raises the question as to whether or not angels have bodies.

<sup>30</sup> Augustine entertains the possibility that demons could be bodiless, separated substances (e.g., *civ. Dei* 21.10), but seems to reject it for various reasons.

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, Augustine, *ench.* 59.

<sup>32</sup> See Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 3.14: “luminosi caeli”, “igne sidereo.”

<sup>33</sup> Augustine, *On Eighty-Three Varied Questions 47*, hereafter abbreviated as *div. qu.*: “quoniam angelica corpora, qualia nos speramus habituros, lucidissima atque aetherea esse credendum est.” I use the English text in Augustine, *Responses to Miscellaneous Questions*, trans. Boniface Ramsey (New York: New City Press, 2008). Augustine writes in the *Retractions*, hereafter abbreviated as *retr.*, about this passage that by ‘ethereal’ one must not be led to think that this means “non-material.” See Augustine, *retr.* 1.26, and see also Augustine, *civ. Dei* 22.29.

<sup>34</sup> Augustine distinguishes between but does not separate fire and ether as distinct elements as do Apuleius and the author of the *Epinomis*. Rather, Augustine’s four-fold division mirrors the *Timaeus*.

<sup>35</sup> Augustine, *retr.* 1. 25. I use the English text in Augustine, *The Retractions*, trans. Sister Mary Inez Bogan, R.S.M. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1968).

<sup>36</sup> Augustine, *Sermon 45.10*. I use the text in Augustine, *The Works of Saint Augustine*, Boniface Ramsey (ed.), 50 vols. (Hyde Park, New York: New City Press, 1990-).

Scripture does mention, it's true, that some angels were seen by human eyes. But of course, the Lord subjected a created body to their control in such a way that he could adapt it to them as he liked. So although they were not born of woman, they had a true body all the same, which they could switch from any one appearance to any other as their service or office required—always though from one true form to another true form.<sup>37</sup>

Augustine refrains from speculating on exactly how the angel supplements, augments, transforms, or otherwise modifies its invisible ethereal body so that it can be seen by human beings. In the *De Trinitate*, he confesses that he does not know how it works and has not the time to pursue it in this text either, which, nevertheless, also confirms his belief in the angelic body. Augustine is wondering when angels appear to human beings in Scripture whether they add to their bodies some kind of grosser, visible matter, or whether they actually transform their own bodies into something visible. There he refers to the angels' "constant and stable spiritual quality of their own bodies" and "their own proper bodies."<sup>38</sup> "Spiritual" here for Augustine does not mean "separated" (from matter) as it does for Aquinas. Rather, when Augustine refers to the "spiritual" quality of the angelic body, he means a more refined, ethereal kind of matter than what one finds in the material earthy bodies of humans or in the airy bodies of demons. On a related note, Edmund Hill notes that Aquinas is confused about the angelic body in Augustine, and believes that the latter thinks that they are made of air, like those of the demons, though in addition to these Augustinian texts, there are Scriptural references to support the position that angelic bodies are composed of fire.<sup>39</sup> In fact, Aquinas tries to re-interpret Augustine as saying that angels and demons possess no bodies at all.<sup>40</sup>

Augustine says that heaven's lower neighbour, the region of air "reaches down to sea and land."<sup>41</sup> This subordinate heaven is subdivided into two levels: an upper and a lower air. Being the closest realm to heaven proper, the upper section of air is higher and purer than its lower counterpart.<sup>42</sup> It is unclear what, if any, beings reside in this region of the cosmos, since the demons now reside in the nether air, and angels dwell in the ethereal heaven.<sup>43</sup> Despite Augustine's apparent reticence towards certifying what will be Anselm's

---

<sup>37</sup> Augustine, *Sermon 12.9*. I use the text in Augustine, *Sermons, Part III, Volume I: Sermons 1-19 series The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (Brooklyn, New York: New City Press, 1990).

<sup>38</sup> Augustine, *Trin.* 3.5.

<sup>39</sup> See Ps 104:4 and Heb 1:7: "fire and flame thy ministers," and "Of the angels he says, who makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire," respectively. Augustine follows Apuleius in understanding ether as a kind of rarefied fire, and not a separate element.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1.50.1, hereafter abbreviated as *ST*, and Aquinas, *On Separated Substances* 18. 98

<sup>41</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 3.15.

<sup>42</sup> Augustine writes, "The higher region of the air . . . on account of its purity and tranquillity is joined in a shared peace to the heaven it borders on, and shared in its name" (*Gn. litt.* 3.14).

<sup>43</sup> Augustine mentions the possible emptiness of this realm in *Gn. litt.* 3. 6,8. Edmund Hill errs, however, when in his translation of this text he suggests in note 11, p. 220, that Augustine hints that the upper air "does

position, which maintains that no angels were aboriginally certain of their future fates, Augustine's cosmos accommodates the position perfectly. This upper division within the level of air provides the appropriate median place for such beings: below the territory to which the faithful angels who never did and now never could fall were raised, and above the lower, murky, cloudy domain of the now-fallen angels.<sup>44</sup>

Anselm is less inclined than is Augustine to speculate about angelic (and demonic) bodies, nor does he, as near as I can tell, avow the place of the angels and demons, or whether they, and heaven, are free of "places" altogether. Nevertheless, Anselm's view of the angelic, heavenly condition can be further illuminated by his comments on the human end, since the two are one. In Anselm's words, "Holy people can also be correctly called 'angels of God' because they imitate the angelic life, because comparability and equality with the angels is promised to them in heaven . . ."<sup>45</sup>

#### IV. Prelapsarian Adam and the Resurrection of the Body

While Eden conjures up images of paradise, and we long for a hoped-for return to "the Garden," Adam's original post, like that of the angels, was not, for Augustine and Anselm, his destined and permanent home. That is, human beings were intended eventually to dwell eternally in heaven with the resolute angels as their equals. In Augustine's words, the elect "shall be crowned and transfigured into heavenly glory and shall be equal to the angels of God."<sup>46</sup> Throughout his writings, Anselm is explicit about the deficiency of the human being's original state, which plays no small role in his Christological considerations. In *CDH*, Anselm argues that human beings, having fallen, would become the bondsmen of whoever would free them. The angels, subject only to God, would be greater than humanity beholden to two masters, God and its saviour. Remaining the vassal of anyone save God, Anselm writes, Adam "would in no way have been restored to that dignity which he would have had in the future, if he had not sinned."<sup>47</sup> Here, it is clear that Adam's prelapsarian

---

have invisible inhabitants, namely angels," since the angels now reside in the sidereal, fiery heaven, and the upper air is now empty.

<sup>44</sup> Or maybe only the angels who would fall resided there, and then fell to the lower air. (The faithful were always in heaven proper.) Augustine writes, "It was perhaps in this region that the transgressor angels were to be found before their transgression, together with their prince, not the devil, then an archangel—some of our people, you see, think that they were not celestial or supercelestial angels—then it is hardly surprising if after their sin they were thrust down to this foggy darkness, where it is still air but now intertwined with a fine humidity" (*Gn. litt.* 3.14). This again, however, destroys the original equality between all the angels. Note too that he raises this again only as an opinion. On the Fall, see *Gn. litt.* 11.33. Augustine also writes in detail about the bodies of the fallen angels who were transformed "as a punishment into something like air" (*Gn. litt.* 3.15), having been cast down into the clouds above us.

<sup>45</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18. See also *CDH* 1.19: "Certainly, the humans in question ought to be equals of the good angels." Cf. Augustine's *Gn. litt.* 4. 24, 41: "For this reason, since the holy angels with whom we shall be equated after the resurrection . . ."

<sup>46</sup> Augustine, *Sermon* 45.10.

<sup>47</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.5. In fact, the absolute equality to be enjoyed by the good angels and the elect goes to the heart of Anselm's Christology in the *CHD*. If human beings were to be redeemed by any creature, they would be subordinate to a master to whom the angels are not subject. Anselm writes, "For man, who had the prospect

condition in Eden was deficient compared to his hypothetical sinless future form. Anselm is not here concerned with Adam being restored to his *original* condition, but rather, to some prospective prestige that he lacked even in Eden.

Elsewhere, Anselm writes, were postlapsarian humanity to be restored, “the ascent which [it] would be making, in the case of the elect, would be from a position of such great weakness to a place which was higher than that from which the devil had fallen.”<sup>48</sup> That is, fallen humanity must be restored not to its original condition in Eden, and not even to the initial glory from which the damned angels originally fell, but rather, the elect should surpass even the aboriginally angelic estate “on a level with the [present] good angels.”<sup>49</sup> Heaven surpasses both Eden and the height from which plummeted Lucifer and his recreant retinue. Like the angels, Adam’s created condition was intentionally temporary: he could have been raised to a greater, even angelic state, or alas, as he did, plunge into corrupted degradation.<sup>50</sup>

So what was Adam’s state in the Garden, destined to be surpassed by the redeemed? Anselm writes, “For [our first parents] used to have, in the Garden, a sort of immortality, that is, the power not to die; but this was not an undying power, because it could die—in the sense, I mean, that Adam and Eve could not not die.”<sup>51</sup> That is, Adam’s body in the Garden was steeled by a foreign protection from succumbing to the death that would otherwise naturally transpire. The need for sustenance implies vulnerability, deficiency, and dependence in distinction from one for whom death is not even a possibility. Adam and Eve did not lack the possibility of dying—indeed, they did die!<sup>52</sup>

Augustine states the position a little more precisely, and Anselm clearly has this passage from the *De Genesi ad litteram* in mind here. Augustine writes, “It is one thing, after all, not to be able to die, like nature which God created immortal, while it is quite another to be able not to die.”<sup>53</sup> Unlike the naturally deathless and fiery bodies of the angels

---

of being the bondsman of no one except God and the equal of the good angels in all respects, would be the bondsman of someone who was not God and to whom the angels were not in bondage” (*CDH* 1.5). Because the angels are bound only to God, if man is to be redeemed, he too must be bound to no other than God if he is to maintain his equality. Thus, man’s redeemer must be God Himself.

<sup>48</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18.

<sup>49</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18. Anselm continues, “For the elevation of the place which is humanity’s due, on a level with the good angels, is higher than the devil’s former place to the same degree that these good angels have earned higher standing as a result of their steadfastness after the ruin of the bad ones.

<sup>50</sup> Augustine is also in agreement on this point. See *corrupt.* 28: “And if [Adam] had willed by his own free will to continue in this state of uprightness and freedom from sin, assuredly without any experience of death and of unhappiness he would have received by the merit of that continuance the fullness of blessing with which the holy angels also are blessed; that is, the impossibility of falling any more, and the knowledge of this with absolute certainty.”

<sup>51</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18.

<sup>52</sup> Later in the text, Anselm states that Adam was originally “strong and potentially immortal,” but “justly incurred the penalty of becoming mortal” (*CDH* 1.22). Anselm repeats the same phrase, “strong and potentially immortal,” later in the same book and chapter.

<sup>53</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 6. 24, 35. Cf. Augustine, *corrupt.* 28.

and the similarly undying, but lesser, aerial constitution of the demons, the earthy bodies of Adam and Eve naturally require nourishment, degrade, and eventually decompose.<sup>54</sup> Augustine identifies the external power to preserve immortally the bodies of Adam and Eve despite their natural degeneration with the Tree of Life. Their immortality is not a natural property of their constitutions, but super-added to them, so long as they could eat the fruit of the tree.<sup>55</sup>

Augustine also distinguishes between the ensouled body (the body animated by soul), and the enspirited body (the body quickened by spirit). He says that the immortality of the inspirited body “man did not yet have” at the creation of Adam.<sup>56</sup> Thus, Adam’s access to the Tree of Life, and nothing in his given nature, made him immortal; there was no necessity that he die, despite possessing a merely ensouled body. We too have bodies kindled by soul. However, as a result of the expulsion from the Garden, bodily death, for us, is assured.<sup>57</sup> The elect, however, following the General Judgement, Augustine writes, “shall be renewed from the staleness of sin, not to the original ‘ensouled’ body which Adam had, but to something better, that is, to an ‘enspirited’ body, when we are made equal to the angels of God, fit for heavenly mansions ...”<sup>58</sup> For Augustine and Anselm, even in the Garden where Adam and Even could not die, it still remained for them, as it remains for us, God willing, to be transformed.<sup>59</sup>

Both figures contrast this original human condition with the heavenly reward. If Adam had resisted sin at that original moment of temptation, Anselm speculates, he, like the good angels, would no longer have been able to sin. Yet, unlike the same angels whose transformation was immediate, Adam would have had to await the alteration to angelic equality until the number of elect had been reached.<sup>60</sup> Filling the complement of heavenly citizens will usher in the General Judgment, and nature will be renewed. Anselm inherits the view, perhaps originated by Augustine, that the number of fallen angels will be replaced

---

<sup>54</sup> On the immortality of angelic and demonic bodies in Augustine, see *Gn. litt.* 3. 10,14. For Augustine, fire and air are active elements, while water and earth are passive and suffer the motions of the higher elements.

<sup>55</sup> Augustine writes, “From this tree of life he was cut off when he had sinned, so that he could die, while if he had not sinned he would have been able not to die” (*Gn. litt.* 6. 24, 35). It seems that Lombard thinks that Augustine didn’t think they were eating from the tree all along, but had they not sinned, they would only then be granted to eat from the tree and remain immortal.

<sup>56</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 6. 24, 35.

<sup>57</sup> Augustine writes, “With us, however even if we live justly, the body is going to die” (*Gn. litt.* 6. 26, 37). See also *Gn. litt.* 6, 26, 27: “This body, you see, is merely ‘ensouled,’ as was also that of the first man. But this one, while in the same class as an embodiment of soul, is much worse off, because it is under the necessity of dying, which that one was not.”

<sup>58</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 6. 24, 35.

<sup>59</sup> Augustine seems to be the source for Anselm’s position here. Cf. Augustine, *civ. Dei* 14.10.

<sup>60</sup> See Anselm, *CDH* 1.18: “For even though they would not yet be promoted to that position of equality with the angels, to which human beings were to attain, since the full complement of the angels was to be made up from the human race it appears that, by the terms of the justice under which they had their being, if they had been victorious in not sinning when tempted, they would be confirmed along with all their progeny, so as to be unable to sin any more.” Thus, Adam would have had to procreate. See Anselm’s *Virgin Conception and Original Sin* 10.

from the race of humans.<sup>61</sup> Augustine holds that at the resurrection, the human body will be transformed into an angelic body “and by the redemption of man the gaps which the great apostasy left in the angelic host [will be] filled up.”<sup>62</sup> The arguments and claims surrounding this piece of orthodoxy provide insight into the angel’s and the human’s place in heaven, since, whatever is true of the one in that state, is true of the other.

Anselm suggests that it would be rather odd, to say the least, having gone through all the trouble to create the universe, if the whole thing screeched to a halt were Adam and Eve to just put the apple down. But if the complement of rational creatures in heaven were originally full, this would have been a likely prospect.<sup>63</sup> God would create the universe, then immediately renew it. However, if the original complement of heavenly citizens were incomplete, creation would still have a purpose and continue (as would procreation), whether or not any angel or Adam fell. The transformation, Anselm concludes, is being deferred. He writes,

We believe that the present physical mass of the universe is to be changed anew into something better. We believe that this will not come to pass until the number of elect humans has reached its final total, and the blessed city to which we have referred has been brought to completion; also that, after the completion of the city, the renewal will follow without delay.<sup>64</sup>

During the renewal of nature, the complement having been achieved, the bodies of the elect will be transformed, Anselm claims, “into an undying bodily immortality.”<sup>65</sup> It is crucial for Anselm that, if human beings will replace the fallen angels and fill the angelic number as they are constituted now, then human beings must be elevated to an absolutely equal status—anything less would not be a true replacement.<sup>66</sup> Given this equality, what must such men and women be like, or rather, be converted into, in order not merely to ascend to the original status of the angels when created, but further, to hold company with the good angels after their angelic confirmation? What this condition consists in is rather a mystery, but we can gather some insights into Augustine and Anselm’s mindset and speculations.

---

<sup>61</sup> On the history of this doctrine, see Vojtěch Novotný, *Cur homo? A history of the thesis concerning man as a replacement for fallen angels* (Charles University in Prague: Karolinum Press, 2014).

<sup>62</sup> Augustine, *ench.* 61. I use the English text in Augustine, *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1961).

<sup>63</sup> See Anselm, *CDH* 1.18. Anselm says it would have been easy for Adam not to sin. For example: “And although man was easily capable of doing this [not sinning], he allowed himself to be conquered by persuasion alone, not under forcible compulsion” (*CDH* 1.22).

<sup>64</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18.

<sup>65</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18.

<sup>66</sup> Anselm writes, “The humans in that heavenly city—those who are to be taken up into that city in place of angels—ought to be of like character to those who were to be there, whose substitutes they are to be, that is, the same in character as the good angels now are. Otherwise, those who have fallen will not be ‘replaced’ . . .” (*CDH* 1.19).

First, both figures are adamant that we now wear the very bodies that our souls (or spirits, rather) shall possess in the hereafter; “from my flesh I shall see God.”<sup>67</sup> Anselm claims that we must “enjoy eternal blessedness as an entirety, that is, with soul and body . . . .”<sup>68</sup> For the Christian, contra certain Platonic and Neoplatonic tendencies, the human is, in a more Aristotelian way, a union of soul and body.<sup>69</sup> Without the body, the human is incomplete. However, this burdensome, ensouled body, insofar as it distracts one “from that vision of the highest heaven” must be transformed in order to achieve and maintain its proper end and equality with the angels.<sup>70</sup> Anselm writes, “. . . if man had not sinned, he would have been bound to undergo change into incorruptibility, likewise it is right that, when in the future he is restored, he will be restored in the body in which he lives in this life.”<sup>71</sup> In some mysterious way, our present flesh will become incorruptible.

Second, Anselm writes, “For if man is to be restored in perfection, he ought to be reconstituted as the sort of being he would have been if he had not sinned.”<sup>72</sup> According to Augustine, this means that Adam’s originally ensouled body, “by not sinning . . . would have deserved to have changed into an ‘enspirited’ body.”<sup>73</sup> Augustine describes the resurrection of the body and its metamorphosis, and provides some details as to its proper nature: “. . . it will be both obeying and commanding, both quickened and quickening with such inexpressible ease, that what was once its burden is now its glory”;<sup>74</sup> and further, “there will be no corruption, no tickling and teasing of the senses.”<sup>75</sup> We see here that the proper, intended state of the body is beyond what we now possess. All burdens, suffering, and degeneration of our present flesh, the effects of the original sin, will be removed.

Finally, according to Augustine and Anselm, we would be eternally assured that we could never again lapse. Like the angels now, we would be able to sin no more. Augustine writes, explicitly connecting the angelic state with that of the redeemed human: “But those men who have been embraced by God’s grace, and are become the fellow-citizens of the holy angels who have continued in bliss, shall never more either sin or die, being endued with spiritual bodies.”<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> Job 19:26.

<sup>68</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 2.3.

<sup>69</sup> See in Augustine, for example, *civ. Dei* 13.24, *Homilies on the Gospel of John* 19, 15, hereafter abbreviated as *Jo. ev. tr.*, and *Sermon* 186.

<sup>70</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 12. 35, 68.

<sup>71</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 2.3.

<sup>72</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 2.2.

<sup>73</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 6. 28, 39.

<sup>74</sup> Augustine, *Gn. litt.* 12, 35, 68.

<sup>75</sup> Augustine, *Sermon* 45.10. See also *Gn. litt.* 12, 35,68: “Accordingly, when it receives back this body, now no longer just ‘ensouled’ but thanks to the transfiguration to come ‘enspirited,’ it will have the measure of its proper nature complete, it will be both obeying and commanding, both quickened and quickening with such inexpressible ease, that what was once its burden is now its glory.”

<sup>76</sup> Augustine, *civ. Dei* 13.24.

## V. Why the Demons Cannot Be Saved

The conviction that the Devil and his minions are beyond salvation is well-grounded in Scripture.<sup>77</sup> The official Catholic line now, as one might expect, is more Thomistic than Augustinian and Anselmian, emphasizing as it does demonic obstinacy and the absence of diabolic repentance over strict justice and punishment.<sup>78</sup> For Thomas, the angelic and demonic will is free, but immovable after the fact: “the angel’s free-will is flexible to either opposite before the choice, but not after.”<sup>79</sup> The human will, however, at least in this mortal coil, is free before the choice, and free thereafter to alter its resolve.<sup>80</sup> While Augustine cites Scriptural authority to argue for the eternal damnation of the demons in *De civitate Dei*, his philosophical arguments as to why there is no salvation for Lucifer and his demonic disciples generally focus on the punitive nature of their sentence, not on their obstinacy in sin; God’s justice is equal to his mercy. In the *Tractates on John*, for example, Augustine argues that the demonic punishment is so great because their initial allotment was equally so grand. In comparison to human beings before death and judgement, who are still capable of receiving grace, the demonic

fault was judged all the more damnable, [because] the nature of those who committed it was of a loftier sublimity[.] For to the same extent as they less than we ought to have fallen into sin, were they superior in nature to us. But now in offending against the Creator they became all the more detestably ungrateful for His beneficence.<sup>81</sup>

To those who are given much, much is expected; the demons, however, wasted their talents.<sup>82</sup>

Anselm’s arguments tend to be more technical, but proceed in the same spirit as do Augustine’s. He cites two reasons in *CDH* to explain why fallen angels are beyond hope.<sup>83</sup> First, unlike human beings who inherit original sin from Adam, the demons are directly responsible for their iniquity. While we *are* culpable for the evils that occur after the original sin and which stem from its *effects* (ignorance, suffering, death, and concupiscence, that is, the tendency toward sin), we did not commit the first transgression that precipitated our present, darkened, infirmity. Thus, because postlapsarian human

---

<sup>77</sup> Augustine reviews a number of the passages in *civ. Dei* 21.23.

<sup>78</sup> This, however, is not only or originally a Thomistic position. The *Catechism* cites St. John Damascene (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century AD). See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 393. Thomas cites the same passage in *ST* 1.64.2. See Joseph Suk-Hwan Dowd, “Aquinas on Demonic Obstinacy,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 89, no. 4 (2015): 699-718.

<sup>79</sup> Aquinas, *ST* 1.64.2.

<sup>80</sup> The position is rooted in Thomistic epistemology and the distinction between human and angelic forms of intellection in relation to their respective ontologies, though the doctrine is disputed. See Dowd.

<sup>81</sup> Augustine, *Jo. ev. tr.* 110.7.

<sup>82</sup> Matthew 25: 14-30.

<sup>83</sup> See Anselm, *CHD* 2.12.

beings did not fall of their own accord, they can attain assistance for their redemption insofar as they, by proxy, received their predicament. For the demons, however, it's all on them. Unlike human beings, the angels did not descend from one another in succession over time; they have no lineage, but rather, were created all at once—"lux fiat!"—and are thereby directly responsible for their own, individual falls. Thus, demonic emendation must come by their own hand. However, Catholic anti-Pelagianism extends also to the demonic realm. They fell of their own accord, and thus must raise themselves, which is impossible—the task is too great. Thus, it's game over for the demons; they are stuck, powerless to save themselves, and unable to benefit from the succor of another.

Furthermore, even if divine aid were available to the demons, the Christological logic cannot apply in their case, an argument worked out in detail in the *CHD*. In short, for the human to be redeemed, according to Anselm's Christology (and Christology generally), the redeemer must be both God and human: human to pay for the anthropological sin for the entire species, yet divine to be capable of the work of redemption while not adding another creditor save God.<sup>84</sup> One could imagine a similar Christ-figure to save the demons, a kind of God-demon, but because (by Anselm's time) each demon is unique and does not belong to a race, unlike human beings who are members of the same species, each demon would need its own saviour: and that's an absurd number of messiahs. Like Augustine, Anselm focuses on the initial moment of the angelic fall and the particular nature of the angels, or rather, demons, to argue why they cannot be saved. While the position is primarily Scriptural, Anselm asserts that "unalterable logic opposes the granting of relief to the fallen angels."<sup>85</sup> While we living still may hope, this demonic finality also threatens the human on the road to perdition: as Dante imagines carved upon the gates of hell, "Abandon all hope, you who enter here."<sup>86</sup>

## VI. Conclusion

Before the great procession in Canto 29, the Garden of Eden in Dante's *Purgatorio*, save only the pilgrim, his guide, and Matilda, is empty; there is not a sinner in sight.<sup>87</sup> It's nice, but no one is there. This finale of the *Purgatorio* shows that Dante is not giving instructions about how to live "the good life," for a worldly course of virtue is not the allotted human end; it is the sufficient ambition for no rational being. This is why Aristotle's practical philosophy, from the Christian perspective, is ultimately tragic. Dante therefore bestows an education for attaining heaven. Having fallen in Adam, one either delves further into depravity, never again reaching our original state, or one makes up and surpasses what one lost. In a sense, Augustine's empty upper air is the culmination of

---

<sup>84</sup> Again, the idea here is that redeemed human beings must be made equals to the faithful angels who have no other creditor but God Himself.

<sup>85</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 2.21.

<sup>86</sup> Dante, *Inferno* 3.9. I use the English text in Dante, *The Inferno of Dante*, trans. Robert Pinsky (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994).

<sup>87</sup> See Dante, *Purgatorio* 28.

Dante's *Purgatorio*: that place now empty, forsaken by its original inhabitants, never to be colonized again.

Augustine and Anselm's angelology and demonology provide an instructive parallel for the human being. Also having been faced with a choice long ago, the angels now model the two ends still available to humanity: infernal damnation and heavenly exaltation. The sealed angelic fates are paradigms for us, the angelic and demonic lives our alternatives. They are our pillars, the extremes. And our possibilities, in the end, are *only* extremes: one or the other. We share these ends with angelic creatures, and we are on a well-trodden path. Our journey plays out in time and requires the mediation of Christ to succeed, for them either unnecessary or impossible. They now can neither fall nor rise, but the destinations they have chosen, heavenly and hellish, are precisely ours as well.

Finally, in the *Enchiridion*,<sup>88</sup> Augustine expresses skepticism concerning what we can know about the organization of angelic society, and questions the advantage of bothering about such lore beyond it being a "useful exercise for the intellect."<sup>89</sup> In a similar vein, Anselm believes that squabbles over certain angelological and demonological minutiae do not constitute "any danger to the soul."<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, discussions of angels and demons can be found throughout the works of both figures, feature prominently within their texts, and are crucially connected to other important doctrines. How could Augustine warn against invoking demons without first having some acquaintance with their dealings? How could Anselm explain the necessity of the Incarnation as a means without speculating on the angelic destination of the human which is her end? Despite the oft hesitancy to pronounce decisively on such matters, one sees the importance of the influence of angelology and demonology, not only on fundamental theological and philosophical doctrines, but also upon the very aims of human life.

---

<sup>88</sup> The *Enchiridion* was written between 421 and 422 (as compared to the *Literal Commentary on Genesis*, composed between 401 and 415).

<sup>89</sup> See Augustine, *ench.* 58-59. Augustine also claims that he is uncertain "whether the sun, and the moon, and all the stars, do not form part of this same society, though many consider them merely luminous bodies, without either sensation or intelligence."

<sup>90</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.18. Anselm writes, "But there are matters about which different opinions can be held without danger, and one such is the issue which gave rise to our present enquiry. For, supposing we do not know whether or not there are to be more elect human beings than there are fallen angels, and supposing we rate one of these alternatives more highly than the other, I do not think this constitutes any danger to the soul" (*CDH* 1.18).