

## Angels and Demons.

(Spiritual Intelligences as Willing but not Affective Beings)

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Question 1—*What are a few more things we should keep in mind as we consider the angels as intelligences?*

*Answer*—We should remember that angelic knowledge is only intellectual and not sensitive, since the angels do not have corporeal bodies, *cf.* Heb. 1:7. Nor do they need corporeal bodies, or external senses, to understand objects, *cf.* Isa. 6:2, 3. Moreover, when we speak of angels knowing intuitively we speak not absolutely, for only God knows things intuitively in their essence by a comprehensive immediate understanding, *cf.* Ps. 147:5. Rather, we mean that angels, being incorporeal substances, have a knowledge of universals as intelligible, or substantial, forms apart from the need to abstract from sensible forms, as men reason, *cf.* Jer. 1:11.

Additionally, although this knowledge is, in this sense, intuitive, the angels, though incorporeal, are not ubiquitous, or omnipresent, they are rather simply *illocalitas*, not circumscribed in space, but shining (as it were) in that space, *cf.* Job 38:7. In this manner, these angels are capable of projecting a local presence, *cf.* Matt. 28:3; Luke 2:9; Acts 12:7; whereby, without filling any space, they may be said to go from or come to any place, *cf.* Luke 1:26, 28; 8:33. And, strictly for purposes of making themselves known to be present to men, they have come into accidental union with matter, assuming bodies which men may perceive through their senses, *cf.* Heb. 13:2. So it is that this accidental union may dissolve itself in a moment when an angel appears or disappears, *cf.* Judg. 6:21.

Thus, their knowledge, like all creatures, is finite and, because intellectual substance is incorporeal, this alone circumscribes their being so as to create limitations which are also those distinctions which make each angel a separate species, each possessing and displaying the angelic nature to the degree to which the specific angel reflects the divine goodness, *e.g.*, Ezek. 10:20-22. So, they do not know any future contingencies peculiar to God, *cf.* Isa. 41:22, 23. Nor do they know the hearts of men, *cf.* 2 Chron. 6:30. But they do know all that is knowable of God and divine things through their unbroken contemplation in heaven, *cf.* Luke 1:19.

Furthermore, this knowledge of angels can be communicated amongst themselves through colloquies, or conferences, *cf.* Zech. 2:3. In addition, Scripture tells us that these angels shout to each other, Rev. 7:2; 14:18. Thus, we may affirm that there is a mutual communication, Isa. 6:3; but, as John of Damascus notes, “There is no need of tongue and hearing, but without spoken words they mutually exchange their own thoughts and desires.” Nor is what the apostle says of speaking with the tongues of angels to this point, 1 Cor. 13:1; because he simply wishes to denote the most excellent and eloquent tongue, as elsewhere we see the most beautiful face called angelic, *cf.* Acts 6:15; and the best food called angel’s food, *cf.* Ps. 78:25. It is more likely that the angelic intellection is impressed from one angel upon the intellectual capacity of another angel, *e.g.*, Zech. 1:9-11. As to their assumption of bodies for presenting themselves to men; they do not so much talk with, or by, their assumed bodies as the sound of their speech is projected in a manner audible to humans from the locality of the assumed body, *cf.* Zech. 4:5.

Question 2—*What might we conclude about the wills of angels in light of their knowledge?*

*Answer*—We must conclude that there is a will in angels, especially if we consider that there is such predicated of the fallen angels, *cf.* 2 Tim. 2:26. All things flow from the Divine will, which created all things good, Gen. 1:31. Thus, all things must be inclined by tendency toward good albeit in different ways: *e.g.*, plant life inclines toward good with a *natural* tendency, without knowledge or understanding, *cf.* Luke 12:27; animal life, having some knowledge, inclines toward good with a *sensitive* tendency, apprehending a particular good but without understanding goodness, *cf.* Isa. 43:20; intellectual life inclines toward good, not as to some particular good only but perceiving the goodness and, thereby, has

an *intellectual* tendency, *cf.* Matt. 6:26. Therefore, men, created in the image of God, have this *intellectual* tendency, *cf.* Eccl. 7:29. So, too, the angels, being intellectual spirit beings, have this *intellectual* tendency, *cf.* 1 Pet. 1:12. Now, this inclination is nothing more than seeking and, especially when arising from *sensitive* or *intellectual* tendencies, it represents what we call the directing of the “will,” *cf.* Ps. 104:21; Jer. 29:13. This inclination, or will, is directed in brute beasts and in men through the use of *sensible* signs with this difference, animals only gain knowledge but men, having intellectual capacity, may apprehend that universal ground which provides understanding, *cf.* Job 12:7-11; 35:11. Angels, on the other hand, know universals apart from particulars because they do not apprehend through senses and, therefore, they perceive the universal aspect of goodness, *cf.* 1 Tim. 3:16. Yet, it should not be concluded that angels have no knowledge of particulars, only that they do always know those things of which they have universal perception, *cf.* Dan. 8:13, 14; whereby they are enabled to be ministering spirits, Heb. 1:14.

Because in angels there is no *sensitive* tendency to affect their wills, the will of the angel is expressive of this highest tendency, which in the holy angels is promoting the goodness of God, *cf.* Dan. 6:22. The will follows the intellection of the angels which is most free and far more perfect than man’s will, which is often disturbed by passions and bodily motions, *cf.* 2 Sam. 14:17, 20. However, this will is neither independent, being always subject to God, *cf.* 1 Pet. 3:22; nor operative, as if their own will was something which the angels operate by their own power, *cf.* Ps. 103:20, 21. Nonetheless, it is a most free principle of willing, from which manifold and various acts are spontaneously elicited in relation to the objects, in accordance to the dictates of the practical intellect, *cf.* 2 Sam. 19:27.

Yet, although the angels were created in a state of grace in which they were undetermined, having free will, to good and evil, they were not endowed with the grace of perseverance, *e.g.*, 2 Pet. 2:4; nevertheless, they were created equally wise and holy, with a perfect concreated righteousness, together with the ability to keep this first estate, performing the will of God in holiness, from which state some fell, Jude 6. Afterwards, in the good angels, being determined by the subsequent confirmation of God, they are wholly disposed to do good, *cf.* Matt. 18:10; whereas the fallen angels, by their own sin, are determined to do evil only and, according to the just desertion of God, they have entered into an estate of misery from which they shall not recover, *cf.* Matt. 25:41. Elsewhere, the apostle Paul assures us that the predestination of God extends to the angels, for those which kept their first estate are also called elect angels, 1 Tim. 5:21.

Question 3—*What should we think concerning the claims of some that angels have lives capable of affection?*

*Answer*—Since angels have no sensitive knowledge, being wholly incorporeal spirits, so they do not have sensitive tendencies, or appetites, nor affections, nor passions, for nothing which arises from the sensitive corporeal body can be predicated of them, *cf.* Ezek. 1:13, 14. Although Scripture sometimes ascribes to them certain passions, such as loving God, hating evil, rejoicing at our repentance, Luke 2:13; 15:7, 10; or, being sad at our sins and weeping over our calamities, *cf.* Num. 22:32-34; such affections properly so called ought not to be imagined as existing in angels, *cf.* Gen. 28:12. Affections have their seat in an irascible and concupiscible seat, which are not found in the *intellective* tendency but in the *sensitive* tendency, because only the *sensitive* appetite can be divided into particulars necessary for fury and lust, *cf.* Gal. 5:19-21; Jas. 1:14, 15; Rom. 8:6; consequently, the object of the angels’ *intellective* tendency, otherwise known as the will, is good in the holy angels according to the common aspect of goodness without that division into some particular good without reference to the whole, as may and does arise in the *sensitive* appetite, or affections, *cf.* Prov. 6:25.

Rather these things are ascribed analogically because, the disturbance of passions being removed, they are placed in the simple act of right will, *cf.* Ezek. 3:12; which belongs to their spiritual nature and by which they either love good, are averse to evil, and concerning these either rejoice or are sad, *cf.* Ps.

148:2. This is to be understood in a similar way to the affections attributed to God, which are to be understood as humanly speaking, *cf.* Gen. 6:6, 7; which nevertheless, must be understood in a manner becoming the Divine, *cf.* Num. 23:19.

Question 4—*What can now be predicated of the holy angels who kept their first estate?*

*Answer*—Three things may be predicated of the good angels and their wills: 1.) They demonstrated persistence and continuance in their concreated truth and holiness, *contra* Jude 6. 2.) Through the Divine confirmation in what is good, they are now altogether unable to sin, going from a state of grace, wherein they were able not to sin (*posse non peccare*), to a state of glory, in which they are not able to sin (*non posse peccare*), *cf.* Luke 20:36. 3.) Finally, entering into the eternal enjoyment of God, which is properly a state of glory, being made angels of light according to this estate, *cf.* Matt. 18:10; 2 Cor. 11:14; 1 Tim. 5:21.

In the state of glory, the good angels have greater excellencies and perfections than in their original condition of a state of grace: 1.) In knowledge, since they are enjoying the beatific vision of God, which although of higher quality is still finite, not infinite, *cf.* Mark 13:32; 1 Pet. 1:12. 2.) In holiness, since they are always illuminated by the most glorious light of the knowledge and holiness of God, *cf.* Matt. 18:10; 2 Cor. 11:14. 3.) In freedom of the will, for they attained to a greater freedom being released from the possibility of sinning, *cf.* Rom. 6:18. 4.) In power, for in the state of glory, they are enabled to overcome the power of the evil angels, though this power is finite and subordinate, being subject to the divine power and will, *cf.* Rev. 20:1, 2.

Question 5—*How do we know that the will of angels is distinct from the intellect of angels?*

*Answer*—The will of good angels regards good things only, whence they are regarded as holy angels, *cf.* 1 Sam. 29:9; Matt. 25:31; while their intellect regards both good and evil things, for they know both, *cf.* Gen. 3:5. The will is, then, a special power which is neither their nature nor their intellect, *cf.* Job 6:30. It is not their nature, because the nature, or essence, of a thing is completely comprised within it, *cf.* Tit. 1:15; moreover, whatever extends to anything beyond it is not its essence, or of its nature, *cf.* Ps. 36:5. Thus, in natural bodies the inclination to being does not come from anything superadded to the essence, but from the matter which desires being before possessing it, *cf.* Ps. 55:4, 5; and from the form which keeps it in such being when it once exists, *cf.* Gal. 5:17. Whereas the inclination towards something extrinsic comes from something superadded to the essence, or nature, *cf.* Eccl. 3:11; as tendency to a place comes from gravity or lightness, *cf.* Ex. 15:5; while the inclination to make something like itself comes from the active qualities, *cf.* Gen. 5:3. Now the will has a natural tendency towards good, *cf.* Gen. 5:1; Heb. 1:6. Consequently, there alone are essence and will identified, where all good is contained within the essence of Him who wills; that is to say, in God, Who wills nothing beyond Himself except on account of His goodness, *cf.* Rom. 8:32; Jas. 1:17. This cannot be said of any creature, because infinite goodness is quite foreign to the nature of any created thing, *cf.* Matt. 19:17. Accordingly, neither the will of the angel, nor that of any creature, can be the same thing as its essence, *cf.* Jos. 24:15.