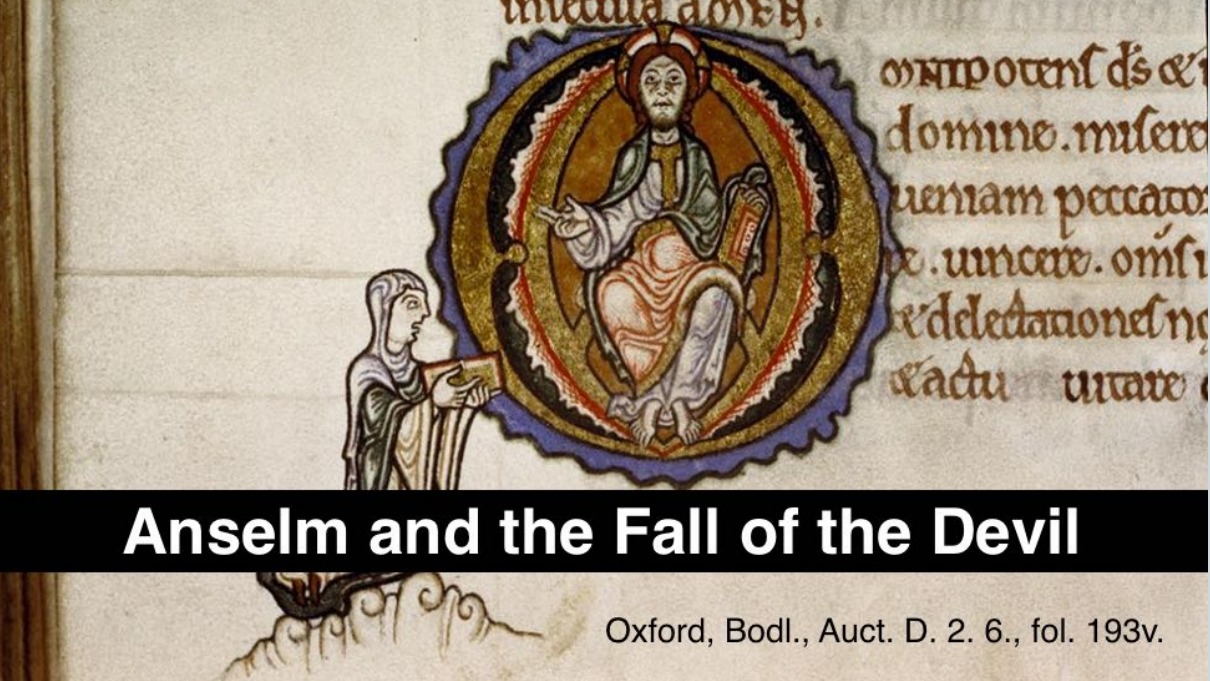

Anselm and the Fall of the Devil

Oxford, Bodl., Auct. D. 2. 6., fol. 193v.

Overview

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On Freedom of Choice

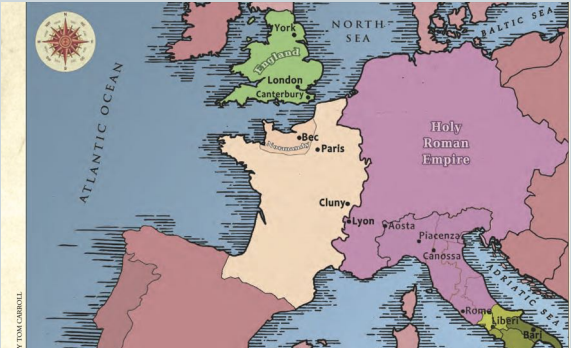
- Free choice
- Kinds of free choice
- The first volition

The Fall of Lucifer

- The problem
- Anselm's solution
- Lucifer's calculation
- Lack of foreknowledge
- Why?

Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109)

- Born near Aosta
- Leaves home at 23; travels to Normandy
- Enters the abbey at Bec in 1060; famous teacher (Lanfranc)
- Abbot of Bec from 1078
- Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093 (quite tumultous political times in England)



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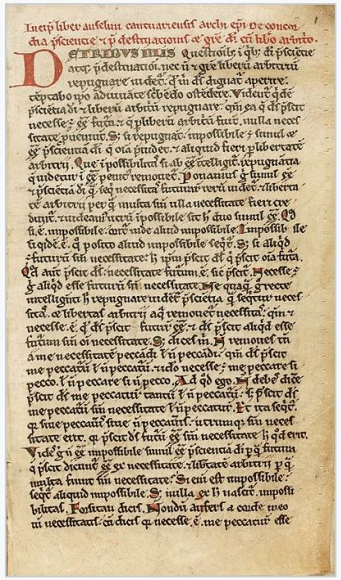
Famous Works

- *De grammatico* (1059–60)
- *De veritate*
- *Monologion* (1075–76)
- *Proslogion* (1077–78)
- *De libertate arbitrii; De casu diaboli* (1080–86).
- *Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi* (1094)
- *Cur Deus Homo* (1095–98)
- *De concordia* (1107–8)



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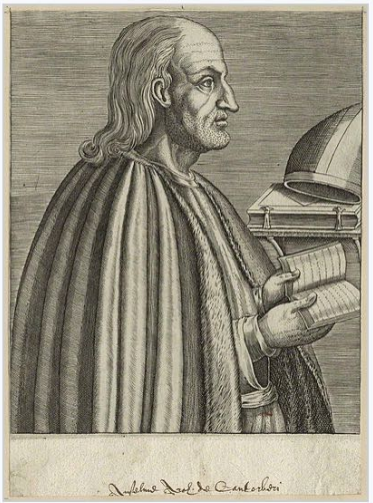
Famous Views

- "Faith seeking understanding"
- What's later came to be called the *ontological argument*
- We can demonstrate various items of faith
- Free choice and sin



A late 16th-century engraving of Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury

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On Freedom of Choice

- Does freedom includes the power to sin? (1–2)
- In what sense do we have freedom if we lost it in the Fall? (3–4; 10–11)
- Can temptation force us to give up our freedom? (5–7)
- Can God force us to give up our freedom? (8–9)
- The definition and division of free choice (13–14)

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What Is Free Choice?

OFC 3, p. 36

"Freedom of choice is the power to preserve rectitude of will for the sake of rectitude itself."

The power to sin cannot be part of freedom:

1. We want a definition of 'freedom' that would apply equally to humans, angels, and God.
2. God and the angels have freedom but do not have the power to sin.
3. Therefore, the power to sin cannot be part of freedom.

"Even though human free choice differs from that of God and the good angels, the definition of the word 'freedom' should still be the same for both. ... We ought to offer a definition of freedom of choice that contains neither more nor less than freedom and since the free choice of God and the good angels cannot sin, [the power to sin] does not belong in the definition." (32)

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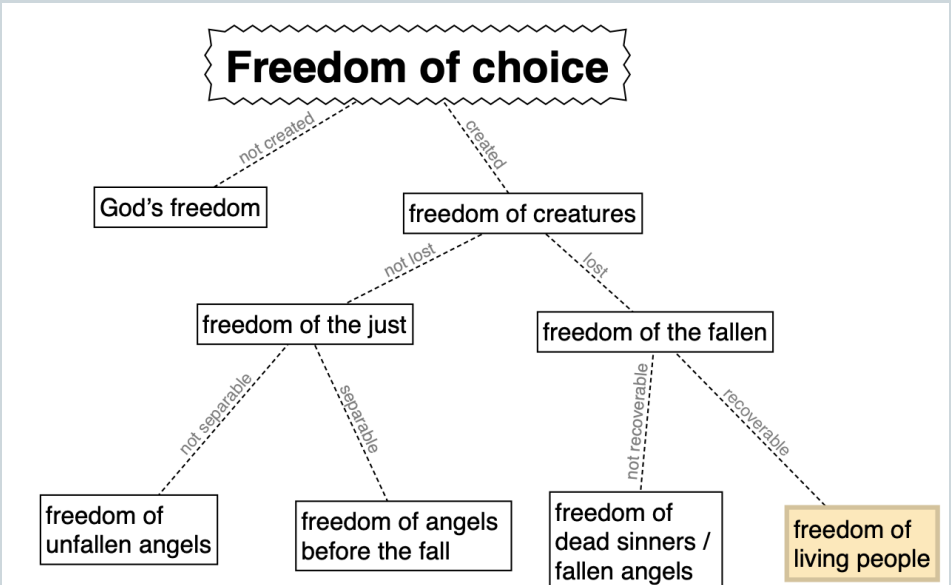
Kinds of Free Will



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The Analogy with Sight

What we need for seeing:

- the power of sight
- visible object
- light
- no impediment

What we need for free will:

- the power of the will
- the object of will
- rectitude
- no impediment

Difference 1: your sight can be taken away, but your will can't! (Not even by God or by temptation)
Difference 2: you can (will to) open your eyes to start seeing, but you cannot will yourself to start willing!
But then: Whence the first act of volition?

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The One-Willed Angel

- Suggestion: what about having at least *one* created volition, something like the will for happiness?

"Let's say that God first gives him only the will for happiness and see whether .. he is now able to move himself to will something other than happiness" (p. 79).

Can we will anything else if the only will given is the will to happiness?

- Unfortunately, no.
- Hence, we couldn't have a morally significant volition.

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The Two Wills

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The two wills (*FoD* 14)

"Therefore ... God must create both wills in him in such a way that he both wills to be happy and wills it justly" (p. 82).

Will for happiness and will for justice: Both of these wills are themselves good, but if not managed well, can create the first evil volition.

How Could Lucifer Be So Foolish?

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The Problem

Sins are usually thought to come from passions, disordered reason, ignorance, or bad will.

- Lucifer has no physical body has no passions;
- He's not ignorant;
- His reason is not disordered;
- He only has good affections/motivations: for advantage and for justice

So, how could he make such a poor judgment?

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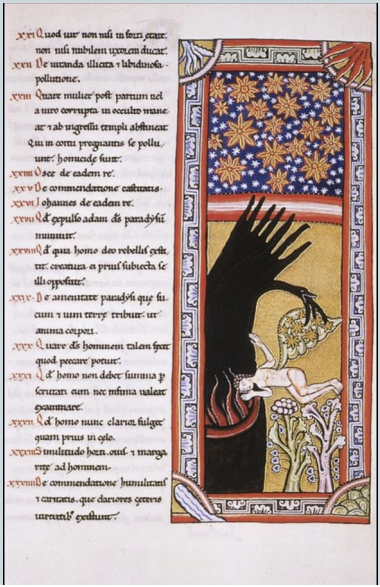
Anselm's Solution: Outline

- Lucifer's rectitude of will is intact when he sins
- Lucifer knows he should subject his will to God.
- Lucifer knows that he would deserve punishment if he does not retain rectitude.
- But Lucifer does not know he will be punished.

So, Lucifer calculates that the advantages of sin outweigh the disadvantages of punishment.



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Lucifer's Calculation

- Lucifer did not know whether or how God would punish him.
- So, he had to wager – which should be easy for a perfectly rational agent!

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The Good Wager

Which of these bets are rational for you to take?

Favored outcome	**Gain if ✔**	**Loss if ✖**
Coin-flip: tail	$ 1	$ 1
Coin-flip: tail	$ 1	$ 2
Dice: 6	$ 120	$ 120
Dice: 6	$ 180	$ 30
I'm younger than 33	$ 10,000	$ 1
There are fairies	$ ∞	$1

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The Good Wager

Which of these bets are rational for you to take?

Favored outcome	**Gain if ✔**	**Loss if ✖**	P	$\sim P$
Coin-flip: tail	\$ 1	\$ 1	0.5	0.5
Coin-flip: tail	\$ 1	\$ 2	0.5	0.5
Dice: 6	\$ 120	\$ 120	1/6	5/6
Dice: 6	\$ 150	\$ 30	1/6	5/6
I'm younger than 33	\$ 10,000	\$ 1	?	?
There are fairies	\$ ∞	\$1	?	?

A bet is rational iff:

$$P \times [gain\checkmark] \geq\sim P \times [loss\times]$$

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Lucifer's Calculation

Favored outcome	Gain if ✔	Loss if ✖	P	$\sim P$
No punishment	∞	?	?	?

$P \times [gain\checkmark] \geq\sim P \times [loss\times]$

$? \times \infty \geq (1-?)\times ?$

This will come out as true if we assume that all the unknown values are finite:

- The chance of God punishing (or not punishing) Lucifer is greater than 0 but lesser than 1;
- The punishment is finite.

If Lucifer accepts these reasonable assumptions, his bet is rational!

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Lucifer's Lack of Foreknowledge

Why didn't Lucifer foreknow his punishment?

- God's judgment is a deep abyss, so no one could know that God would do what he justly could do.
- No previous example of just punishment of injustice.
- Belief that God couldn't condemn what he made with such love?

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So... Why?

Why, then, does Satan will to desert? What is its cause?

- *Only because he wills.*

FoD 27

"Then why did he will it?
Simply because he willed it. For there was no other cause by which his will was in any way incited or attracted. Instead, his will was its own efficient cause, if I may put the matter that way, and its own effect" (p. 99).

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