

Question 64. The punishment of the demons

1. [Their darkness of intellect](#)
2. [Their obstinacy of will](#)
3. [Their grief](#)
4. [Their place of punishment](#)

Article 1. Whether the demons' intellect is darkened by privation of the knowledge of all truth?

Objection 1. It would seem that the [demons' intellect](#) is darkened by being deprived of the [knowledge](#) of all [truth](#). For it they [knew](#) any [truth](#) at all, they would most of all [know](#) themselves; which is to [know](#) separated [substances](#). But this is not in keeping with their unhappiness: for this seems to belong to great [happiness](#), insomuch as that some writers have assigned as [man's](#) last [happiness](#) the [knowledge](#) of the separated [substances](#). Therefore the [demons](#) are deprived of all [knowledge](#) of [truth](#).

Objection 2. Further, what is most manifest in its [nature](#), seems to be specially manifest to the [angels](#), whether [good](#) or bad. That the same is not manifest with regard to ourselves, comes from the weakness of our [intellect](#) which draws its [knowledge](#) from phantasms; as it comes from the weakness of its eye that the owl cannot behold the light of the sun. But the [demons](#) cannot [know](#) [God](#), Who is most manifest of Himself, because He is the sovereign [truth](#); and this is because they are not clean of heart, whereby alone can [God](#) be seen. Therefore neither can they [know](#) other things.

Objection 3. Further, according to [Augustine](#) (Gen. ad lit. iv, 22), the proper [knowledge](#) of the [angels](#) is twofold; namely, morning and evening. But the [demons](#) have no morning [knowledge](#), because they do not see things in the Word; nor have they the evening [knowledge](#), because this evening [knowledge](#) refers the things [known](#) to the [Creator's](#) praise (hence, after "evening" comes "morning" [[Genesis 1](#)]). Therefore the [demons](#) can have no [knowledge](#) of things.

Objection 4. Further, the [angels](#) at their creation [knew](#) the [mystery](#) of the [kingdom of God](#), as [Augustine](#) says (Gen. ad lit. v, 19; De Civ. Dei xi). But the [demons](#) are deprived of such [knowledge](#): "for if they had [known](#) it, they would never have crucified the Lord of [glory](#)," as is said [1 Corinthians 2:8](#). Therefore, for the same reason, they are deprived of all other [knowledge](#) of [truth](#).

Objection 5. Further, whatever **truth** anyone **knows** is **known** either **naturally**, as we **know** first principles; or by deriving it from someone else, as we **know** by learning; or by long experience, as the things we learn by discovery. Now, the **demons** cannot **know** the **truth** by their own **nature**, because, as **Augustine** says (De Civ. Dei xi, 33), the **good angels** are separated from them as light is from darkness; and every manifestation is made through light, as is said **Ephesians 5:13**. In like manner they cannot learn by **revelation**, nor by learning from the **good angels**: because "there is no fellowship of light with darkness [**Vulgate**: 'What fellowship hath . . .?']" (**2 Corinthians 6:14**). Nor can they learn by long experience: because experience comes of the senses. Consequently there is no **knowledge** of **truth** in them.

On the contrary, **Dionysius** says (Div. Nom. iv) that, "certain **gifts** were bestowed upon the **demons** which, we say, have not been changed at all, but remain entire and most brilliant." Now, the **knowledge** of **truth** stands among those **natural gifts**. Consequently there is some **knowledge** of **truth** in them.

I answer that, The **knowledge** of **truth** is twofold: one which comes of **nature**, and one which comes of **grace**. The **knowledge** which comes of **grace** is likewise twofold: the first is purely speculative, as when Divine secrets are imparted to an **individual**; the other is effective, and produces love for **God**; which **knowledge** properly belongs to the **gift** of wisdom.

Of these three kinds of **knowledge** the first was neither taken away nor lessened in the **demons**. For it follows from the very **nature** of the **angel**, who, according to his **nature**, is an **intellect** or mind: since on account of the simplicity of his **substance**, nothing can be withdrawn from his **nature**, so as to punish him by subtracting from his **natural** powers, as a man is punished by being deprived of a hand or a foot or of something else. Therefore **Dionysius** says (Div. Nom. iv) that the **natural gifts** remain entire in them. Consequently their **natural knowledge** was not diminished. The second kind of **knowledge**, however, which comes of **grace**, and consists in speculation, has not been utterly taken away from them, but lessened; because, of these Divine secrets only so much is revealed to them as is **necessary**; and that is done either by means of the **angels**, or "through some temporal workings of Divine power," as **Augustine** says (De Civ. Dei ix, 21); but not in the same degree as to the **holy angels**, to whom many more things are revealed, and more fully, in the Word Himself. But of the third **knowledge**, as likewise of **charity**, they are utterly deprived.

Reply to Objection 1. Happiness consists in self-application to something higher. The separated **substances** are above us in the order of **nature**; hence **man** can have **happiness** of a kind by **knowing** the separated **substances**,

although his perfect happiness consists in knowing the first substance, namely, God. But it is quite natural for one separate substance to know another; as it is natural for us to know sensible natures. Hence, as man's happiness does not consist in knowing sensible natures; so neither does the angel's happiness consist in knowing separated substances.

Reply to Objection 2. What is most manifest in its nature is hidden from us by its surpassing the bounds of our intellect; and not merely because our intellect draws knowledge from phantasms. Now the Divine substance surpasses the proportion not only of the human intellect, but even of the angelic. Consequently, not even an angel can of his own nature know God's substance. Yet on account of the perfection of his intellect he can of his nature have a higher knowledge of God than man can have. Such knowledge of God remains also in the demons. Although they do not possess the purity which comes with grace, nevertheless they have purity of nature; and this suffices for the knowledge of God which belongs to them from their nature.

Reply to Objection 3. The creature is darkness in comparison with the excellence of the Divine light; and therefore the creature's knowledge in its own nature is called "evening" knowledge. For the evening is akin to darkness, yet it possesses some light: but when the light fails utterly, then it is night. So then the knowledge of things in their own nature, when referred to the praise of the Creator, as it is in the good angels, has something of the Divine light, and can be called evening knowledge; but if it be not referred to God, as is the case with the demons, it is not called evening, but "nocturnal" knowledge. Accordingly we read in Genesis 1:5 that the darkness, which God separated from the light, "He called night."

Reply to Objection 4. All the angels had some knowledge from the very beginning respecting the mystery of God's kingdom, which found its completion in Christ; and most of all from the moment when they were beatified by the vision of the Word, which vision the demons never had. Yet all the angels did not fully and equally apprehend it; hence the demons much less fully understood the mystery of the Incarnation, when Christ was in the world. For, as Augustine observes (De Civ. Dei ix, 21), "It was not manifested to them as it was to the holy angels, who enjoy a participated eternity of the Word; but it was made known by some temporal effects, so as to strike terror into them." For had they fully and certainly known that He was the Son of God and the effect of His passion, they would never have procured the crucifixion of the Lord of glory.

Reply to Objection 5. The demons know a truth in three ways: first of all by the subtlety of their nature; for although they are darkened by privation of the light of grace, yet they are enlightened by the light of their intellectual

nature: secondly, by **revelation** from the **holy angels**; for while not agreeing with them in conformity of will, they do agree, nevertheless, by their likeness of **intellectual nature**, according to which they can accept what is manifested by others: thirdly, they **know** by long experience; not as deriving it from the senses; but when the similitude of their innate intelligible **species** is completed in **individual** things, they **know** some things as present, which they previously did not **know** would come to pass, as we said when dealing with the **knowledge** of the **angels** (I:57:3 ad 3).

Article 2. Whether the will of the demons is obstinate in evil?

Objection 1. It would seem that the **will** of the **demons** is not obstinate in **evil**. For liberty of will belongs to the **nature** of an **intellectual** being, which **nature** remains in the **demons**, as we said above (**Article 1**). But liberty of **will** is directly and firstly ordained to **good** rather than to **evil**. Therefore the **demons'** **will** is not so obstinate in **evil** as not to be able to return to what is **good**.

Objection 2. Further, since **God's** mercy is **infinite**, it is greater than the **demons'** **malice**, which is finite. But no one returns from the **malice** of **sin** to the **goodness** of **justice** save through **God's** mercy. Therefore the **demons** can likewise return from their state of **malice** to the state of **justice**.

Objection 3. Further, if the **demons** have a will obstinate in **evil**, then their will would be especially obstinate in the **sin** whereby they fell. But that **sin**, namely, **pride**, is in them no longer; because the motive for the **sin** no longer endures, namely, excellence. Therefore the **demon** is not obstinate in **malice**.

Objection 4. Further, **Gregory** says (Moral. iv) that **man** can be reinstated by another, since he fell through another. But, as was observed already (I:63:8, the lower **demons** fell through the highest one. Therefore their fall can be repaired by another. Consequently they are not obstinate in **malice**.

Objection 5. Further, whoever is obstinate in **malice**, never performs any **good** work. But the **demon** performs some **good** works: for he confesses the **truth**, saying to **Christ**: "I **know** Who Thou art, the **holy** one of **God**" (**Mark 1:24**). "The **demons**" also "**believe** and tremble" (**James 2:19**). And **Dionysius** observes (Div. Nom. iv), that "they desire what is **good** and best, which is, to be, to live, to understand." Therefore they are not obstinate in **malice**.

On the contrary, It is said (Psalm 73:23): "The pride of them that hate Thee, ascendeth continually"; and this is understood of the demons. Therefore they remain ever obstinate in their malice.

I answer that, It was Origen's opinion [Peri Archon i. 6] that every will of the creature can by reason of free-will be inclined to good and evil; with the exception of the soul of Christ on account of the union of the Word. Such a statement deprives angels and saints of true beatitude, because everlasting stability is of the very nature of true beatitude; hence it is termed "life everlasting." It is also contrary to the authority of Sacred Scripture, which declares that demons and wicked men shall be sent "into everlasting punishment," and the good brought "into everlasting life." Consequently such an opinion must be considered erroneous; while according to Catholic Faith, it must be held firmly both that the will of the good angels is confirmed in good, and that the will of the demons is obstinate in evil.

We must seek for the cause of this obstinacy, not in the gravity of the sin, but in the condition of their nature or state. For as Damascene says (De Fide Orth. ii), "death is to men, what the fall is to the angels." Now it is clear that all the mortal sins of men, grave or less grave, are pardonable before death; whereas after death they are without remission and endure for ever.

To find the cause, then, of this obstinacy, it must be borne in mind that the appetitive power is in all things proportioned to the apprehensive, whereby it is moved, as the movable by its mover. For the sensitive appetite seeks a particular good; while the will seeks the universal good, as was said above (I:59:1); as also the sense apprehends particular objects, while the intellect considers universals. Now the angel's apprehension differs from man's in this respect, that the angel by his intellect apprehends immovably, as we apprehend immovably first principles which are the object of the habit of "intelligence"; whereas man by his reason apprehends movably, passing from one consideration to another; and having the way open by which he may proceed to either of two opposites. Consequently man's will adheres to a thing movably, and with the power of forsaking it and of clinging to the opposite; whereas the angel's will adheres fixedly and immovably. Therefore, if his will be considered before its adhesion, it can freely adhere either to this or to its opposite (namely, in such things as he does not will naturally); but after he has once adhered, he clings immovably. So it is customary to say that man's free-will is flexible to the opposite both before and after choice; but the angel's free-will is flexible either opposite before the choice, but not after. Therefore the good angels who adhered to justice, were confirmed therein; whereas the wicked ones, sinning, are obstinate in sin. Later on we shall treat of the obstinacy of men who are damned (SP:98:1-2).

Reply to Objection 1. The [good](#) and [wicked angels](#) have [free-will](#), but according to the manner and [condition](#) of their state, as has been said.

Reply to Objection 2. [God's](#) mercy delivers from [sin](#) those who repent. But such as are not capable of repenting, cling immovably to [sin](#), and are not delivered by the Divine mercy.

Reply to Objection 3. The [devil's](#) first [sin](#) still remains in him according to desire; although not as to his [believing](#) that he can obtain what he desired. Even so, if a man were to [believe](#) that he can commit [murder](#), and wills to commit it, and afterwards the power is taken from him; nevertheless, the [will](#) to [murder](#) can stay with him, so that he would he had done it, or still would do it if he could.

Reply to Objection 4. The fact that [man sinned](#) from another's suggestion, is not the whole [cause](#) of [man's sin](#) being pardonable. Consequently the argument does not hold [good](#).

Reply to Objection 5. A [demon's](#) act is twofold. One comes of deliberate will; and this is properly called his own act. Such an act on the [demon's](#) part is always [wicked](#); because, although at times he does something [good](#), yet he does not do it well; as when he tells the [truth](#) in order to deceive; and when he [believes](#) and confesses, yet not willingly, but compelled by the evidence of things. Another kind of act is [natural](#) to the [demon](#); this can be [good](#) and bears witness to the [goodness](#) of [nature](#). Yet he abuses even such [good](#) acts to [evil](#) purpose.

Article 3. Whether there is sorrow in the demons?

Objection 1. It would seem that there is no sorrow in the [demons](#). For since sorrow and [joy](#) are opposites, they cannot be together in the same subject. But there is [joy](#) in the [demons](#): for [Augustine](#) writing against the Maniches (De Gen. Contra Manich. ii, 17) says: "The [devil](#) has power over them who despise [God's](#) commandments, and he rejoices over this sinister power." Therefore there is no sorrow in the [demons](#).

Objection 2. Further, sorrow is the [cause](#) of fear, for those things [cause](#) fear while they are future, which [cause](#) sorrow when they are present. But there is no fear in the [demons](#), according to [Job 41:24](#), "Who was made to fear no one." Therefore there is no grief in the [demons](#).

Objection 3. Further, it is a [good](#) thing to be sorry for [evil](#). But the [demons](#) can do no [good](#) action. Therefore they cannot be sorry, at least for the [evil](#) of [sin](#); which applies to the worm of [conscience](#).

On the contrary, The **demon's sin** is greater than **man's sin**. But **man** is punished with sorrow on account of the pleasure taken in **sin**, according to **Apocalypse 18:7**, "As much as she hath glorified herself, and lived in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her." Consequently much more is the **devil** punished with the grief of sorrow, because he especially glorified himself.

I answer that, Fear, sorrow, **joy**, and the like, so far as they are **passions**, cannot **exist** in the **demons**; for thus they are proper to the sensitive **appetite**, which is a power in a corporeal organ. According, however, as they denote simple acts of the **will**, they can be in the **demons**. And it must be said that there is sorrow in them; because sorrow, as denoting a simple act of the **will**, is nothing else than the resistance of the **will** to what is, or to what is not. Now it is evident that the **demons** would wish many things not to be, which are, and others to be, which are not: for, out of **envy**, they would wish others to be damned, who are saved. Consequently, sorrow must be said to **exist** in them: and especially because it is of the very notion of punishment for it to be repugnant to the **will**. Moreover, they are deprived of **happiness**, which they desire **naturally**; and their **wicked will** is curbed in many respects.

Reply to Objection 1. Joy and sorrow about the same thing are opposites, but not about different things. Hence there is nothing to hinder a man from being sorry for one thing, and **joyful** for another; especially so far as sorrow and **joy** imply simple acts of the **will**; because, not merely in different things, but even in one and the same thing, there can be something that we will, and something that we will not.

Reply to Objection 2. As there is sorrow in the **demons** over present **evil**, so also there is fear of future **evil**. Now when it is said, "He was made to fear no one," this is to be understood of the fear of **God** which restrains from **sin**. For it is written elsewhere that "the **devils believe** and tremble" (**James 2:19**).

Reply to Objection 3. To be sorry for the **evil** of **sin** on account of the **sin** bears witness to the **goodness** of the **will**, to which the **evil** of **sin** is opposed. But to be sorry for the **evil** of punishment, for the **evil** of **sin** on account of the punishment, bears witness to the **goodness** of **nature**, to which the **evil** of punishment is opposed. Hence **Augustine** says (*De Civ. Dei* xix, 13), that "sorrow for **good** lost by punishment, is the witness to a **good nature**." Consequently, since the **demon** has a perverse and obstinate **will**, he is not sorry for the **evil** of **sin**.

Article 4. Whether our atmosphere is the demons' place of punishment?

Objection 1. It would seem that this atmosphere is not the **demons'** place of punishment. For a **demon** is a **spiritual nature**. But a **spiritual nature** is not affected by place. Therefore there is no place of punishment for **demons**.

Objection 2. Further, **man's sin** is not graver than the **demons'**. But **man's** place of punishment is **hell**. Much more, therefore, is it the **demons'** place of punishment; and consequently not the darksome atmosphere.

Objection 3. Further, the **demons** are punished with the pain of fire. But there is no fire in the darksome atmosphere. Therefore the darksome atmosphere is not the place of punishment for the **demons**.

On the contrary, **Augustine** says (Gen. ad lit. iii, 10), that "the darksome atmosphere is as a **prison** to the **demons** until the **judgment day**."

I answer that, The **angels** in their own **nature** stand midway between **God** and men. Now the order of **Divine providence** so disposes, that it procures the welfare of the inferior orders through the superior. But **man's** welfare is disposed by **Divine providence** in two ways: first of all, directly, when a man is brought unto **good** and withheld from **evil**; and this is fittingly done through the **good angels**. In another way, indirectly, as when anyone assailed is exercised by fighting against opposition. It was fitting for this procuring of **man's** welfare to be brought about through the **wicked** spirits, lest they should cease to be of service in the **natural** order. Consequently a twofold place of punishment is due to the **demons**: one, by reason of their **sin**, and this is **hell**; and another, in order that they may **tempt** men, and thus the darksome atmosphere is their due place of punishment.

Now the procuring of **men's salvation** is prolonged even to the **judgment day**: consequently, the ministry of the **angels** and wrestling with **demons** endure until then. Hence until then the **good angels** are sent to us here; and the **demons** are in this dark atmosphere for our trial: although some of them are even now in **hell**, to torment those whom they have led astray; just as some of the **good angels** are with the **holy souls** in **heaven**. But after the **judgment day** all the **wicked**, both men and **angels**, will be in **hell**, and the **good** in **heaven**.

Reply to Objection 1. A place is not penal to **angel** or **soul** as if affecting the **nature** by changing it, but as affecting the **will** by saddening it: because the **angel** or the **soul** apprehends that it is in a place not agreeable to its will.

Reply to Objection 2. One [soul](#) is not set over another in the order of [nature](#), as the [demons](#) are over men in the order of [nature](#); consequently there is no parallel.

Reply to Objection 3. Some have maintained that the pain of sense for [demons](#) and [souls](#) is postponed until the [judgment day](#): and that the beatitude of the [saints](#) is likewise postponed until the [judgment day](#). But this is [erroneous](#), and contrary to the teaching of the [Apostle](#) ([2 Corinthians 5:1](#)): "If our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a house in [heaven](#)." Others, again, while not admitting the same of [souls](#), admit it as to [demons](#). But it is better to say that the same judgment is passed upon [wicked souls](#) and [wicked angels](#), even as on [good souls](#) and [good angels](#).

Consequently, it must be said that, although a heavenly place belongs to the [glory](#) of the [angels](#), yet their [glory](#) is not lessened by their coming to us, for they consider that place to be their own; in the same way as we say that the [bishop's honor](#) is not lessened while he is not actually sitting on his throne. In like manner it must be said, that although the [demons](#) are not actually bound within the fire of [hell](#) while they are in this dark atmosphere, nevertheless their punishment is none the less; because they [know](#) that such confinement is their due. Hence it is said in a [gloss](#) upon [James 3:6](#): "They carry fire of [hell](#) with them wherever they go." Nor is this contrary to what is said ([Luke 8:31](#)), "They besought the Lord not to cast them into the abyss"; for they asked for this, deeming it to be a punishment for them to be cast out of a place where they could injure men. Hence it is stated, "They [Vulg. 'He'] besought Him that He would not expel them [Vulg. 'him'] out of the country" ([Mark 5:10](#)).